



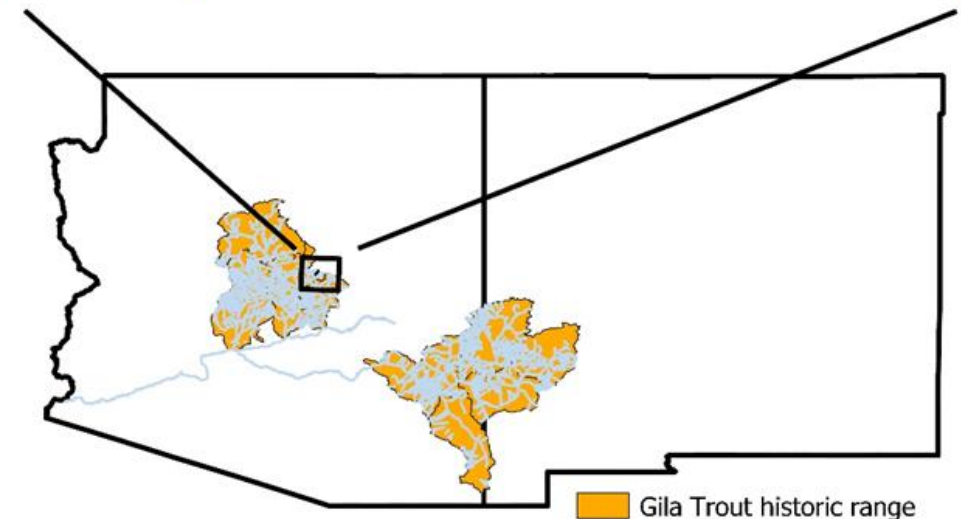
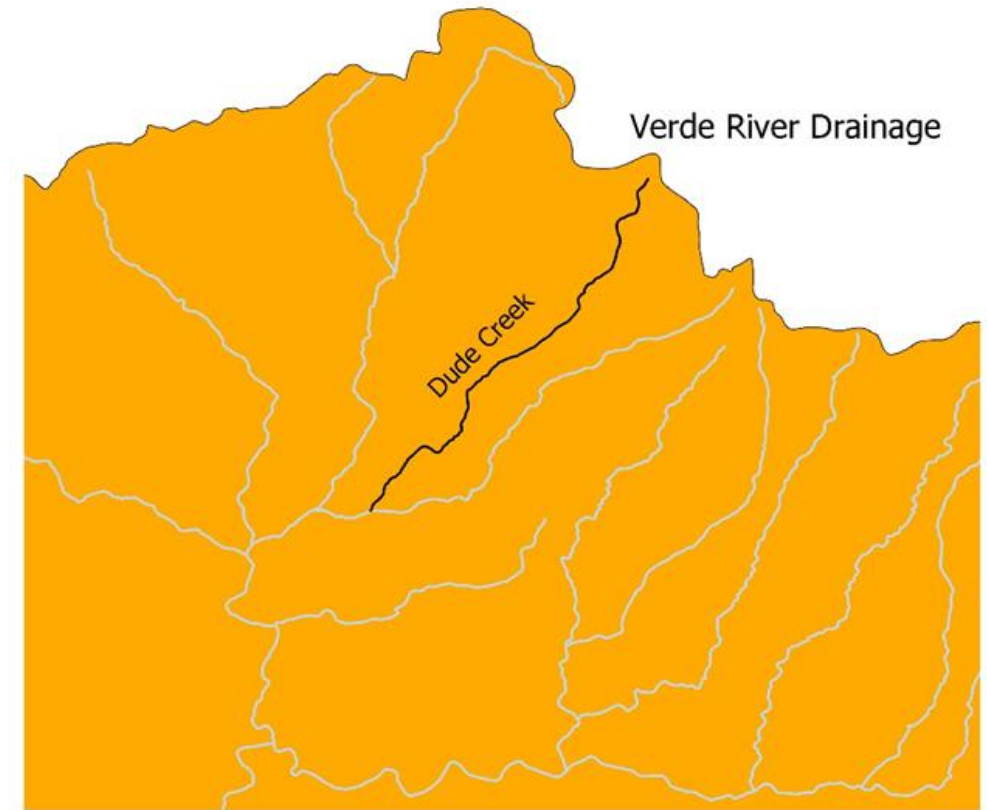
Dude Creek Updates

