

IR3

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Inside Region 3

October 22, 2004



**# 545 - Secretary Norton Unveils
Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge**

Hamden Slough Recognized By Audubon Society

Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge has become one of three areas in Minnesota selected for Important Bird Area status by the Audubon Society of Minnesota. The refuge joins the elite status of the other two Minnesota areas: Hawk's Ridge near Duluth and the peregrine falcon rookeries on the north shore of Lake Superior. The Important Bird Area program is part of an international effort to identify, and help protect, critical habitats for birds.

The refuge lies along a glacial ridge which is a transition line between prairie, broadleaf forest, and pineland. Bird species from the three different vegetative communities overlap on the refuge. The refuge supports an abundance of bird species of conservation concern, including: bitterns, northern harriers, marbled godwits, Wilson's phalarope, grasshopper and LeConte's sparrows, prairie chickens, and bobolinks. Hamden Slough Refuge was established in 1989, after multiple state and federal agencies noted the loss of wild-

life abundance in the historic Hamden Lake area.

Refuge Manager Mike Murphy stated that upland and wetland restoration began in 1991, and the response by prairie species, shorebirds and waterfowl has been explosive. Murphy noted that the refuge has again become a "hot spot" for regional bird watchers.

To qualify for IBA status, an area must qualify in at least one of four bird abundance categories; these include: 1) significant concentrations of breeding or migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, marsh birds or raptors; 2) a concentration of endangered, threatened or species of special concern; 3) rare, threatened or unique habitat; or 4) long-term research or monitoring value.

Murphy stated that the refuge staff and volunteers were delighted that the refuge qualified in three of the four categories. He noted that the dedicated refuge staff, volunteers, youth groups and the sentence-to-serve program has made a major difference for wildlife in western Minnesota.

TSP Open Season: Oct. 15 – Dec. 31, 2004

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season is your chance to start or change the amount of your contributions to your TSP account. The following are open season highlights:

- Changes completed prior to Dec. 11, 2004 will take effect the first pay period in December (Dec. 12).
- FERS maximum contribution is increased to 15 percent.
- CSRS maximum contribution is increased to 10 percent.
- If you are turning 50 or older in 2005 and plan to elect catch-up contributions in 2005, you must increase your contributions to 15 percent for FERS and 10 percent for CSRS.
- Contribution percent changes must be made via Employee Express.
- Allocation changes must be made with the TSP Service Office.

Questions related to TSP should be directed to the Region 3 Human Resources Office at 612-713-5230.

About the cover:



- USFWS Photo by Chuck Traxler

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty unveil the new Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge sign as a press conference at the Minnesota State Capitol, Oct. 12. *Read the full story on page 4.*

Midwest Artists Take Top 3 in Duck Stamp Competition

Midwest wildlife artists garnered the top three places at this year's Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest in Washington D.C. Mark Anderson, from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, won this year's contest with an acrylic painting of two male hooded mergansers. Jim Hautman, from Chaska, Minnesota, finished in second place and Don Moore from Monona, Wisconsin, finished third.

Anderson's entry bested 223 other entries and will grace the 2005-2006 Federal Duck Stamp, which goes on sale July 1, 2005. The sale of Federal Duck Stamps raises approximately \$25 million each year to fund waterfowl habitat acquisition for the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Federal Duck Stamp Contest is the nation's longest running federally sponsored art competition.

Photos of the top three entries are available on the Internet at <http://duckstamps.fws.gov>.

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

Assistant Secretary Meets Partners, Tours Project Sites in Wisconsin and Michigan

Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management, and Budget Lynn Scarlett visited Region 3 on October 14 and 15.

Scarlett toured several Service project sites in Wisconsin and Michigan to meet our partners, gain a better understanding our mission and to talk with media.

The Wisconsin leg of the tour was led by staff from Leopold Wetland Management District and included stops at several project sites, along with the presentation of a \$1 million North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant to Ducks Unlimited for the Lake Winnebago and Rush Lake Restoration Initiative. Assistant Secretary Scarlett took a boat tour of the Rush Lake project site and taped a segment for the Wisconsin TV show "It's Your Environment."

The following day, Scarlett traveled to Michigan to discuss ongoing projects with staff from the East Lansing Ecological Services Office and the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Scarlett toured



- USFWS Photo by Colette Charbonneau
Assistant Secretary Lynn Scarlett present a \$1 million check to Ducks Unlimited Regional Biologist John Coluccy for DU's restoration work on Lake Winnebago and Rush Lake.

Humbug Marsh, part of the Detroit River Refuge, and met with several partner groups to discuss conservation along the river.

Scarlett also had the opportunity to visit Belle Isle and talk with staff from the Alpena Fishery Resources Office about lake sturgeon restoration and conduct an editorial board with Detroit Free Press before returning to Washington. *Georgia Parham, External Affairs*

Hail & Farewell

Region 3 is a dynamic organization. Quality employees are continuously coming to the region or leaving for new challenges.

