



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



Monthly Accomplishments

January 2015

Fisheries Activities

All the FY14 production Channel catfish and brood stock have been stocked into their over-wintering ponds and readied for next year's stocking and spawning seasons. Both seasons usually begin in May but depend a great deal on the weather for the spawning season. Inks Dam NFH has received requests from the Arizona FWCO for FY15.

Production numbers for the FY14 Channel catfish are 57,508 averaging 7.18 fish per pound (fpp) and 7.83 inches in total length. Earlier ponded fish from this year class are averaging 8.92 fpp and will be the fish ones stocked out for FY15 Tribal requests. No mortalities were recorded for the month. Migratory piscivorous birds have not decreased in abundance but staff has parked vehicles and increased harassment measures to prevent losses.

Incoming water quality continues to improve but water temperatures have dropped for the third straight month. Incoming dissolved oxygen averaged 11.12 ppm and an average temperature of 8.1°C by month's end. Feeding again has, for all intents and purposes, stopped for month on all the catfish production.

Currently there are 3,949 FY13 channel catfish averaging 1.97 fpp and 11.94 inches in total length. These fish will be used for future brood stock and future reimbursable fish. Additional

production also includes 1,855 FY12 averaging 0.59 fpp and 17.84 inches in total length. These fish will be utilized for brood stock in FY15 and future Fort Hood Reimbursable contract fish. Two mortalities were recorded for the month and caused by avian predators.

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for two full years and approaching five in refugium. There are now only 20, originally, trapped fish. Five mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month. All mortalities were female again and no external parasites or disease signs were observed in any of the mortalities. Mortality now is more than likely due to normal life expectancy.

The FY14 Clear Creek gambusia currently in isolation now number 156 fish. A single mortality occurred during the month. The Asian Tapeworm treatment has been put off again because of construction inside the isolation/quarantine building and not having the FY15 population of fish in refugium. The treatment will begin in February when the second population of fish are brought into refugium and utilized as the treatment control group.

Hatchery staff has finished testing the light intensity into the tanks, from the light control system, for spawning the gambusia. Staff has now

The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) membership provided a tour for a local church group's youth this month. The groups consisted of 15 youth ranging from first grade through sixth grade. They were accompanied by 9 adults who also participated in the program. All of the youth earned a Royal Ambassadors' Conservation Badge, which is similar to the Boy Scouts badge, and had lots of fun in the process.

Below: Youth learning about the life found along the Overlook Trail.



Below: Youth learning about the morphology of fish during their tour at Inks Dam NFH.



duplicated early work performed by Dr. Clark Hubbs on the amount of light intensity into the tanks to get the maximum number of broods during spawning. The current FY14 population of fish is being moved to a 14 hour of daylight and 10 hours of dark photoperiod regime. After the treatments for Asian tapeworm, staff will begin increasing water temperatures to 22°C and 25°C for spawning.

Personnel

Jerry Simmons and Scott Walker have both been working on their Pre-certification for Heavy Equipment training to be held in February. Jerry Crouch has completed the majority of his FBMS training for Fleet Management while Julie Burks has been training new staff members to the Concur travel system for upcoming training and travel.

Maintenance

Staff performed routine equipment and facility maintenance during the month. All of the facilities heavy equipment and vehicles has been serviced and repaired.



This is the creation of a new pond caused by the lateral line break servicing the 5, 6 and 7 series ponds. An additional two breaks were found going to ponds 5A and 6B.

repaired it and installed a new butterfly valve, replacing the “old” gate valve. Several days later the lateral line broke that services the 5, 6 and 7 series of ponds. In total eight ponds were without water for two weeks while specialty parts were ordered and repairs were made. Staff completed repairs on the intersection and found two more breaks going to Ponds 5A and 6B before testing all of the new connections. It is believed that



The intersection, were the breaks occurred, feeding incoming water to the 5, 6 and 7 series ponds. Unfortunately these pipes were 8 inch pipe when the ARRA Project contractors installed them so parts were special order.

ground shifting caused by recent rains and cold weather, plus the inflexible intersection of joints caused the breaks. Weather has still prevented much work on the levee where it blew out part of the north side but it should be repaired in February, weather permitting.

Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had a total of 113 visitors for the month of January. Numerous people were here to hike on the trails and/or birding activities.

The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 60 hours for the month of January. The FOIDNFH membership provided a tour for a local church group’s youth this month. The groups consisted of 15 youth ranging from first grade through sixth grade. They were accompanied by 9 adults who also participated in the program once things got going.

All of children and adults learned about Channel catfish production, catfish reproduction, life history of the endangered Clear Creek gambusia and the American paddle fish. On the Overlook hike they learned about the plants, lichen and other living things that live along the trail – as well as the geology of the hill that the trail transverses.

They also participated in a Fish Biology and Anatomy class and the most fun by both adults and kids, the now famous, “Master Caster Class”. The youth learned how to cast a fishing line safely and with accuracy while practicing casting plastic casting plugs into one of the floating targets at least three times to be designated “Master Casters.” All of the youth earned a Royal Ambassadors’ Conservation Badge.



Hatchery staff repaired the line break on the 13 series of ponds and then replaced an “old” gate valve to a newer butterfly valve on pond 13B.

Hatchery staff started and finished repairs to several line breaks during the month. A water supply line broke going to the 13 series of ponds. Staff

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Southwest Region
Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery
345 Clay Young Road
Burnet, TX 78611
Phone 512/793-2474
http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/inks_dam/index.html

Current staff members

Paul Dorman	Project Leader
Scott Walker	Assistant Project Leader
Vacant	Environmental Education Specialist
Julie Burks.....	Administrative Technician
Gregory Landry	Fisheries Biologist
Daniel Huston	Fisheries Biologist
Vacant	Animal Caretaker (Term)
Larry Guerro	Motor Vehicle Operator
Jerry Simmons	Maintenance Worker
Jerry Crouch	Maintenance Worker