



Monthly Accomplishments

December 2012

Fisheries Activities

Since June 2012, Gila trout are being held in refugium at NMFWCO. The Gila trout were brought on station for refuge from Whiskey Creek, Gila National Forest, due to the Whitewater-Baldy Complex Fire. The Gila trout are held in two naturalized tank systems mimicking a stream habitat, with substrate and cover. The Gila trout are active, using cover, aggressively feeding, and maintaining their wild coloration. Staff continue to monitor for aggressive territorial behavior, and relocate individual fish to a second naturalized rearing system (with similar sized fish) in efforts to maximize survival. The survival rate is currently holding at 84%, with no known mortalities for two months. These Gila trout are of the Whiskey Creek lineage and have not previously been successfully held or replicated in a hatchery setting.



In cooperation with Pueblo of Isleta, staff completed monthly monitoring for the RGSM within the Middle Rio Grande and Pueblo of Isleta. Monitoring efforts are to determine presence/absence of visible implant elastomer tagged fish in relation to augmentation and research efforts.

Meeting and Trainings

The NMFWCO hosted the Central Arizona Project Funding meeting. Participants included Bureau of Land Management-Las Cruces and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF). Primary topic of discussion was identifying priorities for FY 2013 upper Gila River Basin native fish recovery efforts.

The NMFWCO hosted the Fire Protocol Meeting attended by U.S. Forest Service (USFS), NMDGF, and Trout Unlimited. The topic of discussion was the development of post-fire monitoring protocols of occupied and unoccupied Gila trout streams.

The NMFWCO hosted the Annual Gila Trout Recovery Team Meeting. Participants included Arizona Game and Fish Department, NMDGF, USFS-Apache-Sitgreaves Supervisor's

Office, USFS-Gila Forest, the University of New Mexico, Mora National Fish Hatchery, and Trout Unlimited. The meeting included an overview of the Whitewater Baldy Complex Fire 2012 and status update of rescued Gila trout. The Recovery Team continued identifying needed actions for Gila trout streams, captive populations, nonnative streams, and recreational fisheries. Additional topics of discussion included status of broodstock at Mora National Fish Hatchery, production requests, and proposed monitoring activities for 2013.

The annual Chihuahua Chub Recovery Team meeting was hosted by NMFWCO. Participants included Arizona Game and Fish Department, NMDGF, USFS-Gila Forest, and the University of New Mexico. Topics of discussion included status of broodstock at the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center, production requests for 2013, and population status of Moreno Springs. University of New Mexico, Megan Osborne, presented genetics results identifying the U.S. population of Chihuahua chub as genetically distinct from Mexico's population. In addition, the Recovery Team began the process for the revising the Chihuahua chub recovery plan.

Weston Furr and Bobby Duran completed the New Mexico Department of Agriculture Continuing Education Unit Workshop to maintain the New Mexico Pesticide Applicators license in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Education and Outreach

Staff completed three Native Fish in the Classroom aquarium set-ups and presentations at Emerson, Monte Vista, and Valle Vista Elementary. Staff presented *Native Fish in the Classroom* to 160 5th-graders who will be responsible for the care of native Rio Grande fish. The presentation included an introduction of the USFWS, NMFWCO, native species, the aquarium set-up, and the student's responsibilities for the semester. All schools will receive fish January 2013. Laguna, Valle Vista and Bosque schools will be learning about and raising fish of the middle Rio Grande including flathead chub, western mosquitofish, longnose dace, red shiner, river carpsucker, white sucker, and the fathead minnow. Emerson and Monte Vista elementary schools will be raising and learning about the Rio Grande cutthroat trout. At the end of the semester, the students will gather for a field day to release their fish into the Rio Grande. The projects overall goal is to generate enthusiasm for natural resources and foster a sense of stewardship for native fish and their habitats.

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



New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office
3800 Commons Avenue NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109
Phone 505/342-9900
<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/nmfwco/index.html>

Current staff members

Jim Brooks	Project Leader
Jason Davis	Assistant Project Leader
Susan Maestas	Administrative Officer
Angela Carrillo.....	Administrative Officer
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
Sara Blocker.....	Fish Biologist
Andy Dean.....	Fish Biologist
Christine Stewart.....	Fish Biologist
Ernest Tellier Sr.	Biological Science Technician
Tristan Austring	STEP Student
Cole Wolf	STEP Student