

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## **Jordan River NFH Accomplishment Report**

### ***Partnerships and Accountability***

#### **It's Official – Jordan River NFH has a Friends Group!**

Tim Smigielski and Rick Westerhof met with some of the hatchery's friends on January 11. The group decided to make it official. They are no longer just friends but instead they're our *Friends Group*. Bob MacCord, of McBain, Michigan assumed the duties of president. Peg Myers, of Charlevoix, will be the treasurer. Dr. Dale Ackler, DVM, of Mancelona, Michigan will be vice president, and former volunteers (summer 2004) Jim and Claire Wisman, of Arkansas, will also be members. Tim Moore and Dan Myers, dedicated friends, volunteers, and partners, are board members. The group is in the process of filing paperwork to become a 501(c) tax exempt non-profit organization. The group is excited to begin projects. The first project may be assisting the local trails council assess the trails surrounding the hatchery before the busy hiking season begins.

*-Tim Smigielski*

### ***Aquatic Species Conservation and Management***

#### **Completion of Annual Fish Marking Activities**

Coded wire tagging was done from January 23 through January 27. A total of 120,000 lake trout yearlings (60,000 Seneca Lake strain and 60,000 Superior Traverse Island strain) were marked with a coded wire tag / adipose fin clip combination for use in the Drummond Island (Northern Lake Huron) study. The clipping of the adipose fin serves to identify the fish as one that is carrying a coded wire tag, which is a very small piece of magnetic wire implanted in the nose cartilage of fish. These tags have a numeric code laser-etched on them to differentiate between groups of fish. The purpose of this study is to compare survivals of different strains of lake trout. Total payroll expenditures for coded wire tagging were \$2,585.



Fin clipping of the remaining 1.88 million production fish ran from February 7 through March 27. This year's clip is a left pectoral clip (meaning the left pectoral fin is excised). All hatchery produced lake trout released into the Great Lakes are required to be readily identifiable as such



by the presence of a fin clip. The clip pattern changes every year to aid researchers in making age determinations quickly in the field. This process is extremely labor intensive. We have approximately twelve seasonal employees working 35 hours weekly, individually handling and clipping each fish (approximately 60,000 per day). The operation is supervised / coordinated by one full time biologist. A team of three to four employees are also required to load trucks with fish to bring to the fin clippers once or twice daily. The total payroll cost of this year's fin clipping was \$37,547.

*-Wayne Talo*

**Final Egg Delivery**

Our last shipment of eggs was delivered on January 19. We kept 5.4 million eggs for incubation this year. If survival is similar to that achieved in 2005, between 65 and 70% (roughly 3.5 million) should survive to the first feeding stage. We anticipate providing about a million fish at 2.5 inches to the Pendills Creek NFH in the spring of 2006 for grow out over the next year. The remainder will be kept here until release in the spring of 2007. Below are the final statistics on numbers, strains, and source brood stations:

Sum of Net Inc	Source NFH				Strain
Strain	Iron River	Saratoga	Sullivan's Creek	Grand Total	Percentage
Lewis Lake		2,880,710	452,279	3,332,989	<b>61.02%</b>
Seneca Lake			580,426	580,426	<b>10.63%</b>
Superior Apostle Island	510,153		1,038,252	1,548,405	<b>28.35%</b>
Grand Total	510,153	2,880,710	2,070,957	5,461,820	
<b>Hatchery Percentage</b>	<b>9.34%</b>	<b>52.74%</b>	<b>37.92%</b>		

*-Wayne Talo*

**Jordan River NFH Fisheries Biologist Attends Lake Michigan Technical Committee Meeting**

Tim Smigielski, Lead Fishery Biologist, attended the Lake Michigan Technical Committee meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the week of January 23. Tim provided an update on the progress of the wild lake trout spawning project that took place last fall at Parry Sound, Ontario, Canada. Jordan River NFH biologist John Johnston was part of the crew that collected eggs from feral lake trout for future new brood stock to be held at Sullivan Creek NFH near Brimley, Michigan. Tim also participated in the Lake Michigan lake trout task group session.

