



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE COLUMBIA FISHERY RESOURCES OFFICE ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

...Dedicated to Conserving Big River Ecosystems in America's Heartland.

Partnerships and Accountability

International Conference on Rivers & Civilization

Project Leader Tracy Hill and Fishery Biologist Jeff Finley traveled to La Crosse, WI on 25 June to attend the 3rd International Conference on Rivers and Civilization. The conference was hosted by the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and was the first international multidisciplinary conference on large river basins to be held in North America. The Region 3 Fisheries Program was well represented at the conference with participation from Columbia FRO, La Crosse FRO, and Genoa NFH. The conference provided a great opportunity for the Fish and Wildlife Service to highlight riverine fishery activities that the offices are involved with on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Some of the activities presented included our work with recovering endangered fish and mussel species; controlling aquatic nuisance species; managing interjurisdictional fisheries; improving the quality and connectivity of aquatic habitats; and detecting disease pathogens that threaten aquatic animal health. Attendance at the conference also provide Region 3 Fishery staff the opportunity to be educated about challenges facing major river basins around the globe and strategies that are needed to reverse the continued decline of these rivers and the diverse societies they support.

Tracy D. Hill

Spring Rise Physical and Biological Monitoring Meeting

Columbia FRO staff participated in the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Spring Rise Meeting on 13 July. Those groups responsible for evaluating the modified flows from Gavins Point Dam presented results from their data collection. US Geological Survey staff from the Columbia Environmental Research Center (CERC) presented information that was collected on telemetry of shovelnose sturgeon, aggregation of sturgeon on certain suspected spawning locations near the dam, physiological condition of shovelnose sturgeon during the spawning period, egg collections during the flow event, habitat condition and



modeling of the flow event and real time water quality data collected during the flow event. Nebraska Game and Parks Committee personnel described larval fish collections that occurred during the flow event. Following the presentations groups participating in the meeting attempted to make changes to the monitoring and evaluation program that would provide more useful information during the next modified flow event planned for March 2007.

Recovery of the endangered pallid sturgeon will be enhanced by a more thorough understanding of the sturgeon's response to hydrologic conditions in the river. Relationships between agencies will be created through increased partnership and collaboration towards this shared goal. Involvement in this multi-partnered collaborative effort is another example of Columbia FRO's commitment to the following Fisheries Vision Priorities of "Partnerships and Accountability" and "Aquatic Species Conservation and Management".

Tracy D. Hill

Workforce Management

Columbia FRO C.A.R.E.S

On June 20th three young men began a summer long journey working with fishery biologists at our station. This summer marks the first opportunity Columbia FRO has had to participate in the City of Columbia's C.A.R.E program. Since 1982, the City of Columbia's Career Awareness Related Experience (C.A.R.E) program has served Columbia's youth ages 14-18 in many important ways. C.A.R.E provides at-risk or disadvantaged participants with summer employment opportunities to help them become self-disciplined, productive, and skilled as well as educational opportunities to provide them with practice applying basic skills to real world problems. C.A.R.E trainees work up to 180 hours and attend up to 25 hours in an educational setting problem-solving. Trainees are paid \$5.15 per hour for attending work/class up to 205 hours. The C.A.R.E. Program is funded by the City of Columbia and administered through the Parks & Recreation Department.

Working with these three young men has truly been a rewarding experience for all of us. Gary Shead Jr., Andrew Murphey, and Zachary Mace have assisted our office in net repair, vehicle and boat cleaning and maintenance, assisting in the laboratory pressing



From left to right Gary Shead Jr, Andrew Murphey and Zachary Mace pose with fish collected from a trammel net their first day on the river.



Jeff Finley instructs C.A.R.E students on fish identification and how to measure fish.

fish scales and extracting paddlefish tags and working on the river collecting data on multiple projects. More importantly they have been given a taste of fisheries biology, life as an adult and an opportunity to interact with mentors. Fishery Biologist Cliff Wilson has been instrumental in the development and accountability of these young men and serving as a positive influence. Their employment will come to an end at the first of August. We are grateful to the City of Columbia for sponsoring this program and look forward to working with them again next summer.

Exposure to the fisheries field this early will give these young men insight to furthering their education and focusing on a career choice. By cooperating with our community we are supporting the workforce management goals for the next generation in keeping with the Fisheries Program Vision for the Future.

Jeff M. Finley

Columbia FRO Welcomes New Fisheries Biological Science Technician



Fisheries Biological Science Technician Tammy Knecht joined the staff of the Columbia FRO on May 15th 2006. Tammy came to Columbia from Klamath Falls, OR where she was a USGS Fish Biologist studying the population dynamics of the endangered lost river sucker and the shortnose sucker. Prior to working with USGS Tammy worked for FWS in Red Bluff, CA as a Fish Biologist sampling Sacramento River with rotary screw traps for the endangered chinook salmon. Tammy graduated from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry with a B.S. degree in Environmental Biology, May 2005.

Tammy's enthusiasm and experience supports the "Workforce Management" goals by filling a critical vacancy in the Columbia FRO.

