



# Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

## Monthly Activity Report

August 2013



### ***Uvalde National Fish Hatchery Staff***

*Project Leader – Grant Webber*

*Assistant Project Leader – Vacant*

*Administrative Technician – Sandra Castaneda*

*Engineering Equipment Operator – Cirilo Alonzo*

*Maintenance Worker – Rene Guerra*

*Fish Biologist – Rick Echols*

*Animal Caretaker – Vacant*

*Volunteer – Ian Westmeyer*

### **Partnerships and Accountability**

In partnership with the San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program, the station continues propagation efforts for razorback sucker. As identified in approved Recovery Plans, refugia efforts continue for the Texas wild-rice, fountain darter, Comanche Springs pupfish, and San Marcos salamander. Hatchery also maintains a small number of channel catfish for future fishing derby events.

### **Workforce Management**

Rene Guerra took a bit more than 2 weeks of sick leave in order to have carpal tunnel surgery. The surgery went well as he is back to work, but will be on light duty for a few weeks.

Ian Westmeyer continued to volunteer with the hatchery. For the month, he logged 52 hours. He spent time repainting safety bollards and cleaning endangered Texas wild rice tanks in addition to his normal animal care activities. His home schooling year started late this month, but he intends to give the hatchery up to three hours per day during the school year.

### **Additional Facility Activities**

Feed rates for razorbacks were increased mid-August. This was an effort to build up fat reserves in preparation for October stockings. Fish are not fed from three days before they are harvested from ponds until length and weight data are collected a week later. After data are collected, fish are fed in raceways for up to one week before they are stocked. Increased feeding in the month before harvest also gives fish an added boost as they transition from pelleted food to finding it on their own in the San Juan River.



Light intensity and duration is an important component of successfully growing Texas wild rice. Too much sunlight causes excessive algae growth that smothers rice without constant cleaning. Too little sunlight is not good for rice either, as growth is slowed and plants become weak. Last January deteriorating transparent roof panels were replaced with solid metal panels on our original rice holding area. This has proven to negatively affect our rice plants

as plants have become weaker over time and tiller (asexual reproductive structures) production has ceased from lack of light. In response, roof panels have been removed and will be replaced with transparent panels when funds become available.

No recycling trips were recorded this month. Staff did burn a large pile of pallets and tree limbs in August during a temporary lifting of our local burn ban thanks to two consecutive days of rain.

## Facility Maintenance

Work is nearly complete on the tankhouse drain line. Packing soil over the line and grading is all that remains. The line is functional and is in use.



## Facility Visitors

Jeffrey Johns, Regional Office, Division of Engineering visited the hatchery in order to review and take measurements to develop engineering drawings for future planned deferred maintenance projects.

The hatchery was visited by 9 individuals this month for bird watching, tours, and other outdoor visitation activities.

## Weather

July's air temperatures ranged from a low of 70°F to a high of 105°F. Overall, temperatures were near normal, but precipitation was well below normal. Measurable rainfall occurred on 4 days in August with precipitation totaling 0.86 inches. According to The Weather Channel, the monthly precipitation average for Uvalde in August is 1.81 inches.