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Trout production to resume at Willow Beach National Fish Hatchery

1 message

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Tue, Aug 9, 2016 at 5:16 PM



GAME AND FISH NEWS

Aug. 9, 2016
Arizona Game and Fish Department

Trout production to resume at Willow Beach National Fish Hatchery



Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

WILLOW BEACH, Ariz. – There's good news for anglers and the Mohave County economy.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials have announced that a new water intake for the Willow Beach National Fish Hatchery (NFH) has been built and successfully tested in Lake Mohave. The floating platform system, made possible by a cost-share agreement between the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Service, will provide a reliable cold water source, enabling rainbow trout production to restart.

The hatchery had been unable to rear or stock sport fish after sustaining pipeline and infrastructure damage in November 2013.

“This is a huge win for Arizona anglers and the local community,” said Larry Voyles, Director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department. “It’s gratifying to see the collective efforts of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, and local stakeholders come to fruition. We’re particularly

grateful to Senator John McCain, Representative Paul Gosar and Mohave County Supervisor Hildy Angius for their staunch support in bringing trout propagation back to Willow Beach.”

“After a catastrophic infrastructure failure, we worked collaboratively with Senator McCain and the Arizona Congressional delegation, Mohave County, and Arizona Game and Fish Department to solve the problem,” said Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Regional Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Southwest Region. “It’s been a long time in coming, and we understand the concerns of anglers and the tourism industry in the Lake Mohave area to get this project back on line. We are pleased to have the hatchery back in operation to produce important fish.”

To jump-start the rainbow trout program, Arizona Game and Fish will provide about 60,000 five-inch rainbow trout. This should enable the crew at Willow Beach NFH to stock catchable-sized trout for Colorado River and Lake Mohave anglers as early as February 2017. Game and Fish also provided significant funding to the pipeline construction project.

Additionally, disease-free rainbow trout eggs are anticipated to arrive at Willow Beach NFH in November 2016, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Fish Hatchery System, to incubate and grow out to stocking size in the autumn of 2017.

“Arizona Game and Fish knows the importance of this program and is proud to be part of the effort to restore it,” said Arizona Game and Fish Commission Chairman Pat Madden. “Recreational fishing is an important economic driver, and this is an investment that will pay dividends for our fishing heritage and the economy of local communities.”

To mark the momentous occasion made possible by the commitment and coordination of many people and organizations, a ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held at Willow Beach NFH in early autumn, a date to be announced later.

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