



## FISHERIES DISTRICT 8 NEWSLETTER

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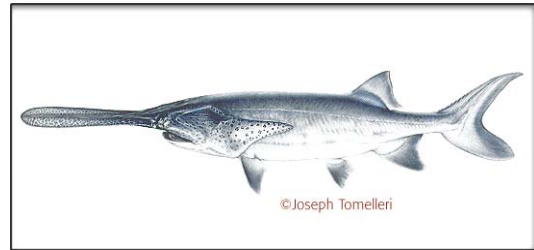
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### District 8: Polk, Montgomery, Garland, Saline, Grant, Clark, & Hot Spring Counties



#### First Quarter – 2009

We assisted with another paddlefish Special Season back in January on the Arkansas River at Fort Smith. Commercial fishermen were randomly drawn to be able to participate in this season. Roe (fish eggs) prices were down a bit this year and thus participation by the commercial fishermen was down. All paddlefish caught were measured and weighed as well as any tag information collected. These special season for paddlefish help us to collect biological data important to establishing length limits for this species to prevent overharvest. Many will know the paddlefish as a spoonbill catfish. The eggs of this species are popular in the caviar industry.



The Commission's Lake Ouachita nursery pond will be raising walleye fingerlings for the 2009 crop. We closed the gate in January to start catching rainfall. In late March, walleye fry (recently hatched) were stocked into the pond. The fry will be allowed to feed on abundant zooplankton and grow to fingerling size before their release later this Spring. The Andrew Hulsey State Fish Hatchery (Hot Springs) and also the Charlie Craig State Fish Hatchery (Centerton) hatched and provided the fry for this pond stocking. A total of 1.2 million fry were stocked into the pond and we will consider ourselves fortunate if we get 25% survival (300,000 fingerlings for release).



We held our first annual “follow-up” Lake Ouachita Citizen’s Advisory Group meeting. The LOCAG is the steering committee behind the Lake Ouachita Management Plan. Updates regarding all aspects of fish management at Lake Ouachita were discussed.

We were busy collecting smallmouth bass broodstock for hatchery spawning. We collected some fish from Ouachita River Bass Club tournaments while others were electrofished, primarily from the Caddo River. These adult fish will be placed into a Hulsey Hatchery pond, allowed to spawn, and then the fingerlings will be taken to the Caddo River and Middle Fork Saline River. The adult broodstock will be returned to the rivers from whence they came.

We participated in the AGFC & USFWS Snakehead Eradication effort March 19 – 26 in the Brinkley area. Piney Creek had become infested with snakeheads from a fish farm release back in 2001 before they were illegal to possess. Powdered and liquid rotenone was used to kill fish from the entire Piney Creek watershed (nearly 70 square miles). The northern snakeheads will survive and possibly flourish if they become established in Arkansas. They will compete readily with our native game fish such as bass and crappies. We will have to wait and see if we got them all.



A Commission habitat barge was brought to Lake Ouachita this quarter to provide additional fish cover for area anglers. This work was centered in the Tompkins Bend area of the South Fork (just east of

Mt. Ida). Mr. Harlan Buttrum has been our contracted labor to complete this project. A total of ten sites, each containing an ample amount of trees, were constructed. We are hearing good reports of bass and crappie being caught on these brush piles. Below are the GPS coordinates for these 10 sites:



- #1 15S 0456936 3826418  
-93.4695 34.5786
- #2 15S 0457331 3826210  
-93.4652 34.5767
- #3 15S 0457570 3826067  
-93.4625 34.5755
- #4 15S 0458047 3825715  
-93.4573 34.5723
- #5 15S 0458126 3825658  
-93.4565 34.5718
- #6 15S 0458069 3824680  
-93.4570 34.5630
- #7 15S 0458081 3824591  
-93.4569 34.5622
- #8 15S 0458098 3824205  
-93.4567 34.5587
- #9 15S 0458302 3824347  
-93.4545 34.5600
- #10 15S 0458549 3824692  
-93.4518 34.5631