

UPDATE
January 1994

A. Population Status:

o the razorback sucker in the Upper Green River is now estimated at 250-500 adults, down from an estimated 1000 adults in 1989.

o the Colorado squawfish population in the upper Colorado River (Grand Valley) is estimated at 200 adults and 900-1500 subadults in the lower Colorado River (Moab, Utah).

-little or no survival of the 77,000 hatchery fish stocked in the early 1980's.

-population appears to be stable.

o Five adult Colorado squawfish and one humpback chub were captured in the Gunnison River above the Redlands diversion in 1993.

B. Program Management

Goal: Ensure effective implementation and coordination of the Recovery Program

Status: o FY 94 Work Plan has been fully funded and is being implemented on schedule.
 o BR has made \$950,000 available to support capital projects in FY 94.
 o FWS provided an additional \$220,000 for operation and maintenance of the Ouray hatchery.
 o Approximately \$250,000 need to be allocated; options are now being evaluated.
 *Except for Service funding, the FY 95 budget appears secure.
 o RIPRAP was finalized on October 15, 1993 and is now being updated to guide the FY 95 work plan.
 *Program operations and staffing being evaluated.
 *Congressional authorization and cost sharing have been raised as issues relative to long-term program funding.
 *requests for membership in the Program have been received from Colorado Department of Agriculture, the National Wildlife Federation, the United Sportman's Council of Colorado, and CLUB 20.

C. Habitat Management (Instream Flows)

Goal: To protect sufficient instream flows to support self-sustaining populations of the fishes

- Status:
- o The change in the Steamboat Lake (Yampa River) decree to allow for reservoir releases for instream flows has been challenged in water court.
 - o The Colorado Water Conservation Board application in water court for a 581 cfs instream flow right in the 15-Mile Reach (July-September) has been challenged.
 - o Senior scientist's review of the Service's instream flow recommendations and methodologies has been completed. Recommendations in the report, which have been endorsed by the Instream Flow Subcommittee and the Biology Committee, include:
 - Implement experimental flows which are based on natural flow patterns and existing flow recommendations;
 - Develop a more refined understanding of water availability;
 - Expand monitoring efforts to include a community ecology perspective;
 - Diversify research to better understand ecosystem functions and processes as they relate to streamflow patterns;
 - Implement an outside peer review process;
 - Implement adaptive management.
 - o The CWCB has drafted a policy regarding the appropriation of instream flows for the endangered fish

D. Habitat Development and Maintenance

Goal: To provide or enhance habitat for the rare fishes through habitat development or management measures such as:

- o fish passageways
- o backwater habitat development

- Status:
- o NEPA and preliminary design of the fish passageway at Redlands Dam (Gunnison River) has been initiated.
 - o Management Plans being developed for 5 flooded bottomlands sites.
 - o Purchase of the Escalante Ranch wetlands have been put on hold pending resolution of contaminant issues (selenium, herbicides, etc.).

E. Stocking Native Fishes

- Goal: A. Produce a sufficient supply of hatchery reared fish to support research and recovery activities.
B. Conserve the genetic diversity present in the wild.

Status: oRazorback experimental stocking of the Upper Colorado River and the Gunnison River will probably be postponed a year.
o The Service's hatchery/research facility at Ouray, Utah, being expanded.

F. Nonnative Fishes and Sportfishing

Goal: Minimize the impacts of nonnative fishes and incidental take associated with sport fishing on the endangered fishes.

Status: * draft procedures for stocking of non native fishes is being developed by the States, and Service in consultation with various interest groups.

G. Information and Education

Goal: To promote public understanding, appreciation, and support for efforts to recover the endangered fish.

Status: o public meeting re: Recovery Program and Flaming Gorge was held in Vernal, Utah.
ohistorical accounting of the endangered fish is complete.

H. Section 7 Consultation

Goal: To allow water development to proceed in the Upper Colorado River Basin in compliance with the ESA.

Status: * agreement on "sufficient progress" and historic projects has been finalized.
* the Service has determined that the Program has made sufficient progress for depletion <3000 AF.

I. Other Items

*The Service will finalize the designation of critical habitat for the endangered fishes by March 15, 1994.