



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



Monthly Accomplishments

January 2016

Fisheries Activities

Channel catfish

This month's average dissolved oxygen level for the incoming water was 6.77 parts per million (ppm). Monthly pond dissolved oxygen levels increased and averaged 9.82 ppm (91.47% saturation), at an average pond temperature of 10.12° C which is about a 3°C decline from last month.

All of the FY15 fish are in their or larger over-wintering production ponds. To-date, 62,928 are in production ponds for FY16 Tribal requests. These fish average 8.76 fish per pound (fpp) and 7.48 inches in total length. Overall we are a bit behind in length and weights on these fish because water temperatures reflect a more "normal winter" temperature profile. A single mortality was recorded for this population and was recorded as bird predation. Staff also took 78 fish from this population to assist the Marble Falls ISD with an aquaponics project the school had started earlier in the school year but were lacking fish to complete the project.

Production numbers for the FY14 Channel catfish are 3,603 averaging 2.02 fish per pound (fpp) and 11.84 inches in total length. No mortalities were recorded for the month. These fish will be used as future brood stock and future reimbursable fish. This brood year has made only slight gains in body weight

has occurred due to colder temperatures for the month.

Currently there are 3,520 FY13 channel catfish averaging 0.98 fpp and 15.09 inches in total length. These fish will be used as brood stock in FY16 and future reimbursable fish. Additional production also includes 541 FY12 catfish averaging 0.20 fpp and 25.74 inches in total length. These fish will be utilized for brood stock in FY16 and Fort Hood Reimbursable contract requests.

Three mortalities were recorded for the FY12 population of fish this month and were recorded as bird (Osprey) wounds. Staff has noted an increase in the number of birds visiting the facility this month.

Clear Creek gambusia

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for three full years and currently five years in refugium. There are now only five original refugium fish. No mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month.

The FY14 Clear Creek gambusia currently in isolation totals 56 fish. Two mortalities occurred during the month. There are currently 42 FY15 Clear Creek gambusia. No mortalities occurred for the month in this population. All of the genetically "unknown" CCG, two FY14 females and one FY15 male were moved into the FY10 tank to be

The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) provide two tours for the month. One tour was for the Boy Scout Troop 153 from Temple, Texas. Taking part in the tour were 22 boys (ages 11 to 15 years old) and 17 adults. They participated in the Master Caster class, bird watching, hiking and feeding the four year-old brood stock channel catfish.



The second tour provided by the FOIDNFH was for the Hill Country Trekkers. The Trekkers find locations to go hiking throughout the central Texas area and Inks Dam NFH is quickly becoming a stopping place for the



group, and individual members, to come to enjoy hiking at the facility. They did manage to hike Overlook, Meadow, Ashe-Juniper and Riverwalk to get in almost five miles of hiking.

tested again at a later date and had no mortalities for the month.

All FY14, FY15, and F1's adults are now on a 14 hour on and 14 hour off light cycle. Staff has increase time so these fish are now on full light regimes for spawning. Water temperatures have also been increased gradually to better represent the late winter and spring seasons. Other water quality indices are being monitored to duplicate optimum water conditions for pre-spawning conditions. All of the FY14 and FY15 Clear Creek gambusia adults (100% pure) are doing well in their respective spawning tanks. Staff has observed what we believe to be spawning behavior hopefully we will have new F1's starting late next month.

The FY15 F1 Clear Creek gambusia total 245, of which; 152 are female and 93 are males. A single male F1 mortality occurred during the month. No external parasites were observed on the mortality. Overall numbers increased by 64 fish after an individual count, of all the F1's, took place while assigning them into their respective spawning tanks. All of these fish have been moved into spawning tanks with approximately 1/3 of the population at densities identical to last years and the remaining 2/3 were put into larger tanks to represent production type density levels before months end. No genetic testing was performed on these fish this year.

Hatchery staff decided to see if we can get these fish to spawn, unaltered, in their first year. By spawning these we should get age 1 fecundity numbers for life history data since most of the

fish we get from the wild are of unknown age. They will be genetically tested after spawning in FY16.

Personnel

Scott Walker worked with Haley Davis from Cedar Park High School during the Leander ISD Annual COOL Week program for graduating senior high students. Haley has aspirations to become a marine biologist. She and Scott worked on pond water quality parameters and the Clear Creek gambusia project during her four days with us. It was also opportunistic that Scott's wife, Jennifer, who works on the Gulf Coast with Kemps Wridleys sea turtle, was also able to spend some time with Haley discussing marine biologist work. "COOL" stands for Career Opportunities On Location. It provides High School seniors an opportunity to work with businesses or organizations that they will be pursuing in the future for a career.

Maintenance

Staff performed routine equipment and facility maintenance during the month. Some minor repairs still need to be conducted but the all of the vehicles and heavy equipment have been serviced for the year.

Jerry Simmons and Jerry Crouch picked up nine old, repairable, fiberglass tanks from the San Marcos ARC to be utilized for several upcoming projects including life history work to see if the Clear Creek gambusia can be cultured in Inks Lake water vs. well water. This will provide us with the ability to perhaps increase production of this species should the need arise.

Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had 232 visitors despite the colder temperatures late in the month. The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 44.0 hours for the month. They filled seed in the feeders for the bird blind, bird counts, printed out trail maps, and bird lists to fill the trail heads and Visitor Center. They also provide two tours for the month.

One tour was for the Boy Scout Troop 153 from Temple, Texas. Taking part in the tour were 22 boys (ages 11 to 15 years old) and 17 adults and the other was a tour for the Hill Country Trekkers. The group consisted of approximately 40 people and they walked all of the trails except the 20 Acres because they were unable to get across Peter's Creek, it's still holding water from last year's rain events. They did manage to hike Overlook, Meadow, Ashe-Juniper and Riverwalk to get in almost 5 miles of hiking. We are glad to help them enjoy the little bit of outdoors we have and they all had fun!

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



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Current staff members

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