



Inside Region 3

Information from the Accomplishment Reporting System for April 1-30, 2003

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Conviction of Illinois Corrections Officer Ends Six-Year Investigation into Killing of Protected Tigers and Leopards

A federal jury in Chicago returned a guilty verdict on April 3 against William R. Kapp of Tinley Park, Ill., for his role in the illegal trafficking and killing of federally protected tigers and leopards. Kapp was charged last May with 19 counts of violating the Endangered Species Act and the Lacey Act, federal wildlife protection laws. The jury found Kapp, 37, guilty of conspiracy to violate the Endangered Species Act and 17 other counts of violating the Endangered Species Act and Lacey Act. The jury found him not guilty of two counts.

Evidence presented during the eight-day trial established Kapp as a central figure in a group of seven Chicago area men and one business that engaged in illegal trafficking of tigers, leopards and other exotic animals. Kapp brokered the sale of endangered tigers and leopards obtained from exotic animal brokers and animal park operators in Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Florida. Evidence showed that Kapp, a corrections officer in the Will County Sheriff's Department, participated in the killing of tigers and other animals while they were still confined in cages or trailers.

Debra Bonamici and Gabriel Fuentes, assistant U.S. Attorneys for the Northern District of Illinois presented the government's case against Kapp, who brokered the sale of 18 endangered tigers and leopards beginning in 1997. "Mr. Kapp wrongly believed these



- USFWS Photo

As part of the six-year investigation, Special Agent Tim Santel and others seized many illegally killed animals as evidence.

animals were worth more dead than alive," Bonamici said. "The jury agreed with us and upheld the provisions of these important wildlife protection laws."

Sentencing is scheduled for July 18. Kapp faces a maximum sentence of up to five years in prison and \$250,000 in fines.

The guilty verdict is the result of Operation Snow Plow, a lengthy investigation into the trafficking of exotic animals. Beginning in 1997, Service special agents, working closely with U.S. Attorney's offices in Illinois, Missouri and Michigan, uncovered a loosely organized group in the Midwest that bought and killed exotic tigers, leopards, snow leopards, lions, mountain

lions, cougars and black bears with the intention of introducing meat and skins into the lucrative animal parts trade. A total of 16 individuals in six states were charged with violating various federal wildlife protection laws. Fifteen of the defendants pleaded guilty without a trial. Kapp was the only defendant to argue his case before a jury

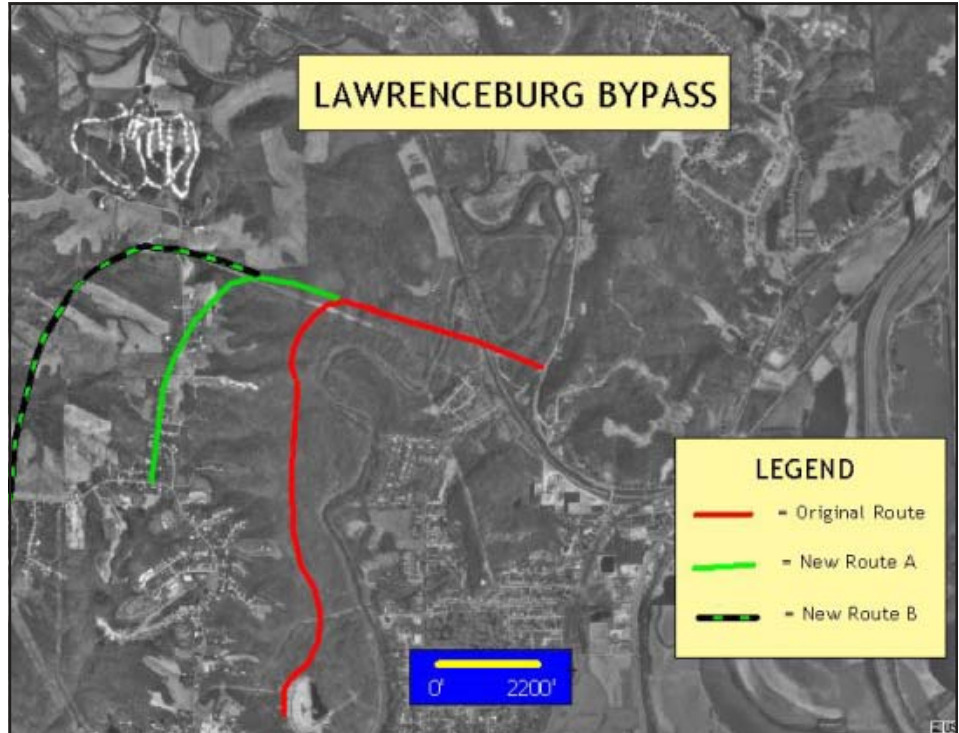
"Today's verdict shows the results of the dedication and perseverance of our special agents who work very hard to protect wildlife," said Service Special Agent Tim Santel, who led the lengthy investigation. "It feels good to get this conviction." *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*

