



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK PAUL CASSIDY

As I sit back and proofread the articles in this issue of our company's newsletter, it becomes obvious that 2005 is shaping up to be an exciting year for ACI.

Obviously, the possibility of our construction division designing and building a hatchery this upcoming year is an important project. I feel this project will be the final piece of the puzzle in providing our clients the total A to Z approach on which I built the company.

However exciting as that may be, I am even more excited about how professional our staff has become in dealing with the water resource issues for our clients. Professionalism is also one of the key principles on which I built this company and I think we have continued to keep it foremost in every decision we make. The addition of Scott Bryan to our staff will only compliment the professionalism of our existing personnel and I look forward to great things from Scott in the upcoming years.

The professionalism of which I speak was no more apparent than at this year's annual meeting of the Arizona-New Mexico Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Two papers were presented by members of my staff regarding ongoing projects on a number of our client's properties. In addition, I personally look forward to serving as the 2005-06 Chapter president following in the footsteps of former chapter presidents Scott Bryan and Jack Kelly. To sum it up, I'll close this article as I close every letter I write to a prospective new client, "If you demand experience and professionalism, then Aquatic Consultants, Inc. should be your lake management company."

Again, thank you all for your continued confidence in Aquatic Consultants, Inc.



AQUATIC HUMOR

The Fishing Priest

The priest was a fisherman, but he hadn't fished in months. One perfect Sunday morning he couldn't resist. He called up the Bishop and claimed he had laryngitis. The priest then headed out to his favorite spot.

The hook hadn't been in the water five minutes before he got a strike, and landed the biggest fish he had ever caught - although he had seen bigger ones. A half hour later, he caught the biggest fish he had ever seen. Another forty-five minutes later he landed a fish that broke the world record.

All this time St. Peter and God have been watching the priest from heaven. St. Peter turned to God, and said, "How can you reward this priest? He lied. He let down his congregation."

God smiles at St. Peter, and replies, "I'm punishing him."

St. Peter is confused, so God continues, "Well, after he finishes, who can he tell his story to?"



FISHTALES

THE AQUATIC CONSULTANTS, INC. NEWSLETTER SPRING 2005

ACI HATCHERY PLANS PROGRESS

Our goal at Aquatic Consultants, Inc. (ACI) is to help customers realize the maximum benefit of their lake or stream, based on their vision. We do this by offering a staff of career fisheries biologists and by backing our programs with ongoing support in the form of engineering design and construction. Bottom line – we are a service company, dedicated to long term relationships with our customers and feel we can provide that service through an A to Z, turnkey approach to our management.

To that end, ACI has recently undertaken a project to secure our future supply of stocker and trophy-sized trout for our clients. Currently, all of our sport fish stocks are obtained from out-of-state commercial suppliers and, oftentimes, our client's needs are not being met in terms of species availability, size and/or timing of stock. In addition, ACI is at a distinct disadvantage because this important commodity is subject to the approval of commercial suppliers by the various state game and fish agencies in the form of importation permits. As an example, only three commercial hatcheries are approved to import trout into New Mexico as this article went to press. Any one of these facilities can be denied importation if the hatchery tests positive for any number of fish health pathogens (e.g., whirling disease).

For some years now, ACI has been keeping an eye out for a property with the three main ingredients needed for a successful hatchery operation – water, water, and water! Recently, an extremely beneficial partnership has been reached with Charles and Marcetta Mulcock, owners of the Mulcock Ranch near Mayhill, New Mexico. This ranch on the Rio Peñasco is blessed with an abundant supply of high quality water along with some of the most senior water rights in the Pecos Valley. In addition, Mr. Mulcock is already growing out both rainbow and brown trout on a very small scale to supplement his ranch's sport fish business. This past year ACI and the Mulcocks contracted with Aquaculture Bioengineering



Fingerling cutthroat trout - like those pictured here – will hopefully be a part of the production planned for the new hatchery.

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by Paul Cassidy

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RIO GRANDE CUTTHROAT



RAINBOW TROUT



BROWN TROUT



SNAKE RIVER CUTTHROAT



BROOK TROUT

Charles Mulcock assists ACI biologists in conducting a 500-minute well sustainability test on his property near Mayhill, NM.



(continued from cover)

ACI HATCHERY PLANS PROGRESS...

Corporation of Rives Junction, Michigan to develop a conceptual design for a trout production facility based on 125,000 pounds annual production. The majority of this production was based on stocker (12 – 14”) and trophy (>18”) rainbow trout; however, a portion of the production could be dedicated to Snake River and Yellowstone cutthroat trout, brook trout, brown trout and possibly even our state fish, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout. Plans are currently

underway to proceed with the final design phase of the project with ground-breaking anticipated for this coming summer. Clients of ACI can expect to see their first trout about a year after ground-breaking!

