



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



Monthly Accomplishments

March 2016

Fisheries Activities

Water Quality

This month's average dissolved oxygen level for the incoming water was 6.80 parts per million (ppm). Monthly pond dissolved oxygen levels averaged only slightly better at 7.48 ppm (82.75% saturation), at an average pond temperature of 17.70° C which is only a slight increase from last month. The Lower Colorado River Authority has decided to release water for downstream agriculture this year since the lakes are almost full. Staff has increased the manual backwash time to once every thirty minutes on the filter since the productivity has increased in the lakes above us.

Channel catfish

All of the FY15 fish are in their larger over-wintering production ponds. To-date, 62,925 are in production ponds for FY16 Tribal requests. These fish average 5.91 fish per pound (fpp) and 8.32 inches in total length. Overall, we still behind in length and weights on these fish because water temperatures are still reflecting a more "normal winter" temperature profile. A mortality was recorded for this population and recorded as bird predation. Stocking will begin for this population of fish the first week of May.

Production numbers for the FY14 Channel catfish are 3,541 averaging 1.83 fish per pound (fpp) and 12.24 inches in total length. No mortalities were recorded for the month. These

fish will be used as future brood stock and future reimbursable fish. Hatchery staff took 62 fish from this population for a Kids Fishing Day in San Angelo, Texas. This was held by the Texas Park and Wildlife Conservation Officers and a total of 67 kids which had a great time.

Currently there are 2,943 FY13 channel catfish averaging 0.90 fpp and 15.51 inches in total length. These fish are being used as brood stock this year and reimbursable fish. Hatchery staff transferred 577 fish from this population to the Fort Hood Natural Resources staff to begin the reimbursable season. These fish weighted a total of 710 pounds and averaged 0.81 fish per pound and total length was 16.10 inches. No mortalities were recorded for this population during the month.

Additional production also includes 539, FY12, catfish averaging 0.17 fpp and 26.95 inches in total length. These fish are being utilized for brood stock this year and Fort Hood Reimbursable contract requests later in the year after spawning. No spawning has started yet this year because of the water temperatures. No mortalities were recorded for the FY12 population of fish this month.

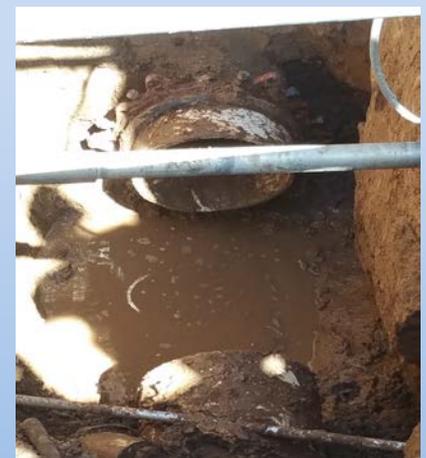
Clear Creek gambusia

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for three full years and currently five and a

DM Projects are going well at Inks Dam NFH. Below are pictures from several of the project occurring this month.



Work being performed for the new generator pad. Once completed this generator will protect the two production wells used for shipping fish throughout Region 2 and the Endangered Clear Creek gambusia.



Although a bit difficult to see with all the safety bars and panels in the way the last of gate valves is finally being installed. This will allow possible future species to be brought on station that with current infrastructure we would be unable to do so.

half years in refugium. There are now only four original refugium fish. A single female mortality was recorded in the FY2010 population during the month.

The FY14 Clear Creek gambusia currently in isolation totals 56 fish. No mortality occurred during the month. There are currently 41, FY15, Clear Creek gambusia. A single female mortality occurred during the month in this population. Mortality, so far this year, has been greatly reduced during this spawning season.

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 and staff has now taken a total twenty (20) F1 fry from two spawning females and still with the month of May to go, which was the busy month last year.

The FY15 F1 Clear Creek gambusia total 243, of which; 151 are female and 92 are males. A single female F1 mortality occurred during the month. No external parasites were observed on the mortality and probably due to spawning.

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. To date we have produced through our spawning technique a total of 84 F2's. Many more of the F1 females are showing signs of being gravid and have been separated into spawning tanks. Staff anticipates that the month of May is going to be big, as far as, numbers of new F2's.

Personnel

All facility staff has their yearly EEO and Diversity training done and almost all have their yearly FISSA training completed by month's end.

Larry Guerro, WG Motor Vehicle Operator, transferred to Bureau of Indian Affairs as a new Water Master near Phoenix, Arizona. Larry was here for almost six years and will be sorely missed on the Regional Distribution Unit but we wish him well in his new endeavor.

Tammy Simmons worked with Marta Estrada, from the San Marcos Aquatic Recovery Center, on administrative duties. They covered a multitude of areas and both seemed to think it was well worth the time and efforts. Marta's vast experience and willingness to share that knowledge was greatly appreciated by Tammy and the staff. We hope to have Marta back up here or send Tammy down there for additional training.

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 has been fitting the new trailer for the fish hauling tank picked up last month from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in Huntsville, Texas with support equipment. Oxygen bottle holders, tool box, spare tire and battery electrical. This trailer also received a new 10,000 pound suspension overhaul. This tank will allow us to haul fish greater distances and utilize a trailer we have on station that has not been used for a long time.

Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had 515 visitors for the month. The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 74.0 hours for the month. They filled seed in the feeders for the bird blind, bird counts, printed out trail maps, got in some early landscaping, and bird lists to fill the trail heads and Visitor Center. The Friends Group is gearing up for the Hatchery Outdoor Program (HOP) which starts in May. The HOP program is for local, 4th and 5th grade school districts to participate in many different outdoor programs.

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



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Current staff members

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| 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) |
| Vacant | Maintenance Worker |
| Jerry Simmons | Maintenance Worker |
| Jerry Crouch | Maintenance Worker |