Major Reduction in Highway Project Impact on Endangered Species

The Service's Bloomington, Indiana Field Office began the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review of a proposed highway bypass near Lawrenceburg, Ind., in 1994. As project plans developed over the next few years, it became apparent that the preferred route, through a forested area of steep slopes, would have substantial impacts on summer habitat for the endangered Indiana bat.

The project location is along Tanners Creek, in a reach that is an embayment of the Ohio River. Direct forest loss of about 200 acres, combined with fragmentation and secondary impacts from subsequent development, would have resulted in overall impacts to several hundred acres of habitat.

A bat survey conducted for the project found a reproductive female Indiana bat, indicating the presence of a maternity colony. The Service concluded that take was likely to occur and formal Section 7 consultation would be necessary. After further coordination, the project languished for a period of approximately three



Rerouting highway construction will help protect Indiana bat habitat near Lawrenceburg, Ind.

years. On April 8, 2003, the engineering consultant for the project came to the Bloomington Field Office for a meeting and announced that, due to endangered species issues and engineering concerns about the rugged terrain, the preferred route had been abandoned and two new route alterna-

tives are being developed.

Both new alternatives are mostly through cleared land and would cause only 20-30 percent of the direct habitat loss of the original route, with much less potential for fragmentation and secondary impacts. *Michael Litwin, Bloomington FO*



- USFWS Photo

Refuge Operations Specialist Juancarlos Giese helps a young refuge enthusiast build a bluebird house.

Rydell National Wildlife Refuge Celebrates Earth Day with a Tribute to Bluebirds

Everyone loves to see bluebirds migrating back into the Midwest during spring. Northwestern Minnesota's Rydell National Wildlife Refuge invited members of the local communities to celebrate Earth Day along with the bluebirds' arrival on April 11. The program consisted of guest speakers, information on the bluebird life cycle, their habitat preferences, and on the placement and monitoring of nest boxes.

For those wishing to make their own bluebird house, Rydell NWR provided materials. Volunteers, along with the refuge staff, assisted children and adults alike in the finer points of Peterson-style bluebird house construction. Working together, more than 30 bluebird houses were built and everyone left with a greater understanding of our resident bluebirds. *Juancarlos Giese, Rydell NWR*

Ludington Staff Helps Educate Elementary School Students



- USFWS Photo by Kevin Butterfield

Students get some "hands-on" time with sea lampreys during Ludington's educational program.

Ludington Biological Station's Kevin Butterfield gave a Sea Lamprey Control presentation to a first grade class at Franklin Elementary School in Ludington, Mich. Students learned about the sea lamprey life cycle, differences between higher fish and the sea lamprey, and control and assessment methods. Nearly all 25 students handled the slippery critters following the presentation, causing lots of squeals. Other teachers stopped to see what all the commotion was and additional presentations are planned. *Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station*

Fish Pathologists Knock Visitors Out at Jordan River National Fish Hatchery

Fish Pathologists Rick Nelson and Corey Puzach from the LaCrosse Fish Health Center visited Jordan River National Fish Hatchery April 22-23, to conduct the spring fish health inspection.

The 2002 and 2003 brood year lake trout were sampled by Rick and Corey for potential pathogens.

On the second day, five children (ages 4-11) and two adults stopped by the hatchery for a tour. Rick and Corey were gracious enough to discuss what they were doing to the group. The teaching lesson lasted only five minutes as one child turned white and had to sit

down. Then an older boy proceeded to hang on his mother, and fell to the floor. His mother assumed he was kidding, but it turned out he passed out from the sight of fish blood. His fall was broken by his mother and a chair, so he was not injured. Staff took him outside before he became nauseous. The youngest boy in the same family also turned white and felt sick.

