



Columbia Fishery Resources Office Accomplishment Report

March 2003



Partnerships and Accountability

Technical Assistance Reaches Canada.

When the Toronto Zoo needed information regarding the paddlefish, who did they contact? Columbia FRO fisheries staff, of course. Education staff at the Toronto Zoo are coordinating a Virtual Zoo Collaboration Project. This project aims to link Canadian zoos and aquariums in an on-going effort to educate the public about Canadian species at risk. The paddlefish has been extirpated from Canada for 70 years due primarily to dam construction and pollution. Joanne Grady of the Columbia Fisheries Resource Office provided the zoo staff with paddlefish life history information, population distribution information, and photographs of large paddlefish to use on their website.

Contact: Joanne Grady

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Aquatic Nuisance Species

Columbia FRO receives Challenge Cost-Share Program grant to assess exotic Asian carp populations on Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge.

The invasive carp species, bighead carp, silver carp, grass carp, and common carp have become more prevalent in the Lower Missouri over the last four years. Columbia FRO fish monitoring has found all four of the carp species and evidence of natural reproduction in units of the Big Muddy NFWR. Fisheries staff will tag exotic carp species with uniquely numbered T-bar tags to assess movement between the Missouri River and refuge units.

Hard parts, including scales and fin spines, will be removed to determine age and growth of the fish. This information will be compared to available published values for the carp from their native range. An assessment of carp population numbers will be made based on the combined tag-recapture and age & growth information. Establishing baseline Asian carp information will aid the refuge in future management decisions.

Contact: Andy Starostka

Interjurisdictional Fisheries

Hydrology Vital to Floodplain Fish - Nathan's Lake Report Now Available.

The Columbia Fishery Resources Office's report of their 2002 survey of Nathan's Lake is now available to interested parties. Columbia FRO conducted a fish survey of Nathan's Lake in August 2002. The lake is a component of Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge. Nathan's Lake was renovated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1996 as part of their efforts to restore Missouri



Jim Milligan and Jeff Finley (now with MDC) with large grass carp caught in Missouri River.

River floodplain habitats. During the 2001 fish survey, Nathan's Lake proved to be a rearing area for young of the year bigmouth buffalo and common carp. Low Missouri River water levels in 2002 limited connectivity of Nathan's Lake to the river. This decreased connectivity may have prevented adult riverine species such as bigmouth buffalo and smallmouth buffalo from entering the lake to spawn. The majority of the fish collected in 2002 were suited more to lakes and ponds than to rivers. This report verifies that fish need a combination of habitat restoration and appropriate hydrology.

Contact: Corey Lee

Public Use

Look for exciting information in this category in our April 2003 report.

Leadership in Science and Technology

Volunteer brings Web development skills to Columbia FRO

When CMFRO put a request on the University of Missouri's jobs web page for a volunteer to put together our station's webpage we had no idea the response we'd receive. Numerous students majoring in fields such as computer programming, journalism, and business responded to the announcement. Many were willing to produce the website in exchange for adding to their portfolio. The selected candidate, Sandra Licklider, was a rare find. Sandy came to us with a degree in Technical Computing, the ability to program computers in several languages, and eight years of webpage experience. She'd recently left the corporate world and was looking to work with government and non-profit groups on their web development projects. Sandy will be working six hours per week in our office. We hope to have our new and improved webpage up by summer.

Contact: Joanne Grady

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Dallas County to Replace Low Water Crossings to Benefit Threatened Niangua Darter

Columbia FRO has been working in partnership with Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), Dallas County, Federal Emergency Management Agency, State Emergency Management Agency, and our Columbia Missouri Ecological Services Office to replace damaged low water crossings in Thomas and Greasy Creeks. The new crossing design provided by MDC engineers will allow fish such as the Threatened Niangua Darter to freely move up and downstream. Funds for the crossing replacements are coming from FEMA's 2002 Flood Disaster Declaration, the Service's Fish Passage Program, and MDC's Stream Stewardship Program. Construction is expected to occur this summer.

Contact: Joanne Grady



Workforce Management

Andrew Starostka takes on Collateral Duty Safety Officer Duties.

Andy Starostka accepted the appointment to Collateral Duty Safety Officer in mid March. Andy is currently reviewing our station safety plan and arranging Defensive Driving training for the staff. He will be going to the week long OSHA safety training later this summer.

Contact: Andy Starostka