Each month, we will do our best to publish a list of new employees, as well as those who have retired. Names are provided by the regional Human Resources Office.

This month, we welcome the following new term, temporary and student employees: **Diane M. Allen**, Mingo Job Corps Center; **Melinda G. Gatzke**, Mingo Job Corps Center; **Chad Pollock**, Columbia FO; **Timothy W. Edison**, Missouri Private Lands Office; **Bobbie L. Hjelmgren**, Necedah NWR; **Cliff Dean Wilson**, Columbia FRO; **Brian J. Bennett**, Columbia FRO; and, **Christopher D. Pollentier**, Upper Mississippi River NWFR - LaCrosse District.

We bid farewell and say thank you to the following retirees: **Theodore M. Schultz Jr.**, Regional Office Realty; and, **Dianne S. Benson**, Regional Office Human Resources.

Refuge Law Enforcement Officers Discover an Intoxicating Problem

The Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, McGregor District, recently announced the results from a Boat Sobriety – Safety check point on the refuge. The check point, a cooperative venture between refuge officers and Iowa Department of Natural Resource wardens, was set-up within a refuge side channel near Guttenberg, Iowa.

Assistant District Manager Clyde Male, who organized the federal component of this operation, stated that 44 boats were stopped and checked; 11 percent of all boat operators encountered during this operation were legally impaired.

Officer Male went on to say that even though the sample size was small, the conclusions have real implications. "One out of 10 operators being impaired by alcohol or other drugs on the Mississippi River is reason for concern," he said.

Stan Blair, veteran river warden with the Iowa DNR, said the operation probably did not demonstrate the magnitude of the alcohol problem on the river. "First, the operation was not set up on

the main channel where the vast majority of boaters operate," he said. "Second, the check point area was purposely well marked." Word of the operation quickly spread and the boating public avoided the area. *Clyde Male, Upper Miss. NWFR*



- USFWS Photo
Service and Iowa DNR law enforcement officers at a sobriety - safety check point in the Upper Mississippi River Refuge.

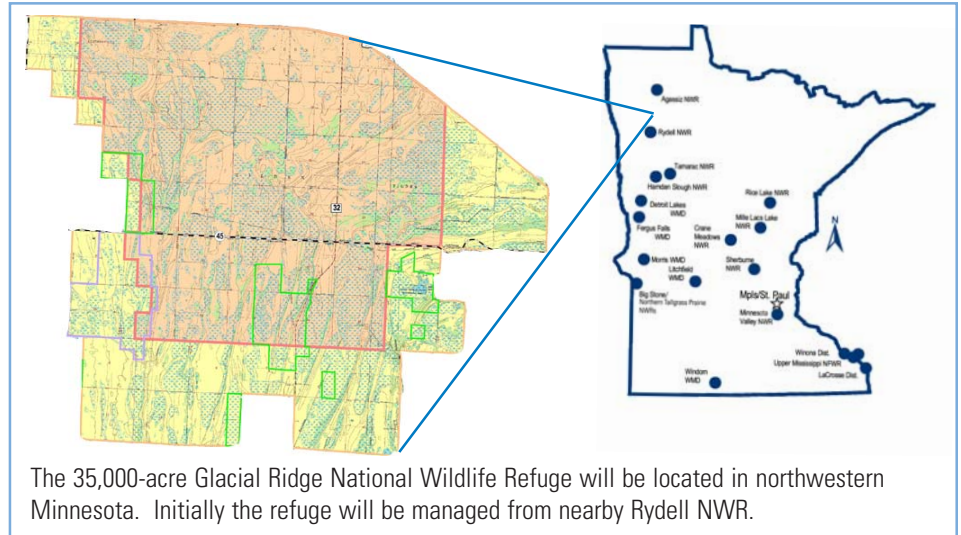
Glacial Ridge Becomes 545th National Wildlife Refuge

Thirty-five thousand acres of wetland and tallgrass prairie habitat in Minnesota has become the nation's newest National Wildlife Refuge as a result of action taken, Oct. 12, by Interior Secretary Gale Norton and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams, moving forward the largest tallgrass prairie and wetland restoration project in history. The area designated as Glacial Ridge becomes the 545th refuge in the National Wildlife Refuge System

The new Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge, located near Crookston, in northwest Minnesota's Polk County, will become a major waterfowl breeding and nesting area. The refuge will provide critical habitat for declining grassland birds, greater prairie chickens, sandhill cranes and other wildlife, as well as the endangered western prairie fringed orchid.

Currently, less than 1 percent of Minnesota's original prairie habitat is still in existence. By granting permanent refuge status, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will join numerous partners in continuing one of the largest wetlands and tallgrass prairie restoration projects in U.S. history. Secretary Norton announced the decision at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul after flying over the new refuge earlier in the day with Governor Tim Pawlenty. The Nature Conservancy will donate about 2,000 acres of land that will become the first parcel of the new Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge. The Nature Conservancy will formally transfer the land on October 26 at an event in Crookston.

