



Reporting Our Progress in Caring for the Land and Serving People



Whitewater Baldy Fire Native Fish Rescue Fisheries and Wildlife Program FY2012 Accomplishments Gila National Forest, Southwestern Region

State: New Mexico and Arizona

Congressional District: 2nd (NM), 1st (AZ)

Accomplishments:

- Nearly 700 threatened Gila trout were rescued from three creeks and were transported to Mora National Fish Hatchery as well as two fishless creeks in Arizona and New Mexico;
- 470 Gila Chub, 170 Loach Minnow, and 270 Spikedace were rescued and transported to Dexter National Fish Hatchery;
- Created two new populations of Gila trout.
- Other fish will be restored back to native habitat as it recovers.

Forest Service Contribution: \$13,300 Wildlife, \$16,000 Fire

Partner Contribution: \$21,260

Project Costs: \$50,560

External Partners:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Arizona and New Mexico Chapters of Trout Unlimited

Internal Partners:

Gila National Forest Fire Program, Gila National Forest Fisheries and Wildlife Program.

In May and June of 2012, the Whitewater Baldy Complex Fire burned approximately 290,000 acres of the Gila National Forest. The burned area affected drainages that represented over half of the remaining populations of Gila trout, spikedace and loach minnow, as well as the only population of Gila Chub in New Mexico. Due to the high severity of the burn, fish populations were at risk from rain events washing ash into the creeks and degrading water quality. Fish were rescued from a variety of habitats, including remote wilderness locations.

Multi-agency teams as well as volunteers were used to rescue fish and stock them into the new habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife is holding the fish at Dexter and Mora Fish Hatcheries. These fish will be used to restock the streams when they recover from the fire and develop hatchery stocks for further restoration activities.



Gila trout.



Pack mules assisting with Gila trout rescue.