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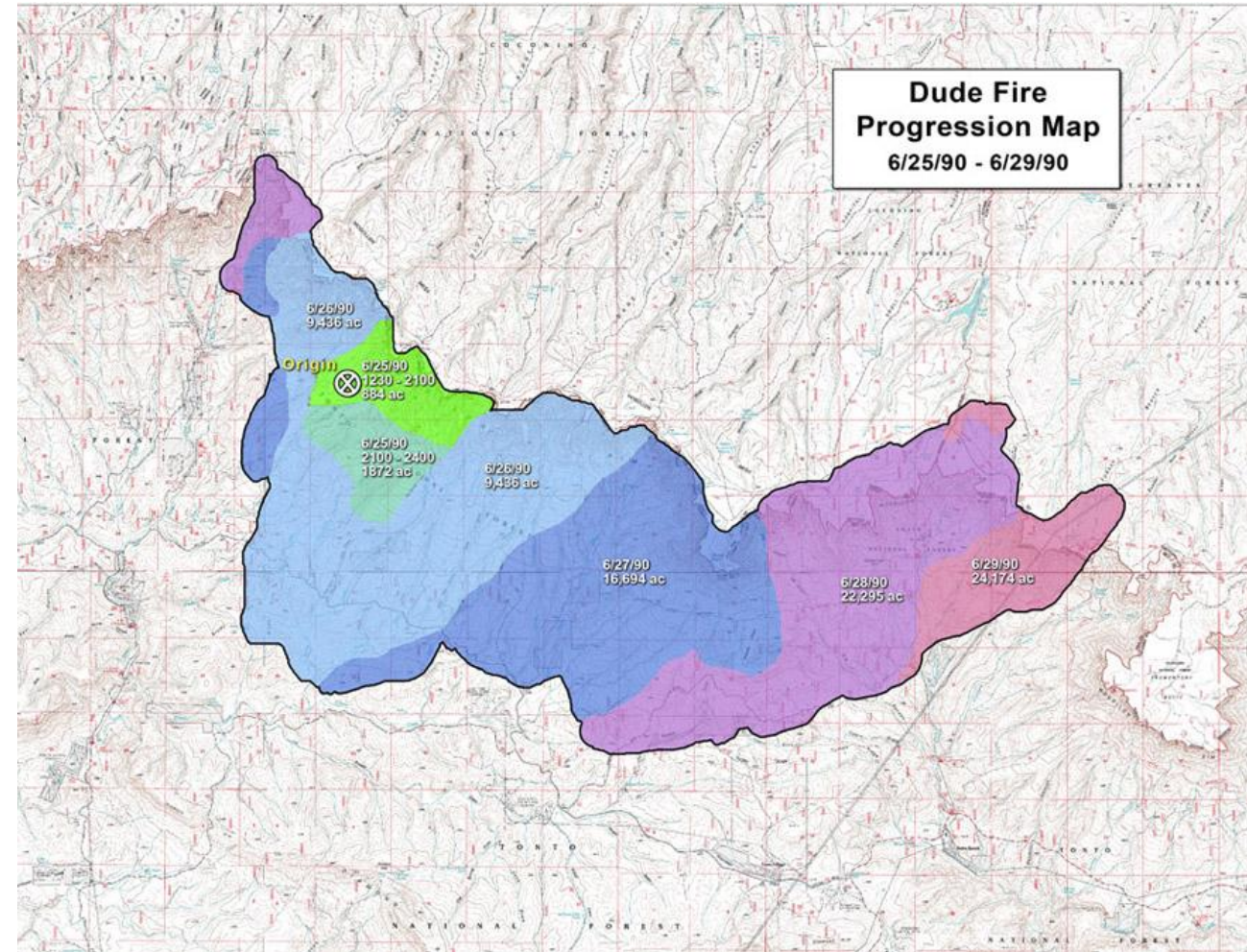
History and Status of Gila Trout

- Their native range is thought to be the Agua Fria River, Verde River, Tonto Creek, Upper Gila River drainage, and the San Francisco River drainage in Arizona and New Mexico.
- Gila Trout were formally described as a species in 1950 when their distribution was estimated to be under 20 stream miles in the Gila River in New Mexico.
- First listed as endangered in 1967 Under the Federal Endangered Species Preservation Act (predecessor to the Endangered Species Act of 1973).
- Due to the tremendous conservation efforts, Gila Trout were downlisted to 'threatened' in 2006.



