



Jumbo yellow perch – north Idaho!

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***A Weekly Peek at Fisheries, Aquatic Ecology
and Watersheds in the***

USDA FOREST SERVICE

February 28 - March 4, 2005

Dave Cross -

I am please to announce the **Rise to the Future Awards for 2004:**

Professional Excellence Management - Dave Heller

Professional Excellence Research – Dr. Tom Lisle

Rec Fish - the Seward Ranger District

Mentor - Sheryl Bryan, National Forests of North Carolina

Public Awareness - Oregon Trout, Salmon Watch Program

Collaborative Aquatic Resource Stewardship - Conservation Fisheries Inc.

Monitoring - The Tenmile and Cummins Creek Watershed Restoration Evaluation

Line Officer - Ken Anderson, Red Rock District Ranger, Coconino National Forest

Individual or Group Research - Dr. Keith Neslow, Northeastern Research Station

Congratulations to all those that were nominated and those selected for the 2004 awards. At this year's Rise to the Future Reception hosted by FishNet, the recipients will be presented their awards by the Chief. The reception will be here in D.C. the evening of June 21.

I want to thank the 8 reviewers of this year's nominations; I appreciate their time. They did a great job! I wish that all of the nominees could be recognized here in DC, but since they cannot, I encourage each Region to recognize the outstanding performance of those nominations that were not selected.

Last week I had the rare privilege of meeting with 20 forest fisheries staff from Regions 1 and 4 at the Idaho Chapter AFS meeting where I presented a paper on the 2003 Task Force Report. Dan Duffield made possible a meeting for FS staff the second evening of the meeting and for a couple of hours we were able to discuss strategies on how to contribute to the success of the agency and our program.

During the meeting I was struck by how far we have come in our knowledge of aquatic ecosystems and the species dependent upon them, and how far we have to go. There were nine papers given at the meeting that included Forest Service staff as the lead author or a contributing author – outstanding! My thanks to Dan Duffield for the opportunity to meet with field staff.

Early warning – The Director's Team has decided that after four and a half years **FishTales** will end its weekly publication on April 1, 2005. Some form of e-newsletter that covers all our staff disciplines - wildlife, soils, air, water, watershed, threatened and endangered species and fisheries will be developed. Format, mailing list and publication schedule has yet to be determined.

Bill Lorenz -

I continued reviewing fisheries and aquatic issues on forest land management plan revision appeals, arrangements for the Forest Service and BLM awards ceremony at the 70th Annual North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, and support to regional aquatic organism passage prioritization strategies.

News from Around the Country

- **Leadership changes** - Tom Thompson, will retire this month as Deputy Chief of the National Forest System. Tom has been with the Forest Service for 37 years. He will be succeeded by Joel Holtrop, who is currently the Deputy Chief of State and Private Forestry. We thank Tom for his years of service and wish him well in retirement, and we look forward to working with Joel in his new leadership role for the National Forest System.

- **Former Chief Thomas speaks to Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society –**

Budding scientists often are surprised at the relationship between science and politics, but they shouldn't be, according to Jack Ward Thomas, who was chief of the U.S. Forest Service from 1993-96.

"I continue to be struck by conversations with students when the subject of politics comes up," said Thomas, who for the past nine years has taught at the University of Montana's school of forestry. "Many students consider politics as something that, while not inherently evil, is certainly malodorous."

But science and politics are inextricably linked in the real world, Thomas noted Tuesday in a speech to about 150 scientists who gathered in Helena for the annual meeting of the Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

While politicians often search for scientific truth in order to make wildlife management decisions, the "truth" is subjective depending on how it is interpreted and what data is being analyzed, Thomas said.

"Truth" also changes as it evolves, much to the frustration of politicians, because of everything from new data to its interpretation by judges.

"In the end, compromise is the coin of the realm," Thomas said. "Politics is the essence of how to avoid deadlock."

He also noted how one small scientific study unintentionally can have wide-ranging political impacts and set off "a cascade of events."

Thomas explained how one year, as part of his job in the Pacific Northwest, he had some money left over at the end of the year and asked his biologists if they had any projects that could use a little extra cash. One of his scientists asked if he could have \$7,500 to do some research on the northern spotted owl.

"I said I guess it's OK, but what's the bag limit on those things?" Thomas said. "That joke perhaps was a comment on the state of wildlife studies at the time. But times were changing and this study was one of cascading events ... that forced the government to adapt ecosystem management as a guiding force."

That cascading effect landed the spotted owl in the midst of the debate over logging in the Pacific Northwest, and earned Thomas the distinction of helping cut

timber harvests in that region by about 50 percent to ensure the survival of about 3,000 of the spotted owl pairs.

"Politics are involved in every level of human endeavor," Thomas said.

