



Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission

Winter 2019-2020 Newsletter

January, 2020

Board of Directors

Jacob Mazzone
Chairman

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Glenn Selby
Vice-Chairman

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Steve Whiteman
Secretary-Treasurer

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Staff

Adam Ringia
Executive Director

Shelley Belin
Hatchery Manager

—

Member Tribes

Jicarilla Apache Nation
Mescalero Apache Tribe
Navajo Nation
Northern Ute Tribe
Oh-kay Owingeh
Pueblo of Cochiti
Pueblo of Isleta
Pueblo of Laguna
Pueblo of Picuris
Pueblo of Sandia
San Carlos Apache
Santa Clara Pueblo
Southern Ute Tribe
Zuni Pueblo
Taos Pueblo
Nambe Pueblo
San Ildefonso Pueblo
Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
Pueblo of Acoma

Welcome to 2020! Snow has already fallen, Thanksgiving, and the winter holiday Season are past and we've seen some chilly temperatures so far. 2019 was certainly a busy year for the commission, and I think we can all be proud of the things we accomplished. As many tribal administrations are settling into their new roles, and looking at new directions and opportunities, we are hoping for a good spring runoff and plentiful water for our fish. The officers have attended a variety of meetings to promote the interests of our members and are working with State and Federal partners to promote good communication among all parties. Federal disruptions continue to impact all of our member tribes in different ways, through vacancies, delays in funding, lack of support, changing regions, and other challenges, the Commission will continue to work to assist where we can and share the information you need. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act, with some significant potential funding for tribes, is slowly moving through the federal process – let's keep the pressure on!

As you are all aware, the terms of our Chairman and Secretary Treasurer are coming to an end, so if you would like to step up and play a greater role in our future, or know someone who might, please send in your nominations for our elections in April.

In this issue, we have updates from the Mescalero Tribal Fish Hatchery (p. 2); a holiday story from Pyramid Lake (p.3); articles on the Department of Interior reorganization (p.4) and the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (pp. 3-4); and many others. We are all looking forward to some exciting workshop opportunities this late winter and spring – Fisheries Management Plans, Hazard Analysis, CSU Wildlife Short Course, Bat Monitoring, and others (see page 3). As always, please let us know if you have any suggestions, or articles to add! Although there may be challenges in the road ahead, there are many opportunities as well. **Adam Ringia, Executive Director**

Letter from the Chairman—Jacob Mazzone

2019 for the Commission was what I like to think of as a *busy year*. The pace at which the Commission has begun to move forward is inspiring. Of course, this is no time for pats on the back or resting on one's laurels. With the New Year's comes plenty of time for picking up the pace, continuing to our long term goals and objectives. The New Year also signifies to me that we have entered the new *meeting season*. The meeting season, in all honesty, can be a great time to reflect on the previous year's accomplishments, setbacks, and gain new perspectives. It is easy to lose sight of the positives, when subsisting solely on continental breakfasts and PowerPoint presentations. Alas, I implore you all to remain active and engaged during this difficult time of the year, the opportunities for collaboration, cooperation, and education during meeting season are barely surpassed. This year, 2020, the start of a new decade, will be filled with many opportunities to participate with the Commission. It is only when all parties come to the table in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation that we can succeed. You might not want to hear this, from me, but that means more folks answering the Executive Directors e-mail requests. I know, I know, it's a tough pill, but the Commission can't do it without you! Happy New Year folks, and I will be seeing you at the next meeting,



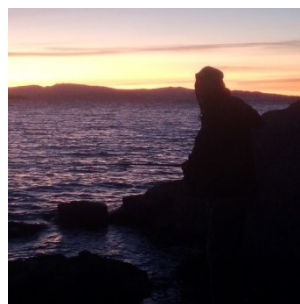
Message from the Vice-Chair – Glenn Selby

First, let me say that I hope that everyone had a happy holidays and a great start to 2020. I was able to enjoy ample time off and travel home to Kansas. Fortunately, working in fisheries allows for plenty of time off to be taken around the holidays.

The winter season is somewhat of a down time in the fisheries field, at least it always has been for me. My time has been filled with report writing and repairing equipment for the upcoming field season.