"It's been a great pleasure to see this project come to fruition," said Ron Nargang, State Director of The Nature Conservancy in Min-



The 35,000-acre Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge will be located in northwestern Minnesota. Initially the refuge will be managed from nearby Rydell NWR.

nesota. "It has been one of the finest examples of partnership I've ever been associated with. More than 30 entities have contributed to its success. This is a classic example of cooperative conservation."

The Fish and Wildlife Service is now allowed to acquire lands located within the refuge boundary either through donation or purchase from willing sellers. Funding for additions to the refuge, estimated to be between \$3 million and \$4 million over the next decade, will come from fees generated through the existing Federal Duck Stamp Program.

This announcement is the culmination of a four-year review of this proposal and celebrates National Wildlife Refuge Week. The new refuge has the strong support of Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, the entire Minnesota congressional delegation and many state and local officials. In addition to The Nature Conservancy, project partners include the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the Minne-

sota Waterfowl Association.

Over the last 30 years, much of the proposed refuge area has been drained or converted for agricultural purposes. One of the goals of this refuge is to restore up to 12,000 acres of wetlands and 14,000 acres of tallgrass prairie upland habitat. To date, the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) has provided funding to restore 13,000 acres of wetlands.

Of the 35,000 acres that will eventually make up the refuge, 24,140 acres are currently owned by The Nature Conservancy. The remaining acres are owned by private landowners and/or managed by the State of Minnesota.

The Nature Conservancy has established an endowment fund that will allow local governments to continue to receive the full value of property taxes currently paid on the private property.

Initially, the new Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge will be managed by staff from the Rydell National Wildlife Refuge, located eight miles south of Glacial Ridge, in Erskine, Minn. *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs and Tom Worthington, Refuges.*

Genoa Fish Hatchery Helps Walleye Fishing Champs Save Walleyes

For the third year in a row, the Masters Walleye Circuit held its world championship of walleye fishing at Pools 9 and 10 on the Mississippi River in southwest Wisconsin.

Over the years, competitive fishing tournaments have been blamed for causing undue stress to the fish population and returning caught fish to locations many miles away from the habitat in which they were caught. The Falling Rock Walleye Club, a local group of sportspersons, asked the Genoa National Fish Hatchery staff to participate in the live-release portion of this year's tournament to monitor activities so that fish were released with the most amount of care possible to help ensure their survival and safe return to their native habitat.

Only the nation's top walleye anglers are asked to participate in the World Walleye Championship event, and this year, more than 45 teams were invited. During the four-day

tournament, the pros caught more than 200 fish.

After the fish were weighed, the Genoa National Fish Hatchery staff was on-hand to promptly take possession of the fish, check their health and quickly place them in the hatchery's 450-gallon distribution tank to help the fish recover. The fish were then taken back to the river and released in two separate locations.

Approximately 250 people were at the event on the last day of weigh-ins held at the Cabela's store in Prairie du Chien, Wis. This co-



- USFWS Photo

Staff from Genoa NFH were on-hand at a professional walleye fishing tournament to ensure fish caught during the tournament were safely returned to their river habitat.

operative effort between sportspersons and the Service should help conserve local populations of walleye, and also provide a useful tool in reaching people with a conservation ethic message during a competitive fishing event.

Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH

Northwest Minnesota Stations Get an Early Start on Refuge Week



- USFWS Photo

Dave Davis, Detroit Lakes WMD, helps future conservationists assemble a bluebird nesting box as "Puddles" the blue goose supervises.

The Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District hosted the "Blue Goose Festival" on Sept. 25, kicking off a week of cooperative activities as part of an early celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week. The Detroit Lakes WMD staff, Hamden Slough NWR staff, Tamarac NWR staff, the Friends of Detroit Lakes WMD, Detroit Lakes schools, and numerous other volunteers worked cooperatively to bring a week's worth of outreach activities to the Detroit Lakes area communities.

More than 300 people attended the festival and enjoyed a variety of hands-on activities at the Wetland District headquarters centered around the "Conservation in Ac-

tion" theme; with a further focus on migratory birds in the Refuge System.

The University of Minnesota Raptor Center presented a formal program featuring a bald eagle, red-tailed hawk, great-horned owl, and peregrine falcon.

The Friends of Detroit Lakes WMD sponsored the majority of activities and covered most of the monetary costs associated with the event.

The event was advertised and tied to the following week's activities which included displays at a local mall, a tour of Hamden Slough NWR, and the Tamarac Fall Fest the following Saturday. *Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD*

Six Refuges Combine Resources to Get the Job Done at Two Rivers NWR

Led by Two River Refuge Wildlife Biologist Ken Dalrymple, maintenance workers and equipment from six refuges across the region combined their skills, abilities, and efforts to complete a long awaited dike rehabilitation project on Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge last month.

The Calhoun Moist Soil Unit dike had served its purpose well for more than 40 years, but decades of muskrat and beaver burrowing, combined with several floods, had taken their toll. During the past five years the dike had been “band-aided” more times than a second-grade soccer team.