CATCH & RELEASE...TIPS & TROPHIES

Many of our clients manage their fisheries for trophy fish which require releasing live fish back into the water. Follow these tips to ensure a healthy release:

1. Try to land the fish quickly; don't play it to exhaustion.
2. Use a landing net whenever possible.
3. Keep the fish in the water.
4. Do not squeeze or grab any part of the fish.
5. Gently remove the hook (barbless is much easier).
6. If the hook is deeply swallowed, cut the leader. A fish's body fluids will dissolve the hook in a matter of days.
7. Let a tired fish recover. Hold it by the tail in the water with one hand. Gently support it from below and just behind the head. Move it back and forth until it swims off. Never just toss a fish back into the water.



ACI fisheries biologist, Jason Wiebenga, demonstrates the proper release technique of a brown trout collected during an electrofishing operation.



This 24 1/2 inch, 7 3/4 pound female rainbow trout is a trophy-sized fish caught at one of our client's lakes this past spring. Notice the large egg sac visible in the photo.

AND SPEAKING OF TROPHIES...

As we approach spring, we are reminded that many of our clients have large trophy-sized fish that have either been stocked or have grown up in their lakes. As these fish move into reproductive mode they can undergo a tremendous amount of spawning stress, which sometimes results in a minor fish kill. Clients should be aware of this situation and not become alarmed as long as you are only losing an occasional fish or two. ACI realizes this problem and calculates replacement fish into your lake's annual stocking allotment. However, please don't hesitate to give our office a call if your fish are showing signs of stress.



JASON MONTOYA & DEVIN BECK AWARDED 3RD ANNUAL MILES MCINNIS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Aquatic Consultants, Inc. and the Arizona-New Mexico Chapter of the American Fisheries Society awarded the third annual Miles McInnis Memorial Scholarship to Jason Montoya (pictured) and Devin Beck. Miles McInnis was a fellow fisheries biologist and close personal friend of both Paul and Jack who died of pancreatic cancer. Jason and Devin each received a \$1500 award at the Arizona-New Mexico American Fisheries Society's (AFS) annual meeting held in Gallup on February 4, 2005. The award will assist with

Jason and Devin's undergraduate studies in fisheries science at Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona, respectively. Jason is planning to participate in the National Student Exchange Program in which he would study for a semester at the University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau, Alaska. Devin, current vice president of the student chapter of AFS at the University of Arizona, is interested in protecting native fish in the southwest and implementing projects to reestablish them into native waters. ACI wishes these well-deserving students success in their future studies of the fisheries sciences.

ACI TEAM MEMBER PROFILE: SCOTT BRYAN—FISHERIES BIOLOGIST

Welcome Aboard Scott! ACI is pleased to introduce you to our newest biologist in the field – Scott Bryan. Scott joined the ACI team in March in anticipation of our increased clientele for this year's field season. Scott has a B.S. degree in Environmental Biology and a M.S. in Fisheries Management. Scott comes to ACI after serving a ten year stint with the Arizona Department of Game and Fish as their Fisheries Research Biologist. In Arizona, Scott worked on various fisheries projects, including rainbow trout-stripped bass interactions in the Colorado River, native fish assessments in streams and rivers, and fisheries investigations of large reservoirs. Scott is married to Anna and they have a two-year old son, Peyton. Scott is an avid sports fan and enjoys fishing (imagine that!), camping, hiking, golfing, and spending time with his family. Scott is a welcome addition to ACI based on his fisheries and administrative background along with his outstanding organizational and communication skills. Please feel free to visit with Scott when you see him on your ranch or course this upcoming year.



ACI HELPS THE GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT



Aquatic Consultants, Inc. is happy to donate its design and consulting services to an educational project being proposed by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. ACI president, Paul Cassidy, recently met with Tom Sansom (pictured at the proposed site) of the Department to discuss plans for a recirculating stream and pond system at the Game and Fish's new headquarters building located in the southwestern end of Santa Fe. The Department has negotiated over 3 1/2 million gallons of effluent water annually from the City of Santa Fe for the project. "We expect this to be a great educational opportunity for both children and adult visitors to our property," Tom Sansom said as he looked out over the project site. "In addition, the small reservoir will serve as a source of water for our drip irrigation system being installed at the headquarters building." Paul Cassidy adds, "ACI has helped out on similar projects and we are more than happy to assist the Department with this very worthwhile venture."