New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office

Monthly Accomplishments March 2013

Fisheries Activities

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

Staff assisted the Navajo Nation Department of Game and Fish with largemouth bass population assessments and nonnative fish removal.

Staff assisted the Mescalero Apache Tribe with the annual spring fisheries survey and nonnative fish removal at Lake Mescalero.

Staff stocked out 142 retired RGSM broodstock from the Los Lunas Silvery Minnow Refugium. The RGSM were released in the Rio Grande within the boundaries of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

In cooperation with The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), staff 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 low/no flow during the winter months.

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

Staff completed the first of three nonnative fish removal and endangered species monitoring trips on the San Juan River from Hogback Diversion to Shiprock Bridge, New Mexico. Nonnative fish removal is one management tool used for the recovery of the endangered razorback sucker and Colorado pikeminnow. This is the tenth consecutive year of intensive nonnative removal activities within this reach.

Staff assisted the Navajo Nation Department of Game and Fish with the re-grading of the West Avocet pond bottom. The Navajo Nation provides ponds used as a grow-out site for razorback sucker prior to stocking into the San Juan River.

Since June 2012, Gila trout (Whiskey lineage) have been held in refugium at NMFWCO. The Gila trout were brought on station for refuge due to the Whitewater-Baldy Complex Fire. Thirty Gila trout were transferred to Mora National Fish Hatchery (NFH) in February 2013. The last 36 Gila trout were transferred to Mora NFH this month to establish a broodstock for the Whiskey lineage. At final transfer, the staff had 82% survival. Gila trout, of the Whiskey lineage, have not previously been successfully held or replicated in a hatchery setting.

Meeting and Trainings

Jim Brooks and NCTC staff provided instruction for the Rotenone & Antimycin Use in Fish Management Course (NCTC FIS2132) hosted by NMFWCO in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Christine Stewart successfully completed the course.

The NMFWCO hosted the Iron Creek Genetics meeting attended by NMDGF, AZFWCO, the U.S. Forest Service, and The University of New Mexico (UNM). Staff from UNM presented results of genetic samples taken from Gila trout of the Iron Creek lineage. Their findings concluded that the Iron Creek lineage, formally considered hybridized, is a pure lineage. The Gila Trout Recovery Team discussed the likelihood of survival of this lineage post-fire, scheduling a reconnaissance trip, and potential of bringing the Iron Creek lineage into a hatchery for refugium.

Jim Brooks participated in the Colorado pikeminnow Recovery Team meeting held at the New

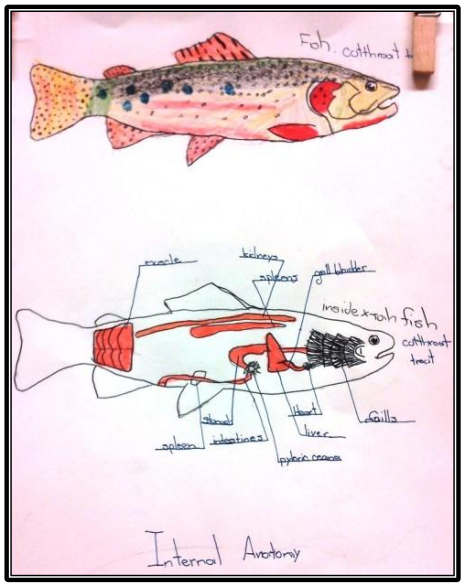
Mexico Ecological Services Field Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

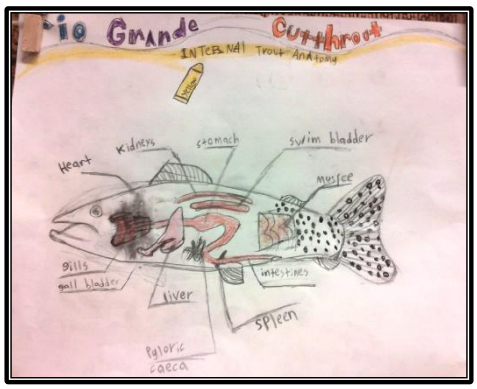
Staff completed a site visit to Salt Creek (White Sands Missile Range) with personnel from NMDGF, Holloman Air Force Base (AFB), and White Sands AFB of a fish passage project for the White Sands pupfish.

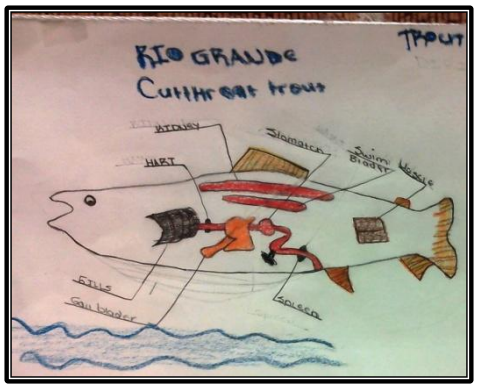
Staff attended a special session of the Rio Grande cutthroat trout Workgroup in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The objective of the meeting was to identify and prioritize upcoming projects.

Education and Outreach

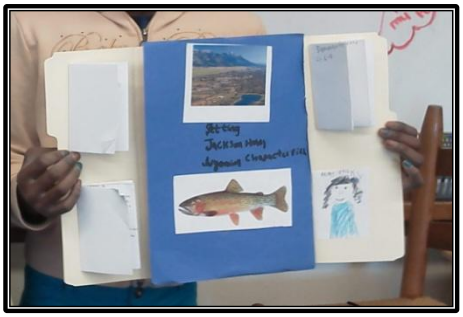
Angela Palacios James presented *The Anatomy of a Cutthroat* to five classes (~100 students) from Laguna, Valle Vista, and Emerson Elementary Schools. The NMFWCO provided Rio Grande cutthroat specimens, worksheets, and reference guides to provide for a hands-on experience as the 5th grade students explored internal and external trout anatomy. These same classes participate with the Native Fish in the Classroom (NFIC) project that aims to generate enthusiasm for natural resources and foster a sense of stewardship for native fish and their habitats. One additional class participating in the NFIC project is scheduled to complete this activity in April 2013.







Angela Palacios James presented *Fiction Mimicking Reality* to the second of three classes (21-5th graders) from Emerson Elementary School. The presentation tied together points from the fictional book T*he Case of the Missing Cutthroats: An Eco Mystery* and work that field biologists do with native fish. Issues discussed in the book, included native ranges of cutthroats, macroinvertebrate sampling, fish tagging and monitoring, and impacts of humans. The book was a class reading assignment, initiated by the teacher, to help integrate the activities of the NFIC project into their curriculum. In addition, students made book review folders, highlighting issues discussed in the book. One additional class participating in the NFIC project is scheduled to complete this activity in April 2013.



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
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
Andy Dean	Fish Biologist
Christine Stewart	Fish Biologist
Ernest Tellier Sr.	Biological Science Technician
Tristan Austring	STEP Student
Cole Wolf	STEP Student