



# Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

## Monthly Activity Report

### June 2016



#### Staff

**Project Leader • Patricia Duncan**

**Fish Biologist • Valentin Cantu**

**Engineering Equipment Operator • Cirilo Alonzo**

**Maintenance Worker • Rene Guerra**

**Administrative Assistant • Mark Dietrich**

**CDP Intern • Tamika Wright**

**YCC • Vincent Diaz, Moira McDowell**

began culture of the Rio Grande silvery minnow (RGSM) again in FY2016. During June, the 140,000 RGSM stocked into four ponds at Uvalde NFH in May, continued to thrive and grow. On June 9, Uvalde NFH staff participated in a RGSM conference call with other partners. As with last year, the fish produced at Uvalde NFH will augment the numbers released to the Rio Grande in Texas in recovery efforts.

Pat Duncan participated in a conference call on June 9 with other R2 FWS staff and refuge partners, on the results of this year's refuge Yacqui catfish propagation and future plans.

#### Partnerships and Accountability

As identified in approved Recovery Plans, refugia efforts continued for the Texas Wild Rice, Fountain Darter, Comanche Springs Pupfish, Devils River Minnow, and San Marcos salamander in June.

The station continued to maintain communications with the San Marcos Aquatic Resource Center (SMARC) for existing and upcoming refugia activities of threatened and endangered species native to the Edwards Aquifer system.

Martha Keller, from the Dexter Fish Health Center, came and directed the annual fish health inspection at Uvalde NFH on May 3. On June 9, the results of the fish health inspection were provided showing a clean bill of health for Uvalde NFH, with no indications of the presence of any of the disease pathogens that were tested.

In collaboration with the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (SNARRC) and other partners, Uvalde NFH also

#### Workforce Management



**Moira McDowell cleaning and disinfecting catfish hatching trough**

In June, two area youth began work in the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) program at Uvalde NFH. The YCC program provides opportunities to young students ages 15 to 18, to work on a variety of projects at the UNFH to allow them to learn more about potential career positions within the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service. This month, Moira McDowell, a junior at Utopia High School and Vinny Diaz, a junior at Sabinal High School, assisted biologists with daily refugia activities including assisting with the control of aquatic nuisance algae and macrophytes within refugia ponds, raceways, spillways, and display tank systems. They also assisted with monitoring, feeding, cleaning, and acid washing refugium tank systems. The YCC students also learned about hatchery and pond production of channel catfish.



Vinny Diaz collecting catfish eggs from spawning container.

They assisted with collecting catfish eggs from spawning cans in the broodstock pond and later care of young catfish fry in the hatchery. YCC students also assisted other Uvalde NFH staff with ground maintenance projects which included picking up trash along the property fence line and within hatchery grounds.

Another term fish biologist, GS 7-9 was advertised for Uvalde NFH to work primarily with Rio Grande silvery minnow production along with other endangered species.

A full time term Engineering Equipment Operator, WG-9 for UNFH was developed and submitted for advertisement.

### Aquatic Species Activities

Temperatures continued to warm in June. Pond water temperatures ranged from 24.1°C to 32.1°C. Young of the year channel catfish continued to thrive with an increase in feeding due to the increasing seasonal temperatures.

Pond spawning of channel catfish continued into June in order to meet production goals. Channel catfish fry from the first spawns in May were stocked into station ponds. Rearing of channel catfish fry in raceways in the tank house from later pond egg collections continued in June.

A trial investigating different conditions for the germination of Texas wild rice was initiated by Tamika Wright in June. As part of her SCA CDIP program, she began a project where she evaluated different solutions and conditions for the germination of stored and newly collected seeds from Texas wild rice growing in Uvalde NFH refugia.

### Facility Maintenance

Weather permitted that work could begin on the installation of wiring to handle the additional large tanks installed last year for the Texas wild rice. By the end of June all electrical modifications were completed and the rice tanks were now able to handle the necessary pumps for water recirculation.

Work continued on details for an additional PPR for the replacement of a 24,000 gallon tank for the quarantine building in June.

In June, materials were assembled on station to install an additional water inlet to pond 48 across the pond from the kettle. This will help provide better water quality in this pond.

The renewal of the application for aquaculture water effluent discharge was completed. This renewal is due every three years with the state of Texas.

## Outreach



On June 4, the first annual Disabled Veterans and Senior Citizens Fishing Derby was held at Uvalde NFH in conjunction with the National Boating and Fishing Week. With two one acre ponds available for the derby, participants had plenty of room to spread out and fish for channel catfish on the clear, sunny morning. Although rain had been predicted, the clear sunny weather held throughout the event.

Veterans attending the derby contributed a combined 224 years of service to our country representing every branch of the service. Veteran participants in the derby served from 1940 through 2015 representing every armed conflict including WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan. A total of 115 area disabled Veterans and Senior Citizens along

with their families attended the derby. Many of the participant's children and grandchildren also attended the derby with them which resulted in a fun family outdoor recreational event.



Assistance with the derby was provided by Border patrol Agent Diana Robles and Texas State Game Wardens, Henry Lutz, Rachael Kellner, Dennis Gazaway and Chris Stautzenberger. Volunteers from the American Legion Post 479, Everardo "Lalo" Zamora, Jose Saucedo and Margaret Palermo, also helped make the event successful. We also appreciated assistance from other volunteers who helped with the event including Monica DeLeon, Gina Dietrich and Tamika Wright.



On June 24, Val Cantu provided an educational tour of the Uvalde NFH to a group of 13 elementary children and adults. Mark Dietrich provided an educational tour of the Uvalde NFH

to area Boy Scouts on June 28 and another tour to a group of five visitors on June 30.

Pat Duncan attended the monthly Uvalde Tourism Council meeting on June 28.

## Visitors

Uvalde NFH hosted a total of 31 visitors during the month of June.

## Weather

Temperatures continued to warm in June along with more than normal precipitation. Temperatures ranged in Uvalde from a low of 69°F to a high of 95°F with an average temperature of 85°F in the month of June. There was 2.6 inches of measured rainfall in Uvalde in June.

## Upcoming Events

Stocking of channel catfish in Popeye Lake for fishing derby in Crystal City on July 16

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