Two bull dozers and a road grader were loaned from other refuges, and heavy equipment operators from five other refuges rotated through the month-long project to complete the tasks necessary to turn the dilapidated dike into a safer, more functional structure.

Work included stripping the existing levee of vegetation, cleaning



- USFWS Photo

Mark Eldredge (left) from Port Louisa NWR and Fred Nienke from Two River NWR survey their progress on the new dike construction.

three feet of sediment out of the original borrow ditch, filling the ditch with firmer earthen fill, placing more than 20,000 cubic yards of earthen fill on the inside slope of the dike, sloping the dike to a 5:1 ratio for safe and proper maintenance, replacing the stop-log structure, and finally, planting grass seed on the finished dike.

Two 18-cubic-yard scrapers with operators were contracted to move on-site borrow material, while refuge operators and equipment

placed and shaped the material. The wetland habitat unit was enlarged and enhanced by taking the fill material from the periphery of the unit, thus increasing the wetted area. The end result is a wider, well constructed dike with a 5:1 slope that will be much more rodent resistant, as well as easier and safer to maintain.

Thanks go to Allan Lagemann from Great Rivers NWR, Mark Eldredge from Port Louisa NWR, John Killburg from the Upper Mississippi NW&FR, Bob

Espelend from Crab Orchard NWR, and Fred Nienke from Two Rivers NWR. Thanks also to Illinois River NWR for loaning their bull dozer, and to John Dobrovolny, Doug Johnson and Clark Bartelt of the Regional Office for NEPA coordination, and contracting for scrapers with operators.

This completed project is yet another fine example of combining refuge resources in order to accomplish our mission. *John Mabery, Two Rivers NWR*

Carterville FRO Staff Begin Pre-Restoration Study on Mississippi River

Wing dikes, as part of the nine-foot channel system in the Mississippi River, have redirected water flow towards the navigation channel, causing the constriction of the river channel and creating a homogenous pattern of sediment that limits the quality, quantity, and diversity of aquatic habitat types in the river.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has proposed dike alterations within the Red Rock reach of the middle Mississippi River designed to increasing habitat diversity in this area. The Red Rock reach is a seven-mile stretch of the river located approximately eight miles down-

stream from Chester, Ill. Construction of these dike alterations is expected to begin in 2005 or 2006.

The Carterville Fishery Resources Office, in consultation with the Marion Ecological Services Office, has begun limited pre-project data collection on habitat use by sturgeon in the Red Rock reach. Field sampling was conducted monthly from July through September 2004.

Data collected from this project will be used to determine the effects of the Corps restoration project. *Nathan Caswell, Carterville FRO*



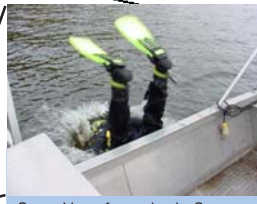
- USFWS Photo

Carterville FRO Fishery Technician Ray Wild removes a shovelnose sturgeon from a gill nest during field sampling in the Red Rock reach of the Mississippi River.

Around the Region



- USFWS Photo by Kelly Blackledge
A reporter from the Fargo Forum talks with Tamarac NWR Biologist Lowell Deede during an early morning duck banding event held at Hamden Slough NWR for Refuge week.



Scott Yess from the LaCrosse FRO takes a plunge into the St. Croix River to search for zebra mussels.



- USFWS Photo by Joanie Moore
Jordan River Hatchery Manager Rick Westerhof participates in a radio interview on Oldies 101.5 from Gaylord, Mich.



Genoa NFH and Twin Cities FO staff tag and measure Higgins' eye pearlymussels prior to stocking them in the Mississippi River.



- USFWS Photo by R. Andrew King
A female gray bat captured during a survey at the Indiana Army Ammunition Plant. The Bloomington ES Field Office is surveying bats at the site as part of the Army's Endangered Species Management Plan.



- USFWS Photo by Rob Simmonds
Carterville FRO Fishery Biologist Corey Wrasse determines the age of fish collected at the Swan Lake Habitat Restoration Project site as part of a study to determine if the fish population is improving.

Fall Travelers Remind Us Conservation Doesn't End at the Boundary Marker

By Steve Delehanty, Morris WMD Project Leader.

Some people say there are two seasons in Minnesota: winter and road construction. But really, there are two far more majestic seasons: spring migration and fall migration. Birds tell the story of the seasons and there is little in this world more inspiring than flocks of birds, large and small, moving across the continent on their annual migrations. Think of the extraordinary concept. It takes a little of the sting from the mocking phrase “bird brain.” These marvelous creatures know when it is time to go and then they have the ability to move thousands of miles with uncanny navigation skills to reach their destination.

Of course, not all birds migrate. At its most basic level, migration is a compromise between the rigors of migration and the bird's need for food and space to reproduce. If a bird can find the necessary food and shelter to survive a Minnesota winter, it normally stays in the area year-round. These birds have a head start come spring for choice breeding habitat and they don't need to go through the dangers of migration. Many of our seed eating birds tough out the winter in Minnesota simply because they can; their food is still available through the winter. Many other species depend on open water, insects, or snow-free landscapes to find food. These species migrate in order to take advantage of abundant breeding habitat in the north while retreating each fall to a more suitable winter climate.