The boys were fine and a good time was had by all, especially by the mothers. One was laughing so hard, she was in tears. *Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH*



- USFWS Photo by Rick Westerhof

Rick Nelson (left) and Corey Puzach give an impromptu class to visitors at Jordan River NFH and discovered that not everyone has what it takes to be a fishery biologist.

Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team Web Site Newer, Better, Updated



New information was added to the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team web site to highlight team accomplishments and update information about cormorants and other issues. The Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team is comprised of Service offices in the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem that work together and with cooperators to accomplish goals related to conserving Great Lakes resources. The web master for the site is Fishery Biologist Anjanette Bowen of the Alpena Fishery Resources Office in Michigan.

The website can be accessed at (<http://greatlakes.fws.gov>). *Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO*

Fergus Falls Cylinder Nesting Data Guides Future Nest Placement

During the winter of 2002-03, the nest cylinders placed by Fergus Falls Wetland Management District staff over the years were checked and maintained. One hundred ninety-four nesting sites were available during the year. There were 89 double-cylinder hen houses, seven single-cylinder hen houses and three triple-cylinder hen houses available across the district.

Ninety-two poles (179 sites) were surveyed. Of these, only 28 sites showed any evidence of use (16 percent). Thirteen of the 28 sites used were unsuccessful. Many of the unsuccessful nests were abandoned.

Staff used the presence of very small egg shell fragments and/or the presence of egg linings to determine if a nest was successful.

Fifteen nests were determined to be successful (8 percent) leaving 151 sites that were not used (84 percent). Use was up from 9 percent in 2001 to 16 percent in 2002, and successful nests are up from 2 percent last year to 8 percent this year.

No goose nests were found in the cylinders. Mallards were the



- USFWS photo

Fergus Falls WMD continues to study the success rate of their mallard nest cylinder program in order to place cylinders in the most productive locations.

only species using the cylinders. No cylinders were moved or added this season.

Based on the data from these surveys, staff will begin moving cylinders in winter 2003-04 to sites where use is occurring in order to achieve better use of the cylinders.

Studies have shown sites that are getting use can have a dense concentration of nest structures

and still be successful. About 50 percent of the hen houses were moved during the winter of 2001-02, but most of those moves were less than 50 feet and generally out of the cattails into open water.

Next winter structures will be moved from sites with little use to areas where cylinder use has been better. *Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC*

Technical Assistance Provided on Regulation of Confined Animal Feeding Operations



- Corel Corp. Photo

Staff from the East Lansing Field Office recently helped the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program respond to citizens concerned about confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and their effects on water quality in southern Michigan.

The contaminants staff discovered that both the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and U.S. EPA are undertaking enforcement actions on CAFOs in the area and that the state is planning a study of water quality

indicators in the area.

The Service advised MDEQ of the historical presence of federally listed mussels in one of the watersheds and suggested that mussel identification be included in any benthic sampling protocols.

Staff also provided the Partners program with background information on CAFO regulation and names and phone numbers of MDEQ, U.S. EPA, and Michigan Department of Agriculture contacts related to this issue. *Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO*

Media Musters for Mussel Restoration Event

Genoa National Fish Hatchery opened its doors to news media during its week of Higgins' eye mussel restoration activities. Several reporters ventured out to the 'Clam Palace' to watch biologists impel female Higgins' eyes to release their glochidia (juvenile mussels) and then infest host fish (in this case, large mouth bass) with the glochidia.

A reporter from the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel and one from the LaCrosse, Wis., Tribune, as well as a Wisconsin Public Radio correspondent and a reporter/camera-man with LaCrosse's News Channel 8, ventured out on a glorious spring day to interview the biologists and photograph the action. A lengthy article with several photos appeared in the April 27 edition of the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. *Rachel Levin, External Affairs*



- USFWS Photos by Abby Rodriguez

A Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel photographer captures mussels underwater (above), while Tony Brady, Genoa mussel propagation specialist, explains the propagation process to a reporter from Wisconsin Public Radio (right).



