



TISHOMINGO NFH ACTIVITY REPORT FOR AUGUST 2013

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Paddlefish production for 2013 has concluded with the stocking of over 23,000 paddlefish in three locations: John Redmond Reservoir in Kansas (2500 10-inch), Grand Lake in northeastern Oklahoma (2,000 12-inch), and Lake Eufaula in east central Oklahoma (18,500 12-inch). Each fish was tagged with the MICRA-sanctioned coded wire tag for continuing survey assessments. **(CSF 5.2.1)**



Tishomingo NFH staff stock paddlefish in Lake Eufaula, OK, August 2013.

Leadership in Science and Technology

Alligator snapping turtle eggs are hatching at Tishomingo NFH, with about 400 turtles already hatched from the 26 clutches discovered around three turtle ponds on station from May 20th through June 18, 2013. Hatching, which began on August 13th, should be completed around the second week in September.



Newly-hatched alligator snapping turtle at Tishomingo NFH, OK, August 2013.

Alligator snapping turtles have been stocked in three areas in 2013. Two of the stocking locations were on Tishomingo NWR in drainage areas of the Washita River. A total of 46 alligator snapping turtles were stocked from year class 2010. These turtles were progeny of alligator snapping turtles which came to Tishomingo NFH in 2007 from Arkansas. The release onto Tishomingo NWR of these 2010 turtles is unique due to the fact these eggs were discovered on the refuge, were naturally incubated there, and

brought to Tishomingo NFH for their final 10-day incubation. After hatching, these turtles were PIT-tagged and at age 3, released back on the refuge weighing an average of 1.24 pounds.



Alligator snapping turtle released by Tishomingo NFH staff in the Tishomingo NWR.

The third stocking location was in the Verdigris River above Lake Oohlogah in northern Oklahoma for a total of 125; 2 from year class 2007 and 123 from year class 2008. This was the second release of turtles in this system, with the ultimate goal of re-establishing a viable population.

Tishomingo NFH's biologist, Brian Fillmore, stocking alligator snapping turtles in Caney River in Oklahoma.



Including the three 2013 releases, Tishomingo NFH has re-introduced a total of 946 alligator snapping turtles back to the wild since the first release date in June 2006. Most of the release sites have been located on Tishomingo NWR in the Washita River drainage. In 2008 and 2009, fifty-seven were provided to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for stocking in the Big Muddy and Saline River systems in Illinois. Other release sites have included Vian Creek and the Caney River along the Kansas-Oklahoma border. **(CSF 5.2.1)**

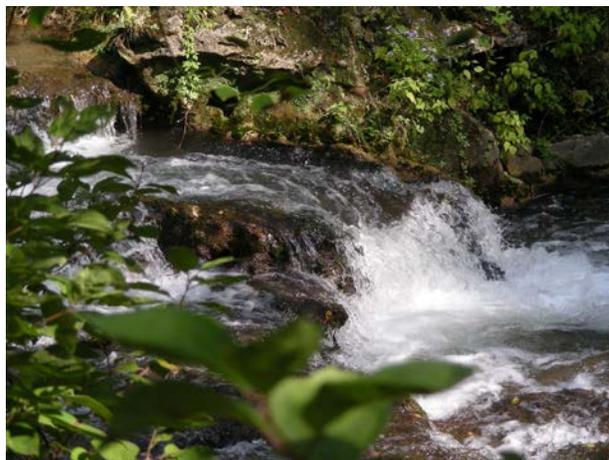
Alligator snapping turtle released in Washita River drainage in August 2013 by Tishomingo NFH staff.

Outreach Accomplishments

The Oklahoma Herpetology Society visited the Tishomingo NFH for a tour of the entire facility, Pennington Creek, and the alligator snapping turtle culture building. This group is based out of Oklahoma City and travels here annually to view turtle production and visit the pristine creeks in the area.

(CSF 15.4.8)

The confluence of Spring Creek and Pennington Creek on grounds of Tishomingo NFH in Oklahoma after a welcomed summer rain.



Volunteers

Since the beginning of the alligator snapping turtle program at Tishomingo NFH, Dr. Day Ligon, president of our Friends' Group, Friends of Alligator Snapping Turtles (FAST), and professor at Missouri State University, has assisted with and provided students to assist with all aspects of turtle production, re-introductions, wild surveys, and research. To date, thirteen student volunteers and Dr. Ligon have contributed in excess of 12,000 hours to the alligator snapping turtle program. **(CSF 52.1.2)**



Dr. Day Ligon, Missouri State University professor, holds an adult alligator snapping turtle.

Volunteer Denise Thompson, a student of Dr. Day Ligon at Missouri State University, prepares to mark alligator snapping turtle for her nesting study at Tishomingo NFH, OK, with staff biologist Brian Fillmore.