I love to fish, however, I am not a trout fisherman. And I am certainly a fair weather fisherman. But I recently had the opportunity to fish Pyramid Lake, on Pyramid Lake Paiute tribal land, and when you have an opportunity like this, you accept without hesitation. Pyramid Lake is a gorgeous place offering exquisite views. The sheer size of Pyramid Lake is impressive. Pyramid Lake offers the unique opportunity to catch Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, and anglers from all over the world make the trip to chase these impressive fish. Having fished Pyramid Lake on one other occasion, I was hopeful to hook into another behemoth Lahontan Cutthroat Trout roaming the waters of Pyramid. Unfortunately, on this day, high winds made for tough fishing. We fished hard from sunrise until mid-afternoon with no luck. Talking to other anglers around the lake, it appeared we were not the only ones having a tough time. Pyramid Lake can certainly be tough fishing at times, but when fishing is good you have the opportunity to catch a fish of a lifetime. And although on this day the fish didn't cooperate, I wouldn't hesitate to make another trip to Pyramid Lake given the chance.

Lastly, I would like to remind everyone of the upcoming Fisheries Management Workshop. As with previous workshops, I expect that this one will be an excellent opportunity to learn and improve valuable skills.



Mescalero Tribal Fish Hatchery News— Shelley Belin

Hello from Mescalero! – We are finally back to normal business days after the holidays.

We have a few staffing updates. First, our USFS Intern, Caleb Chee, completed his last day of work with us on December 27. We are very appreciative of his service, and for the funding provided by the US Forest Service that allowed us to keep him so long! Sadly, we are also losing Ian Murphy, one of our long-time fisheries technicians, who first came on under US Fish and Wildlife Service funding, and has worked with us for several years. He is moving on

to another opportunity within the tribe. His position was posted for rehiring at the end of 2019, and closed January 10th, we will be conducting interviews soon.

The 150K trout eggs that we received on November 27th are doing well so far. They hatched and were also set down into two tanks on December 11th. Swim-Up and feeding began January 2. We started grading and moving fish from the inside raceways and recirculation tanks to the outside raceways. We are hoping to get some much-needed major tank repair work done for the 16 inside tanks, and are currently working with a contractor to start this project in February. In the meantime, we are completing renovations to our new training room and shop and look forward to sharing our progress with you for the April meeting!

We completed 8 out of the 9 expected fish deliveries for the fall, delivering 15,420.00 pounds of fish. January is looking to be busy as well with two deliveries scheduled to Isleta and one to Sandia!

Our annual disease testing is coming up on February 19th. We will be closed for deliveries until we receive the results – probably in late March. Tori and I were scheduled to attend the NCTC Fish Health course in Phoenix coming up on Jan 14-17, but Tori was unable to attend due to illness.

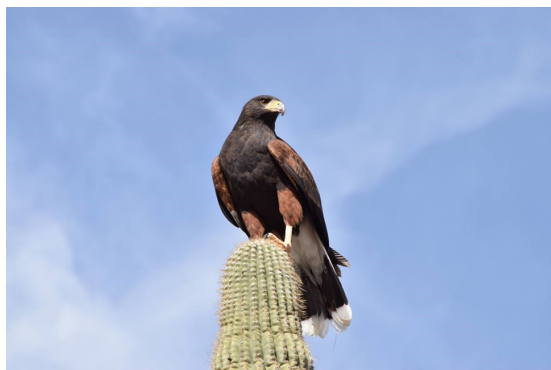
Recovering America's Wildlife Act Update:

Historic, Bipartisan Wildlife Funding Bill Moves Forward

Lacey McCormick -Dec 05, 2019

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#) was passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee today, priming it for a vote on the House floor. The bipartisan legislation, which has nearly 160 co-sponsors, would fund proactive conservation efforts to prevent species from becoming endangered and would provide additional funding for species that are already listed.

"Right now more than one-third of all wildlife species in the United States are at heightened risk of extinction — and demand immediate conservation attention. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act is the most significant piece of wildlife legislation since the Endangered Species Act passed in 1973," said [Collin O'Mara](#), president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "Thanks to the leadership of Chairman Grijalva and Reps. Dingell, Fortenberry and Huffman, and the bill's more than 150 bipartisan cosponsors, this historic bill is making important progress in the House and is



showing that even in these divided times, wildlife conservation can bring all Americans together."

(Continued on Page 4)



Jicarilla Wild Community and Outreach and Education (Wild CORE) native fish and fisheries education station Summer 2019.

Upcoming Meetings and Workshops

Fisheries Management Workshop—2/26-27

Practical Electrofishing—3/3—3/6

AZ USFWS Tribal Coordination - 3/30-4/1

Wildlife Short Course—3/30—4/3

NM USFWS Tribal Coordination— 4/2020

SWTFC Annual Meeting—4/2020

Bat Monitoring Workshop—4/20-24

HACCP Training—4/29- 4/30

Holiday Cheer from Pyramid Lake—Dan Mosley

Here's a good Pyramid Lake fish story I just received from a mother/visitor from SoCal:

For Thanksgiving, we drove from Orange County Ca to Reno Nevada to visit my Uncle who lives in Reno and often fishes at Pyramid Lake at Blockhouse. As you are aware, the weather conditions were crazy cold for us. After 3 days of enduring the ice, snow and long drive, my 12 year old daughter was rewarded on the last day there by catching her biggest fish yet. 14 pounds 11oz and 32 inches and it was done with a 5ft 2 on an Ugly stick with a frozen reel. She caught, reeled, and released this bad boy all by herself.