Background

- Prior to 1990, Dude Creek housed a population of Brook Trout.
- The Dude Fire was a devastating fire that started near Payson, and burned 24,174 acres in 1990.



Background

Gila Trout Stockings:

- September 1999: 126 mixed age trout stocked
- November 1999: 17 age-0 trout stocked
- May 2000: 22 adults stocked
- There was never any evidence that the Gila Trout stocked in 1999-2000 ever reproduced.

Fires:

- The Rodeo-Chedeski fire hit the area in 2002, and there was another small scale fire in 2005.

Flooding proceeding the fire in 2005 eliminated all remaining trout.

The habitat was surveyed annually (visually) from 2005-2014 when it was



Background on Stockings

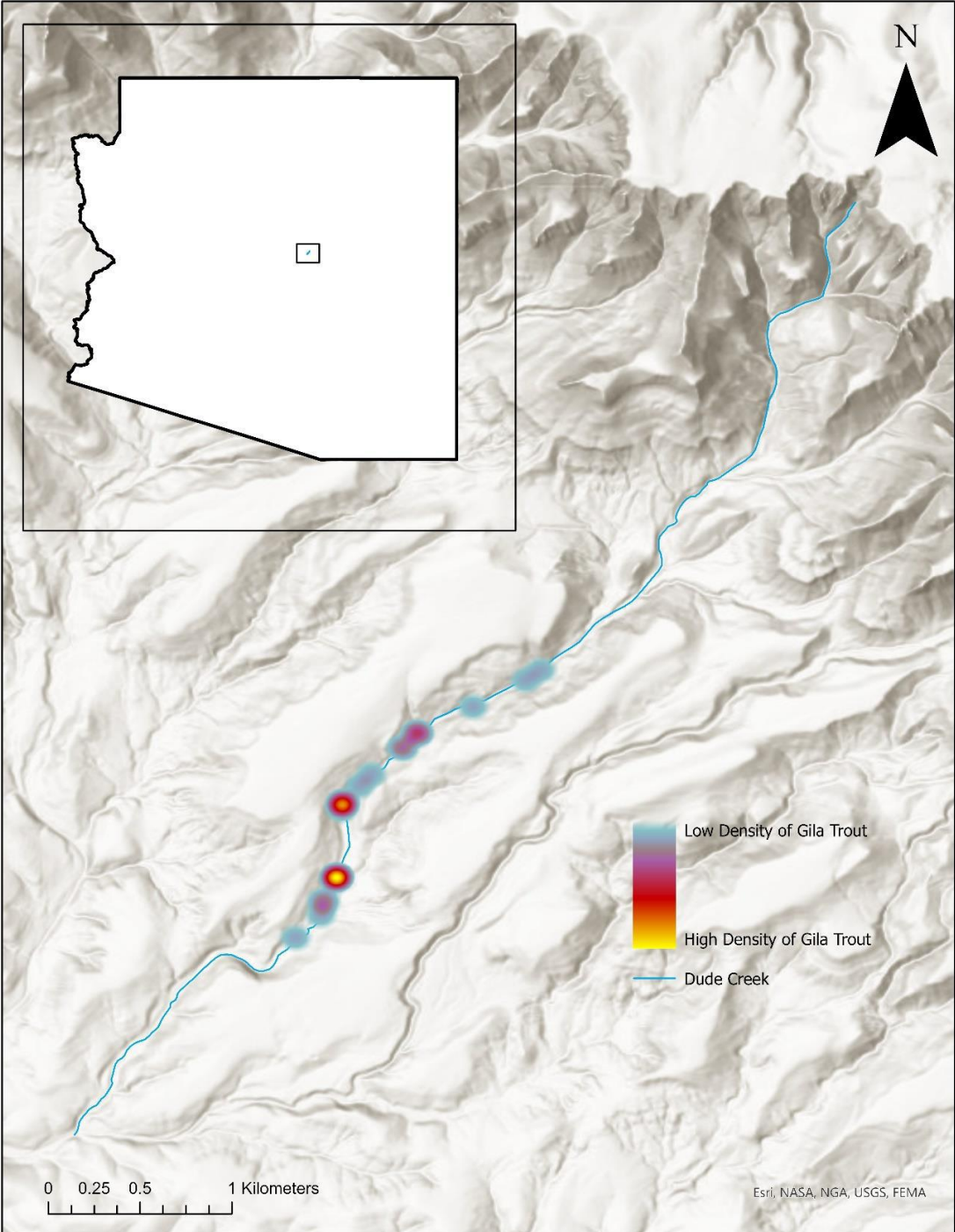
- 2015: 1,030 Gila Trout, Main Diamond and South Diamond lineages, were stocked into Dude Creek in October.
 - South Diamond had their adipose fins clipped.
- 2016: Electrofishing survey in August captured 76 Gila Trout, all adults (>130mm), except for 5 that were juveniles (80-130mm).
 - 37 Main Diamond
 - 39 South Diamond
- 2017: 125 of each Main Diamond, South Diamond, Whiskey Creek, and Spruce x Whiskey lineages were stocked.
- Natural recruitment has been documented since 2018.



