



## Monthly Accomplishments

April 2014

### Fisheries Activities

In cooperation with Pueblo of Isleta and Pueblo of Sandia, we completed monthly monitoring for Rio Grande silvery minnow (RGSM). Monitoring determines presence/absence of visible implant elastomer tagged fish from augmentation and research efforts.

We assisted personnel from the Pueblo of Santa Ana with quarterly fish monitoring on the Rio Grande and Jemez River.

In cooperation with The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), we completed Pecos River fish community monitoring at twelve sites near Roswell, New Mexico. Data from these monitoring efforts are used to define the status of the fish community, with emphasis on Pecos bluntnose shiner, in response to Federal water management actions.

With the assistance of USFWS Grand Junction (Region 6), we completed a nonnative fish marking trip and endangered species monitoring trip on the San Juan River from Shiprock, New Mexico to Mexican Hat, Utah. Channel catfish and common carp were tagged with individually numbered anchor tags in an effort to generate population estimates and

exploitation rates. The data will be used to guide future management decisions for these two invasive fishes. Recapture information will be collected during regular nonnative fish removal trips scheduled throughout 2014.



**Figure 1. Colorado pikeminnow**

In cooperation with USFWS Grand Junction (Region 6), Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Navajo Fish and Wildlife, and American Southwest Ichthyological Researchers we completed the first of four nonnative fish removal and endangered species monitoring trips. We sampled the San Juan River from Shiprock, New Mexico to Mexican Hat, Utah. Nonnative fish removal is one management tool used by the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program for the recovery of the endangered Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker.

In cooperation with NMDGF and U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Dustin Myers completed post-fire monitoring within the main stem and southern fork of McKnight Creek, Gila National Forest. The surveys did not produce fish, possibly because of recent floods which scoured out the channel beneath the barrier. Repairs will need to be made to the barrier before fish can be repatriated.



**Figure 2. McKnight Creek**



**Figure 3. McKnight Creek barrier scoured from underneath.**

Stephen Davenport assisted New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) with annual Pecos pupfish monitoring at Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Bottomless Lakes State Park, and Bureau of Land

Management's overflow wetlands/Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

In cooperation with NMDGF and USFS, Dustin Myers completed several tasks within the West Fork Gila River Complex, Gila National Forest. Dustin completed a habitat suitability assessment for Upper White Creek, which was recommended to receive Gila trout (Whiskey Lineage) in fall 2014. Upper White Creek shows signs of recovery with suitable habitat present. Post-fire monitoring was completed from the Upper West Fork water fall to White Creek confluence. We collected German brown trout and 30 Gila trout. Several Gila trout collected were passive integrated transponder tagged and successfully overwintered from the fall stocking in 2013. Crews also assessed the condition of Whiskey Creek and reported the stream to still be raw and blown out with no suitable fish habitat present. Crews did observe Gila trout near Turkey Feather Creek, in the Upper West Fork. In addition, Dustin retrieved photo stations that were deployed in spring 2013. Dustin also attempted to collect temperature loggers, but found they all had been lost due to high flows.

## Meetings and Trainings

Thomas Archdeacon attended meetings of the Minnow Action Team to develop biological based recommendations for the overall improvement of the status of the RGSM. The MAT consists of

Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, City of Albuquerque BioPark, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, Pueblos, Ecological Services, Refuges, and Fisheries.

We participated in the RGSM Propagation and Genetics Workgroup Bi-annual Meeting. Topics of discussion included station updates, fish health results, genetics update, wild egg collection for 2013, and production needs for 2014.

Dustin Myers attended the quarterly meeting of the Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## Education and Outreach

D. Chris Kitcheyan and Dustin Myers attended student presentations given by Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute students of the NATR 235 class. The presentations were the final reports on their semester long research projects: Radio Telemetry with Sandia, Fish Population Otolith and Scale Aging, and Gopher Research at SIPI.

Angela James led the activity, *The Anatomy of a Trout*, for 70 fifth grade students from Emerson Elementary School. New Mexico FWCO provided preserved trout specimens, worksheets, and reference guides to provide students an opportunity to explore the internal and external anatomy of

a trout. Emerson Elementary is a participant of the *Native Fish in the Classroom* project.



**Figure 4. Emerson Elementary students examining a Rio Grande cutthroat trout.**



**Figure 5. Emerson Elementary students examining a Rio Grande cutthroat trout.**

Angela James led a hands-on demonstration, in the Rio Grande, to 24 Bosque School students. The students were instructed on seining and protocols used to monitor for the RGSM. The students then assisted the staff in collecting fish for the Native Fish in the Classroom project.

Angela James presented *How Many Fish* to three classes (~72 students) from Mountain View and Emerson Elementary Schools. The presentation discussed why and how fish surveys are completed. To demonstrate on use of the data, classes completed an activity

estimating the population of Pinto fish (pinto and red beans) using a mark-recapture method. All three classes are participants of the *Native Fish in the Classroom* project.



**Figure 6. Mountain View Elementary student counting Pinto fish.**

Angela James participated in Science Career Day at Lybrook and Cuba Middle Schools hosted by UNM School of Medicine (Science Education Partnership Award). Angela discussed fisheries related careers and education requirements, and then demonstrated tools and methods used to work with fish. Students ended the session by weighing and measuring imitation fish in the class.



**Figure 7. Angela James demonstrating how to weigh and measure a fish.**

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



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## Current staff members

Vacant .....	Project Leader
Jason Davis .....	Acting Project Leader
Angela Carrillo.....	Administrative Officer
Kimberly Flowers.....	Office Assistant
Stephen Davenport .....	Supervisory Fish Biologist
Chris Kitcheyan .....	Supervisory Fish Biologist
Weston Furr .....	Fish Biologist
Thomas Archdeacon.....	Fish Biologist
Dustin Myers.....	Fish Biologist
Angela Palacios James.....	Fish Biologist
Bobby Duran .....	Fish Biologist
Andy Dean.....	Fish Biologist
Ernest Tellier Sr. ....	Biological Science Technician
Tristan Austring .....	STEP Student