"Phase I" of Red Cliff Creek Habitat Improvement Completed

The first phase of the multi-year Red Cliff Creek habitat improvement project has been completed. This partnership between the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Natural Resource Conservation Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Great Lakes Coastal Program will enhance and restore fish and wildlife habitat from the Red Cliff Creek's confluence with Lake Superior to a point 4.5 miles upstream. Red Cliff Creek is an important cultural and natural resource for the Red Cliff band. Brook trout inhabit the water, woodcock and songbirds depend on the riparian corridor and gray wolves roam the area.

Brook trout spawning habitat was enhanced on 85 feet of a pond outlet tributary channel. Meanders were created in this channelized section of stream and two rock-lined step pools were created to improve fish habitat. Contractors from K&D Excavating placed spawning gravel within the channel. Streambank stabilization occurred on approximately 200 feet of stream. The contractors also placed large rocks and boulders in select locations to limit bank erosion and willows were planted on the banks within the entire project area. Ten-foot high balsam fir trees that were removed from a nearby construction site were also planted in select locations. Erosion control measures took place at one culvert and a collapsed road crossing was removed.



- USFWS Photo

Spawning gravel, rocks, boulders and willow trees are all newly-installed enhancements to fish habitat on Red Cliff Creek. Once completed, 4.5 miles of Red Cliff Creek will have been enhanced.

The next phase will include enhancing and restoring instream and riparian habitat downstream, as well as establishing fish habitat structures. Improving fish passage at the Highway 13 culvert and other road crossing locations are other important aspects of the project. *Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO*

Ohio, Service Work to Conserve Indiana Bat on Mining Lands

The Ohio Division of Mineral Resource Management, U.S. Office of Surface Mining and the Reynoldsburg Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have been working closely to develop conservation measures for threatened and endangered species on surface coal mining lands. The three agencies have been meeting monthly since October 2002 to draft a species-specific document that ensures protection of the endangered Indiana bat and its habitat in the coal-mining regions of Ohio.

Conservation measures are being developed in compliance with the 1996 Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Statement issued by the Service to the OSM. This national programmatic Biological Opinion allows for incidental take of endangered species when in compliance with the terms and conditions of the incidental take statement. A state regulatory authority must implement and require compliance with any species-specific conservation measures developed by the local Service field office and the regulatory authority (with the involvement, as appro-

priate, of the permittee and OSM). These conservation measures are to be site-specific and designed to anticipate incidental take.

Therefore, the agencies are working together to develop a document to aid the surface coal mining industry and the public in understanding the options and protocols associated with mining in areas

containing potential Indiana bat habitat. This agreement will provide for future development, as warranted, of other species-specific conservation measures for other endangered or threatened fish, wildlife and plant species that may occur in the coal-mining region of Ohio. The agreement will also support the development of acceptable and practical measures that will minimize impacts to non-endangered wildlife resources and enhancements to habitat during the mining and reclamation processes. *Sarena Selbo, Reynoldsburg Field Office*



- USFWS Photos by Angela Boyer

The state of Ohio, the Service and other partners are working to ensure that the endangered Indiana bat (above) and surface coal mining operations (left) can coexist.



First Prairie Chicken Lek Found on Hamden Slough NWR

Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge's first prairie chicken lek was observed April 11 near Hamden Lake.

Prairie chickens gather at leks in the morning to engage in elaborate courtship displays which can include singing, strutting, dancing and the display of their feathers.

The dancing ground is a quarter-mile southeast of the intersection of County Roads #13 and #106, on hayed acreage. A total of 17 birds were observed dancing and calling, including 12 males and five females. The only previous sighting of prairie chickens on the refuge was made in 1993, when two males were observed near the same site. *Michael Murphy, Hamden Slough NWR*



- Photo by Mary Tremaine/Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

Accomplishment Reports Received

The following reports were processed by the Region 3 Accomplishment Reporting System for accomplishments completed between April 1 and April 30, 2003. Employees can search all reports using the ARS's Report Manager.