*-Tim Smigielski*



## **Fish Health Inspection**

John Whitney from the USFWS LaCrosse Fish Health Lab performed the bi-annual inspection on the yearling Lake trout at Jordan River NFH. John sampled all four strains being reared at Jordan. The results are forthcoming.

*-Tim Smigielski*

## **Jordan River Project Leader Attends Upper/Lower Lakes Meeting, Eh!**

Rick Westerhof, USFWS Project Leader from Jordan River National Fish Hatchery attended a joint meeting of resource professionals from around the Great Lakes on March 20 and March 21 in Windsor, Ontario Canada. Rick, who is the chair of the Lake Huron Technical Committee's lake trout task group, presided over a short meeting of the task group while he was there.

*-Tim Smigielski*

## ***Public Use***

### **Charlevoix Kiwanis Club Learns About the Jordan River NFH**

On March 14, Rick Westerhof traveled to Charlevoix, Michigan to give a presentation on the Jordan River NFH to the Kiwanis Club. The Club was interested in learning more about the hatchery, especially our outreach events for kids. We hope to collaborate with the Club on future events through the hatchery or through the Friends of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery.

Rick also stopped by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station to see the facility, meet the staff and discuss a potential cross training program. Dave Clapp, Station Supervisor, was kind enough to give Rick the nickel tour of the facility. Thanks Dave!!

*-Rick Westerhof*

### **Mancelona Baptist Church Seniors Visit Jordan River NFH**

Approximately a dozen seniors toured the hatchery and enjoyed observing the fin clipping project that was underway during their visit. Many of these folks commented that they had never been to the hatchery or had not visited for quite a few years. Tim Smigielski, Lead Fishery Biologist, led the seniors around the hatchery, explaining the progress in Lake trout restoration, sea lamprey control and the expanded role of hatcheries within the region. Everyone

enjoyed coffee and hot chocolate while rehashing the visit and asking questions.

*-Tim Smigielski*

### **Fish are More and More Fun at Jordan River NFH**

The evening outreach program *Fish are Fun* held here during the winter is so popular that staff have been offered a road show venue. The last program in the series held at the hatchery March 21 was *Exotic Invaders*. This program attracted a whole Boy Scout troop. Tim Smigielski, Lead Fishery Biologist who puts on the programs, will likely be doing more programs for much bigger crowds. Jon Sumner, the leader for Boy Scouts of America in northern Michigan, was so impressed with the hatchery programs that he is willing to provide ushers, refreshments, and even an auditorium to put on interpretive programs for the public in a nearby community. This will be a new, innovative, and low cost way of advancing the mission, promoting USFWS programs and educating the public. The first pilot event is slated for this spring. Stay tuned.



*-Tim Smigielski*

### **Local Charter School Students Tour Jordan River NFH**

Fifteen fourth and fifth graders from Concord Academy Antrim toured the hatchery and experienced fin clipping on March 24. Some volunteer students lopped off the left pectoral fin from yearling Lake trout, while observing the annual project. The students were also treated to a special showing of the Tim Smigielski classic *Exotic Invaders* PowerPoint presentation. Many of the visitors asked well thought out questions and provided interesting observations in regard to aquatic nuisance species, hatchery operations, and lake trout restoration. The teachers and chaperones enjoyed the trip as well. Everyone learned a lot and had fun doing it.

*-Tim Smigielski*

### **Bob Petersen Attends National Wild Turkey Federation Event**

Maintenance Mechanic Bob Petersen from Jordan River NFH provided a display at a new National Wild Turkey Federation event in Petoskey, Michigan. The display introduced visitors to Great Lakes Lake trout restoration and fish culture. Thanks to Bob for his efforts in expanding

our partners and outreach opportunities.

