

Work Task B10: Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

FY10 Estimates	FY10 Actual	Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY10	FY11 Approved Estimate	FY12 Proposed Estimate	FY13 Proposed Estimate	FY14 Proposed Estimate
\$85,000	\$70,053.15	\$551,323.68	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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Start Date: FY06

Expected Duration: Closed in FY10

Long-term Goal: Maintain fish-rearing capability to provide RASU and BONY for the LCR MSCP Fish Augmentation Program.

Conservation Measures: RASU 3, RASU4, BONY3, and BONY4.

Location: Uvalde, Texas.

Purpose: Provide backup source and rearing capacity for RASU and BONY as needed for the Fish Augmentation Program, and provide a facility where species research can occur.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): This work task was added in April 2006 following approval by the Steering Committee, with concurrence from the USFWS. Funds were allocated to this work task from B5. This work is related to B4, as RASU and BONY for Uvalde NFH will be supplied by Dexter NFH. The work is also related to B1 and B2, as Uvalde NFH may also rear RASU for repatriation to Lake Mohave. Finally, the work is related to C10 and C11, as species research relative to rearing and growth of BONY and RASU may be conducted at this facility.

Project Description: Uvalde NFH is a large warmwater fish culture facility established in southwest Texas in 1934. The facility has 47 ponds totaling more than 50 surface acres for fish production. Water is supplied by two deep wells, which provide 72°F water year-round. A third well was developed to secure the long-term water supply for rearing ponds. The facility was shut down for renovation in 2001 following a major flood event and has since been returned to production.

The LCR MSCP and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program are sharing costs for upgrading water supply systems and for rearing native fishes. The LCR MSCP will utilize the facility to assess rearing capacity for BONY, rear RASU for broodstock development at Lake Mohave, and conduct research on fish hauling and transportation.

The LCR MSCP has a requirement to stock 12,000 BONY each year for five consecutive years. This is beyond the current capacity of the LCR MSCP Fish Augmentation Program, primarily because of the target size being 300 mm TL. Bonytail tend to be sexually mature by the time they reach 150 mm TL. During pond culture, these fish typically spawn and increase the number of fish in the pond. This in turn results in slow growth of the original fish. Initial actions at Uvalde NFH will focus on capability and techniques to grow BONY to target size in one growing season.

Previous Activities: During both 2006 and 2007, fingerling BONY were brought on station from Dexter NFH to assess growth rate and rearing capacity. The fingerling fish averaged 172 mm TL and were stocked into 1-acre ponds at densities of 500, 1,000, and 1,500 fish per acre. In October, these fish were harvested and hauled by tank truck to Dexter NFH. Growth and survival were remarkable, with 92% surviving and 88% of the survivors reaching target size in one season.

During routine fish health inspections in July 2007, Guadalupe largemouth bass on station tested positive for Largemouth Bass Virus, a restricted pathogen in both Arizona and California. BONY were also tested and came up negative; however, the states of Arizona and California have asked that no fish from this facility be stocked into the Colorado River until the hatchery receives a Class A rating. As a result, no BONY were stocked from Uvalde NFH into the LCR during 2007. The fish were held at Uvalde NFH for future research.

BONY growth studies were repeated in 2008 using similar densities to those used in 2007. There was 72% survival with most fish attaining target size during the study period. In July 2008 the hatchery was tested for Largemouth Bass Virus and was clean.

BONY growth studies continued in 2009 using densities of 1,500 and 2,000 fingerlings per acre in four lined ponds. Fish stocked at 1,500 fish per acre attained a survival rate of 96%, and fish stocked at 2,000 fish per acre attained a survival rate of 94%, with 99.7% of all fish in the study reaching or exceeding target size. In July 2009, the hatchery received its second annual consecutive clean fish health report, thereby returning the facility to Class A status.

FY10 Accomplishments: Most of the funds were used for salaries and contract administration. Funds scheduled for Uvalde NFH were to be shifted to Achii Hanyo (B3) in FY11. These actions were completed ahead of schedule; therefore, not all funds were spent completing goals within this work task as originally agreed to.

FY11 Activities: Closed in FY10.

Proposed FY12 Activities: N/A

Pertinent Reports: N/A