Distribution Season Begins at Pendills Creek Hatchery

Tracy Walters, Pendills Creek NFH

Abundant Bluegills Found During Polander Lake Survey

Scott Yess, LaCrosse FRO

GIS Projects Completed

Jane Lardy-Nelson, Refuges & Wildlife

Shorebird Workshop Participants Identify Unique Karst Site in Kentucky

Bob Russell, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

Saving the Higgins' Eye Pearlymussel From Extinction

Gary Wege, Twin Cities FO

Service Biologist Conducts Stock Assessment Analysis for OMNR

Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO

Sea Lamprey Story Taken to Michigan Lake and Stream Association Conference

Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

Prairie Wetlands Learning Center and DU Greenwing Fair

Kenneth Garrahan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

Marsh Madness at the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center

Kenneth Garrahan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

Symposium: Natural History, Conservation and Restoration of Freshwater Mussels in the Upper Midwest

Gary Wege, Twin Cities FO

Technical Assistance Provided on Regulation of Confined Animal Feeding Operations

Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO

Live From Winona! It's the Upper Miss Refuge!!

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

WAN / Internet connection for Neosho Fish Hatchery

John Herron, ABA (CSG)

Jordan River National Fish Hatchery Cleans The Highway

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

East Lansing Field Office Staff Nominated for Environmental Excellence Award

Craig Czarnecki, East Lansing FO

Fish Pathologists Knock Visitors Out at Jordan River National Fish Hatchery

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

Michigan Begins Recovery Planning for Hungerford's Crawling Water Beetle

Carrie Tansy, East Lansing FO

Media Turn Out for Mussel Restoration Event

Rachel Levin, External Affairs

Increase in Public Contracts for Architect Engineer Design Services

Robert Hansen, ABA-CGS

Oiled Geese Discovered on Grosse Ile, Detroit River

Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO

Red Cliff Creek Habitat Improvement - Phase 1

Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO

Lake Trout Restoration Impediments Reviewed for Lake Michigan

Charles Bronte, Green Bay FRO

2003 Field Season Begins for the Alpena Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

Heather Enterline, Alpena FRO

Service Private Lands Staff in Indiana Gather for State Private Lands Meeting

Jeff Kiefer, Indiana PLO

Service Staff Contributes to Spring meeting of the Sea Lamprey Integration Committee

John Heinrich, Marquette Bio Station

Nontarget Mortalities During Lampricide Treatments in Lake Champlain

John Heinrich, Marquette Bio Station

Protection of Endangered Species During Lampricide Treatments

John Heinrich, Marquette Bio Station

Service Represented at Detroit River Watershed and Flyway Initiative Environmental Seminar

Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO

International Press Releases and Public Notices Standardized For Lampricide Control Program

Terry Morse, Marquette Bio Station

New WAN / Internet Connection for Alpena Fisheries Office

John Herron, ABA (CSG)

Ohio Developing Conservation Measures for Indiana bat on Coal Mined Lands

Sarena Selbo, Reynoldsburg FO

Earth Day Celebrated at Rydell Refuge With a Tribute to Bluebirds

Juancarlos Giese, Rydell NWR

Career Days at Thunder Bay Junior High

Susan Wells, Alpena FRO

Technical Fisheries Committee Provides Final Harvest Limits for Lake Whitefish and Lake Trout

Jerry McClain, Alpena FRO

Sea Lampreys Destroyed, Lake Trout Saved

Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

Ludington Staff Helps Educate Elementary School Students

Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

La Crosse Fish Health Center Inspects Fish at the Jordan River NFH

Richard Nelson, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

Service Biologist Attends Technical Fisheries Committee Meeting

Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO

Region 3 Director Robyn Thorson Visits Resource Center Staff in Onalaska

Heidi Keuler, LaCrosse FRO

2003 Lake Trout Harvest Limits Recommendations Set by Technical Fisheries Committee

Mark Holey, Green Bay FRO

A Fresh Look is Added to the Great Lakes Lake Sturgeon Web Site

Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO

NRDA Wetland Restoration Efforts Taking Shape at Marian College's Eco Lab

Daniel Sparks, Bloomington FO

University students learn about restoration and natural resource damage assessments

Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO

Agassiz Refuge Helps Landowner in Roseau County

Dave Bennett, Agassiz NWR

International Brainstorming Session to Propose Future Direction of Lampricide Control Research

