



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



Monthly Accomplishments

October 2014

Fisheries Activities

All FY14 Channel catfish have been stocked into their over-wintering ponds by month end. One additional pond remains to be stocked out in November for future Ft. Hood reimbursable fish in FY16. All of the brood fish have been placed into their over-wintering ponds.

Currently there are 71,533 FY14 Channel catfish averaging 10.13 fish per pound (fpp) and 6.90 inches in total length. Early ponded fish from this year class are ranging from seven to eight inches in total length. A total of five mortalities were recorded for the month but the three to four Ospreys have been having a field day with the ponded fish. Incoming water quality continues to be extremely poor and has improved slightly for the month. Incoming dissolved oxygen averaged 3.21 ppm (increase of 1.3 ppm from last month) and a temperature 24.0°C (decrease of 4°C from last month).

Currently there are 3,954 FY13 channel catfish averaging 2.36 fpp and 11.77 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 0.64 fpp and 17.20 inches in total length. These fish will be utilized for brood stock in FY15 and future Fort Hood Reimbursable contract fish. No mortalities were recorded for the month on both of these year classes.

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for two full years. The 36 remaining fish have been on station for almost four years. Fourteen mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month. No external parasites or disease signs were observed in the mortality and was probably due to attempts at spawning or normal life expectancy. To date no fertilization has taken place or observed by staff. Staff has returned them back to normal light regimes and will start again in May to induce spawning.

Staff worked with the Texas Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) office and brought in a total of 265 FY 14 Clear Creek gambusia for the newly created isolation recirculation systems. They are currently in isolation due to Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources & Recovery Center (SWNARRC) Fish Health Unit detecting Asian Tapeworm in samples sent in prior to bringing the new population to Inks Dam NFH.

Early mortality during transport was approximately 34% and probably due to handling during the capture, holding, and identification processes in an attempt to eliminate hybrids and Western mosquitofish from the new population. Mortality has subsided to near zero by month end. There are now a total of 166 FY14 individuals in the refugium population and have

Facility staff, volunteers and the Friends of Inks Dam NFH met early in October to have the 2nd Annual "Appreciation Luncheon" held in the Education Building.

This luncheon is to show appreciation to each other in working towards the goals for the year. A total of fifty-three people, not including staff, showed up for the luncheon.



Above: New Supervisory Fishery Biologist, Scott Walker, introducing himself to the FOIDNFH and volunteers who attended the luncheon.

Below: After the introductions and greetings everyone sat down to a wide variety of delicious food. Fish, hushpuppies, numerous side dishes and desserts were served for all to enjoy.



adapted to feeding regimes and aquarium life.

Facility staff has worked with the Fish Health Unit and SWNARRC personnel in the development of a protocol for the treatment of Asian tapeworm. This treatment will begin when another group of gambusia is brought into refugium to make up for the losses which should be mid-November. Hatchery personnel will again work with the Texas FWCO and a staff member from Texas Parks and Wildlife in the collection of the second FY14 gambusia population.

Personnel

Inks Dam NFH is pleased to announce another addition to our growing staff list, and introduce Jerry Simmons. Jerry is retired military and an outstanding maintenance mechanic. His beginning date was mid-October and since he has serviced quite a number of vehicles and equipment for the facility.



Jerry Simmons comes from Kansas where he was working as a contract Maintenance Mechanic, on heavy equipment, for military installations there. His skills will be greatly appreciated at the facility and on the Regional Distribution Unit.

Maintenance

Staff performed routine equipment and facility maintenance during the month. Staff has been cleaning and grading ponds to prepare them for production next year. Annual

vehicle and heavy equipment maintenance started this month and should continue through fall.

Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had a total of 113 visitors for the month of October. Some of the visitors where here for the start of the fall bird migration and some folks came for the early fall fishing. Many folks came over from staying at the Inks Lake State Park which is just a couple miles up the road and a highly visited State Park.

The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 67 hours for the month of October. Most of the FOIDNFH membership is starting to return from the “cooler” neighboring states. Some of the friends’ membership and volunteers renewed the “Chinaberry Chopper” project, this month; which entails cutting down the invasive Chinaberry trees and then spraying the stumps with an herbicide. About fifteen people worked in three separate locations on hatchery grounds. It appears one more final attempt at removing that invasive is all that is needed for this year.

Robert Savage, volunteer and construction expert, has created a cabinet for front office to cover up all the telephone cables and computer wires coming into the building. Not only does it function to keep the junction boxes ventilated but it improves the overall appearance of the office and has a depiction of Rainbow trout burned into the wood panels.



Volunteer Robert Savage has created a workable and functional cabinet cover to remove an eye sore from our front office. The cabinets face covers the cables and wires utilized for telephone and computer connections in the office building.

The Intermediate Sanction Facility (ISF) came out again this month a spent two days mowing and weed whipping. They did the Park/Picnic area, along the river, around the Visitor Center and the old Meager Fish Camp area by the filter. The 8 man crew put in a total of 96 hours and greatly assisted the hatchery staff in keeping the facility looking presentable.

Inks Dam NFH supplied 75 fish for the 1st Annual Texas FWCO Kids Fishing Derby held at the San Marcos Aquatic Resources Center (SMARC) had a good turnout of a little over a hundred kids. “The kids seemed to enjoy casting into the pond, and once the first person pulled out a fish, it invigorated the crowd and the kids were determined to catch their very own”. The Texas FWCO is setting up plans to have this event again next year.

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
Julie Burks.....	Administrative Technician
Gregory Landry	Fisheries Biologist
Vacant	Fisheries Biologist
Vacant	Animal Caretaker (Term)
Larry Guerro	Motor Vehicle Operator
Jerry Simmons	Maintenance Worker
Vacant	Maintenance Worker