The mechanisms of migration are fascinating. Some birds gain considerable weight in early fall. They burn these fat reserves on marathon nonstop flights of hundreds of miles. When they arrive at some

resting point, exhausted and sometimes literally starving, it is important that they have access to abundant food to quickly regain their energy. Flights across large water bodies like the Great Lakes or the Gulf of Mexico are particularly stressful for small birds but they accomplish these flights twice each year, nonstop. Other bird species are more deliberate in their migration, slowly drifting south over the course of many weeks.

Most birds that migrate from Minnesota go south for the winter. The major wintering areas for birds that nest in Minnesota are the southern states around the Gulf coast, Mexico, Central America, and South America. Most of our waterfowl winter in Mexico and the southern United States around the Mississippi Delta and the coastal marshlands. One exception is the tundra swan; these birds migrate through Minnesota from west to east on their way to winter on Chesapeake Bay. Minnesota even serves as preferred winter habitat for some migratory birds such as the snow buntings that migrate to Minnesota each year from the far north.

The nature of migration tells us that conservation is a global issue. It is not enough for one state or even one nation to conserve its natural resources because many natural resources, including migratory birds, are influenced by factors occurring in more than one country. For example, one of the rarely discussed implications of the annually increasing cropland acres in South America is that bird habitat is being destroyed there at a rapid rate. And it isn't just affecting their birds because their birds



- USFWS Photo

Morris WMD Project Leader Steve Delehanty with previous Morris Project Leaders Jim Hubert (left) and Al Radtke (right) at the dedication of the Centennial WPA.

are our birds. The same bobolink that sings from your meadow in June is living in South America in January. Just as the conversion of many North American prairies and forests to farmland a century or more ago created a massive shift in wildlife abundance, the transition of South American forests and prairies to farmland will also affect wildlife, including birds that nest in Minnesota. It isn't likely that humans will be able to simply leave all natural habitats alone so it is important that we consider the needs of birds and other wildlife as we make changes to the natural world. Perhaps it means modifying some farming practices or leaving certain critical blocks of habitat unaltered. The more thoughtful we are when we make changes to the land, the more likely it is that birds will continue to amaze and delight us with their inspiring annual migrations.

Editor's Note: This article was originally written for a local newspaper and is reprinted here IR3 with Steve's permission.

Accomplishment Reports

The following accomplishments reports were processed between Sep. 15 and Oct. 15, 2004:

1. Genoa Hatchery Staff Conduct Iowa Mussel Survey and Relocation, *Tony Brady, Genoa NFH*
2. Ashland Fishery Office Continues With Fall Walleye Surveys, *Frank Stone, Ashland FRO*
3. Small Lake Sturgeon Occupy Unique Habitats in the St. Clair River, *James Boase, Alpena FRO*
4. Fourth Group of Endangered Whooping Cranes Departs on Ultralight-guided Flight to Florida, *Rachel Levin, External Affairs*
5. Squaw Creek Refuge Hosts National Animal Call Expert, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
6. Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge Approved by Director Williams, *Tom Worthington, Refuges&Wildlife*
7. Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge Established in Minnesota, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
8. Squaw Creek Refuge Participates in The Big Sit, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
9. 850 Attend Wildlife Festival at Sherburne Refuge, *Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR*
10. Detroit Lakes Students Learn About Orienteering, *Les Peterson, Detroit Lakes WMD*
11. Midwest Artists Sweep 2004 Federal Duck Stamp Contest, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
12. Spawning Spectators at Sullivan Creek, *Tracy Roessner, Pendills Creek NFH*
13. Fischer Wetland Partners for Fish and Wildlife Project Completed, *Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO*
14. Neohso National Fish Hatchery's Friends Group Hosts Annual Picnic, *David Hendrix, Neosho NFH*
15. Tamarac Refuge Celebrates National Wildlife Refuge Week, *Kelly Blackledge, Tamarac NWR*
16. Missouri River Restoration Projects, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
17. Refuge Participates in Missouri River Learning Celebration, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
18. Streamlined Cell Tower Process Conserves Migratory Birds in Missouri, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
19. Higgins Eye Recovery in Action on The Upper Miss, *Tony Brady, Genoa NFH*
20. Remnant Prairie Parcel Important for Orchid Recovery, *Rick Nelson, Rock Island FO*
21. Chicago Field Office Represents the Service at Special Events, *Cyndi Duda, Chicago FO*
22. Indiana I-69 Project Kept Bloomington Field Office Bustling in Fiscal year 2004, *Andy King, Bloomington FO*
23. Service Contributes to Indiana's Antidegradation Policy, *Thomas Simon, Bloomington FO*
24. Students Learned While Having Fun at Non-Native Species Awareness Day, *Gregg Baldwin, Marquette Bio Station*
25. GIS Support We Can All Relate To, *Jane Lardy-Nelson, Refuges&Wildlife*
26. Hamden Slough Refuge Selected for Audubon's IBA Status, *Michael Murphy, Hamden Slough NWR*
27. Students Learn Through Hands-on Aquatic Ecology Class, *Gregg Baldwin, Marquette Bio Station*
28. Educators And Public Attend Wetland Education Fair, *Gregg Baldwin, Marquette Bio Station*
29. Red River Water Festival Reaches 1,800 Students, *Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD*
30. Chicago Field Office Provides Teacher Training Regarding Wetlands, Watersheds and Water Quality, *Cyndi Duda, Chicago FO*
31. Conservation Planning Office Provides GIS Support on Comprehensive Conservation Plans, *Jane Lardy-Nelson, Refuges&Wildlife*
32. Patoka River Brine Study Finds Surprising Results, *Thomas Simon, Bloomington FO*
33. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service Divers Monitor the St. Croix River, *Scott Yess, LaCrosse FRO*
34. Fisheries Operations Needs for Alpena Fishery Office, *Susan Wells, Alpena FRO*
35. Carterville Fishery Office Monitors Fisheries Response to Swan Lake Project, *colby wrasse, Carterville FRO*
36. Research Finds Tributaries Will Not Provide Restoration Relief for White River Fish Kill, *Thomas Simon, Bloomington FO*
37. Coastal Wetland Indicators Completed for Great Lakes, *Thomas Simon, Bloomington FO*
38. Chicago Field Office Provides Guest Speakers for Metro Area Schools, *Cyndi Duda, Chicago FO*
39. Chicago Field Office Assists Students with Environmental Field Studies, *Cyndi Duda, Chicago FO*
40. September Construction Non-Stop for Alpena FRO Partners Program, *Heather Entertine, Alpena FRO*
41. Lake Huron and St. Marys River Surveyed to Detect New Populations of Aquatic Nuisance Species, *Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO*
42. Carterville Fishery Office Performs Essential Role in MICRA National Paddlefish Stock Assessment, *Greg Conover, Carterville FRO*
43. Sedimentation Issues in Hoosier National Forest Being Inventoried, *Thomas Simon, Bloomington FO*
44. Warsaw Treatment Plant Discharge Threatens Endangered Clubshell Mussel, *Thomas Simon, Bloomington FO*
45. Six Refuges Pitch In To Overhaul Dike and Enhance Habitat, *John Mabery, Two Rivers NWR*
46. Young of the Year and Juvenile Sturgeon Sample Find Big Numbers, *Corey Lee, Columbia FRO*
47. 2003 Summary of Pallid Sturgeon Monitoring Efforts, *Wyatt Doyle, Columbia FRO*
48. Chicago Office Hand Pollinates Flowers of the Federally Threatened Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid, *Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO*
49. Endangered Species Outreach-News Releases, *Georgia Parham, External Affairs*
50. Progress Continues on Cohasset Oil Spill Natural Resource Restoration, *Annette Troubridge, Twin Cities FO*
51. NRDA and NEPA Outreach-News Releases, *Georgia Parham, External Affairs*
52. High School Students Learn About Fisheries, *Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO*
53. Service Begins Propagation Planning to Prevent Extinction of Tumbling Creek Cavesnail, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
54. Completion of FY 2004 Data Entry to BFO Performance Measures Worksheets, *Angela Keith, Bloomington FO*
55. External Affairs Supports Public Meetings on Proposed Wolf Delisting in Madison, Wis., *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
56. Chicago Field Office Partners for Fish and Wildlife Projects Initiated during Fiscal Year 2004, *Michael Redmer, Chicago FO*
57. Service Funded Study Improves Conservation for the Massasauga Rattlesnake in Missouri, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
58. Decurrent False Aster Status to be Updated, *Rick Nelson, Rock Island FO*
59. Significant New Populations of Virginia Sneezeweed Discovered in Missouri, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
60. Potential Impacts to Hines's Emerald Dragonfly and Gray Bat From Bridge Project Averted, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
