

Andy Fisher

Organ Pipe National Monument

“There is a species of fish in this desert – yes, a fish in the desert – that only lives here, in the United States. There is one other small population in Mexico, but there’s only one place in this entire country that this fish lives and survives and it happens to be here at Organ Pipe. That habitat is endangered simply because it’s so far away from everything else, there’re so many threats to it and it’s a very small. It’s a very small oasis, if you will, and the less rain we get, the drier it gets, and the smaller that habitat gets and then the smaller the population of fish gets. So we were recommended a couple of years ago to build a refugium, a second habitat, an artificial habitat for the fish and we decided to go ahead and do that. We’re bringing kids in to do it which is really cool. They’re coming out, they’re studying habitat, they’re going to be the ones who tell us how to build it, they’re going to be the one who actually help us build it and then they’re going to be the ones who help us monitor the population. All of this for one species of endangered desert fish. And so that here is a pretty unique project that we’re pretty heavily involved in right now, which we hope will continue and it’s definitely unique to this monument and this place.”