

I. Project Title: **Retrieval of native fish from GVIC and GVP canals**

II. Principal Investigator(s):

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III. Project Summary:

A fish screen was constructed on the Grand Valley Irrigation Company (GVIC) irrigation canal in winter 2001–2002. However, the fish screen has not been operated for a full field season since its installation. Operational problems or lack of ‘fish water’ has meant that it has been pulled for at least part of the irrigation season every year since its installation. This program was originally intended as a monitoring program to compare numbers of fish collected from the canals pre and post implementation of the screen. However, since the screen has never been fully operational, it is primarily a fish salvage operation. Fish salvage is also done on the Government Highline canal which does not yet have a fish screen on it. The screen is scheduled for construction in winter 2004–2005.

Fish salvage is conducted by driving major portions of the canals looking for pools of water that contain fish after the irrigation water is turned off for the year. The irrigation diversions are halted in early November. The pools are sampled with electrofishing or seines. All native fish collected are identified and loaded into a hatchery truck for release in the Colorado River. Total numbers of fish collected and transported are recorded.

IV. Study Schedule: 2004–2005

V. Relationship to RIPRAP: Colorado River Action Plan: Mainstem

II.B.1.b. Screen GVIC diversion canal to prevent endangered fish entrainment.

II.B.3.b. Screen Government Highline diversion canal to prevent endangered fish entrainment.

VI. Accomplishment of FY 04 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion of Initial Findings and Shortcomings:

Because FY 04 began in October 2003, this work was done in calendar year 2003 (November). The work to be done in FY 05 will be done in November 2004 after this report is due.

November 2003

Sampling was done on the Grand Valley Irrigation Canal from about 16 Road upstream to about 38 Road (the upper end of the canal). Although this is about 22 miles in east-west distance, the canal meanders for at least three times that distance. We did not measure the distance traveled by the canal. We collected a total of 1,573 flannelmouth suckers, 164 bluehead suckers, and 1,171 roundtail chubs. These fish were found throughout the length of the canal, but the majority were found in the upper three miles of the canal. All of these fish were adults or subadults. In addition, one hatchery produced razorback sucker was captured. That fish was originally stocked in the Colorado River near Rulison in October 2001. The fish had been at large for 2 years and had grown 100 mm in that period. The razorback sucker (along with the other native fish) was stocked into the Colorado River.

The Government Highline Canal was sampled from near the Cameo Power Plant to Horizon Drive. Most fish in that canal were concentrated around the Lewis Wash siphon. In contrast with the GVIC canal, most native fish collected were juvenile or young of the year. We did not enumerate every one of these fish, but approximately 3,000 small native fish were removed from the canal and transported to the Colorado River. The greatest majority of these fish were roundtail chubs.

- VII. Recommendations: Complete the fish screen on the Government Highline Canal and ensure that it and the screen on the GVIC canal are operated year round.
- VIII. Project Status: Project is on track. Scheduled to conclude in November 2004 (FY 2005).

IX. FY 04 Budget

A. Funds Provided:	21,852
B. Funds Expended:	21,852
C. Difference:	0
D. Publication Charges:	0

X. Status of Data Submission: Tagging data from 2004 should be coming in soon.

XI. Signed: C.W. McAda, November 8, 2004