

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jordan River NFH Accomplishment Report

Partnerships and Accountability

Jordan River Participates in Celebrating Habitat and Congressional Meetings

During the week of March 7-11, 2005, Rick Westerhof from the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery (NFH) participated in the Celebrating Habitat Festivities and Congressional briefings on the Hill. FWS staff from all over the country were present and setup meetings with Congressional offices to thank them for all their support and the \$200 million dollars appropriated each year that allows us to fulfill our mission. Habitat and station accomplishments were discussed during the briefings. Pendills Creek NFH, Alpena Fisheries Resource Office, Green Bay Fisheries Resource and Jordan River NFH teamed up to give briefings to Michigan Congressional members. Briefings were given to the following Congressional members: Joy Mulinex (Senator Carl Levin), Maryann Gay, (Senator Debbie Stabenow), Dan Jourdan (Congressman Sander Levin), Jamie Harper (Congresswoman Candice Miller), Jared Page (Congressman Joe Schwarz), Lauren Lark (Congressman Bart Stupak), Katie Murtha (Congressman John Dingell), Matt Mika (Congressman David Camp), Mike Ward (Congressman Mike Rogers), Greg Van Workem (Congressman Peter Hoekstra), Matt Reiffer (Congressman Vernon Ehlers), and Alex Manning (Congressman Thaddeus McCotter). We wish to thank all the people that took time to meet with us and invite them to visit our field stations.

-Rick Westerhof

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Jordan River NFH Crew Coded Wire Tags 162,000 Yearling Lake Trout

On January 25, 2005, coded-wire tagging operations commenced at the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery. This work was completed on February 1st after approximately 161,945 yearling lake trout were tagged and adipose fin-clipped. This year a crew of five permanent-intermittent staff was employed to mark and tag the yearlings at a cost of approximately \$3360. Five strains, including, Lewis Lake, Seneca Lake, Superior Apostle Island, Superior Isle Royal and Superior Traverse Island, were tagged with a unique code number. The tagging effort remains paramount to the Lake Trout Restoration program in Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. This 2004 year class will be released at 22



Coded wire tag being injected into the nose cartilage of a lake trout Photo by Wayne Talo

different sites around Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. Future tag return data will be used in monitoring and evaluation of the USFWS interagency Lake Trout restoration efforts in both of these lakes. Specifically, these tagged fish will be used to: Compare survival rates of lake trout strains in lakes Michigan and Huron, characterize the movement patterns of Lewis Lake strain lake trout released into Lake Huron and assess sea lamprey predation rates on lake trout in northern Lake Huron.

-Clarice Beckner

Fish Health Inspection a Sign of Spring at Jordan River NFH

The arrival of Cory Puzach, Microbiologist, from La Crosse Fish Health Center the week of March 14th marked the arrival of spring at the Jordan River NFH. Health assessments are performed semi-annually at Jordan River NFH. The results of the health assessment are still pending.

-Tim Smigielski

Jordan River NFH Crew Fin Clips Two Million Yearling Lake Trout

On March 29, 2005, fin clipping of the Brood Year 2004 lake trout was completed. A grand total of approximately two million fish were marked with a left ventral fin clip beginning on February 7. This averages out to nearly 59,000 fish per day (using a 6 1/4 hour workday), or 873 fish per hour per clipper. This fin clip serves to identify these fish as hatchery-origin lake trout to researchers who may later collect some of them while doing biological surveys. The total cost of this year's fin clipping operation was \$36,590. This covered the wages of both the fin clipping crew and those of biologists who oversee the operation. The size of the fin clipping crew ranged daily from 8-15 people, with an average number of about 11 people. Most of the fin clippers are permanent-intermittent employees that help to expedite this important job. To make the job more enjoyable, we had numerous potlucks hosted by the fin clippers or



Pictured, left-to-right, front row: Donna Buning, Patricia Milligan, Sharon Huffman, Christy Reinhardt, Leona Stanek. Back row: Louise Eckler, Bonnie Olund, Rose Harvey, Robert Lee, Clara Finch. Not pictured: Marilyn Barber, Peg Botens, Sylvia Kesteloot, Debbie Petersen, Brian Waters.

Photo by Clarice Beckner

the hatchery staff.