Visual Encounter Surveys

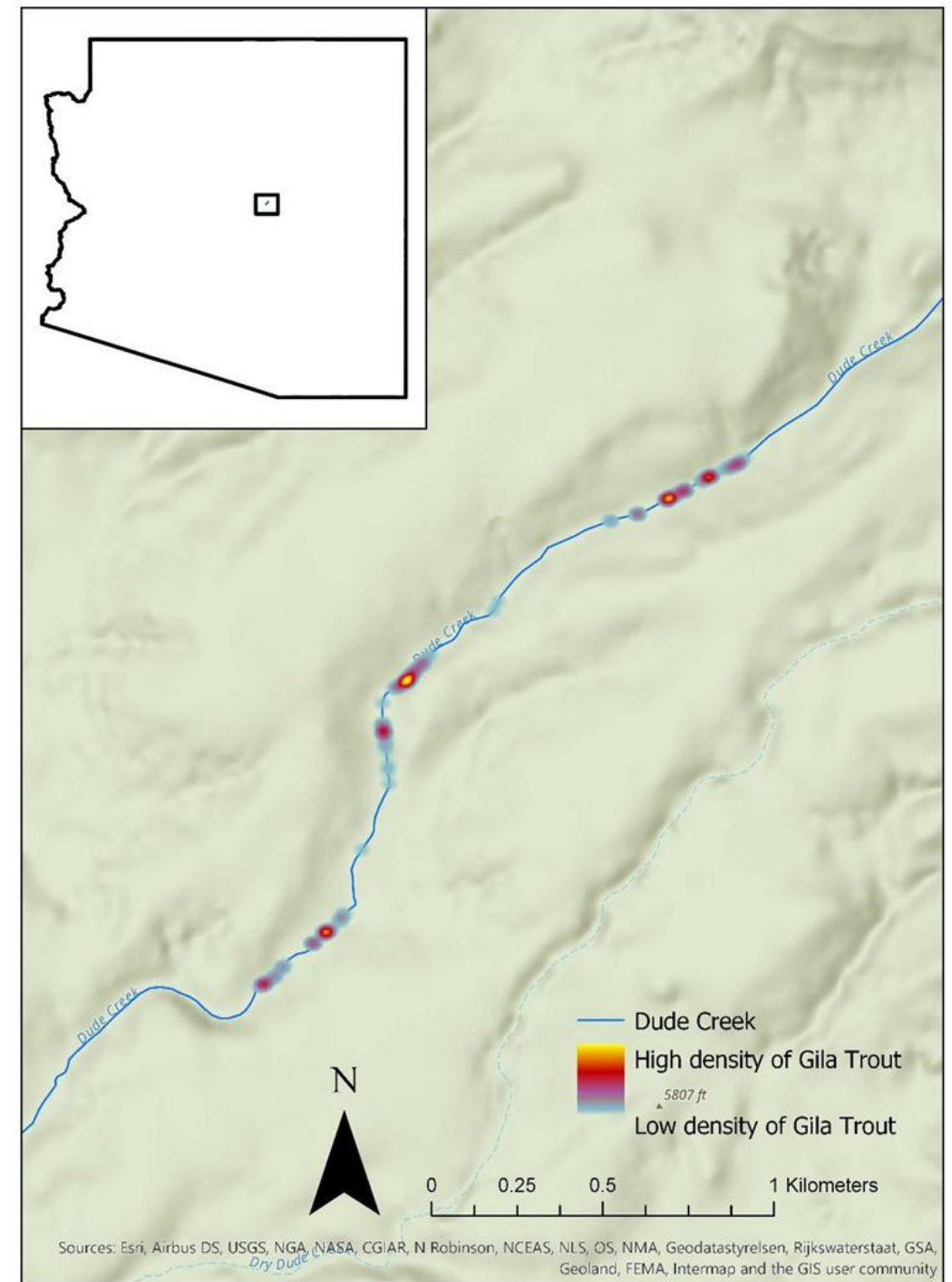
- Visual encounter surveys were completed in the fall of 2019-2022.
- Visual surveys were not done in 2023 or 2024 because population estimates were done.

