

Selective Removal of Non-indigenous Fish

Eradication of detrimental non-indigenous fish will be implemented where feasible and controlled to the maximum extent possible where eradication is not possible (Table 4). Several species have already been targeted for control and/or eradication including rainbow trout in the upper reaches of Beaver Dam Wash, green sunfish from the Santa Clara River and red shiner in the mainstem Virgin River below the Washington Fields Diversion (see below for details). Engineering feasibility for fish barrier structures to control non-indigenous fish is currently being developed. Possible impacts to native species will be evaluated prior to implementation of control and eradication actions.

Upper Beaver Dam Wash:

NDOW will have lead responsibility for an interagency effort to re-introduce Virgin spinedace into historic habitat in Nevada below Schroeder Reservoir. Efforts will be focused on re-creating the historic species matrix which occurred in this reach prior to dam construction, through selective removal of rainbow trout from the reach below Schroeder Reservoir. Virgin spinedace will be obtained from other populations within the Beaver Dam Wash drainage. The anticipated date of re-introduction will be early summer 1995 following the normal peak spring runoff period for upper Beaver Dam Wash. NDOW will provide pre-project assessments, documentation and monitoring of re-introduction efforts.

Santa Clara River:

UDWR will initiate efforts to control and manage green sunfish in the Virgin River basin in ways to benefit native fishes, including Virgin spinedace. The feasibility of chemical renovation projects in the Santa Clara River drainage will be evaluated in respect to controlling or eliminating green sunfish and other exotic fishes that are determined to be a problem.

The overall project will be divided into workable segments that can be treated separately. For example, if upstream sources of green sunfish can be eliminated above Baker Reservoir then, in turn, the stream segment between Baker Reservoir and Moody Wash could be renovated to remove exotic fishes. Providing that upstream treatments are feasible, this area could also be isolated from contamination by exotic fishes from downstream sources. Other project segments could include Moody Wash downstream to Gunlock Reservoir, and from Gunlock Reservoir downstream to the confluence of the Virgin River.

Control of green sunfish in the Santa Clara River below Gunlock Reservoir might be necessary after population maintenance flows are established. In this case, chemical treatments to temporarily reduce exotic fish while Virgin spinedace are re-introduced and become established might be needed. Such work