-Clarice Beckner

Alpena FRO and Jordan River NFH Team Up to Represent the Service

This year the Upper Lakes Meeting, sponsored by the Great lakes Fish Commission, was held in March in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Tim Smigielski, Lead Fish Biologist, was able to attend part of the week-long meeting. Tim delivered an interpretive poster demonstrating the USFWS 2004 Great Lakes lake trout stocking trips. While at the meeting Tim participated in an evening session of the Lake Michigan technical committee lake trout task group. Special thanks to Aaron Woldt, Fish Biologist with Alpena FRO who designed this year's poster and has passed the baton to Tim for future years.

-Tim Smigielski

Public Use

Hatchery Hosts Snowmobile Picnic

On a cold, windy Saturday, January 22, approximately 40 people from the Elk Country Sno-Riders of Atlanta and Hillman, MI used the hatchery as a stop on their weekend snowmobile tour. The hatchery provided the facilities and grilling equipment. The Sno-Riders brought their own food. Denise Johnston and Tim Smigielski provided hatchery tours and information. The snowmobile group intends on making this an annual event.

-Tim Smigielski

Hatchery Provides Fun, Educational Evening to Local Kids

On January 18, February 15, and March 15, 2005 Fisheries Biologist Tim Smigielski hosted the first "Fish are Fun!" evening children's outreach events.

Ms. Joanie Moore, of nearby Mancelona, MI, attended with her kids and took this picture which was published in the February 9, 2005 edition of the Antrim County News. Joanie Moore is the Chair of the Mancelona Bass Festival Committee, and she has been involved with the hatchery's outreach programs since the spring of 2004, when





Tim led a contingent of hatchery employees and volunteers to participate in the Bass Festival for the first time.

Following is the text of the published caption: *The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Jordan River National Fish Hatchery recently hosted the first of three programs in a series, "Fish are Fun!" The winter program is part of an effort by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to increase awareness concerning the Service's mission and programs in the Great Lakes Region. The program, geared toward elementary school-aged children, will focus on brook trout during its next program on February 15, and exotic invaders on the third and final date, March 15. The evenings begin with an interpretive tour of the hatchery, and conclude with a short, informative PowerPoint presentation. Above, fishery biologist Tim Smigielski shows the children lake trout eggs that are incubating and soon to hatch into fry. A fish tank, located in the visitor's welcome center, contains fingerling lake trout that have been reared at the hatchery. There is no charge to attend the program, and refreshments are served. Call the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery, (231) 584-2461 for the dates and times of the next two programs.*

-Wayne Talo

Back by Popular Demand - "Fish are Fun" Will Return for Fall 2005

As the sweat beaded up on his forehead, his ever observant eight year old son yelled out from the crowd, "Man, dad are you sweatin'!" Tim Smigielski, Fish Biologist at Jordan NFH, was sweating, and for good reason. He was frantically trying to accommodate nearly 60 people who showed up at the hatchery to attend the last program in the winter outreach series "Fish are Fun". This was nearly triple the attendance of the February program. Tim was short of chairs, short of refreshments, but not short on information. There was certainly no shortage of questions from the 50-plus wide-eyed viewers. The kids and parents learned of the non-native invaders that threaten the Great Lakes ecosystem and how they can help defend the future of our natural resources. The visitors were lead on a tour of the hatchery while being provided with facts about sea lamprey control, lake trout restoration and cold water fish culture. At the end of it all, the kids passed their test. They expertly identified images of non-native and native Great Lakes species. Many parents asked that the program continue and were willing to help where necessary. Each child received USFWS logo sunglasses and the group was informed that because of their attendance at programs like this, "*the future's so bright we gotta wear shades!*"

-Tim Smigielski

Jordan River Staff Participate in Annual Kid's Ice Fishing Event

This February the Northland Sportsman's Club of Otsego County, Michigan hosted their annual kid's ice fishing derby. Well over 100 youngsters participated in the derby, which



was held at the Otsego Lake State Park. The sport group and various sponsors supplied minnows and wax worms for the hopeful perch anglers. Afterward, the club hosted a luncheon and award ceremony. During the luncheon Denise Johnston, Assistant Project Leader, and Janet Smigielski, volunteer spouse of Tim, worked the kids Fish ID game. The game was designed for last year's hatchery festival and was provided by Jordan River NFH. The game was very popular with the youngsters who received USFWS logo pens, magnets and coloring books for their participation.