Year	YOY	Sub-Adults	Adults
2022	17	2	8
2021	11	21	8
2020	140	-	-
2019	138	19	42



Population Estimates: 2020 & 2023

- 2020: sampled 347 Gila Trout; 28-260mm; total population estimated at 996 Gilas; adult population estimated at 462.
- 2023: sampled 87 Gila Trout; 65-275mm; 14 adults, 49 juveniles, & 24 young-of-year; total population estimated at 253; adult population estimated at 39.



Regulation Changes

- 2021: New regulations for Dude Creek took effect: Closed January 1st - April 30th; Catch-and-release only; single barbless hook; artificial fly and lure only.

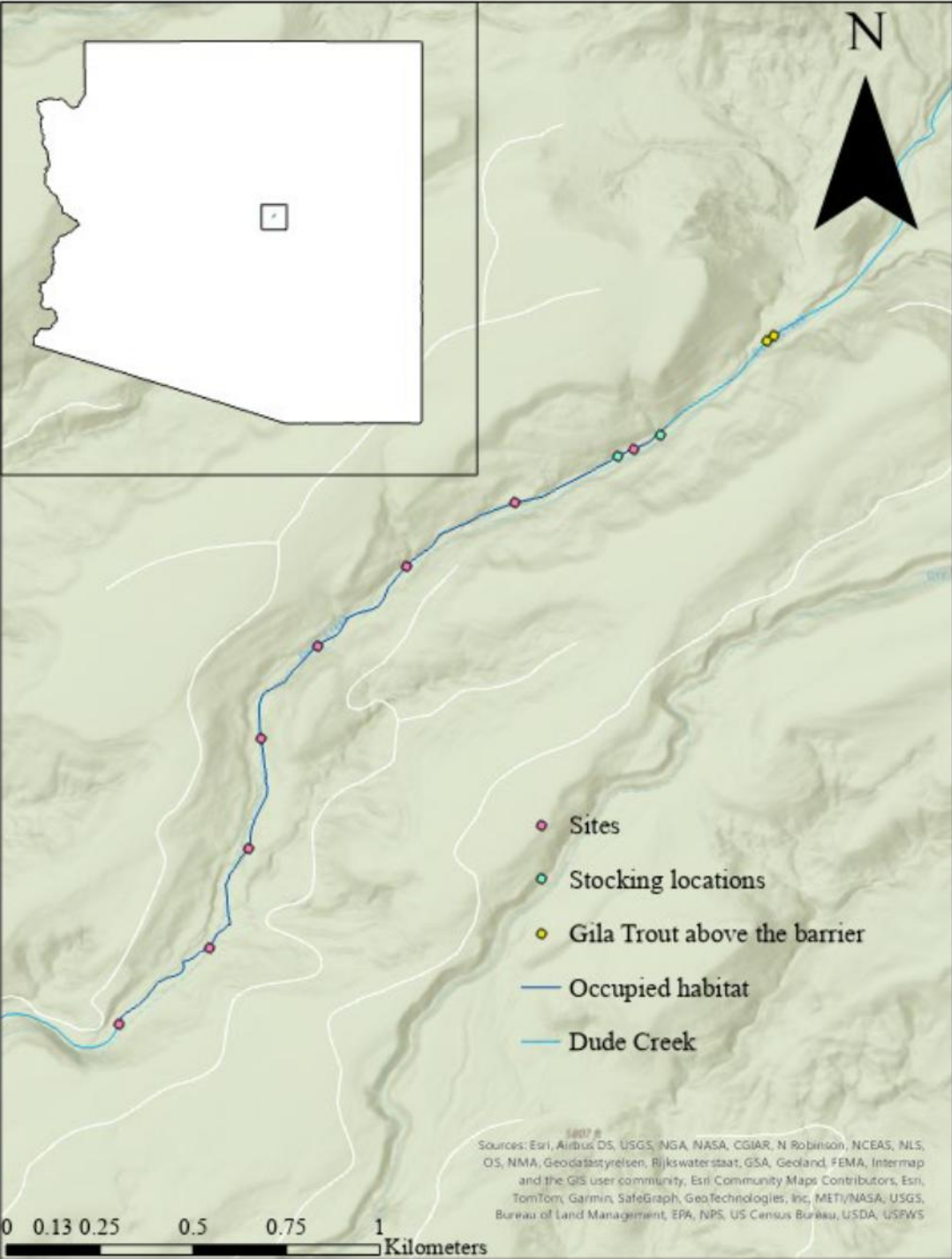


2024 Work

March Observations: Observed 3 large, adult Gila Trout above the barrier/ the end of the “occupied reach” during a site visit.

June Stocking: 458 Whiskey Creek Gila Trout were stocked. They were 2-10 inches in length. All trout had their adipose fins clipped prior to stocking.

October Population Estimate: Sampled 73 Gila Trout, including 28 recaptures from the June stocking. The population was estimated at 256 Gila Trout. No