Terry Morse, Marquette Bio Station

Alpena Fishery Office Cable Upgrade Complete

Debra Turner, Alpena FRO

Columbia Fishery Office Announces Volunteer Openings on National Web Portal

Joanne Grady, Columbia FRO

Alpena Fisheries Office Lends Support for Local Piping Plover Protection

Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO

The 2003 Great Lakes Piping Plover Breeding Season Begins with the Annual Coordination Meeting

Jack Dingledine, East Lansing FO

Hiawatha Forest NFH Raises Fry for MDNR Research Project

Tracy Walters, Pendills Creek NFH

Reynoldsburg ES Office reaching out to local schools

Megan Seymour, Reynoldsburg FO

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season

Linda Krupinski, ABA (Personnel)

340 Assist In Spring Clean-up/ Centennial Celebration At Sherburne NWR

Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR

First Prairie Chicken Lek Found on Refuge

Michael Murphy, Hamden Slough NWR

Coastal Program Supports Habitat Projects in Duluth-Superior Harbor

Dan Stinnett, Twin Cities FO

Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team Web Site Updated

Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO

Spring Wild Fish Health Survey On the Upper Mississippi River

Corey Puzach, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

Finclipping Completed At Pendills Creek NFH

Tracy Walters, Pendills Creek NFH

Accidental Zebra Mussel Introduction Appears Unsuccessful in Chequamegon Bay

Gary Czypinski, Ashland FRO

GIS Training Class Conducted in Region 3

Jane Lardy-Nelson, Refuges&Wildlife

MS Access Fishery Database established

Henry Quinlan, Ashland FRO

Preliminary Survey of the Maumee River for Spawning Lake Sturgeon

James Boase, Alpena FRO

The Blue Water Anglers Learn About Lake Sturgeon Rehabilitation Efforts

James Boase, Alpena FRO

East Lansing Field Office Receives CPR and First Aid Training From Jordan River Staff

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

Major Reduction in Highway Project Impact on Endangered Species

Michael Litwin, Bloomington FO

Lamprey Trapping Structure for Cheboygan River

Marianne Dahl, ABA (Engineering)

Volunteer positions posted for Columbia FRO

Joanne Grady, Columbia FRO

Fisheries class debates issue of dam removal when contaminated sediments are present

Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO

Head Start Students

Tracy Walters, Pendills Creek NFH

New Financial Management Tool - Datamart

William Andersen, ABA (Budget & Finance)

New Reports Added to the Alpena FRO Web Site

Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO

Local School Groups Use Genoa National Fish Hatchery to Further Outdoor Education

Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH

Spring Viremia of Carp monitoring takes place on pool 11 of the Mississippi

Corey Puzach, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

Muscatatuck Refuge Operations Specialist Speaks at Ball State University Women's Week

Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

Chicago Field Office Conducts Outreach on Wolf Reclassification

Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO

Chicago Office Distributes Mead's Milkweed Draft Recovery Plan

Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO

Chicago Field Office Participates in Event to Recognize Volunteer Efforts

Kristopher Lah, Chicago FO

Mallard Nest Cylinders Used Slightly More Than Last Year

Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

GLBET Binational collaborative submits proposal for islands conservation

Megan Seymour, Reynoldsburg

Columbia Fishery Office Makes Recommendations to Reduce Carp in DeSoto Lake

Joanne Grady, Columbia FRO

Illinois Corrections Officer Convicted of Killing Protected Tigers and Leopards

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

Jordan River's Maintenance Mechanic Teaches CPR & First Aid Training to Alpena FRO Staff

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

CPR and First Aid Training held at Alpena FRO

Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO

La Crosse USFWS Resource Center and Genoa NFH Receive Visit from Westby School District Students

Heidi Keuler, LaCrosse FRO

Fish Health Inspection at Keweenaw Bay Isolation Facility and Tribal Fish Hatchery

Kenneth Phillips, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

Pest Management Class Taught at College of Menominee Nation

Ken Stromborg, Green Bay FO



- USFWS Photo by Michelle McDowell

One of the two islands that make up Mille Lacs NWR, the smallest refuge in the National Wildlife Refuge System, stayed iced-in until late spring this year. Due to a late thaw, Spirit Island appeared to be an iceberg floating in Mille Lacs Lake this May.



**Inside Region 3
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