

Work Task C29: Age Characterization of Reach 3 Razorback Sucker Population

FY08 Estimates	FY08 Actual	Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY08	FY09 Approved Estimate	FY010 Proposed Estimate	FY11 Proposed Estimate	FY12 Proposed Estimate
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$35,000	\$0

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Start Date: FY09

Expected Duration: FY11

Long-term Goal: Assess effectiveness of the fish augmentation program.

Conservation Measures: RASU6.

Location: Colorado River in vicinity of Needles, California, and Laughlin, Nevada, and other sections of LCR MSCP Reach 3 where spawning RASU are encountered.

Purpose: To characterize the age structure of the RASU spawning population in Reach 3.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): This work is related to B2, B3, B4, and B5 as fish from these facilities may be encountered and data collected will help assess potential survival and population structure resulting from RASU stockings. This study began under G3 to evaluate the ageing technique developed by Bio/West, Inc. for RASU on Lake Mead under C13.

Project Description: This study will characterize the age structure of the spawning RASU in Reach 3 of the Colorado River. Under the Lake Havasu Fishery Improvement Project, more than 31,000 RASU were stocked into this reach over a 10-year period (1993 to 2002). In 2005, researchers located concentrations of spawning RASU just upstream of Needles, California. This group of RASU is believed to have resulted from the earlier augmentation stockings by the Lake Havasu Fishery Improvement Project. Unfortunately, few if any of those fish were PIT-tagged prior to release.

This study will aggressively capture adult RASU from Reach 3 during the spring 2009 and spring 2010 spawning periods and remove fin-ray sections in the field. The fin-ray sections will be analyzed in the laboratory, and researchers will build an age structure of the spawning stock. These data will then be compared with stocking records for the Lake Havasu Fishery Improvement Project. Attempts will be made to isolate individual stocking events and to assess differential successes or failures. The final report will summarize these data and provide recommendations and guidance to the LCR MSCP Fish Augmentation Program.

Previous Activities: New start in FY08 under G3.

FY08 Accomplishments: See G3.

FY09 Activities: Collect specimens from field activities in Reach 3 to obtain upwards of 300 RASU fin ray samples for aging. Fin ray sections will be analyzed and fish ages will be determined. Aging data along with past stocking information will be used to determine disparate stocking success. Information will be disseminated in an annual progress report.

Tissue samples will also be collected during these field activities. These samples will be analyzed to evaluate the genetic composition of this population (C31).

Proposed FY10 Activities: Continue fin ray sample collection to increase sample size to better understand factors influencing stocking success.

Pertinent Reports: The annual progress report for 2009 will be completed in November 2009.