Happy Ending for a Problem Croc

Recently, the folks at Fein Catch Tilapia Farm were quite upset due to the fact that a crocodile took up residence in one of their fish ponds. The tilapia were losing ground, and that belly-full crocodile was being looked upon as a very unwelcome guest.

The kind people at Fein Catch chose not to shoot their reptilian tenant. Instead, they called The Belize Zoo. The croc was safely netted and transported to the Zoo where temporary residence was provided.

Zoo officials quickly connected with our colleagues at Crocodile Research Coalition, CRC. Led by co-founder, Dr. Marisa Tellez, CRC is currently undertaking a country-wide survey of Morelet’s crocodiles. In addition, Dr. Tellez and her colleagues are taking exciting education programs to Belizean communities which have resulted in raising awareness about these amazing apex predators.

TBZ and CRC hatched a plan for the future of the rescued croc. Releasing him back into the river within proximity of the tilapia farm was not an option. No one wanted to take the chance of
this “fish-bandit” returning to the scene of the crime! Contact was made with owners of private lands along the George Price Highway which include the wetlands area known as Cox Lagoon. Cox Lagoon is home to many crocodiles, food is plentiful, and the area is protected from hunting. The perfect release spot!

After important data from the “headed for freedom” crocodile was collected, the croc was placed in his new home at Cox Lagoon with a new name: “Tilapio.” TBZ and CRC reps waved goodbye as a liberated Tilapio swam downstream to set up his territory.

We sincerely thank Fein Catch Tilapia Farm and the owners of Cox Lagoon for their kind consideration and support of this charming reptile.