

Wilson honored with outstanding achievement award



OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT
KRISSEY WILSON

The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program presented Krissy Wilson with an outstanding achievement award last January for her many contributions to endangered fish recovery. As the native aquatics coordinator for the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), she administers a statewide program to evaluate and assess the status of native fish, amphibians, reptiles and mollusks; oversees implementation of conservation actions to protect and enhance populations of native species; and administers contracts and annual budgets.

Krissy is a tireless defender of numerous aquatic species including the June sucker, Columbia spotted frog, boreal toad, least chub, bluehead and flannelmouth suckers, and roundtail chub, to name a few. In 2006, she became Utah's representative to the Upper Colorado Program's Biology Committee. Her experience with conserving other species helps shape management actions to benefit the endangered fishes.

As the Upper Colorado Program developed and implemented nonnative fish management actions last year that focus on prevention as well as control, Krissy worked to adapt policies within UDWR to support that strategy. This included developing and implementing a "must kill" policy for nonnative

smallmouth bass and burbot caught in the Green River, and a rapid response to an illicit introduction of nonnative fishes into Utah's Red Fleet Reservoir.

"Those new regulations will further the Recovery Program's work to manage nonnative fishes," said Upper Colorado Program Director Tom Chart who presented the award. "Recovery Program partners recognize it is not easy for our state partners to balance their dual goals of providing sport-fishing opportunities and conserving native species. Krissy finds solutions that support her agency's mission, including recovering the endangered Colorado River fishes."

Krissy came to UDWR in 1996 as a native species biologist. She has a firsthand understanding of a species' life history as well as what is needed to restore and maintain river habitat. She has also worked with private landowners to access property and establish conservation agreements/easements. Her efforts resulted in the donation of a conservation easement to UDWR of 600 acres of prime riparian and wetland habitat for Columbia spotted frog and other wildlife valued at \$10 million, and a \$237,500 donation toward an endowment fund to monitor the easement.

Krissy is quick to acknowledge others for her successes. "I am honored and grateful to receive this award and I accept it on behalf of the great team of people who I am fortunate to work with," she said. "We all face many challenges when it comes to achieving conservation goals and it takes all of us working together to accomplish them."

Krissy has a bachelor's degree in environmental resource management from Arizona State University in Tempe and a master's degree in zoology from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. She is active in many professional organizations and has published numerous professional articles. 🐟