

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jordan River NFH Accomplishment Report

Partnerships and Accountability

Getting By With A Little Help from Our Friends

Several years ago the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery adopted a two mile section of highway US131. This program, through the Michigan Department of Transportation, requests that three clean ups be made annually: April; July; and September. Normally it is an activity that the entire crew gets involved with, but the April clean up can be a challenge. The hatchery begins their annual distribution of lake trout in April, which involves hauling fish to various ports around Lakes Michigan and Huron. Most of our staff can be away from the hatchery involved in this important restoration effort.

Therefore we must look to alternative sources for participants to be involved in the clean up effort. On April 25th, ten high school students and the Director of the Concord Academy Antrim, four members from the East Jordan Snowmobile Club, and one member of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery Friends Group came to our rescue. Concord Academy Antrim Director, Kathy Schanski, has added the Adopt-a-Highway Program into their curriculum. Only students in good standing are allowed to participate in the clean up. With their assistance we were able to remove 26 large bags of debris from the roadside area. The group was treated to a hot dog roast for their efforts. Everyone understands the program's importance and has pledged their ongoing support.

- Clarice Beckner



Thanks to the East Jordan Snowmobile Club, Concord Academy Antrim, and the Friends of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery for their help with this year's first Adopt-a-Highway project. - Photo by Clarice Beckner

Earth Day 2007 Trail Cleanup Held April 21st

On Saturday of Earth Day weekend, East Jordan Cub Scout Pack 17 joined the Friends of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery, for the second year in a row, to do a good deed in the Jordan Valley. Scouts and Friends cleaned up litter and cleared downed trees and branches from the Friends Group's adopted 2.5 mile section of the Jordan River Pathway/North Country Trail. Through this act of stewardship the Scouts earned achievements in both hiking and trail clearing. Back at the hatchery, the Scouts enjoyed a lunch of hot dogs, Cub Scout Master Jon Sumner's



The Friends of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery - Photo by Peg Myers

famous beans and stew, and ice cream sundaes. The event ended with Biologist John Johnston leading a tour of the hatchery, including watching staff do sample counts of yearling lake trout to be stocked in Lake Michigan the following day.

Peg Myers-Treasurer, Friends of the Jordan River NFH

Jordan River NFH Staff Celebrate Earth Day with Partners

President of the Jordan River National Friends Group Bob MacCord and his wife, Liz, were on hand at the Michigan Department of Natural Resource's Oden State Fish Hatchery to celebrate Earth Day. Rick Westerhof, Project Leader from Jordan River National Fish Hatchery was there too. Together they applied hundreds of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "Trout" tattoos for the willing visitors. Bob, Liz and Rick spent the day telling the story of lake trout restoration, sea lamprey control, and the importance of friends organizations to USFWS Region 3 Hatcheries. The highlight of the day was a bald eagle attempting to catch excess broodstock from the display pond. Unfortunately, the eagle was unsuccessful as the fish are quite large. The Fish and Wildlife Service was well represented with Barry Matthews, volunteer from the Ludington Sea Lamprey Office there with live sea lampreys. Maureen Jacobs, coordinator of the Michigan Fisheries visitor center, provided a front and center location for the Jordan NFH display. Jordan River NFH staff has built a strong relationship with Maureen and the Oden SFH staff; another success for the Service.



Friends Group President Bob MacCord and wife Liz MacCord
- Photo by Michigan DNR, Oden State Fish Hatchery

-Tim Smigielski and Rick Westerhof

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Fish Marking Project Completed at Jordan River NFH

The 2006 year class of lake trout yearlings at Jordan River NFH has been marked with the lake-wide fin clip. The 2.2 million yearlings received a "double clip" this year. This means that two fins were removed, denoting the 2006 year class of hatchery fish. The clip, referred to as RPLV (right pectoral fin, left ventral fin) is used by resource agencies around the Great Lakes for age determination purposes. The project started in late January and was completed on April 2nd. The lake trout, when



Clipping a right pectoral fin

-Photo by Wayne Talo

recovered during assessment and creel census surveys, are referred to as "known age fish" and are identifiable as a hatchery introduced lake trout. During the clipping season, 9 to 13 fin clippers, worked seven hours a day to accomplish this task. Paul Haver, Fisheries Biologist at Jordan River NFH, provided much of the coordination and leadership necessary to complete the project successfully. Thanks to all for another year of clipping fins.