While pleased that the old logging policies are a thing of the past, Thomas also is concerned with the international impacts of the United States' current natural resource actions — or inactions. He related the story of "the world's largest log home builder" in Hamilton, who estimated that enough dead lodgepole pines stood on Forest Service land burned in 2000 to keep him operating for 30 years.

"Log home builders love dead standing lodgepole pines," Thomas said. "But he couldn't access any of it, so the log trucks are coming in, six a day, from Canada.

"We were cutting 12 million board feet per year for decades, which was too much too fast," Thomas said. "... now we're cutting less than 2 million board feet per year while importing from countries without resource protection. We're transferring the environmental impact and the money and jobs that go with them.

"It pains me now to see what we are doing. It was too much too fast, now it's too little too slow."

But Thomas is quick to encourage his fellow scientists to keep at their work, regardless of how their science is used by politicians.

"It looks tough and it is tough, but by God I enjoy it," he said. "If I could just start over and do it one more time, with the technology that we have now, I would do it again in a minute. I welcome you young folks. You have a hell of a road ahead of you." *Helena Independent Record - 03/02/05*

Regional Roundup: Southwest Region, Amy Unthank, Regional Fisheries Program Leader

The Regional Office TES staff continues to work on final edits and review of the 11 Forest Land and Resource Management Plan ESA consultation documents. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been working hard on a Biological Opinion in response to the Region's Biological Assessment. Ron Maes, the aquatic TES biologist, has been totally focused on that project, with 12 fish species addressed in the consultation (along with birds, mammals, plants, reptiles and amphibians).

Rain and snow were arriving in record breaking totals during the month of February, totals not seen since the Civil War era in some parts of the region. Local climate experts say that the drought has not been broken, but that conditions are most certainly improved for our streams, lakes, stock ponds and reservoirs in the region for this year. Overall good news for fish that have been suffering from a drought for several years, but flooding has certainly rearranged some habitat. There will be some effort by research, academia, state, and federal biologists to see if the high water has helped reduce the number of non-natives in some

systems and helped give a boost to native fishes. Such spikes in populations of some of the southwestern fish species have been seen in the past after significant flow events. In some cases the number of non-natives may now just be too overwhelming to let Mother Nature give a boost to the natives. Stay tuned.

Wild and Scenic River issues have taken up a lot of time recently for the Regional Fisheries Program Manager. The Region is working on the quantification of water rights to meet the purposes of the designation of two rivers in New Mexico, the Rio Chama and the East Fork Jemez River. Fisheries has been recognized as an Outstandingly Remarkable Value on both rivers, one of which we manage in cooperation with the BLM (the Rio Chama). Greg Gustina from the New Mexico BLM State Office has been helping Amy Unthank with the fisheries issues on the Rio Chama.

The Apache trout recovery team met in February and had some interesting discussions on whether hatchery fish should be proposed for use in recovery. The Arizona Fish and Game Department has taken the lead on revision of the Recovery Plan and is hoping to revise the plan in time for review processes to take place soon by the various involved agencies (including the White Mountain Apache Tribe) and then through publication in the Federal Register to provide the public and final agency review. The Apache trout still has the potential to be one of the first fishes to be proposed for de-listing (and de-listed) if the recovery effort can stay on track regarding removal of non-natives and re-introduction of Apache trout back into its native habitat. This effort has had great support from Trout Unlimited, as well as the Federation of Fly Fishers.

The Gila trout recovery team will meet this week and discuss the continued ban on the use of piscicides in New Mexico, a proposed down listing package for the Endangered fish, and some genetic policy issues raised by the Regional Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This fish has had a lot of habitat impacted by forest fire in the past few years and the ban on piscicides has thrown a wrench into plans to complete the treatment and removal of non-natives for some portions of the Gila Wilderness.

Several of the Forests took advantage of the Chief's Centennial project proposals and are awaiting word to see if their projects were funded. We expect some good partnership projects for fisheries to be supported through this effort, which could bring some highly needed funds to our Forest aquatic programs.

Many of the biologists in the region recently attended the Arizona-New Mexico AFS and TWS Chapter meetings (held jointly) in Gallup, New Mexico in early February. This allowed for a brief gathering of Forest Service biologists, which the Region will follow-up with a full two-day meeting in Albuquerque March 22-23 for wildlife, fisheries, and botanists (all 3 botanists) from the Ranger Districts and Forests. Such a gathering has not occurred in a few years, so we all look forward to discussing items, such as, the new planning rule and how to stay integrated and keep programs supported while helping meet fuel reduction targets.



Just to remind folks that this region can produce some big fish, here's a flathead catfish from one of the Tonto National Forest's reservoirs, with District Wildlife Biologist Todd Willard standing next to the happy anglers.

