Angela Palacios
New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Angela was first exposed to fisheries and outreach during high school as a Conservation Aide with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). She continued working for MDC for her first two summers while attending The University of Arizona, where she obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in Renewable Natural Resources in December 2000.

Angela began her career, as a Fish Biologist, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in May 2008. She has three broad job duties that include fish culture, fieldwork, and outreach. She manages recirculation systems held at New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office. This includes caring for both hatchery spawned and wild caught fish species such as the federally listed Gila Trout, Colorado Pikeminnow, and Rio Grande Silvery Minnow. She provides field support for several projects located on the Gila, Rio Grande, Pecos, and San Juan Rivers. In addition, Angela is the lead for the information and education activities that includes the Native Fish in the Classroom (NFIC) Program. Now in its 9th year, the NFIC Program provides students the opportunity to raise native fish in their classroom while learning about native fish and their aquatic ecosystems.

Title: Community Based Conservation: Creating a Shared Vision for Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge

Abstract: In this presentation, Angela Palacios will be presenting on the Native Fish in the Classroom (NFIC) and lessons learned as the program has evolved over the past nine years. The NFIC is structured so that students can raise native fish in their classroom while learning about ecology, biology, conservation, and socio-economic issues regarding water resources. This includes incorporating flexibility to accommodate diverse schools, maintaining relevance in regards to environmental education, and understanding sense of place.

The NFIC Program is designed to encourage appreciation for native New Mexico species, such as the Rio Grande cutthroat trout and other native fish species of the Middle Rio Grande in all of our classroom aquariums. This also includes reconnecting with species-specific recovery plans and the target T&E species of the NFIC Program to make the program reflect the goals of species recovery. By understanding the need to conserve habitats, students become stewards of local watersheds and can make informed decisions about how to care for the environment in the future.