-Tim Smigielski

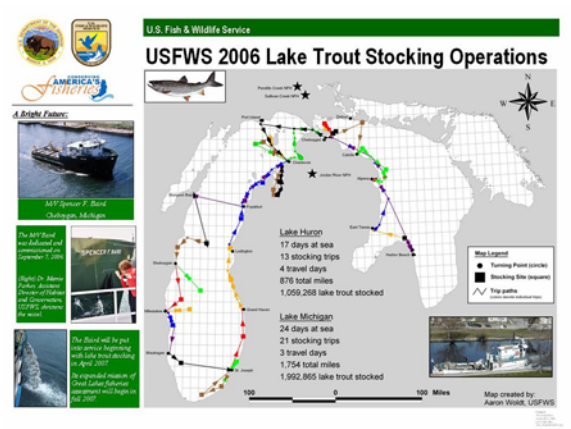
Jordan River NFH Staff Battles Dissolved Oxygen Problems

Jordan River NFH rears approximately two million lake trout yearlings for native lake trout rehabilitation in lakes Huron and Michigan. This spring the hatchery has slightly more fish on station. The fish are now about 5-7 inches and 10-12 fish per pound. A sudden spring warm up with temperatures in the upper seventies raised the water's temperature, reducing its capacity to hold oxygen, while simultaneously increasing the biological demand for oxygen. Staff monitored oxygen levels and determined that the situation was critical, especially with the hatchery at high loadings and another week until it would be Jordan River's turn to stock fish. Oxygen levels were as low as 4.5 to 5 parts per million during part of the day between April 18th and April 24th. Staff installed reflective tarp over the water intakes to reduce temperature spikes, put micropore stones (additional oxygen) in some of the raceways, manipulated water in the outside raceways, did not feed fish or clean raceways for three days and quickly ushered visitors away from the fish to prevent additional stress. While many staff was on the road busy stocking fish, Project Leader Rick Westerhof really earned his keep, monitoring oxygen levels and keeping a close eye out for stressed fish. Fortunately, a change in the stocking schedule allowed Jordan River NFH to release some fish early and reduce loadings at the hatchery. As a result of the efforts, no fish were lost during this emergency.

-Tim Smigielski and Rick Westerhof

Alpena FRO and Jordan River NFH Collaborate on 2006 Stocking Poster

It all started in 2003 when current 1836 Treaty Coordinator with Alpena FRO, Aaron Woldt, developed the first GIS map displaying the complexity of the offshore lake trout stocking program. Since that time, the Togue crew, which is now the Baird crew, supplies the trip data and other relevant information. Fish Biologist Tim Smigielski from Jordan River assists with coordination of the effort and Aaron Woldt updates and prints the map. Together, this year, another interpretive poster was displayed at the Upper/Lower Lakes meeting in Ypsilanti, Michigan the week of March 19th. Alpena



Map created by Aaron Woldt, USFWS, Alpena, MI

FRO staff and Jordan River staff continue to develop collaborative efforts, in order to advance the mission of the USFWS in Region 3.

- Aaron Woldt and Tim Smigielski

Jordan River NFH Staff Attend Upper Lakes Meeting

Rick Westerhof, Project Leader, and Tim Smigielski, Lead Fishery Biologist with Jordan River NFH were in attendance for the 2007 Upper/Lower Lakes meetings held in Ypsilanti, Michigan the week on March 19th. Jordan staff were particularly interested in the State of the Lake Reports for Lakes Huron and Michigan. The reports were very informative and well done. The conference is coordinated by the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission. While there, Tim also participated in the Lake Michigan Technical Committee lake trout task group meeting.