Can you imagine the excitement she felt after her fight with this big boy? She was beyond happy. All of the locals were so surprised and so happy for her! They all wanted the pictures sent to them because they couldn't believe her catch. She was the first on the lake to catch this morning and caught the biggest one. Everyone was so very happy for her. We are so thankful for the trip and delighted for her first big time catch! It is beautiful there and this fish made our entire trip worth every hour we spent in the car to get there! Thank you for allowing us the permits to fish on your beautiful lake!

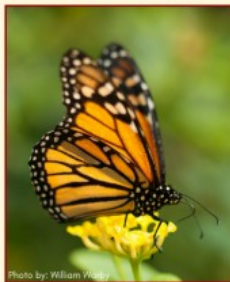


RAWA (Continued from page 3)

About the Recovering America's Wildlife Act:

- The bill will provide \$1.397 billion in dedicated annual funding for proactive, on-the-ground wildlife conservation efforts in every state and territory.
 - The bill will fund additional recovery efforts for the approximately 1,600 U.S. species already listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.
 - The majority of the money — \$1.3 billion — will go to wildlife recovery efforts led by state wildlife agencies. This spending will be
- guided by the Congressionally mandated State Wildlife Action Plans, which identify 12,000 species of concern nationwide.
- Tribal Nations would receive \$97.5 million annually to fund proactive wildlife conservation efforts on tens of millions of acres of land.
 - The bill complements the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson) and Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson), which funded state-led recovery efforts on behalf of game and fish species that faced potential extinction in the 20th century.

RECOVERING AMERICA'S WILDLIFE ACT



Visit [Fisheries.org/RAWA](https://www.fisheries.org/RAWA) for details

Department of Interior Reorganization



After our November meeting, many of you stayed for the USFWS-Tribal Coordination Meeting, and heard and discussed some of the potential impacts of the Department of Interior Reorganization. Although the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education were both removed from this effort, you as tribal fisheries and wildlife professionals deal with other federal agencies under the Department of Interior, and there will be some impact to all of us as this effort moves forward.

Although much of the process seems to be moving along under the radar, the effort is not a new one, nor is it in the beginning stages, even if it appears to be moving quite slowly in some cases. A couple of brief timeline points for perspective:

- Executive Order 17381 – March 13, 2017
- Fmr Sec of Interior presents Jan 10, 2018
- Listening Sessions: April-June 2018
- New boundaries established August 2018
- Regional Facilitators names November, 2018
- Field Special Assistants Names September 2019
- BLM Central Office moved to Grand Junction CO - Notice to Employees Nov, 2019

For more information, there is quite a bit available on the DOI website: <https://www.doi.gov/employees/reorg/news>

SWTFC Officer Elections Coming up in April!!

The current terms of both the Chairman of the Board and Secretary Treasurer Positions of the Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission are coming to a close at our annual meeting in April this year. If you are a voting member, please make sure to get your nominations in for the next term before then!

The two year position of Chairman of the Board of the Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission has been officially filled by only a few people since our creation – Butch Blazer, John Antonio (for a partial term), Alfred La Paz, and most recently for the last six years by Jacob Mazzone.

The Secretary Treasurer position has been held by Steve Whiteman since 2004, and is also a two year term.



Mescalero Youth Intreship

(Part 2) — Caleb Chee

One of the first projects that I participated in upon my return to the Smokey Bear Ranger District was taking eDNA samples from numerous streams around the Lincoln National Forest. The purpose of taking eDNA, (which means Environmental DNA) is to analyze and see what kind of wild life is around that specific area. Working with eDNA samples was a new experience for me and I learned from the USFS Staff. When taking eDNA samples you have to be very careful, it's important not to contaminate the spot you are working in.

The steps to actually get eDNA are: first find a stream; then take a little cup that has a filter in it; hook the cup up to a pump that sucks the water up into a bucket; then, after letting the pump do its job for about 5 minutes, you take the cup off the pump and use a pair of tweezers to carefully peel the white filter off of the cup; then insert the filter into a bag filled with tiny silica beads that collects all the moisture out of the filter; and finally, send the filter to a lab to be tested and wait for your result to see which animals were within that reach of river. The next project I did with the Forest Service was a resurvey of a couple of trick tanks that we had previously built during the summer time. We also checked on a few fences that we had built over the summer as well. We looked for any signs of damage, and if there was any damage, we would repair the fence. Afterwards we checked on the trick tanks to see if they were still functional and to see if any wildlife had been using these water resources.