61. Reclassification of Missouri Bladderpod, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
62. Chicago Field Office Participates in State Amphibian-Reptile Advisory Committee, *Michael Redmer, Chicago FO*
63. Chicago Field Office Provides Technical Assistance to City of Chicago, *Eduard Kavrecki, Chicago FO*
64. Hands-On Duck Banding for the Media, *Kelly Blackledge, Tamarac NWR*
65. Jordan River Hatchery Rockin' to the Oldies?, *Timothy Smigielski, Jordan River NFH*
66. Blue Goose Fest Kicks off Refuge Week in Detroit Lakes, *Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD*
67. Blue Goose Festival Kicks Off Sept 25 in Northwestern Minnesota, *Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD*
68. Creation/Implementation of BFO FY 2004 Travel Expense Tracking Database, *Angela Keith, Bloomington FO*
69. More Than 850 Students Attend Environmental Education Days at Sherburne Refuge, *Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR*
70. Region 6 Hydrologist Visits Northern Lower Michigan, *Susan Wells, Alpena FRO*
71. Service Biologist Co-Chairs Modeling Subcommittee Meeting for 1836 Treaty Waters, *Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO*
72. Completion of FY 2004 OALS for Bloomington Field Office, *Angela Keith, Bloomington FO*
73. Alpena FRO Assists Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority with Walleye Assessments in 1836 Treaty Waters, *Scott Koproski, Alpena FRO*
74. Columbia Field Office Helps Host the 8th Annual Missouri River Natural Resources Conference, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
75. Columbia Field Office and Corps Make Progress on Interior Least Tern Conservation, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
76. Sail Your Way to Aquatic Education, *Susan Wells, Alpena FRO*
77. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Joins WOW!, *Charles Scott, Columbia FO*
78. Wisconsin Private Lands Technical Session - 2004, *Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO*
79. Comprehensive Conservation Plan Completed For Illinois River NW&FR, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
80. Comprehensive Conservation Plan Completed for Mark Twain Refuge Complex, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
81. Carterville Fishery Office Begins Data Collection for Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Project, *Nathan Caswell, Carterville FRO*
82. U.S. Highway 131 Comes Clean, *Rick Westerhof, Jordan River NFH*
83. Recently Completed Plan Maps Future Direction of Minnesota Valley NWR, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
84. The Green Bay Fishery Resources Office Assists with Culvert Replacement on Brehmer Creek, *Stewart Cogswell, Green Bay FRO*
85. Federal Assistance Provides Training at Aquatic Resource Education Workshop, *Julie Morin, Federal Aid*
86. Stream Habitat Measurement Techniques, *Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO*
87. Sharing the Service's Resources for Spill Response and NRDA in the Great Lakes, *Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO*
88. Fish Population Estimate Conducted for Whittlesey Creek, *Glenn Miller, Ashland FRO*
89. Healthy Fish Habitats Workshop, *Tracy Hill, Columbia FRO*
90. Adult Lake Sturgeon Telemetry Research Continues on St. Clair River, *James Boase, Alpena FRO*
91. Lake Sturgeon Database Will Track All Tagged Fish, *Adam Kowalski, Alpena FRO*
92. Trout Fishing Pond at Big River Days is a Big Hit, *Candace Chambers, Great River NWR*
93. River Fish and Mussel Display a Hit at Vernon County Fair, *Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH*
94. Horicon Refuge Hosts Successful National Public Lands Day, *Diane Kitchen, Horicon NWR*
95. Shiawassee Refuge Staff Participate in BioBlitz, *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*
96. Waterfowl Expo 2004 in Southern Illinois, *Elizabeth Jones, Cypress Creek NWR*
97. Jordan River Hatchery Hosts First Annual Hatchery Fest, *Timothy Smigielski, Jordan River NFH*
98. Ottawa Refuge Continues Annual National Public Lands Day Project, *Susan Wells, Alpena FRO*
99. Ashland Fishery Office Takes on Fall Walleye Surveys, *Frank Stone, Ashland FRO*
100. Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Hosts 463 Fifth Graders, *Rebecca Hinkle, Ottawa NWR*
101. Remarks Drafted for RD: Humbug Marsh Acceptance Ceremony, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
102. NRDA of Former Indian Refinery in Lawrenceville, Illinois, to be Developed Cooperatively, *Nicole Molitor, Rock Island FO*
103. Thunder Bay Project Implementation Working Committee Meeting, *Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO*
104. Meeting the Challenge of Project Planning through Early Coordination, *Laurie Fairchild, Twin Cities FO*
105. Ohio Field Office Spreads the Word on Wildlife, *Megan Seymour, Reynoldsburg FO*
106. U.S. Army Calls On Service to Track Endangered Bats at Indiana Army Ammunition Plant, *Andy King, Bloomington FO*
107. Carterville Fishery Office Submits Final Report for Dredge Material Placement Studies, *Nathan Caswell, Carterville FRO*
108. Lake Sturgeon Production at the Genoa National Fish Hatchery Increases, *Nick Starzl, Genoa NFH*
109. East Lansing Field Office Staff Presents to Regional Audubon Society, *Jack Dingleline, East Lansing FO*
110. Green Bay Fishery Resources Office Assists with Large Woody Debris Project, *Stewart Cogswell, Green Bay FRO*
111. Ecological Services Provides Howling Opportunity to Jordan River National Fish Hatchery, *Rick Westerhof, Jordan River NFH*
112. Maintenance Action Team Repairs Tornado Damaged Boardwalk at Horicon Refuge, *Diane Kitchen, Horicon NWR*
113. Carterville Fishery Office Discovers Nursery Area for Shovelnose Sturgeon and Paddlefish, *colby wrasse, Carterville FRO*
114. Fish Culturists / Big River Station Project Leaders Meetings Held in La Crosse, *Tony Brady, Genoa NFH*
115. 53rd Annual Posen Potato Festival Parade, *Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO*
116. Jordan River Hatchery Participates in Family Hunting and Fishing Expo, *Timothy Smigielski, Jordan River NFH*
117. Over 450 Drive Auto Tour at Shiawassee's Open House, *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*
118. Hatchery Intern Completes Program at Neosho National Fish Hatchery, *David Hendrix, Neosho NFH*
119. Prairie Science Class Bands Ducks with Fergus Falls and HAPET Staff, *Anthony Rondeau, HAPET*