-Tim Smigielski

Public Use

Jordan River NFH Winter “Fish are Fun” had “Standing Room Only”

On March 29th the last in the series of winter outreach programs at Jordan River NFH showcased the Sea Lamprey Control Program and its connection to the lake trout program. Tim Smigielski, Lead Fisheries Biologist from Jordan River NFH, developed the series to provide more outreach opportunities for the public, during the long northern Michigan winters. Jeff Slade, Biologist from Ludington Biological Station, provided excellent images and materials, which really made the event a huge success. Approximately 60 youngsters and parents attended “Vampires of the Great Lakes”. This is another shining example of cross program cooperation success in Region 3 Fisheries. Thanks, Jeff, for all your help.

-Tim Smigielski

Jordan River NFH Fishery Biologist Speaks to Young Authors

Fishery Biologist Tim Smigielski from Jordan River NFH was a guest speaker at the annual "Young Authors Day" at Shanty Creek Resort in Bellaire, Michigan. Tim spoke to the group of 15 aspiring writers about scientific writing. The students, primarily fifth and sixth graders from Mancelona Schools, chose to attend Tim's presentation from a list of other speakers. Tim explained the main differences between scientific writing and other types of writing; such as creative writing. He also presented a PowerPoint slide show on Great Lakes



Fisheries Biologist Tim Smigielski presents fish anatomy to some aspiring young authors - Photo by USFWS

salmon and trout identification; a topic that they may choose to write about in the future.

-Tim Smigielski

Students from Bellaire High School Tour Jordan River NFH

On April 30th, John Johnston, Fish Biologist, provided a tour of the hatchery. Rick Westerhof, Project Leader, provided a discussion on environmental issues pertaining to the surrounding watershed. The discussion covered geology, hydrology, soils and land use, water quality, biological communities, fisheries management and recreational use. The group, 25 juniors and seniors from a local high school environmental education class, loved the grounds and the informative presentation. Thanks John and Rick.

-Tim Smigielski

Cooperation with Native Americans

(Nothing to report).

Leadership in Science and Technology

(Nothing to report).

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Annual Settling Basin Maintenance Completed at Jordan River NFH

In late April, Maintenance Mechanic Bob Petersen and Biologist John Johnston worked on “One of the Dirtiest Jobs in America”. It certainly looks like the guys are not having fun, but we know deep down inside their reminiscing about playing in the “mud” as a little kid. It is odiferous and messy, but it is sorely needed after a long winter of fish propagation. Jordan River’s discharge permit requires an annual cleaning of the water treatment basin. Bob finds it easier to do three times a year. The basin works most efficiently when clean (small quantity of its



Maintenance Mechanic Bob Petersen and Fisheries Biologist John Johnston cleaning the settling basins.
- Photo by Clarice Beckner

Jordan River NFH, Feb. through Apr. 2007



capacity in use). Thanks Bob and John for another job well done.

-Tim Smigielski and Rick Westerhof

Workforce Management

Animal Caretaker at Jordan River NFH is Real Life 007

Certainly “awesome” is at times an over used word. In this case it is really meaningful. Ray Puroll, a local resident from Bellaire, Michigan, has been assisting the hatchery staff with fish culture duties, fish distribution activities, public outreach events, fin clipping and various other duties as assigned. Ray works weekends when the hatchery is operating at maximum loading. He cleans and feeds primarily the outdoor raceways, caring for 2 million lake trout yearlings while the permanent staff person cares for the 3.5 million fry in the hatchery. Ray is a single parent who works up to three jobs during the year to support his family. Ray has two wonderful children, Megan, age 11 and Dylan, age 9. He is a great dad to his kids and just a fun guy to be around. Ray really bails out the hatchery staff when they are spread thin during distribution. For this spring, in particular, he has been our rock since there had been two to three staff on the road and one staff on the M/V Baird so far this distribution season. Ray is our 007, the James Bond of Jordan River, always completing the mission ... and with a style all his own. Thanks, Ray!



Ray Puroll

- Photo by USFWS

-Tim Smigielski