



Monthly Accomplishments

July 2014

Fisheries Activities

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

With the assistance of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Ernest Teller, Bobby Duran, Angela James, and Weston Furr completed nonnative fish removal and endangered species monitoring on the San Juan River between Shiprock, New Mexico and Montezuma Creek, Utah. Nonnative fish species included channel catfish, bullhead, and bass. Endangered species included razorback sucker, Colorado pikeminnow, and roundtail chub.



Figure 1. Endangered Colorado pikeminnow (745 mm total length).



Figure 2. Candidate species roundtail chub

Chris Kitcheyan, Andy Dean, and Arizona Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) assisted the Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife Department with fish salvage efforts of Asááyi Lake. An emergency fish evacuation was executed in response to impending ash flows caused by the Asááyi Lake Fire in June 2014. Approximately 600 to 700 rainbow trout (150 pounds) were collected utilizing electro-shocking boats and trammel nets. The trout were relocated to Wheatfield Lake, Navajo Nation, which will be unaffected by post-fire run-off.



Figure 3. Asááyi Lake.

Andy Dean assisted the Pueblo of Santa Ana - Department of Natural Resources with

quarterly fish monitoring surveys on the Rio Grande and Jemez River.

Stephen Davenport and Andy Dean assisted New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) with trapping and subsequent fin-clipping of Pecos pupfish for genetic analysis at five long-term monitoring sites.



Figure 4. Arizona and New Mexico FWCO staff collecting rainbow trout with electroshocker.

Thomas Archdeacon and Tristan Austring, with the assistance of various personnel from the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and New Mexico FWCO, continued with salvage efforts for the RGSM. As of 31 July 2014 crews salvaged RGSM from 20.1 unique river miles of the Rio Grande, all within the San Acacia Reach, which lies between the south boundary of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and near Brown's Arroyo. We collected 116 RGSM > 30 mm standard length (SL). Of these, 107 (96 hatchery marked fish) were found alive and rescued.

There were eight RGSM > 30 mm SL (eight hatchery marked) found dead during this time. In addition, two RGSM died during transport. No drying occurred in the Rio Grande in the Isleta Reach during this time. Salvage efforts are ongoing.

Stephen Davenport and Andy Dean were unable to complete Pecos River fish community monitoring due to flooding events within the Pecos River.



Figure 5. Overbanking of Pecos River at Scout Camp.

Stephen Davenport completed a site visit with Natural Resources Conservation Service to the Rio Mimbres. Stephen provided technical advice for an upcoming fish passage project to be completed to a diversion dam within a section of private property.

With the assistance from USFWS Grand Junction (Region 6), Bobby Duran, Jason E. Davis and Ernest Teller completed the first of three nonnative fish removal and endangered species monitoring trips on the San Juan River between Hogback Diversion to Shiprock, New Mexico.

In collaboration with the Cochiti Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Chris Kitcheyan, New Mexico FWCO staff, and the Cochiti Tribal Youth Conservation Corp (TYCC) completed the first of two fish passage projects on the Santa Fe River.



Figure 6. Cochiti Pueblo, New Mexico FWCO, and TYCC working on a river crossing.

Meetings and Trainings

Chris Kitcheyan participated in a Consultation Meeting with Navajo Nation and New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office (ESFO). The participants discussed the potential listing and critical habitat designation for the Zuni bluehead sucker.

Tom Sinclair and Jason E. Davis attended the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program Executive Committee Meeting. Participants included U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, BOR, University of New Mexico (UNM), Bosque del Apache NWR, New Mexico ESFO, Interstate Stream Commission (ISC), Sandia Pueblo, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD), Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA), and Tetra Tech.

The New Mexico FWCO hosted the Gila Trout and Chihuahua

Chub Recovery Team meeting. Participants included U. S. Forest Service, NMDGF, UNM, Mora National Fish Hatchery, and Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center. Participants discussed the repair of the McKnight Creek barrier, future actions to preserve the Spruce Creek Gila trout lineage, removal of a boulder within the Upper West Fork Falls, and surveys of the Upper West Fork to determine presence of nonnatives and their hybrids.

New Mexico FWCO staff met with New Mexico ESFO staff to discuss fisheries issues within the various basins of New Mexico.

Tom Sinclair and Jason E. Davis met with NMDGF staff to discuss fisheries issues within the various basins of New Mexico.

Angela James participated in the Middle Rio Grande – Advancing Youth Environmental Education and Employment Workshop held at the Rio Grande Nature Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Jason E. Davis and Thomas Archdeacon attended a RGSM Catch Per Unit Effort Workshop planning meeting. Participants included BOR, MRGCD, ABCWUA, and ISC.

As a representative for the Fisheries Program, Stephen Davenport participated in the review of Science Support Partnership and Quick Response Program proposals.

Angela James, Kjetil Henderson, and Rebecca Cook completed

FWS Off-road Utility Vehicle Safety Training in hosted by the Las Vegas NWR in Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Weston Furr and Jason E. Davis met with staff from New Mexico ESFO, UNM and Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife to discuss future stocking plans for razorback sucker into the San Juan River.

Thomas Sinclair, Jason E. Davis and Kimberly Flowers participated in the monthly conference call of R2 Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation.

Education and Outreach

The 2014 Tribal Youth Conservation Corps (TYCC) group sponsored by New Mexico FWCO concluded in July. Four high school students comprised the Cochiti TYCC program and worked on various natural resource projects located on Cochiti Pueblo, including a fish passage project on the Santa Fe River. The TYCC program aims to expose native youth to the various subjects within natural resources and potential careers.



Figure 7. Chris Kitcheyan with TYCC.

Chris Kitcheyan, Thomas Archdeacon, Tristan Austring, Kjetil Henderson, Rebecca Cook,

and Angela James participated in the 2014 Sandia Field Day. Approximately 37 students (1st grade to 12th grade) rotated through various stations including electrofishing, seining, reptiles, plant identification, and macroinvertebrates. Staff demonstrated electrofishing, conducted macroinvertebrate sampling and identification, and instructed students on seining protocol used for the monitoring of the RGSM.



Figure 8. Sandia students identifying macroinvertebrates.

Weston Furr provided two presentations for the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science (NMMNHS) Summer Program. The first presentation was for the Aqua Art Adventures group (~11 4th-5th graders). The presentation included an introduction to fish biology with real trout specimens, unique traits of fishes, interesting facts about fish and aquatic environments, and threats to aquatic systems and organisms. The students then worked on various fish art related projects. Weston's second presentation was for the Discovery! Young Explorer Finds New Fish Species in the Rio Grande! - An Exploration of Fish Adaptations group (~10 4th-5th graders). Weston discussed form and function of fish morphology and how adaptations help fishes

succeed in specific habitats. His presentation aided students with the task of designing, naming, and discussing a 'new species' of fish that they 'discovered' in the Rio Grande.

Weston also met with six NMMNHS Junior Docents. They discussed aquatic biology, careers in scientific fields, and general aquatic conservation topics. The Junior Docents are high school students that volunteer at the NMMNHS during the summer and are considering careers in science.



Figure 9. Weston Furr talking with NMMNHS summer students about fish biology.

Personnel

The New Mexico FWCO staff expanded to include two new Fish Biologists, Kjetil Henderson and Rebecca Cook who began their appointment in June 2014. Their primary duties consist of monitoring and salvage efforts for the RGSM.

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

Thomas Sinclair	Project Leader
Jason Davis	Assistant 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
Kjetil Henderson	Fish Biologist
Rebecca Cook.....	Fish Biologist
Ernest Teller Sr.	Biological Science Technician
Tristan Austring	STEP Student