*-Tim Smigielski*

### **St Mary's School Impressed With Jordan River NFH Outreach Programs**

Rod Bragg, teacher from St Mary's School in Gaylord, Michigan, was so impressed with the *Fish are Fun* presentations which he and his own children attended that he immediately scheduled tours for two of his classes that very same day. Rod, along with several interested parents and the 24 eighth graders, arrived at 9am on March 7. The visitors were treated to a tour, a fin clipping demonstration, and they enjoyed an oral presentation about recreational fishing and its connection to the hatchery and the Great Lakes. The second group, an afternoon class of juniors and seniors from the high school, toured the hatchery and were presented with information on careers in fisheries and the USFWS.

*-Tim Smigielski*

### ***Cooperation with Native Americans***

(Nothing to report).

### ***Leadership in Science and Technology***

#### **Great Lakes Fish Team Meeting Hosted by Jordan River National Fish Hatchery**

The Jordan River NFH staff hosted the USFWS Great Lakes Fish Team meeting February 7 and 8 in Traverse City, Michigan. Approximately 20 Service staff from the Region 3 Great Lakes Fisheries Program participated in the meeting. The annual meeting is extremely important to get a grasp on all the activities happening in the Great Lakes. As usual, the agenda was full, but we managed to get through it.

Topics discussed included administrative/budget, contracting, lake sturgeon, lake trout, sea lamprey, public outreach, upcoming March Congressional briefings, Great Lakes Restoration Act, U.S. vs. Michigan 2000 Consent Decree, National Fisheries training, and hatchery construction.



The day and a half long meeting was capped off by a tour of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy located on Grand Traverse Bay in Traverse City, Michigan. Service employees got an excellent

## ***Jordan River NFH, Jan. through Mar. 2006***



tour of the Academy's vessel, the *State of Michigan* (225 ft long), which was a Navy submarine surveillance ship named the *Persistent*.

*-Rick Westerhof*

### **Jordan River NFH Participates at the Lake Huron Technical Committee Meeting**

Rick Westerhof gave the Lake Huron Technical Committee an update on the Lake Huron Lake Trout Task Groups (LHTTG) latest activities. The LHTTG was charged with the following tasks: 1) 2005 Fall Sampling Spawning Lake Trout; 2) Parry Sound Evaluation Plan; 3) Study Plan Revisions; 4) Juvenile Lake Trout Monitoring Plan; 5) EMS Sampling Plan; 6) Southern Lake Huron Modeling and Status; 7) 2006 Lake Trout Stocking Sites; 8) 2005 Lake Trout Stocking Data, and 9) M/V Spencer F. Baird Update.

The LHTTG made progress on several of tasks, while others will be completed by the summer meeting. Members of the task group include Jim Johnson, MIDNR; Ji He, MIDNR; Lloyd Mohr, OMNR; Stephen Riley, USGS; Mark Ebener, CORA; Jerry McClain, FWS; Aaron Wolcott, FWS; and Rick Westerhof, FWS.

*-Rick Westerhof*

### **Another Splendid Week in Washington, DC**

Well, it was another splendid week (March 6-10) in Washington DC briefing Michigan members of Congress. A total of 13 offices were briefed on FWS activities in Michigan. They included the offices of Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow and Representatives Peter Hoekstra, Dave Camp, Joe Schwartz, Bart Stupak, Dave Kildeer, Mike Rogers, Sander Levin, John Dingell, Vernon Ehlers, Joe Knollenberg, and Carolyn Kilpatrick.

Service employees that gave briefings were: Curt Friez, Pendills Creek NFH; Mark Holey, Green Bay FRO; Jerry McClain, Alpena FRO; Bob Adair, Great Lakes Program Supervisor; and Rick Westerhof, Jordan River NFH. Overall, all the meetings went very well. We really appreciated the interest and time of all staffers, Representatives, and Senators that we met with. One of the highlights of the visit was seeing Region 3's new Secret Service agent – Tracy Hill in action. Just kidding he's not our new agent, but he certainly could have passed for one that day. Looking good!!