After completing a few weeks with the USFS, I came back to work with the Fish Hatchery. I did a variety of jobs there. I came back just in time for my favorite activity at the hatchery, which is help handling trout fish eggs. I liked being able to help prep for the fish eggs, it is an experience that I will never forget. Prepping for the fish eggs it was a very lengthy process that requires at least four of our staff members. I also helped out with several deliveries in the month that I worked with the Fish Hatchery. I visited a few Tribes that I've never even been to before! Sandia and Nambe Pueblos, were two of the places we delivered fish. Helping out and going on fish deliveries was a great experience because it gave me knowledge of how our deliveries work, knowledge of other Tribes and their Tribal lakes. When we did deliveries to those places, we had to prepare our fish truck for the drive which means we disinfect the truck, fill all the tanks with water, then the next day we go to a selected raceway that contains a number of fish we are transporting, we then get the number of pounds and then place the fish in tanks. After all that then you'll be ready to go! Another thing I did while here at the hatchery was moving fish from one tank to another tank or to an outside raceway. To do that we had to get a total weight of all the fish in that one tank, then place all the fish in a trailer tank filled with water and oxygen, we then get ready to dump them into the raceways where they can grow to be a bigger size fish. Overall, I had a fun time with the USFS and the Fish Hatchery, I learned a lot within the time I had spent there. I am grateful for the opportunity they gave me to expand my knowledge of working with



SCIENCE

The idea of mobile fish hatcheries that use natural flow through a temporary facility suggests better adaptation to local conditions and reduced mortality of fish raised that way. Although not trout, this article looks at that concept, rearing salmon eggs in in-stream incubators: full article available at: North American Journal of Fisheries Management <https://doi.org/10.1002/nafm.10409>

In-stream egg incubators produce hatchery Chinook Salmon with similarities and differences from natural juveniles

Keats R. Conley, Jonathan D. Ebel, John S. Hargrove, Wyatt Petersen, and Lytle P. Denny

(Abstract) *Supplementation of fish at the egg stage is a low-cost alternative to hatchery rearing, presumed to improve adaptation to local natural conditions. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes began supplementing Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) in Panther Creek, Idaho, at the eyed-egg stage in 2014. Chinook Salmon eggs were artificially fertilized and reared to eye-up in-hatchery, then planted in custom-made in-stream incubators (egg boxes) for volitional release and natural rearing. Using data from three brood years, we evaluated the efficacy of this supplementation program solely in terms of juvenile production: we related juvenile production to egg box placement and retrieval, assessed the relative contribution of egg box-produced juveniles to overall juvenile abundance, and compared the performance (length, condition, dispersal distance, and survival) of egg-box versus natural-origin juveniles. Brood year and box placement within the stream (distance upstream) were the best predictors of whether or not an egg box was retrieved from its original location. Meanwhile, the condition of the box (i.e., intact, damaged, missing) was the best single predictor of juvenile production. Supplemented eggs represented an estimated 42%, 50%, and 42% of total egg deposition in Panther Creek in brood years 2014, 2015, and 2016, respectively. Parentage analysis revealed that egg boxes contributed 6% to 22% to 35% of parr production for the respective brood years when normalized to the estimated egg deposition—less than the egg-to-parr production estimated for natural redds. As fall parr, egg box progeny differed from natural fish in terms of their length and dispersal behavior, but were of similar length and condition at their emigration from Panther Creek and exhibited no significant difference in downstream survival through the Federal Columbia River Power System. Collectively, our results provide useful insights to fisheries managers interested in initiating or refining egg supplementation programs.*



SWTFC Contacts:

Mescalero Tribal Fish Hatchery
P.O. Box 190
Mescalero, NM 88340

Jacob Mazzone – Chair
Phone: 575-759-3255

jacob.a.mazzone@gmail.com

Glenn Selby – Vice-Chair
Phone: 979-446-2041
gselby@nndfw.org

Steve Whiteman – Sec/ Treasurer
Phone: 970-563-0130
swhitema@southernute-nsn.gov

Adam Ringia – Executive Director
Phone: 505-235-2228
adam.ringia@gmail.com

Shelley Belin – Hatchery Manager
Phone: (575) 464-8768
sbelin@mescaleroapachetribe.com