

## Second Quarterly Report to the Legislature

Dec. 18, 2015

### **Aquaculture and Fisheries Program**

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**Overview:** The Department and Center continue to conduct a variety of activities to meet our academic, research and extension goals. Efforts to fill faculty and staff vacancies are going well. APHIS approval of the Lonoke lab was granted December 10, 2015, and Spring 2016 inspections will take place in that lab. A series of meetings will be held in early 2016 to ensure that the process goes smoothly.

**Academic activities:** Fall classes were completed and graduation was held Dec. 11. Two fisheries students received BS degrees, 3 received MS degrees, and our first PhD student graduated. This is the first PhD student ever to graduate from UAPB.

Preparations for the accreditation visit in 2016 are continuing, and instructors have been identified to teach all Spring 2016 classes. Our new recruiter has been very active in attending off-campus events, as well as bringing groups of high school students to UAPB to tour our facilities and speak to our faculty. Our Department will work closely with others in the School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences to intensify recruitment efforts.

**Research activities:** Two Departmental assistantships for graduate students were awarded to faculty - one for aquaculture and one for natural fisheries. However, internal funds are limited and efforts to increase extramural funding for research are underway. Faculty are actively engaged in writing proposals to support research and outreach activities that will include undergraduate and graduate students. A new zebrafish lab has been installed, which will enhance our ability to attract funding for interdisciplinary research projects. UAPB initiatives such as the research incentive program and programs to encourage international research collaboration will provide extra motivation for the faculty to engage in grantsmanship. Meetings with various stakeholder groups are being planned for early 2016 to gather input on research priorities.

**Extension activities:** APHIS certification of the Lonoke lab was received, thanks to the dedication and hard work of our Extension personnel, and support from the UAPB administration. The costs of getting the lab into condition to be certified exceeded expectations, and were borne by UAPB. Operational costs will be carefully documented during the first year to allow more accurate planning for future years. The location of the Lonoke lab should be more convenient for most of the farmers who will need routine certification services. Diagnostic services will continue to be offered at the UAPB lab.

UAPB Aquaculture Extension agents all over the state continue to conduct farm visits and provide information to producers and to the public.

**Professional Development:** Our fish health Professor is our newest faculty member, and she is actively pursuing professional development and leadership training opportunities. Other faculty, staff and students are engaged in activities with state organizations (Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Catfish Farmers of Arkansas, Arkansas Bait and Ornamental Fish Growers Association), as well as national and international professional organizations such as the World Aquaculture Society and the American Fisheries Society. A number of faculty hold key leadership positions in these organizations. One natural fisheries faculty member recently became a Fellow of the American Fisheries Society, which is a very prestigious award.

**Personnel:** We conducted interviews with three strong candidates for the position of Water Quality Professor, and plan to hire one of them in early 2016. An administrative assistant position will also be filled in 2016. Temporary workers to support the Aquaculture Research Station have been trained and will work until the permanent positions can be filled. Job descriptions are being developed or refined for other open faculty and staff positions.

**Further Information:**

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