-Tim Smigielski

Boyne City Girl Scouts Tour Jordan River National Fish Hatchery

On March 25, 2005 the Boyne City Girl Scout Troop toured the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery. Seven girls and two troop leaders learned all about the hatchery in two hours from their tour guide Rick Westerhof. The group was very interested and impressed with the facility. They had endless questions regarding all the activities that we get involved in. We hope the tour inspired a few of them to pursue a career in natural resources.

-Rick Westerhof

Cooperation with Native Americans

(Nothing to report).

Leadership in Science and Technology

(Nothing to report).

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

(Nothing to report).

Workforce Management

Draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Manual Presentation

During the week of February 7th Administrative Assistants met in LaCrosse, Wisconsin to discuss administrative rules, regulations and common administrative problem areas. At that time Clarice Beckner, Administrative Assistant from the Jordan River National Fish



Hatchery (Michigan) took the opportunity to show the group the SOP manual that she has been working on. For many years Clarice had hoped to complete such a manual, but it was not until last year that she began gathering the information. There is so much information that administrative personnel are required to have available in order to perform their jobs. The SOP is an attempt to compile the most important information so it can be available in one to two notebooks. This should save time when looking for information on how to complete reports and procedures that are sometimes not done on a routine basis. The manual is also a good place to store information about the station, such as electric meter numbers, procedures unique to the field station, etc. Everyone interested will be able to review the manual's content, along with a list of items that are planned to be added.

The SOP manual was very well received by the group and 14 people have asked for copies of the completed manual. Clarice explained the manual is a work in progress and will need to be updated routinely as procedures change in order to remain an effective administrative tool. The group discussed the need for such a tool that, not only, would assist current administrative personnel, but also be of great assistance to new administrative personnel and project leaders when the administrative position is vacant.

Clarice hopes to finish the current updates within the next month or so. At that time a copy of the completed manual will be sent out to the 14 offices that have requested a copy. Clarice plans to provide updates to everyone as she makes them. She has also asked the group to send her suggestions for topics/information to be included in the future updates. Any questions or comments can be sent by email at clarice_beckner@fws.gov.

-Clarice Beckner

Jordan River National Fish Hatchery Hired Animal Caretakers for Marking Program

On June 24, 2004 necessary paperwork was submitted to request the hiring of eight more Animal Caretakers to assist in our fish marking program. Due to numerous delays, including our Human Resource Specialist taking another position, the vacancies were not open until mid January 2005. Finally, three of the employees entered on duty March 21, one on March 22, and one on March 23. We are still working to get the final three hired. Because it takes so long to go through the recruitment process for jobs that are of intermittent nature, by the time next year you contact those that were hired, their work situation has changed and they are not always willing to return to work. We are looking at ways to streamline this process. Thanks to Human Resources for working so hard on these vacancies during their staff shortage.

-Clarice Beckner

Jordan River NFH representative successfully completes “The Academy”

The USFWS National Conservation Training Center has developed a course targeting fish biologists who have been with the Service less than five years. The course is entitled Fisheries Academy. The course is packed with information regarding legislation, policy, strategic planning, budget process, HACCP planning and professional development. Tim Smigielski, Lead Fishery Biologist, attended the two week course, which ran from February 28 through March 10. Since Tim’s past career experience has been working for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and private consulting he found the portion of the course dedicated to regional variations and job functions very beneficial. In Tim’s opinion, “NCTC provides an atmosphere that allows students and visitors to network and develop relationships that will pay huge dividends to the Service and our natural resources long into the future.”

-Tim Smigielski

Area Agency on Aging Employee Leaves Hatchery to Accept another Position

Norma Sparks began working at the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery in October 2003. She is part of the Area Agency on Aging program of Traverse City, Michigan that places senior citizens in work environments in our area. Norma’s duties included keeping the main hatchery building neat and clean, which is a very important duty at the hatchery that can often be overlooked. She also took initiative to keep our visitors’ center stocked with brochures and supplies. Hatchery staff also helped Norma learn new job skills such as operating the fax machine, copy machine and some computer training and answering the phone during Clarice’s absence.



Normally, the agency places their clients for six months at a time, but because Norma enjoyed working at the hatchery, she was allowed to stay longer. Norma’s last day was Friday, April 8, 2005. Norma has accepted a position at a resale shop that is operated by the Antrim County Commission on Aging. We appreciate Norma’s hard work and dedication and wish her well in her new endeavor.

-Clarice Beckner