Regional Roundup Calendar

Region	Issue
Southwest Region	3/04/05
Intermountain Region	3/11/05
Pacific Southwest Region	3/18/05
Pacific Northwest Region	3/25/05
Southern Region	4/01/05

Migrational Opportunities (Federal job announcements: http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/agency_search.asp)

- Vacancy announcement** ADS05-R10-SRD-0128DP GS-0482-09 Fishery Biologist at the Sitka Ranger District, Sitka, Alaska.
 To apply on-line:
<https://www.avuecentral.com/casting/central/control/redirectApply;jsessionid=0a010037ce62a8dba89f41b4c44b46bccf0fd50842f.ml1Kn6aN-h4UaNaKaxDvq70HmQLPqRfzqwbvq70KaMTvq71ymNaHagaLbxiQc34Pc3eN8OexmkfN-h8xn6jAmljGr5XDqQLvpAe>
 To apply off-line contact Julie Simpson at 907-747-4262 or email at jasimpson@fs.fed.us.

- **Vacancy announcement** ADS05-R6GP-MSH-006G: Fishery Biologist, GS-0482-11, AMBOY, Washington, has been sent to USAJOBS and has a scheduled open date of February 24, 2005 and close date of March 25, 2005. Upon the open date, the announcement will be accessible at <http://www.avuedigitalservices.com/usfs/applicant.html>, or <http://www.avuecentral.com>. You may view the announcement that was sent by accessing <http://www.avuedigitalservices.com/usfs/ads.html> and entering your manager userid and password. Contact your Servicing Human Resources Office if you have any questions.
- **Outreach: biological technician term position (2 year), Blacksburg, VA**
The Coldwater Fisheries Research Unit of the Southern Research Station will be hiring a Term Biological Science Technician (Fisheries) to work with the Center for Aquatic Technology Transfer (CATT). The term position will be at the GS-07 level for a period of 2 years, with possibility of a 2 year extension, pending funding, not to exceed 4 years total (\$34,149). The duty station will be located at Blacksburg, VA. The CATT was created in 1995 in response to the growing need for research technologies to be applied directly to management problems. The CATT works cooperatively with universities, National Forests, and local, state, and other federal agencies.

The incumbent will primarily collect and analyze field data and prepare reports (60% field data collection, 40% data analysis/reporting and other duties) regarding the impacts of road-stream crossings on aquatic organism passage on National Forest managed lands in the southern United States. Potential duties include, but are not limited to, (1) training and leading field crews to perform road-stream crossing assessments, (2) equipment preparation and maintenance, (3) data entry and analysis, and (4) report writing and presentations.

Strong candidates for the position will have (1) strong leadership skills, (2) strong written and verbal communication skills, and (3) familiarity and experience with surveying equipment and field data collection techniques for stream habitat, adjacent roads, and biota.

The position will be officially announced/advertised in the near future, with an anticipated starting date of April 2005. If you are interested in this position, please send a letter of interest and vitae summarizing your qualifications to Craig Roghair, Fisheries Biologist, USDA Forest Service, SRS CATT, 1650 Ramble Rd, Blacksburg, VA 24060 or email to croghair@fs.fed.us. Those interested will be sent a copy of the announcement with duties, qualifications required, and application instructions. For more information, contact Craig Roghair at 540 951-1045. The USDA Forest Service is an equal opportunity employer.

Please respond by March 10, 2005.

Applicants must be U. S. citizens.

Hotlinks:

- Forest Service Fisheries and Aquatic Ecology: <http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/fish/index.html>
- Fish Your National Forests: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fishing/>

- National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI): <http://www.fishhabitat.org>
- Large-Scale Watershed Restoration Projects: <http://www.fs.fed.us/largewatershedprojects/>
- Fish Ecology Unit: <http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/fishecology/index.html>
- Watershed and Air Management: <http://www.fs.fed.us/clean/>
- National Fishing and Boating Week: <http://www.nationalfishingandboatingweek.org/>
- NatureWatch: <http://www.fs.fed.us/outdoors/naturewatch/>
- Forest Service Research Stations – One stop shopping: <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/index.htm>
- Forest Service Research Station - Boise Aquatic Sciences Lab: <http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/boise/>

New Files for FishTales – FishTales can now be viewed in one of three ways. You can receive it via e-mail or go to our web site where it is available in a pdf or html version.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/resources/pubs/fish/fishtales/>

FishTales® is a weekly update of activities of the Fisheries and Aquatic Ecology Program of the USDA Forest Service. All information presented is subject to change as projects evolve, opportunities arise and issues unfold. Contributions are welcome and should be submitted to Dave Cross at dcross01@fs.fed.us or Bill Lorenz at blorenz@fs.fed.us no later than close of business on Thursday afternoons. We reserve the right to edit contributions for clarity, brevity, and wherever possible, a dash of silliness and irreverence.

Positions listed are for outreach purposes only and are not full announcements. Interested individuals should contact the forests referenced or consult the USAJOBS website.

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