Continued on next page

Easy Rider

In my field station visits, FWS employees often drive me around to showcase their territory and tell me about their work. I learn a lot about operations, ecosystems, partners and problems. But I also pester them with questions about themselves, their families, their backgrounds, community activities, favorite books and personal opinions. Getting to know employees this way is one of my favorite parts of my job.

In addition to fish and wildlife business, what do I learn? Well, all sorts of things. On drives through woods and prairies, along shorelines and through towns, I find out why Kelly Srigley Werner loves the Broncos and that Greg Brown is a Packer Backer. Dick Steinbach likes tunes by The Corrs, and Jessica Richards and I both love Christmas music. Ed Stratton shared the excitement of his daughter's wedding plans, and Dan Stinnett related the charming story of how he met his wife of 25 years. I discovered that Tracy Hill is expert at mushroom hunting, and that Joyce Collins hates cooked carrots (but she told me the best restaurant to visit in Cape Girardeau). John Mabery explained the local lore of the piasa bird, and Christie DeLoria was peppered with ques-

tions about growing up on Michigan's Upper Peninsula ("Please show me where your grandparents lived"). Dave Ellis and I discussed D-Day and the battle for the Normandy beaches, and in the course of one short conversation, Jon Kauffeld and I covered provisions of the Farm Bill and the wines and foods of Italy – go figure!

These "dashboard chats" are a great pleasure for me, but they can be hard on the driver. I have been accurately accused of hogging the map, and Tom Larson has banned me from traveling in a van with his Conservation Planning team unless I promise not to make everyone play word games. Mark Chase is more accepting — we engaged a fierce battle of "20 Questions" for 2 hours driving home from LaCrosse (you'll have to ask him who won).

Some car talks were extraordinary. Jessica Gourley was conscripted to rush me from Lansing to Detroit one day when I was laboring with a horrendous assignment, and listening to her passion for conservation as we drove down the interstate revived my flagging

spirit – she was a tonic! And Dennis Sharp is my "knight in shining armor" – I remain grateful to him for getting me safely headed home in urgent circumstances.

Being an "Easy Rider" is a chance for me to become better acquainted with FWS colleagues during all-too-rare opportunities to visit in person. I learn about your jobs, and I learn about your lives. I treasure these encounters, and look forward to more of them.

**- Regional Director
Robyn Thorson**



- USFWS Photo by Clarice Beckner
Regional Director Robyn Thorson and Jordan River Hatchery Manager Rick Westerhof take questions from employees during Robyn's visit to the station.

Accomplishment Reports (Continued)

Continued from previous page

- 120. Executive Council Meeting in Traverse City, Michigan, Rick Westerhof, Jordan River NFH
- 121. Cache River Wetlands Open House, Elizabeth Jones, Cypress Creek NWR
- 122. Service Participates in Hatchery Tour and Executive Council Meeting, Jerry McClain, Alpena FRO
- 123. All Hands Chat with the Regional Director at Jordan River National Fish Hatchery, Rick Westerhof, Jordan River NFH
- 124. DCR Staff Provides EEO Training at Fisheries Meeting, Peggy Nelson, ABA (DCR)
- 125. EEO Training Conducted for Mingo JCC Employees, Arlene White, ABA (DCR)
- 126. Discovery of New Hine's Emerald Dragonfly Sites in Missouri, Charles Scott, Columbia FO
- 127. Jordan River National Fish Hatchery Hits the Air Waves, Rick Westerhof, Jordan River NFH
- 128. Historic Lake Trout Spawning Reefs in Lake Huron Examined for Presence of Invasive Round Goby, Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO
- 129. Reproduction of Lampreys Reduced in St. Marys River, John Heinrich, Marquette Bio Station
- 130. Chicago Office Conducts Habitat Assessment and Provides Technical Assistance, Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO
- 131. Chicago Field Office Meets with Partners to Coordinate Orchid Recovery, Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO
- 132. Chicago Field Office Partners in Developing Management Plan for Dragonfly's Habitat, Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO
- 133. Chicago Office Conducts Habitat Assessment on Private Property for Endangered Dragonfly, Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO
- 134. Chicago Field Office Provides History of Success in Working with Stakeholders, Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO
- 135. Chicago Illinois Field Office Participates in "Orchid Extravaganza", Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO
- 136. Friends of Detroit Lakes WMD Receive Grant for Public Use Activities, Les Peterson, Detroit Lakes WMD
- 137. Chicago Field Office Presents Success of Partnership with Stakeholders, Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO
- 138. Columbia Fishery Office Technician Starts Graduate School, Jennifer Johnson, Columbia FRO
- 139. Spills Tracking System Updates to ArcGIS 8.0, Nicole Molitor, Rock Island FO