Tammy Knecht

Columbia FRO Welcomes New Technician

The Columbia FRO (CMFRO) welcomed Fishery Biological Technician Derek Eisenbrei to the staff on May 15, 2006. Derek comes to Columbia with a BS degree in Oceanography/Meteorology he earned from SUNY Maritime College. While in college, Derek received a 3-year Navy ROTC scholarship, which led to his commissioning as a naval officer upon graduation. His immediate activities before joining CMFRO included continuing his education at Walsh University in North Canton, OH in pursuit of a licensure in education of Adolescent to Young Adults and working as a head high school swim team coach. In addition to these endeavors, Derek has experience writing and editing for Navy publications and providing life skills and tutoring for youth K-12.





Derek is looking forward to working on the Missouri river in support of Pallid Sturgeon recovery and the success of the Columbia FRO.

Derek Eisenbrei

Columbia FRO Welcomes New Technician

The Columbia FRO welcomed Biological Science Technician (Fisheries) Lee Erickson to the staff June 12th, 2006. Lee hails from southwest Minnesota. His love and enjoyment of the outdoors has led him to pursue a career in the management of natural resources. He graduated from South Dakota State University (SDSU) in May 2006 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. He has worked for the USFWS in Region 3 for the Windom Wetland Management District as a Biological Science Technician where he gained valuable experience working independently on wetland restorations and aiding in public relations events such as “Wings on the Prairie.” He has also worked in Region 6 for the Waubay National Wildlife Refuge as a Biological Science Technician where he enjoyed conducting 4-square mile waterfowl surveys, and volunteering in events like “1-2-3 to the Refuge” where grade schools would visit and learn about the animals that inhabit the Refuge through games and hands on experience.



He looks forward to learning the “ropes” of the Missouri River with the guidance of the Columbia FRO’s experienced staff. Hoping his work ethic, willingness to learn, and experience in outreach events will prove to be a valuable asset to the Columbia FRO.

Lee Erickson

Columbia FRO Welcomes a New Fishery Biologist

Fishery Biologist Chris Eggleston joined the staff of the Columbia FRO on April 3rd 2006. Chris graduated with a BS in Biology from the Evergreen State College in 1999. He then went to work for the Service as a Biological Science Technician on Laysan Island National Wildlife Refuge (part of the Pacific Remote Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex). This remote island refuge is located 790 miles northwest of the main Hawaiian Islands. At Laysan he studied seabird populations, the endangered Laysan Teal, and



Chris Eggleston holding a Paddlefish caught in a trammel net.





invasive plant eradication. After finishing up the winter season he accepted a Fishery Biologist position with the Northern Central Valley Fish and Wildlife Office in Red Bluff, California. On the Hatchery Evaluation and Tributary Monitoring teams he studied the endangered Winter Run Chinook salmon, threatened Spring Run Chinook salmon and steelhead. Chris then returned to the Hawaiian Islands where he worked on Tern Island National Wildlife Refuge as a Biological Science Technician and then accepted the Assistant Manager position. Here he studied the Endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal, Threatened Hawaiian Green sea Turtle and many species of seabirds.

Chris's enthusiasm and varied experience support the "Workforce Management" goals by filling an important vacancy in the Columbia FRO. Chris is looking forward to working with the knowledgeable staff at the Columbia FRO and gaining valuable experience.

Chris Eggleston

Columbia FRO Welcomes Student Volunteer

Meagan Montgomery, a graduate student at the University of Missouri, volunteered for two days with the Columbia FRO. Her master's project is titled "Fish Use of Passage Facility and Seasonal Wetland Pools at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area". Meagan spent her day with Fishery Biologist Jennifer Johnson and Biological Science Technician Nick Siepkner. The crew spent the day electro fishing for the Missouri River Mitigation Project near Overton, Missouri. Meagan assisted with netting stunned fish, collecting habitat information and identifying and measuring captured fish. By the end of the day, Meagan could easily identify most of the species captured that day. Meagan also got a first hand glimpse of the "flying carp" she had heard so much about, with several silver carp landing in the boat. The Columbia FRO was happy to have Meagan for the day and looks forward to future outings with students in the Columbia, Missouri area.



The Fisheries Program depends on a range of professionals to accomplish its mission and career exploration opportunities such as this may help recruit potential employees. Our cooperative effort with the University of Missouri helps to fulfill the "Workforce Management" goal of the Fisheries Program Vision for the Future.

Jennifer Johnson



Columbia FRO, June & July 2006



Columbia FRO Staff

Tracy D. Hill – Project Leader
Joanne M. Grady – Branch Chief, Fisheries Conservation
Wyatt J. Doyle – Branch Chief, Corps Operations
Andrew B. Starostka – Team Leader, ANS/Habitat Assessment
Jeff M. Finley – Team Leader, Outreach/Mitigation
Nicholas K. Frohnauer – Fishery Biologist
Nicholas J. Utrup – Fishery Biologist
Andy T. Plauck – Fishery Biologist
Cliff D. Wilson – Fishery Biologist
Jennifer L. Johnson – Fisheries Biologist
Tammy Knecht – Fisheries Biological Sciences Technician
Derek Eisenbrei – Fisheries Biological Sciences Technician
Chris Eggleston – Fisheries Biological Sciences Technician
Lee Erickson – Fisheries Biological Sciences Technician