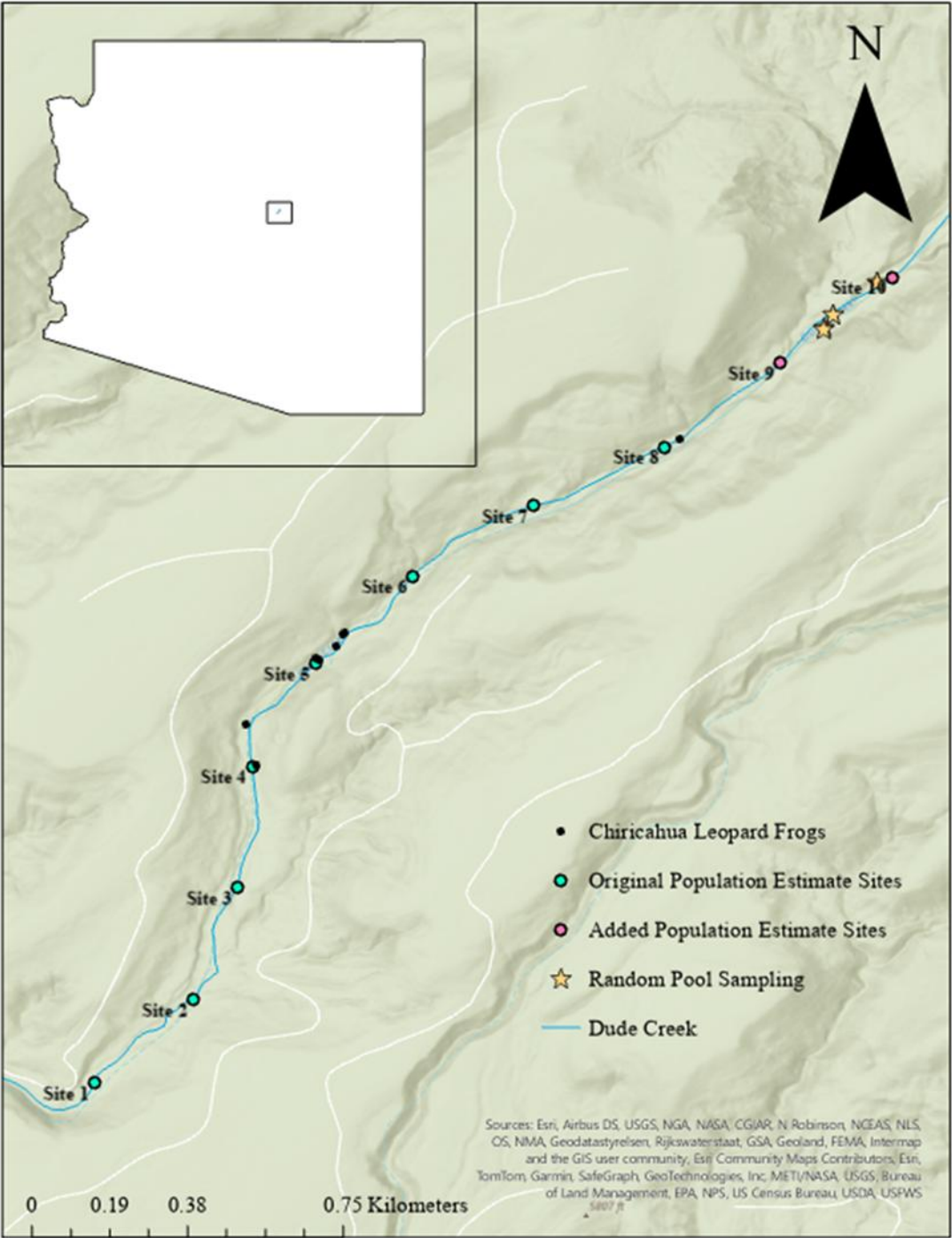


2024 Work – Continued

PIT tagging: All 73 Gila Trout that were captured during the population estimate were PIT tagged in addition to 6 others that we captured in pools outside the sample sites.

Site Number	Number of PIT tags deployed
2	1
3	2
5	15
6	3
7	29
8	20
9	3
10	0

Additionally, we sampled 4 random pools and



Future Plans

- Annual single pass sampling: monitor population, track tagged trout (movement and growth), and continue to tag all untagged Gila Trout that are captured.
- Augment the population as needed with fish from Mora.



~~No. There was not.~~
