

FILE

PERFORMANCE REPORT

As Required By

FEDERAL AID IN FISHERIES RESTORATION ACT

TEXAS

Federal Aid Project No. F-5-R-21

REGION I-B FISHERIES STUDIES

Objective 2: Pollution Studies

Project Leader: Billy J. Follis

Assistant Project Leader: David J. Morris

Clayton T. Garrison
Executive Director

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Austin, Texas

Lonnie J. Peters
Chief, Inland Fisheries

Robert J. Kemp, Director
Fish and Wildlife Division

March 11, 1974

PERFORMANCE REPORT

State: Texas Project Number: F-5-R-21

Project Title: Region I-B Fisheries Studies

Project Section: Inventory

Study Title: Pollution Studies

Contract Period: From March 1, 1973 To February 28, 1974

Program Narrative Objective No.: 2

Objective: To determine the source and nature of pollution.

I. Segment Objective:

- A. To investigate instances of pollution affecting specific fish populations and to report findings to the Texas Water Quality Board when remedial action is needed.
- B. Specifically, to determine the extent of damage to fish populations, to trace the source of pollution, to attempt to determine the nature of the pollutant, and to report instances of violation and negligence to proper authorities.

II. Summary of Progress:

Three minor instances of pollution and/or fish kills were detected and investigated in Fisheries Region I-B during this segment.

A small fish kill was reported on the North Concho River in Tom Green County in May, 1973. Only a few dead gizzard shad and river carpsucker were found along about one-quarter mile of the river. Many individuals of these two species and other native fish present were not affected. This small die-off appeared to have been caused by natural low water conditions and oxygen depletion.

A minor fish kill occurred in May on the Colorado River in northwestern Coke County. All species present were affected for about 8 miles of this shallow portion of the river. High chlorides and low dissolved oxygen were the only lethal agents detected.

A few dead fish were reported by fishermen in the Colorado River just above Lake Spence in July. Species mentioned included carpsucker, carp, largemouth bass, and catfish. Investigation found only a few fish of the above species in a decomposing state. It was concluded that these fish died in stagnant pools of the river and then were washed down-river by run-off from a localized rain.

Robert J. Kemp, Director
Fish and Wildlife Division
Londie J. Peters
Chief, Inland Fisheries

In July, 1973 an oil pipeline belonging to Mobil Oil Company broke, causing a major oil spill into the Colorado River in Mitchell County. About 3 miles of the river were affected, totally destroying the fish population. However, in this area the river supports an insignificant sport fish population. Fishes here were mainly shad, carsuckers and minnows. The concerned authorities notified included The Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Water Quality Board, Railroad Commission, Colorado River Municipal Water District, and responsible personnel of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The Mobil Oil Company constructed 3 temporary earthen dams and used "oil fences" and hay to contain the crude oil. Southerly winds and slack flow of the river aided containment and recovery efforts of oil. Within 3 days most of the crude oil (4,500 barrels) had been recovered and the residue burned off. Charges were not filed by any agency.

III. Significant Deviation:

Population sampling with nets and seines was not necessary in establishing the damage to fish populations during investigations of fish kills in Region I-B this segment. The affected waters were very shallow and clear and supported no important fisheries or endangered species; therefore, only visual observations were made.

IV. Conclusions, Evaluations and Recommendations:

All but one pollution report to this project was considered minor since no important fisheries or endangered species were affected. A major oil spill into the Colorado River in Mitchell County occurred, but most of the oil was recovered within three days. No major damage to sport fish populations was found because the fish populations in this area were comprised mainly of rough fishes.

V. Prepared by: Billy J. Follis
Project Leader

Date: March 11, 1974

Leo Lewis
Regional Director, Inland Fisheries
Region I

Approved by: David L. Pritchard
Dingell-Johnson Coordinator

