



Accomplishment Reports From The Columbia Fishery Resources Office

June 2003



Partnerships and Accountability



Andy Starostka and Greg Snellen along with Mark Drobish of the Army Corps of Engineers measure shovelnose sturgeon collected in otter trawl. Photo credit Teak Phillips. St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

St. Louis news staff cover sturgeon trawling, the Big Muddy Refuge, and floodplain development.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch reporter Sara Shipley and photographer Teak Phillips spent the day out on the Missouri River with Fish & Wildlife Service staff to learn more about floodplain development. Rick Hansen of the Columbia Missouri Ecological Services Office has been working with Sara on a series on floodplain development in the St. Louis area. A fabulous example of the alternative to

extensive floodplain development is the Big Muddy NFWR. Tom Bell and Tim Haller of the Big Muddy NFWR supplied a boat and their expertise on the Big Muddy Refuge, while Joanne

Grady was onboard to answer questions about pallid sturgeon and native fish populations. Wyatt Doyle, Andy Starostka, and Greg Snellen were onboard our stern trawling vessel sampling for sturgeon. Both Sara and Teak had the opportunity to participate in trawl sampling and hold young shovelnose sturgeons in their hands. Mark Drobish of the Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, was onboard the trawling vessel for the day as part of our long-term pallid sturgeon monitoring partnership. The floodplain series can be found online at:

<http://www.stltoday.com/stltoday/news/special/flood93.nsf/front?openview&count=2000>

Contact: Joanne Grady

CFRO represented at Missouri River Natural Resources Conference

Andy Starostka attended the 7th Annual Missouri River Natural Resources Conference held at Benedictine College in Atchison Kansas. Activities included the usual suite of presentations relating to the river and natural resource topics, field trips, displays, and socials. Louise Mauldin prepared a display describing the sturgeon monitoring work that is being conducted by the Columbia FRO.

One of the highlights of the conference was two field trips, one to Fort Leavenworth Military Reserve to view and discuss the mature hardwood bottom forest, the oldest such bottomland forest on the lower Missouri River. This flood plain forest contains several spectacular giant pecan trees and several successional stages of bottom



land forest and grasslands. The other field trip was to Benedictine Bottoms Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Site. This area is managed jointly by Kansas Parks and Wildlife and the Army Corps of Engineers. We were able to view and discuss various restoration projects including native warm season grasses, wetlands and flood plain forests.

Benedictine College was a great venue for the conference with its historic buildings, great views of the Missouri River a short walk across campus, and friendly and helpful support of the staff. The exchange of information with other biologists that CMFRO does not regularly interact with was informative and useful to the understanding of the research and management projects that are being conducted in the watershed.

Contact: Andy Starostka

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Pallid sturgeon monitoring yields young sturgeon

CMFRO biologists have been participating in a joint multi-state pallid sturgeon monitoring project for the last three years. In the month of June CMFRO was successful using new sampling methods designed to target adult pallid sturgeon and young of the year pallid and shovelnose sturgeons. Two pallid sturgeon were collected while drifting trammel nets along with 5 hybrid pallids collected in trammels and trawls. Young of the year sturgeon were collected in otter trawls along with one hundred young of the year paddlefish collected throughout the lower 200 miles of the Missouri River. Paddlefish have only been collected a few times in previous year's samples. Our June sampling effort shows we are getting closer to developing an effective trawl method capable of sampling a wide range of fish. Partners in this effort include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Missouri Department of Conservation, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, and Innovative Net Designs.

Contact: Wyatt Doyle



Photo depicts range of size in young of year sturgeon collected in a single trawl haul.

Leadership in Science and Technology

Columbia FRO website opens for business

Our new website passed accessibility and policy testing. It is now available at <http://midwest.fws.gov/Columbiafisheries/>. Many thanks again to our volunteer Sandra Lickliger of Rocheport, Missouri for all her hard work!

Contact: Joanne Grady