

Work Task B5: Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery

FY16 Estimate	FY16 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY16	FY17 Approved Estimate	FY18 Proposed Estimate	FY19 Proposed Estimate	FY20 Proposed Estimate
\$315,000	\$731,953.63	\$3,074,634.70	\$330,000	\$330,000	\$330,000	\$330,000

Contact: Ty Wolters, (702) 293-8463, twolters@usbr.gov

Start Date: FY05

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-Term Goal: Fish augmentation

Conservation Measures: RASU3 and RASU4

Location: Cornville, Arizona

Purpose: To operate and maintain the fish rearing facility and annually contribute razorback suckers (*Xyrauchen texanus*) to the LCR MSCP Fish Augmentation Program

Connections with Other Work Tasks (Past and Future): Activities at the Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery are related to Work Task B4; the hatchery receives razorback suckers from the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center in Dexter, New Mexico (Center). A portion of the fish rearing and predator-conditioning research activities outlined in Work Tasks C10 (closed) and C11 (closed) were conducted at the research center (Aquatic Research and Conservation Center at Bubbling Ponds) associated with this hatchery.

Project Description: The Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery is managed and operated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. This is a warm-water rearing facility that is supplied by a continuous, year-round, 10-cubic-foot-per-second spring flow of 68-degree Fahrenheit water. The facility has 10 acres of production ponds, a workshop, a storage shed, a small laboratory, and sufficient fish distribution equipment to meet the delivery requirements of the LCR MSCP. Program funds provide for salaries, fish feed and supplies, facility operation and maintenance, and delivery of fish. Production goals are 12,000 razorback suckers of 305 millimeters minimum total length for release into Reaches 3–5.

Previous Activities: Prior to the LCR MSCP, 70,000 razorback suckers were successfully reared at the Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery and delivered to the lower Colorado River as required by two Biological Opinions (1997 and 2001).

FY16 Accomplishments: A total of 60,000 fry were received for rearing from the Center in April. During FY16, 7,487 razorback suckers were harvested, tagged (with passive integrated transponders), and stocked into the lower Colorado River. A total of 3,854 razorback suckers were stocked into Lake Havasu (Reach 3), and 3,633 were stocked below Parker Dam (Reach 4).

Funding was provided for replacing the spring source pipeline that supplies water to the Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery. The work is expected to be conducted in FY17–18. This water supply infrastructure is currently in critical disrepair and, without replacement, may threaten the water supply to the hatchery. Approximately \$300,000 of LCR MSCP funds will be used for this repair. The Arizona Game and Fish Department will provide additional funds necessary to cover any remaining costs for the replacement of this pipeline. Minor infrastructures repairs, upgrades, and equipment purchases are also planned, and corresponding budget obligations for FY16 reflect these additional expenditures.

FY17 Activities: The Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery began in FY17 with approximately 90,000 razorback suckers on station (table 1).

Table 1.—Razorback Sucker Year-Class and Corresponding Number of Fish on Station at the Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery at the Start of FY17

Year-Class	Number
2013	1,900
2014	17,000
2015	21,100
2016	50,000

All razorback suckers were supplied by the Center (as fry or fingerlings). Most fish are expected to reach target size in 2017 and 2018.

Regulatory compliance activities will be completed for the spring source pipeline replacement project. To cover these additional costs, expenditures are expected to exceed the projected FY17 budget.

Proposed FY18 Activities: Razorback sucker larvae will continue to be received from the Center. Razorback suckers from the 2015, 2016, and 2017 year-classes will continue to be reared. Approximately 12,000 razorback suckers greater than 305 millimeters total length are expected to be produced at the Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery for the LCR MSCP in FY18. Annual administrative progress reports for FY18 activities and production numbers will also be provided by the hatchery.

Pertinent Reports: Annual administrative reports are available upon request.