*-Rick Westerhof*

## ***Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management***

(Nothing to report).

## ***Workforce Management***

### **Hatchery Volunteer Receives Honors**

At one of the family-style potluck luncheons, which are standard at the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery, local resident and long time volunteer Dan Sutherland of Mancelona was recognized for his more than four thousand hours of service to the federal government. Dan, who began volunteer work at the hatchery in 1996, after a serious work related injury left him in need of rehabilitation, received the Secretarial and Presidential awards for his dedicated service. “Dan has become a very important part of our crew and he is a joy to be around because of his upbeat and positive attitude. His contributions are well respected by the entire staff,” explained hatchery manager Rick Westerhof. Dan’s favorite duty is assisting with the loading and delivery of lake trout in preparation for their release into Lakes Huron and Michigan.



*-Tim Smigielski*

### **Volunteer at Jordan River NFH “A Real Miracle”**

Andy Pavelek, a 32 year old man from Shelby Township, Michigan, started work as a volunteer at Jordan River NFH on February 14. Andy holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from Adrian College and was formerly a successful territory sales manager for a business in southeast Michigan.

Nearly four years ago, Andy was assaulted while visiting his brother in Chicago. He sustained a life-altering brain injury. Thankfully, Andy survived, but he was left with a major uphill battle as he could not walk or talk after the attack.

Andy’s is a remarkable story of courage, family support, and an incredibly strong will. As a result of his long rehabilitation and recovery, his career was ended, and his home and finances were lost to medical expenses. Through the support of his family and many friends, he was able



to take full advantage of medical advances and treatments. He beat the odds!

As part of his rehabilitation process, Andy has diversified his learning experiences at schools, hospitals, businesses and fitness centers, and now has wound up here at Jordan River. Andy is in great physical shape; he exercises regularly and loves the outdoor lifestyle. His positive attitude is contagious. He ran a marathon, participated in a cancer benefit mountain bike event, and most recently, on April 1, Andy ran a 5k with his brother in Chicago. Plus, he is just poison to his opponents on the pool and ping pong tables.

Andy is assisting with fish culture and some maintenance tasks at the hatchery. He is living on station and loves the area. Andy is doing a super job, and unless you were told, you would never, ever, guess that he couldn't walk or talk just three years ago.

*-Tim Smigielski*

### **Hocking College Student Completes his Internship at the Jordan River NFH**

Devin Tiell, of Tiffin, Ohio, interned at the Jordan River NFH from January 3 through March 9. He is enrolled in the Hocking College Aquaculture Program, which requires forty hours of hatchery intern work in addition to the standard coursework. He is interested in building his own hatchery to raise freshwater prawn for market. Devin was a great addition to our workforce, a quick study, and a pleasure to have around. He participated in and enjoyed all the aspects of cold water fish culture. His allegiance to the Ohio State University "Buckeyes" was his only shortcoming. Thanks, and good luck, Devin!



*-Tim Smigielski*

### **Assistant Project Leader Represents Jordan River NFH at NCTC Training**

In late February, Assistant Project Leader Denise Johnston attended training in the use of the Fisheries Information System (FIS) at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia. Denise frequently works with the system and was grateful for the opportunity to increase her knowledge and capabilities in FIS.

*-Tim Smigielski*



## **OSHA Training**

Biologist John Johnston attended the Collateral Duty Course for Other Federal Agencies from March 27 through April 3 at the University of Cincinnati. This course introduces collateral duty safety personnel to many OSHA workplace safety acts and enables the employee to recognize basic safety and health hazards in their own workplaces, and to assist agency safety and health officers with inspection and abatement efforts. A wide range of everyday safety aspects from personal protective equipment to blood borne pathogens were discussed with three very knowledgeable instructors. A mock work place safety inspection was conducted at a local motel's restaurant and break room, which was very informative. This training will allow John to perform inspections at other Fish and Wildlife Service offices if need be.



*-John Johnston*