Was there a fish kill?



Was There a Fish Kill?

As a general rule, social media is not a reliable source of information.

Exceptions: Official Arizona Game and Fish Department social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)

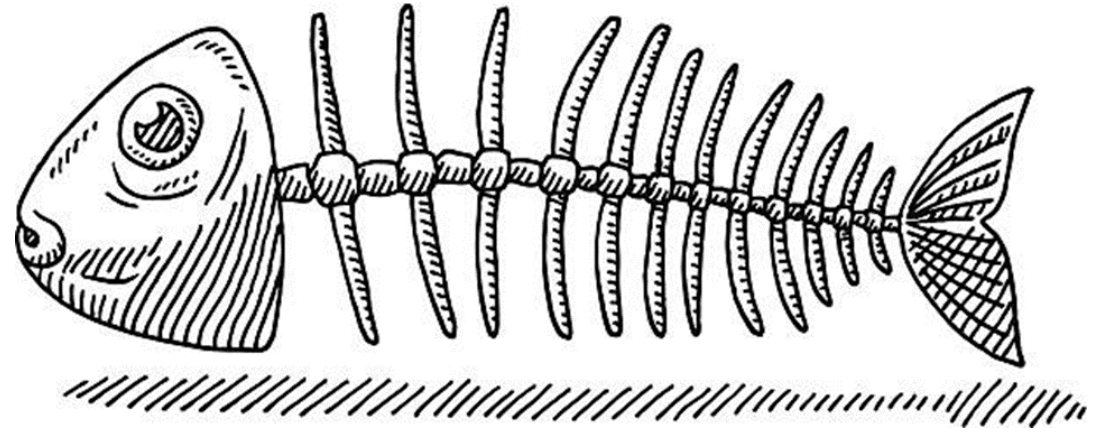
Please, do not repost or share unconfirmed posts about fish kills.

If you suspect a fish kill, please contact:

ekeister@azgfd.gov

aloubere@azgfd.gov

sgsimmons@azgfd.gov



Thank you!

Trout Unlimited
US Forest Service (Tonto National Forest)
New Mexico Department of Game and
Fish
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers





