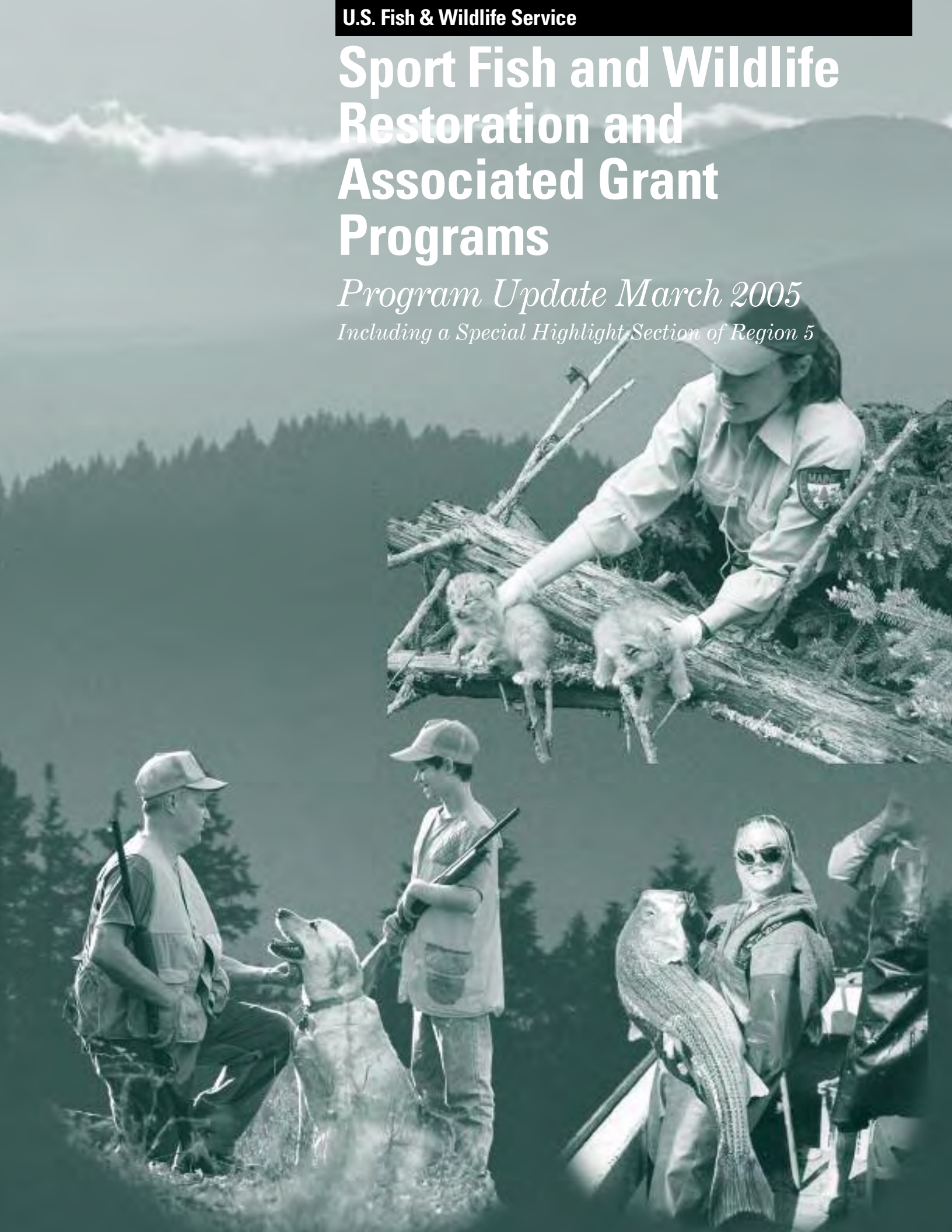


# Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration and Associated Grant Programs

*Program Update March 2005*

*Including a Special Highlight Section of Region 5*





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## Comments from Mitch King

### *Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs*



It has been an exciting first four months for me on this job. I've been on a steep learning curve since the day I walked in. Besides working on a variety of issues ranging from bears to boating access, I am exploring new territories like excise tax issues, working with industry and most importantly, meeting some great people. I continue to be impressed with the passion for the Federal Assistance Program expressed by Service and the State staffs. At the same time, the support for the program from the fishing, archery and guns and ammunition industry is uplifting.

Mixed in with all this excitement, there are some really great things happening. The Federal Assistance Joint Policy Task Force is providing clear and consistent policy interpretations that will clarify issues for our State partners and drive implementation decisions made by the Service's regional staff.

Full implementation of the State Wildlife Grant program is moving towards reality. State fish and wildlife agencies are working with their local partners to develop quality State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies. Several States are beginning to share their draft strategies on web sites and what we are seeing looks great! Come October 1, I'm confident that all 56 States and Territories will submit their strategies for review and approval. The development, review and approval of these strategies is an exciting and important milestone for the conservation community.

I can't tell you how excited I am about the steps the Service is taking to work with the States, Industry (fishing tackle, archery equipment, and guns and ammunitions manufactures), and the various tax collection agencies to assure consistent application of tax laws and to make sure that industry and others know where their tax dollars are being spent. This is an extremely important issue with huge implications on the funding for State fish and wildlife agencies and on Industry's bottom-line.

As I've become more familiar with the program, I see a couple of areas that need some focused attention over the next year.

**Compliance**—The Service needs to help our State partners get through the “compliance” maze. It is not unusual to hear stories where States are being forced to modify their management actions to address the complications associated with NEPA, ESA and National Historic Preservation Act compliance. In my opinion we can do better. Our State partners need help in this area and I'm going to be looking to State and Service staff to come up with innovative solutions that provide a level of resource protection appropriate to the proposed fish and wildlife management actions.

**Accomplishment Tracking**—This is an area that will require increased attention levels. The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs, State Wildlife Grants and the Landowner Incentive Program represent the most important and successful conservation programs in the country. Unfortunately, while we all know this to be true, I have not been too impressed with our ability to prove it. At the same time, I am constantly hearing requests to better articulate our accomplishments to OMB, Congress, Industry and the hunting and fishing community. Articulating our accomplishments is even more important with the State Wildlife Grant and Landowner Incentive Programs, which are appropriated annually by Congress. To see these programs grow, we must do a better job of proving that we get the biggest resource bang for the appropriated buck. We will be working with our State partners over the next year to come up with the most effective way to track our accomplishments.

Let me close by saying THANK YOU for helping me through these first few months and I look forward to many more.

Mitch

# Greetings from Marvin Moriarty

## *Northeast Regional Director*



I would like to invite you to take a look at the Northeast—birthplace of our great nation, and of wildlife conservation. The first game law was enacted to protect white-tailed deer in Massachusetts in 1696, in recognition of human impacts on a valuable natural resource. The first laws against market hunting were formed by the New York Sportsmens Club in the 1840's. Today, despite the pressures resulting from a human population of approximately 70 million, the Northeast has abundant wildlife, from moose wandering the North Woods of New England to striped bass filling the Chesapeake Bay.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works in partnership with over 30 state agencies to conserve fish and wildlife resources in the Northeast. The Division of Federal Assistance is an integral part of that incredibly productive state/federal relationship. Federal Assistance administers over 800 grants totaling approximately \$116 million to the 13 northeast states and the District of Columbia. With small geographic areas, many of our states receive minimum apportionments of Federal Aid—however, on average, these funds make up in excess of 30% of the state fish and wildlife agency budget.

With exciting new initiatives like the Landowner Incentive Program and State Wildlife Grants, in addition to the cornerstone Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs, Federal Assistance touches most aspects of fish and wildlife management and environmental conservation and works with a diverse group of partners. The Federal Assistance staff here in the Northeast work closely with state agencies at each stage of grant funded work, from developing proposals to monitoring performance. Our relationship with state agencies is based on mutual trust and respect, and a shared dedication to natural resource conservation.

I am particularly proud of our efforts to assist states in the development of their

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies (CWCS). Every Division of the Service has offered assistance to our state partners, and many of the state development teams include representatives from Refuges, Ecological Services, Fisheries, and Migratory Birds. The Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, in the Division of Migratory Birds is assisting states by collecting existing information on bird conservation priorities in the region to determine overlaps and gaps between bird initiative priorities, state priorities, and other bird conservation efforts. Summaries of bird information will be produced for use by state partners to assess how their strategies compare with those of other states, and how they reflect regional priorities.

Of course, the Division of Federal Assistance is the primary contact for states in the CWCS development. To assist Northeast states, Regional staff created a website of CWCS planning resources, listserv to facilitate communication, and a database for state contacts for each species of regional conservation concern. A regional matrix of species of greatest conservation need is under development, and will be presented at the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in April 2005. Federal Assistance staff have attended SWG meetings at the regional and national level, and met with many individual state agencies to assist with strategy development. Federal Assistance is actively involved in IAFWA's Teaming with Wildlife Workgroup and is spearheading the Northeast's Development Assistance Team that is designed to ensure that any and all Service resources requested by states to assist in CWCS development are delivered.

As I reflect upon the high standard of service offered by Federal Assistance to our states, I would be remiss in not acknowledging the efforts of Robert Sousa, recently retired Division Chief. Bob continued to build on the philosophy of his predecessor, Bill Hesselton, of

empowering good people to provide exemplary service in their daily working relationships with state colleagues. This philosophy has created a Federal Assistance team that is a model for how the Service can work with states. This Federal-state partnership, plus the contributions of other Service programs, contributes to a comprehensive approach that focuses on high priority needs of fish, wildlife and people here in the Northeast.



# News Section

## Federal Assistance Employee Updates



*Dan Edwards*



*Tim Hess*

### Retirements

**Don Friberg** retired July 1st as Federal Assistance Chief. Don worked in the Federal Assistance Program for over 30 years, and had worked with State of South Dakota for 10 years prior to coming to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Lanny Moore** – Long time Washington office Federal Assistance staff member Lanny Moore retired at the end of December, 2004. Most recently Lanny had been assigned to the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to assist with the Excise Tax Working Group (ETWG). Lanny had over 20 years of experience with the Service and was previously recognized by the American Recreation Coalition for his conservation efforts in the Washington Office. Lanny was also recognized by the Director of the FWS for his efforts on the ETWG at the 2004 North American Wildlife and Natural Resource Conference.

**Blake Weirich**, Assistant Federal Assistance Training Program Coordinator, has announced that February 4, 2005 will be his last day with us in the Federal Assistance Division. His career spans more than 38 years (4 years as a High School Chemistry/Biology Teacher; 24 years with the PA Fish & Boat Commission, and more than 10 years with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service). Blake's involvement with the Federal Assistance Training Program began in 1999 as an instructor for our Basic Grants Management course. Shortly after that he was hired as the Assistant FA Training Program Coordinator. Blake has made many significant contributions to the Federal Assistance Division and our training program. His tireless efforts in developing and delivering our State Project Leaders Course to hundreds of our State project leaders is just one of his noteworthy accomplishments.

**Bob Sousa** retired as Federal Assistance Chief in Region 5. Bob worked for the Federal Assistance program for 20 years, the last 12 in Region 5. He also spent 4 years at the Silvio Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center.

### Welcomes

**Fred Caslick** was recently announced as the new Federal Assistance (FA) Portland, OR Chief to replace Don Friberg in Region 1. Fred has worked in the FA program twice in his 20-plus years as a Fish & Wildlife Service employee. His first stint in FA was in the Region 1 office (1988-91) as the educational specialist. His second stint was in the Region 5 FA office in Massachusetts, where he worked for several years as the Finance/Administrative Officer. In addition to FA, Fred has worked as a regional planning and evaluation specialist in Region 5 as an outdoor recreation planner on the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and as an outreach specialist (currently located in the Cortland, New York Field Office). He has a PhD and two masters degrees in natural resource policy and management.

**Dan Edwards**, Wildlife Restoration program grants manager, was hired as the new Wildlife Section Chief for Region 1; Dan came to us from Oregon Dept of Fish and Wildlife after 21 years of wildlife management work with the state.

**Tim Hess** is the new Chief in Region 7-Alaska. Tim has a B.S. in Fisheries Science from Cornell University and an M.S. from Tennessee Tech in Fish and Wildlife Biology. He worked for the Georgia Wildlife Resources Division from 1975 to 1995 as a Fisheries Biologist and Assistant Chief of Fisheries. As Assistant Chief, Tim also served as Georgia's Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration coordinator for 13 of those years. From 1995 until 2001, Tim was the Chief of Fisheries for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. In 2001, he began his employment with the Policy Branch of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Arlington, Virginia. Tim completed a short detail with the USGS Bird Banding Lab in Patuxent before joining the Region 7 staff in Anchorage as Federal Assistance Chief in late November. Tim has one child, Chad, who is currently in his final semester at Tufts University in Boston completing a B.F.A. program. During his free time, Tim enjoys fishing, skiing, and working with the youth in this community.

# Staff Directory Federal Assistance

## Washington DC Office

**Federal Assistance Main Phone Number**  
703/358 2156

**Web Address**  
<http://federalaid.fws.gov>

**Mitch King**, Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs

**Kris E. LaMontagne**, Division Chief

**Jim Greer**, Deputy Division Chief - Operations

**Doug Gentile**, Civil Rights Coordinator for Public Access

**Jimmye Kane**, Lead Secretary

**Pam Matthes**, Multistate Conservation Grant Program Coordinator

**Hsia Franklin**, Secretary

### *Branch of Budget and Administration*

**Tom Jeffrey**, Branch Chief - Budget Development and Execution - Program Management

**Mary Grieco**, Administrative Officer

**Linda Muhammad Puchoon**, Program Support Assistant

**Tracey Vriens**, Program Analyst

### *Branch of Information Management*

**Lorinda Bennett**, Branch Chief

**Vacant**, Fiscal Management - Audit Liaison

**Ed Duda**, System Developer

**Vacant**, System Developer

**Jeffrey Graves**, Server Support - Web Site Support

**Pete Hitchcock**, Network Engineer, Security Officer, Acting FAIMS Lead

**C. J. Huang**, Database Administrator

**Sandie Lehberger**, Administrative Technician

**David Washington**, ADP Systems Support - ADP Acquisition Support

**Debbie Wircenske**, Help Desk and Fiscal Administration Training

### *Branch of Grants Operations and Policy*

**Tom Barnes**, Branch Chief - National Issue Management

**Brian Bohnsack**, Sport Fish Restoration Program - Coastal Wetlands - Clean Vessel Program - Boating Infrastructure Grant Program

**Kim Galvan**, Regulations - U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Manual Chapters - Section 6 Grants - Landowner Incentive Program

**Genevieve Pullis-LaRouche**, State Wildlife Grants

**Joshua Winchell**, Regulations - Education Liaison

### *Branch of Audits*

**Pat McHugh**, Branch Chief - Audits

**Ord Bargerstock**, Systems Accountant - Audit Resolution

### *Branch of Surveys*

**Sylvia Cabrera**, Branch Chief - National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

**Richard Aiken**, Economist - National Survey

**Jerry Leonard**, Economist - National Survey

### *Branch of Training*

**Steve Leggans**, Branch Chief

**Julie Schroyer**, Administrative Analyst

**Debbie Unbehagen**, Grants Management Specialist (Instructor)

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### **One Year IPA Position Available in the Washington Office**

The Division of Federal Assistance is looking for an individual to serve for up to one year under a full-time IPA (Intergovernmental Personnel Act) appointment in the Fish and Wildlife Service's Washington Office, Division of Federal Assistance.

The position will focus on the implementation of the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program and completion of the States' Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies (CWCS). The individual selected will assist the National Advisory Acceptance Team during the review process for the Strategies. This individual will also help put into place mechanisms that will measure program performance during the implementation phase of the CWCS. The Service views the CWCS and the State Wildlife Grant program to be one of the most important and effective means to achieve wide-scale wildlife conservation. This is a great opportunity to further this important effort and to work closely with Fish and Wildlife Service leadership and the national Federal Assistance team.

Candidates who have worked closely on the CWCS and/or the State Wildlife Grant program are encouraged to apply. Interested individuals who are not currently in a position that allows for an IPA should inquire about similar employment possibilities. Salary, lodging and some personal travel expenses will be paid; relocation expenses will not be paid. Start time is negotiable but a June start date is preferred.

Candidates should send letters of inquiries as soon as possible but no later than April 1 to: Genevieve Pullis LaRouche, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 4020, Arlington, VA 22203. Email: [genevieve\\_larouche@fws.gov](mailto:genevieve_larouche@fws.gov). Phone: 703/358 1854. Fax: 703/358 1837.



# Federal Assistance Program Overview

The goal of the Federal Assistance Program is to work with States to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, their habitats and the hunting, sport fishing, and recreational boating opportunities they provide. The Federal Assistance Program is responsible for administering the following Programs:

- Wildlife Restoration
- Sport Fish Restoration
- Clean Vessel Act
- Boating Infrastructure Grant
- National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant

- Multistate Conservation Grant
- State Wildlife Grants
- Landowner Incentive

In addition, Federal Assistance provides grant management support for endangered species tradition section 6, Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Land Acquisition, HCP Planning, and Recovery Land Acquisition Grant Programs. The following is an update on the accomplishments of the Federal Assistance Program and its partners with these grant programs.



# Focus on Specific Programs and Activities

## State Wildlife Grants

On December 8, 2004, President Bush signed into law the Fiscal Year 2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act that included \$69,027,526 for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program. The Act states that any amount apportioned in 2005 to any State, territory, or other jurisdiction that remains unobligated as of September 30, 2006, will be allowed to carry over and be reapportioned, together with funds appropriated in 2007.

Federal Assistance is working closely with State planners as they enter the final stretch of developing their Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies (CWCS). The CWCS are an unprecedented planning effort that focuses on species in greatest need of conservation. All States and Territories have committed to submit their CWCS by October 1, 2005 in order to receive State Wildlife Grant funds. Regional CWCS meetings are on-going where States and Federal Assistance staff discuss and share information on species and habitats, conservation actions, and other region specific topics. In some Regions, Federal Assistance staff, at their states' request,

are putting together regional species matrices.

The National Advisory Acceptance Team (NAAT), the group charged with reviewing all 56 Strategies and making recommendations to the Fish and Wildlife Service Director, met in late September at IAFWA's annual conference in Atlantic City. The Team drafted a list of Frequently Asked Questions and a Review Process document. These documents, sent to the States in October, address questions heard at the Nebraska "One-year out" meeting in August and lay out the process for NAAT review. The NAAT intends to meet at least 6 times in 2005, in locations across the county, to read and review all 56 Strategies.

In addition to planning and writing their CWCS, many States have implementation grants on the ground. These grants are aimed at species in greatest conservation need and are used to address the life needs and requirements for those species in order to preclude them from being listed under the Endangered Species Act.

For additional information contact Genevieve Pullis LaRouche.



## Wallop-Breaux Reauthorization Update

The out-going Congress did not pass legislation that would reauthorize the Wallop-Breaux programs in the months before the fall elections. Accordingly, the American League of Anglers and Boaters (ALAB) and other conservation and recreation groups are continuing their efforts to gain reauthorization of several U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recreation and conservation grant programs, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard's Recreational Boating Safety Program. To date, ALAB has successfully included their reauthorization position in legislation for the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Act, also known as the SAFETEA Highway Bill. Action on the SAFETEA bill by Congress has

stalled and its passage appears likely to be postponed until the spring of 2005. Congress has provided a temporary reauthorization of the various programs, but this extension does not cover the entire fiscal year.

The Service is a technical advisor to ALAB and will work closely with this group in the coming months.

For additional questions on this issue, please contact Brian Bohnsack. (703/358 1801. email: [Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov](mailto:Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov)).



## The Landowner Incentive Program

The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) is a grant program first authorized in the FY 2002 Interior Appropriations Bill. It provides competitive matching grants to States, Territories, the District of Columbia, and Tribes. Tribes are allocated funding through a separate competitive program. The grants establish or supplement landowner incentive programs that provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for projects that protect and restore habitats of Federally listed species or species determined to be at-risk. Private lands play a pivotal role in linking or providing important habitats for fish, wildlife, and plant species. As such, habitat provided by private lands represents an important tool for natural resource managers. LIP provides States with the funds needed to expand habitat protection and restoration programs on to private lands, enabling States to do species restoration planning on a more comprehensive statewide basis. LIP projects involve activities such as the restoration of marginal farmlands to wetlands, the removal of exotic plants to restore natural prairies, a change in

grazing practices and fencing to enhance important riparian habitats, in stream structural improvements to benefit aquatic species, road closures to protect habitats and reduce harassment of wildlife, and conservation easements. The State agency with primary responsibility for fish and wildlife submits proposals to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). The Service uses a two-tiered award system. Tier-1 grants are awarded if they meet minimum eligibility requirements. The Service ranks Tier-2 proposals and awards grants after a national competition. Tier-1 grants are intended to provide a base for States to fund staff and associated support necessary to develop a new or enhance an existing landowner incentive program. Tier-2 grants are generally intended to implement landowner incentive programs or fund the expansion of existing landowner incentive programs or those created under Tier-1 grants. A minimum 25% non-Federal share of project costs is required. LIP complements other Federal private lands conservation programs that focus primarily on the conservation of habitat. By requiring State fish and wildlife agencies to use their expertise to identify the needs of Federally listed,

proposed, and candidate species, or other at-risk species when applying for a grant, LIP adds a biological perspective to habitat conservation measures. State fish and wildlife agencies are the primary recipients of LIP grants. However, all other governmental entities, individuals, and organizations, including Tribes, may partner with or serve as a subgrantee to that fish and wildlife agency. The Service anticipates sending the LIP Final Policy with Implementation Guidelines and a Request for Proposals to the Federal Register for publishing during the month of February, 2005. State fish and wildlife agencies will have 60 days to submit grant proposals to the Washington Office of Federal Aid for consideration. At the end of the 60-day period, Tier 1 grant proposals will be reviewed by the Washington Office and the Service Regional Offices to ensure that eligibility criteria are met before contacting the States regarding the grant awards. Tier 2 grant proposals will be reviewed and scored by a national review team made up of Service employees familiar with grant programs. This team will make Tier 2 award recommendations to the Director in a timely manner.



Martha Collins

## Sport Fish Restoration Program Spawns New Successes

With its apportionment of \$260,526,978 for fiscal year 2004, the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program has awarded more than \$4.4 billion to State fishery agencies for their fisheries conservation and recreation programs since the inception of the program. The Service has recently announced the final apportionments for the current fiscal year, though the total was not available in time for this update. Apportionments for this fiscal year are likely to decrease slightly from previous years. The decline is primarily the result of decreased revenue from interest that is generated by the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund.

Fiscal Year 2004 was another successful year for the program. Several Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration grant program projects were recognized by fisheries and boating organizations for their contribution to the country's fisheries and boating recreation programs this past year. The Fisheries Administrators Section of the American Fisheries Society recognized four projects as "Outstanding Federal Aid in Sport Fish Awards of the Year":

**Sport Fishery Development and Management Category: Cedar Creek Lake Development Project-** The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources used Sportfish Restoration Funds to develop a new 784 acre lake in Lincoln County. The lake was stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, black crappie, and channel catfish. The lake is heavily vegetated and should provide a high quality fishery for many years to come.

**Aquatic Education Category: Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education-** The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission was recognized for their aquatic education program efforts at this center, located in Pisgah Forest. Visitors to the Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education can view both indoor and

outdoor exhibits that focus on North Carolina's natural resources. The exhibits are designed to show the relationship between people and wildlife, and the natural resources they share. The facility features three aquariums that contain coastal, Piedmont and mountain aquatic species.



*Students attend an aquatic education event hosted by the Pisgah Center of Wildlife Education in North Carolina. This center, which is operated by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, received the American Fisheries Society's Fisheries Administrators Section's Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program Aquatic Education project of the year in 2004. Photo courtesy North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.*

**Research and Survey Category- Striped Bass Spawning Stock Assessment (Maryland) and Sterile Fish Program (Idaho)-** The Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Idaho Fish and Game Department were recognized as co-winners for their respective research into regionally important fisheries. Maryland's project focused on understanding more about the economically important striped bass fishery found in the state. Idaho's research project seeks to maximize recreational fisheries and conserve native fish stocks by integrating the stocking of sterile trout into existing fisheries. It is hoped that the use of sterile fish will reduce the risk of swamping the gene pool of native fishes by the hatchery fish.

In addition, the States Organization for Boating Access recognized Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program projects

and one state agency for their boating access work at their national meeting this past year:

**State Boating Access Program Excellence Award- Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources -** The Alabama agency was recognized for their innovative approach in developing new boating access facilities with Sport Fish Restoration funds to meet the needs of regional and national fishing tournaments.

**Small Access Category- Fort Osage Access, Missouri-** Missouri Department of Conservation- The Missouri agency renovated an existing access by replacing a concrete boat ramp, entrance road and parking area. The renovation improved appearance and safety, and better accommodates disabled users at the only public access site on this reach of the Missouri River.

**Mid-size Access Category- Newport Public Boat Ramp, Delaware-** The Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife in partnership with the town of Newport jointly developed this \$1.4 million project. This project reclaimed an area that was occupied by a construction landfill and built a ramp to provide access to the Christina River, which flows into the Delaware River.

**Large Access Category- Hell Creek State Park Boating Access, Montana-** The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks was recognized for this \$825,000 boating access project located on Fort Peck Reservoir, the second heaviest-fished body of water in the state. The Hell Creek State Park is extremely popular with both resident and non-resident anglers and this project made several significant improvements to the park, including expanding the boat launching facilities, adding a RV dump station, improving the road systems leading to and within the boundaries of the site, expanding the camping and parking facilities, and constructing a restroom with showers to accommodate disabled users.



*The Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks was recently recognized by the States Organization for Boating Access for their boating access facility development at Hell Creek State Park. The boat launch and accompanying infrastructure provide high quality facilities for anglers in pursuit of Fort Peck Reservoir's walleye, northern pike, smallmouth bass, and other species. Photo courtesy Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.*

**Marina and Harbors Category- St. Ignace Municipal Marina Expansion, Michigan-** The Michigan Department of Natural Resources led this multi-phased \$8+ million project on Lake Huron in downtown St. Ignace. The project completed improvements to shore-based infrastructure, including completing a toilet/shower building, parking, walkways, and fuel service area, upgrading the harbor, including reconstruction of the breakwalls and shore protection to provide safety from wave action; and expanding the number of boat slips from 20 to 134 by the addition of floating piers within the expanded marina basin, protected by new breakwalls.

The Service will continue its work with stakeholders in the coming months to ensure that the program's successes continue in the current year. For additional information on this program, contact Brian Bohnsack (703/358 1801: [Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov](mailto:Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov)).

### **Wildlife Restoration Program Approaching 70 Years of Conservation Funding**

The Service recently released the final apportionment for the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (WR) program for fiscal year 2005. The apportionment was down slightly from fiscal year 2004. Funding for WR is generated from an excise tax, at the manufacture's level, on sporting firearms, ammunition, handguns, and archery equipment. The annual apportionment varies with fluctuations in sales of taxed equipment. The amount a state receives also is affected by the number of hunting licenses sold in that state and also by the land area of each state. The WR program has awarded more than \$4.7 billion since its inception in 1937 and it continues to be the one of the financial backbones of wildlife conservation efforts in the U.S. The program is widely recognized as one

of the premier conservation funding programs in the world.

Because of the program's long-term stable funding, the State and Territorial wildlife agencies have been able to develop programs that are continuing to accomplish conservation and recreation successes throughout the country. For example, more than 2.2 million acres of land was leased for hunting or protected by conservation easements in fiscal year 2004. States and Territories also provided technical assistance to approximately 7,000 private landowners regarding wildlife conservation activities on their lands in this fiscal year. In addition, participation by a State in the Wildlife Restoration program provides legal protection for hunter license revenues from being diverted to any other purpose than legitimate work of the State fish and wildlife agency.

For additional information on the Wildlife Restoration program, contact Tom Barnes (703/358 1815: [Thomas\\_Barnes@fws.gov](mailto:Thomas_Barnes@fws.gov)).



*Region 4 Federal Assistance biologist Tom McCoy (left), Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division Director Dan Forster (middle), and Region 4 Federal Assistance Chief Mike Piccirilli check the radio telemetry equipment on this Georgia black bear before its release. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources is conducting radio telemetry research on black bears with funds from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration program.*

## State Audit Update

We are in the second cycle of State audits conducted by the Department of Interior Office of Inspector General. There are currently fourteen audits in process. To date, fifteen second cycle audits have been completed for which we have received audit reports. Our experiences and the feedback from the audits continue to be very positive. We are striving to maintain open lines of communication between the auditors, grantees, and Federal Assistance offices. This strong message of cooperation was reinforced during auditor training and Program orientation provided by the Division in December 2004. We welcome all comments and suggestions on our audit program.

Our audit policies are completed and have become part of the Service Manual. They can be found in the Fish and Wildlife Service, Service Manual, chapters 417 FW 1 through 6. The policies outline the responsibilities for audits, define terms associated with audits, provide an overview of the audit process, and establish procedures for objectives, planning, conducting, reporting, resolution, and appeals.

For additional information on this issue, please contact Patrick McHugh.

## Joint State/Federal Task Force on Federal Assistance Policy

The Joint State/Federal Task Force on Federal Assistance Policy (JTF) established in September 2002, has provided recommendations to resolve issues of national significance in the Wildlife Restoration and Sport Fish Restoration grant programs. Based on its recommendations, the Service has issued seven Director's Orders (DO's) and two memos to clarify policy issues. The USFWS is also considering the issuance of three other DO's proposed by the JTF. For three additional issues, the JTF determined that additional policy guidance was not needed, but stated its understanding of the existing policy

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## Audit of Sport Fish and Wildlife Resoration Grants 2005 and 2006 Schedule of States and Territories

The Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration program five year audit cycle of state agencies has completed or scheduled the audits for thirty-one States and Territories. Representative from the OIG have contacted each of the States in the first subgroup to determine an appropriate audit schedule that is acceptable to all parties. States and Territories in the second subgroup, if they have not already been contacted, can expect to be contacted by the OIG sometime after April 2005. We expect the final subgroup to be scheduled in late 2005.

### First Subgroup

Kentucky  
Maine  
Michigan  
Nevada  
New Mexico  
Pennsylvania  
South Carolina  
Texas

### Second Subgroup

District of Columbia  
Georgia  
Minnesota  
North Dakota  
Northern Mariana Islands  
Oklahoma  
Virgin Islands  
Virginia

### Third Subgroup

Arizona  
Delaware  
Guam  
Hawaii  
Kansas  
Maryland  
Missouri  
Ohio

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pertinent to each issue and recommended that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service take appropriate steps to ensure existing policy is consistently applied. Finally, the JTF determined that additional policy guidance was not needed for three other issues without any further recommendation.

The USFWS and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has recently amended the JTF charter to allow it to review operational policies and administrative problems and recommend solutions for State Wildlife Grants and the Landowner Incentive Program. This additional JTF policy-making authority would not extend to the Tribal elements of these two programs.

For more information on this issue, contact Tom Barnes at 703/358 2156.

Copies of all current FWS Director's Orders can be found at <http://policy.fws.gov/do.html>.

## Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Responds to Stakeholder Input

The Division of Federal Assistance awarded \$3,455,730 of Tier 1 funds from the Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program to States for Fiscal Year 2005 in December. The Division awarded the Tier 1 funds several months in advance of announcing the Tier 2 awards for the program, which is a change from previous years. The Division changed the timing of the award announcement in response to input received from stakeholders received as part of the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council's review of the BIG program. The Council's review of the program was completed recently and their recommendations on additional program changes will be provided to the Service. The Council is appointed by the Secretary of Interior and provides advice on ways to enhance angling and boating opportunities to the Secretary through the Service's Director.

Congress has extended the authorization for the BIG program for most of the current fiscal year. Congress has approved \$5.3 million of funding for the BIG

program in Fiscal Year 2005 and additional authorizations are likely to occur later this year when deliberations begin again with the Highway Bill. The American League of Anglers and Boaters (ALAB) have proposed that funding increase for the BIG program in the current reauthorization efforts. Under ALAB's proposal, the BIG program would receive a percentage of the total receipts into the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund. This percentage is estimated to increase the total funds available for the program to approximately \$10 million per year.

The BIG program remains one of the Service's most competitive grant programs. The Service received 33 proposals from 16 states requesting \$15.0 million of funding for the Tier 2 portion of this program in Fiscal Year 2005.

### **E-Grants Initiative Continuing: Four Federal Assistance Grant Programs Come Online**

The Division of Federal Assistance is continuing its efforts to make grant programs available online for our various stakeholders. To date, four of the Division's competitive grant programs have been posted onto the federal government's Grants.Gov site and are now able to receive proposals electronically. Specifically, the Clean Vessel Act, Boating Infrastructure Grant, National Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Landowner Incentive grant programs have been posted on this site and been able to receive proposals submitted electronically. As one of the 24 President's Management Agenda E-Government initiatives, Grants.gov's mission is to provide a simple, unified Web site for potential grant applicants. By putting relevant information in one place, we are helping organizations less familiar with Federal grant programs to learn about and apply for these opportunities on a secure and safe Web location. The Division of Federal Assistance is one of leading organizations within the Department of Interior with our efforts to enter into electronic grants management.

The Grants.Gov site is now one year old and provides secure methods for submitting grant proposals electronically to federal agencies. As with any new initiative, the Grants.Gov site began slowly and is now becoming more accepted within the federal government. Over the past year, some of the Grants.Gov accomplishments include:

- receiving more than 1,250 grant applications government wide
- enrolling more than 3,000 grant-seeking organizations
- making an average of 1,400 grant opportunity notices available daily
- reviewing more than 25 million page views

In addition to serving as a single site for federal financial assistance, states can also post information on their grant funding opportunities on to this site. This feature may be very useful for our state cooperators that sub-grant federal funds received from many of the Division's programs (e.g., community assistance programs for the development of fishing programs, state landowner incentive programs, and state sewage pumpout grant programs).

Within the Department of Interior, the U.S. Geological Services (USGS) is recognized as the leading agency for electronic grants management. The USGS requires all of their grant proposals to be received electronically. As a result, the USGS has increased the efficiency of managing their grants and the efforts have been well received both internally within the agency as well as with their grant stakeholders.

The Division's grant program postings are reaching potential new constituents and making many individuals aware of the diverse range of grant programs administered by the Service. As a result of the increased knowledge of these new constituents, our state agency partners are likely to receive additional contacts from individuals and groups within their state seeking to coordinate the submission of their proposals. This will provide our state cooperators with the opportunity to expand their constituency base and supporters.

For additional information on this issue, contact Lori Bennett (703/358 2033: [Lori.Bennett@fws.gov](mailto:Lori.Bennett@fws.gov)) or Brian Bohnsack (703/358 1801: [Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov](mailto:Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov)) in the Division's Washington office.





## Partnership Addresses Excise Taxes of the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs

The Service is part of a cooperative partnership with the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), the Bureau of Public Debt, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection and representatives of the manufacturing industries of sport fish and archery equipment, firearms and ammunition. Excise taxes and import duties collected by the IRS and the TTB are the backbone of revenue sources for the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs. The foundation of this partnership is to ensure there is: (a) accurate and consistent collection of excise taxes and import duties; (b) fair application of the tax code; and, (c) a broad-based understanding of the importance to and use of collected taxes by State Fish and Wildlife Agencies in restoring fish and wildlife resources.

One of the first actions taken by this group was to train six field agents of the IRS in December 2004. As part of this training, agents learned about the history of the Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs, including the roles of the Federal partners, state agencies, private industries, and hunters and anglers in the programs' successes. Much of the training was led by IRS personnel and focused on detailed procedural issues for the agents, including the complicated task of identifying whether a company was required to pay the tax and what percentage was owed. In addition, IAFWA representatives, sport fish and archery equipment manufacturers and Federal Assistance personnel spoke to the group. These newly trained agents are working with manufacturers and importers of sport fish and archery equipment to increase compliance with the tax code and to consistently interpret and apply the law throughout the nation.

Also, the TTB is working with the manufacturers of firearms and ammunition to help them learn more about the TTB's application of the tax code. During the January 2005 SHOT Show at the Las Vegas Convention Center, the TTB, in cooperation with the National Sport Shooting Foundation, held a comprehensive seminar for industry representatives. This seminar focused on definitions of key terms and their affect on tax compliance and payments and helped manufacturers understand their role during firearms and ammunition transactions, including the role of their distributors and dealers. In February, the Service and TTB held follow up meetings with representatives of firearms and ammunition manufacturers to discuss further training of manufacturers, consistency of application of the law by auditors and agents, and a compliance assistance program for industry.

This is a unique partnership of tax payers, tax collectors and fish and wildlife agencies. This partnership is restoring the cooperative spirit first put in place by the visionaries that went to Congress in the 1930's and again in the 1950's to dedicate excise taxes collected on sporting firearms and ammunition, sport fishing equipment and archery equipment for apportionment to states for sport fish and wildlife restoration. This unique cycle of tax collection and disbursement has been in place and working successfully for over 70 years; however, new developments in the tax code, recent misunderstandings occurring during application of the tax code and increased numbers and locations of manufacturers have created the need to reinvigorate formal cooperation and to restore common goals to foster mutual support. This new partnership set ambitious goals over the next four years and is setting task oriented objectives designed to resolve current issues. All in



*Gordon Robertson, of the American Sportfishing Association, spoke recently to a group of Internal Revenue Service excise tax agents about their role in the continued success of the Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs.*

this partnership are working cooperatively to increase compliance with the tax code, which in turn provides critical funding to State and Territorial Fish and Wildlife Agencies to manage the Nation's fish and wildlife resources that will be enjoyed by millions of Americans who fish and hunt every year.

For additional information, contact Pam Matthes (703/358 2066)

### **More States Certifying Licenses Electronically with Service: License Revenue Continues to Increase, Certified License Holders Decline**

The Division of Federal Assistance is continuing to work with State fish and wildlife agencies to certify the number of paid hunting and fishing license holders electronically versus the traditional paper method. License certification is an essential part of the apportionment process for the Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration grant programs. Currently, about 45% of the states certify their license holders electronically with the Service. To submit electronically, contact your regional Federal Assistance office for access requirements and to request a free professional version of Adobe Acrobat 6.0 which is necessary for electronic submission of the license figures.

The license certification information provided by State fish and wildlife agencies continues to indicate a mixed future for these agencies. While hunting and fishing license revenue continues to increase for most state agencies, the number of hunting and fishing license holders certified by State fish and wildlife agencies for the 2005 apportionments from the Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs continued their decrease of recent years. States certified 14,740,188 and 27,908,272 hunting and fishing license holders respectively in license year 2003. The total number of fishing license holders declined for the third consecutive year, after averaging over 29 million for several

consecutive years. The number of hunting license holders also continued to decline gradually since reporting more than 15 million license holders as recently as 1999.

State fish and wildlife agencies reported \$679,824,466 and \$512,970, 893 of income from hunting and fishing license income, respectively, in 2003. Hunting license income has increased every year since 1972. Fishing license income has continued to increase since 2000. Fishing license income, in general, has also increased for many consecutive years, though it experienced two consecutive years of decline in 1999 and 2000.

Historical information on license sales and revenue is located on the Division's web site (<http://federalaid.fws.gov>). Additional information on license certification and income can be obtained by contacting Lori Bennett (703/358 2033: [Lori.Bennett@fws.gov](mailto:Lori.Bennett@fws.gov)).

See tables on pages 16 and 17.



### **National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation**

Planning for the 2006 Survey began in 2004. It will be the 11th conducted since 1955. The Service sponsors the survey every five years at the request of State fish and wildlife agencies. The survey will be similar in content, scope, and methodology to those conducted in 1991, 1996, and 2001— so their estimates will be comparable. The Census Bureau will collect the information.

During 2004 the Service, International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and Census Bureau staff met with representatives from the 50 state fish and wildlife agencies and with national non-governmental organizations to discuss survey content and reporting needs. And, the Service and Census Bureau began preparing the request to the Office of Management and Budget for approval to conduct the survey.

The Census Bureau will begin collecting information in April 2006. It will contact 90,000 households to identify samples of 31,500 sportsmen and 24,300 wildlife watchers. Census will ask these individuals detailed questions about their fishing, hunting, and wildlife-watching activities and expenditures. This will be accomplished by computer-assisted telephone and in-person interviews conducted in April and September 2006, and in January 2007.

The 2006 Survey will generate information identified as priority data needed by the States, Service, non-governmental organizations, and other major survey users. General categories of information collected include the number of participants in different types of fish and wildlife consumptive and non-consumptive activities, the extent of participation (days and trips), and related trip and equipment expenditures. The survey is one of the nation's most important sources of information on fish and wildlife recreation.

## Fishing License Holders Table

State	Paid Fishing License Holders	Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits, and Stamps	Non-Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Total Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Gross Cost
Alabama	442,474	277,548	407,601	685,149	\$13,067,535.86
Alaska	475,746	345,480	109,338	454,818	\$6,147,667.90
Arkansas	684,834	507,979	236,316	744,295	\$8,301,260.00
Arizona	381,705	373,492	166,505	539,997	\$7,470,333.00
California	2,124,452	3,066,904	40,783	3,107,687	\$49,769,590.00
Colorado	630,127	608,778	247,250	856,028	\$9,855,726.00
Connecticut	153,810	143,584	10,226	153,810	\$2,794,181.00
Delaware	19,867	21,004	3,831	24,835	\$202,327.00
Florida	1,045,564	1,245,224	518,392	1,763,616	\$22,448,453.00
Georgia	649,628	728,833	92,721	821,554	\$7,991,288.00
Hawaii	5,251	5,390	221	5,611	\$25,442.00
Iowa	418,786	739,173	53,219	792,392	\$6,725,198.00
Idaho	395,964	363,233	168,026	531,259	\$8,749,339.87
Illinois	701,381	750,529	28,962	779,491	\$8,954,789.00
Indiana	500,608	437,165	72,751	509,916	\$9,924,961.00
Kansas	273,357	242,312	38,393	280,705	\$4,848,439.00
Kentucky	580,447	505,193	112,017	617,210	\$8,190,157.00
Louisiana	627,551	777,738	175,937	953,675	\$8,984,168.00
Massachusetts	125,704	246,369	15,628	261,997	\$3,259,830.00
Maryland	377,212	393,545	79,572	473,117	\$5,614,390.00
Maine	262,772	185,548	77,677	263,225	\$5,856,339.00
Michigan	1,189,822	1,033,632	283,973	1,317,605	\$22,318,881.00
Minnesota	1,461,112	1,092,708	249,213	1,341,921	\$26,340,197.00
Missouri	851,518	1,218,176	175,418	1,393,594	\$12,182,030.50
Mississippi	362,569	370,410	57,788	428,198	\$4,733,231.00
Montana	383,374	400,844	358,449	759,293	\$9,619,389.00
North Carolina	661,688	634,561	56,942	691,503	\$12,358,455.00
North Dakota	167,344	133,381	40,587	173,968	\$1,638,996.00
Nebraska	190,794	329,580	48,174	377,754	\$4,106,836.00
New Hampshire	141,061	189,246	91,238	280,484	\$4,867,176.00
New Jersey	166,708	233,363	13,750	247,113	\$4,648,088.00
New Mexico	198,708	289,973	98,124	388,097	\$3,574,627.00
Nevada	136,256	178,892	36,661	215,553	\$2,796,268.00
New York	988,171	832,298	159,457	991,755	\$21,399,100.00
Ohio	950,767	865,610	85,157	950,767	\$12,430,910.00
Oklahoma	584,596	361,176	78,795	439,971	\$6,825,418.35
Oregon	684,517	825,772	195,505	1,021,277	\$15,155,681.00
Pennsylvania	1,051,043	1,560,966	159,191	1,720,157	\$19,039,228.75
Rhode Island	27,534	40,051	3,576	43,627	\$580,116.00
South Carolina	470,877	450,214	102,956	553,170	\$5,901,740.00
South Dakota	204,285	133,298	75,352	208,650	\$4,660,988.00
Tennessee	992,727	943,214	211,709	1,154,923	\$12,839,048.00
Texas	1,479,414	2,041,377	92,155	2,133,532	\$34,670,718.00
Utah	370,325	290,267	101,341	391,608	\$9,062,617.00
Virginia	587,295	671,661	81,467	753,128	\$8,763,163.00
Vermont	121,874	80,917	41,633	122,550	\$2,444,268.00
Washington	668,414	1,833,269	299,648	2,132,917	\$16,007,690.35
Wisconsin	1,413,804	1,279,859	411,206	1,691,065	\$24,390,378.00
West Virginia	266,277	603,169	142,569	745,738	\$4,512,810.00
Wyoming	258,158	117,519	156,870	274,389	\$5,921,430.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,908,272</b>	<b>31,000,424</b>	<b>6,564,270</b>	<b>37,564,694</b>	<b>\$512,970,893.58</b>

## Hunting License Holders Table

State	Paid Hunting License Holders	Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits, and Stamps	Non-Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Total Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Gross Cost
Alabama	99,121	185,367	37,848	223,215	\$8,373,590.84
Alaska	270,229	255,022	44,202	299,224	\$9,077,910.50
Arkansas	386,559	361,702	76,406	438,108	\$12,153,851.00
Arizona	181,467	362,036	34,263	396,299	\$10,486,835.00
California	315,588	843,357	15,334	858,691	\$16,342,858.00
Colorado	309,801	388,842	165,057	553,899	\$52,287,530.00
Connecticut	54,926	127,832	6,462	134,294	\$2,300,724.00
Delaware	20,066	28,682	3,165	31,847	\$633,008.00
Florida	176,320	313,151	8,028	321,179	\$4,717,719.00
Georgia	331,795	870,755	83,371	954,126	\$13,091,634.00
Hawaii	8,388	8,584	316	8,900	\$285,880.00
Iowa	269,014	768,276	103,638	871,914	\$17,578,690.00
Idaho	245,358	727,210	96,883	824,093	\$20,321,479.88
Illinois	293,994	1,057,549	44,510	1,102,059	\$16,016,031.00
Indiana	232,819	421,894	14,312	436,206	\$14,943,634.00
Kansas	195,874	397,044	71,902	468,946	\$12,087,277.00
Kentucky	347,379	608,399	58,296	666,695	\$12,649,252.00
Louisiana	268,793	561,943	34,614	596,557	\$10,010,776.00
Massachusetts	56,662	204,885	5,465	210,350	\$1,931,205.00
Maryland	123,699	264,537	29,384	293,921	\$5,379,334.00
Maine	201,136	217,930	47,675	265,605	\$7,127,981.00
Michigan	863,946	2,225,367	40,864	2,266,231	\$27,557,693.00
Minnesota	573,424	1,379,563	34,196	1,413,759	\$27,543,644.00
Missouri	542,477	1,175,640	54,396	1,230,036	\$19,013,206.50
Mississippi	235,447	234,717	43,971	278,688	\$9,450,722.00
Montana	232,276	856,605	122,824	979,429	\$24,653,681.00
North Carolina	433,542	470,217	23,728	493,945	\$9,713,265.00
North Dakota	146,010	425,646	178,026	603,672	\$8,517,645.00
Nebraska	176,502	345,550	51,519	397,069	\$9,303,513.00
New Hampshire	63,975	188,686	37,566	226,252	\$3,793,753.00
New Jersey	81,501	266,914	136,649	403,563	\$7,048,188.00
New Mexico	109,948	284,052	54,516	338,568	\$13,401,961.00
Nevada	60,805	75,909	14,085	89,994	\$3,200,053.00
New York	641,572	1,373,531	80,698	1,454,229	\$20,709,350.00
Ohio	425,992	1,108,893	19,949	1,128,842	\$17,247,929.00
Oklahoma	331,672	313,181	15,812	328,993	\$7,705,971.50
Oregon	295,422	1,314,350	66,817	1,381,167	\$18,506,490.00
Pennsylvania	1,017,802	2,660,174	131,249	2,791,423	\$39,773,564.00
Rhode Island	10,691	30,995	2,881	33,876	\$476,179.00
South Carolina	272,752	200,487	58,856	259,343	\$7,282,978.00
South Dakota	207,973	244,101	104,602	348,703	\$15,365,201.00
Tennessee	727,525	946,477	37,513	983,990	\$13,505,126.00
Texas	1,039,327	1,225,481	65,235	1,290,716	\$28,126,610.00
Utah	154,884	226,437	11,636	238,073	\$10,750,245.00
Virginia	304,605	763,282	50,598	813,880	\$11,198,884.00
Vermont	90,110	164,924	21,865	186,789	\$3,418,595.00
Washington	194,308	871,538	12,078	883,616	\$12,197,388.51
Wisconsin	716,200	2,584,071	133,806	2,717,877	\$32,848,828.00
West Virginia	262,835	729,189	196,988	926,177	\$10,642,616.00
Wyoming	137,677	152,836	75,558	228,394	\$19,073,987.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,740,188</b>	<b>31,813,810</b>	<b>2,859,612</b>	<b>34,673,422</b>	<b>\$679,824,466.73</b>

We continue to seek cost-effective methods for the survey. In 2006 the Census Bureau will conduct a side-by-side test to determine the viability of using state fishing and hunting license databases as a supplement to the traditional census household databases. If viable, the use of state databases could reduce costs considerably for future surveys because Census would not have to sample as many households as it does now.

The 2006 Survey is funded by grants from the Multistate Conservation Grant Programs of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program. Products will include preliminary reports, final national and 50 state reports, CDs, and quick facts brochures. All data and reports also will be available on a website.

The Service also analyzes and produces reports based on existing survey data. Addenda to the 2001 Survey include the following reports: *Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis*; *2001 National and State Economic Impacts of Wildlife Watching*; *Net Economic Values for Wildlife-Related Recreation in 2001*; *Participation and Expenditure Patterns of African-American, Hispanic, and Female Hunters and Anglers*; and *Fishing and Hunting 1991-2001: Avid, Casual, and Intermediate Participation Trends*. The most recent report issued is *Deer Hunting in the United States: An Analysis of Hunter Demographics and Behavior*.

Copies of survey reports are available on request or are accessible through the following website: <http://federalaid.fws.gov>. For more information you also may contact the Service's survey staff.

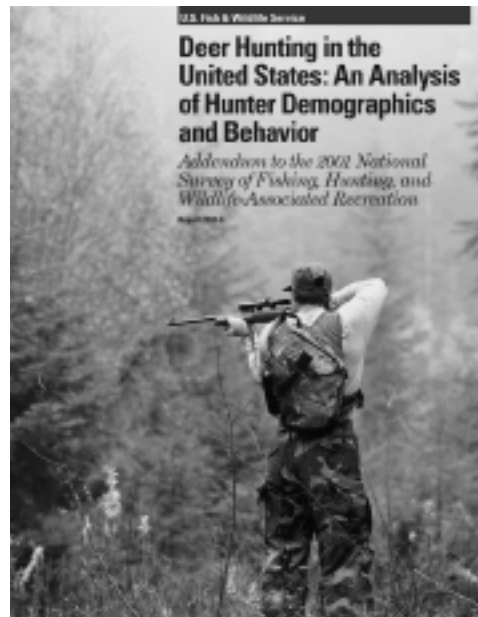
## New Survey Report on Deer Hunters

The Service recently released a new survey report based on the 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, *Report 2001-6, Deer Hunting in the United States: An*

*Analysis of Hunter Demographics and Behavior*. It provides a wide array of information about deer hunters including participation levels, demographic characteristics, spending patterns, use of primitive weapons, land ownership and leasing behavior, and license purchasing behavior. It is intended to be used as an informational tool by resource managers, academics, product manufacturers, and other interested parties.

Deer hunter participation levels are examined for the U.S. as a whole and by state. In 2001 Deer hunting was the most prominent hunted species by a large margin. Approximately 79% or 10.3 million of the 13.0 million hunters in the U.S. hunted for deer. Turkey was the second most hunted species at 2.5 million. Moreover, deer hunting was prominent in nearly every state. At least 50% of hunters in all but a few states hunted deer, and there were 21 states in which deer hunting participation was greater than 75%.

The distribution of the deer hunting population with respect to commonly used



*The Fish and Wildlife Service recently released a new report on deer hunting in the U.S.*

demographic features such as age, income, gender, education, and geographic location is compared to that of the U.S. population and non-deer hunters. Some of the findings include the following. At over 65 years of age, the participation rate for deer hunting was noticeably lower than non-deer hunting. Deer hunters had fewer years of education on average than non-deer hunters. The participation rate for both deer and non-deer hunting went up as incomes increased.

The report contrasts many behaviors of deer and non-deer hunters including expenditures, hunting land ownership and leasing pattern, and the wildlife-watching pattern of hunters. Deer hunters spent more on hunting, particularly for special equipment, land leasing, and land ownership. Deer hunters were more likely to own hunting land and hunt on privately owned land. Both deer and non-deer hunters participated in wildlife watching at nearly the same rate. About 55% of both groups participated in wildlife watching around the home, while about 30% of both took wildlife watching trips. Several aspects of deer hunter behavior, including primitive weapons usage, land ownership, and license purchasing pattern are analyzed in greater detail. Nearly 40% of deer hunters hunted with either a muzzleloader rifle or bow and arrow, and those that used these primitive weapons, on average, participated more days and spent more money than those who did not. Several factors were found to have an impact on the rate of hunting land ownership and leasing. Both increased with age, income, and hunting days. Additionally, regions of the country where relatively large amounts of public land were available, such as the Mountain region, were found to have low rates of hunting land ownership and leasing.

The report made use of two questions contained in the Survey regarding license purchasing and exemptions to identify those deer hunters that hunted without purchasing licenses and were not exempt from the requirement to do so. These hunters were identified as likely



noncompliant with respect to license purchasing. The report indicates that these hunters were not necessarily noncompliant because the respondent may not have understood correctly or answered truthfully to the two questions involved. Nevertheless, they were considered likely noncompliant. This methodology revealed that about 8% of deer hunters in 2001 were not licensed and not exempt.

Lastly, the report uses statistical modeling to help promote a greater understanding of factors that affect the decision to hunt without a license. The modeling identifies how numerous demographic characteristics and hunting behaviors affect the probability that a hunter will hunt without a license. Numerous factors were found to have a significant impact on the probability that a hunter will hunt without a license including number of days hunted, geographic region, age, weapons used, gender, other species hunted, whether hunting occurred on public or private land, and whether land was leased for hunting.



#### **Section 4 and 10: Hunter Education Program**

In late September 2004, the Service signed a four-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Archery Trade Association, the Bowhunting Preservation Alliance, and Arrowsport to increase archery and bowhunting opportunities, building on bowhunters' continued support for wildlife conservation.

"This is another example where the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is strengthening partnerships with the hunting community," Service Director Steve Williams said. "These groups are on the forefront of wildlife conservation in the Nation. Since 1985, excise taxes paid on bows and arrows have contributed more than \$320 million to State conservation programs."

Specifically, the agreement will help ensure the collection of excise taxes under the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife

Restoration Act, and will help States use these funds for archery and bowhunting-related recreational programs.

"This agreement goes well beyond the industry and the Service, it includes all the archery and bowhunting interest groups," said Jay McAninch, CEO/President of the Archery Trade Association, the Bowhunting Preservation Alliance, and Arrowsport. "Our agreement underscores bowhunting as a conservation tool that is important for wildlife management and recreation across the country."

The USFWS Division of Federal Assistance has long assisted states in pursuing their conservation and outdoor recreation goals by providing efficient administration of grant funds. This MOU reaffirms this service, as well as formalizes a partnership with an industry association that represents a significant number of groups that support the Wildlife Restoration Program through payment of excise taxes. Included below

are some examples of state archery-related projects supported by the Wildlife Restoration Program.

### **Archery Range Construction/Improvement**

**Nebraska** – The competitive Nebraska Shooting Range Grant Assistance Program provides funds to third party conservation/shooting range organizations and government agencies to assist in the development of firearms and archery facilities. Section 10 funds have been awarded to projects throughout Nebraska ranging from \$2,000 to \$30,000 per project. One program funded under this effort is the Ponca State Park archery range. Grant funds were used to help purchase archery equipment, targets, and construct 6 sight-in stations, a storage building and a 20 station walk-through field course. Another effort involved a partnership with a local archery club to construct a 28 station walk-through field course and 6 sight-in stations at a range in the Big Indian Natural Resource Area.

**New Hampshire** – Hunter Education Training Facility, Holderness, NH. The facility contains an outdoor archery shoot/don't shoot course, an outdoor archery target/sighting-in range, and has a multi-purpose indoor range that can be used for archery. The facility is geographically located in the center of the State and will provide access for archers and bowhunter education courses.

**Minnesota** – Ten archery ranges are currently funded under contract agreements with the state's Shooting Range Development and Rehabilitation Grant Program.

**Nevada** - Wildlife Restoration Section 10 Enhancement funds were provided by NV Department of Wildlife for the planned multi-partner \$15 million Clark County Shooting Sports Park near Las Vegas. All shooting disciplines will be accommodated in this state-of-the-art facility. Archery shooting facilities will be an integral part of the comprehensive

Hunter Education component of the facility.

**Alabama** - A 25-yard rifle range, shotgun field, and an archery range was constructed adjacent to the existing range at the Barbour County Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Shooting Range. The construction at this public shooting range increased public access to shooting facilities, improved safety features, and increased public recreational archery opportunities.

### **National Archery in the Schools Program**

Wildlife Restoration Program funding has also played a critical part in the growth of

the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). NASP is a physical education curriculum initially co-created by the Department's of Education and Fish & Wildlife Resources. The program teaches Olympic-style target archery to students in the 6th-8th grades. Since its inception in 2002, the program has been adopted by over twenty states across the nation, with even more slated to implement the program in 2005. Many of the participating states utilize Wildlife Restoration Funds to purchase the bows, arrows, targets and other materials necessary to allow the schools to implement the program. NASP has introduced thousands of boys and girls to archery every year since the program began.



*Professional archery coach Terry Wunderle works with seven-year-old Christopher Reed and twelve-year-old national champion Levi Cyr at Reedy's Archery Shop in Massachusetts.*

Terry Wunderle

## **The Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) of the Department of the Interior and Federal Assistance Information Management System (FAIMS)**

The Federal Assistance Information Management System (FAIMS) is used by Fish and Wildlife Service personnel to manage the complete life cycle of over half a billion dollars in grants administered by the Service. FAIMS is critical to the reconciliation of grant related fiscal information that exists in systems operated by the Department of Health and Human Services, the Division of Federal Assistance, and the Division of Finance. The checks and balances built into FAIMS ensure the integrity of Federal Assistance's fiscal data as confirmed by the audit firm KPMG, LLP.

In addition, FAIMS has an Internet interface known as iFAIMS located at <http://faims.fws.gov>. Many States are recognizing and praising the grant information that is available online to both registered users (typically state federal aid coordinators) and the general public. This site provides available information about the grants inside of FAIMS for a variety of users outside of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Registered users can view grant information including the planned accomplishments, amount of federal funds obligated, and the actual accomplishments of completed projects. Division of Federal Assistance staff have prepared high-quality state specific templates for these reports and the output can be printed and used as an informational resource for media, legislators and other stakeholders. Users can also run detailed reports concerning their grants and even submit license certifications. Public users can view grant information online and run many different reports. These reports bring back more than just static data, by providing a parameter form we have enabled users to retrieve information based on the values they need for specific grants.

The Department of Interior is migrating to a centralized and comprehensive Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) to manage all aspects of business. The Department plans to deploy grant programs administered by the Federal Assistance Program on October 1, 2006. Until that date, current FA grant application and award processes will continue using FAIMS. The Service will continue to provide information, as it is received from the Department, regarding training opportunities for States and Territories and other grant recipients.

Last year some of the major accomplishments included:

- Final implementation of new internal controls including upgraded configuration management and workflow software and procedures.
- Greater use and integration of help desk system to better respond and monitor problems with the system.

So far in Fiscal Year 2005 emphasis has been placed on:

- Securing the FAIMS and iFAIMS systems from external and internal threats via increased technical,

operational and managerial policies and procedures.

- Analyzing FAIMS data in preparation for FBMS conversion.

During the remainder of 2005 emphasis will be placed on:

- Continuing to secure the FAIMS and iFAIMS systems against external and internal threats.
- Preparing FAIMS for implementation in association with the FBMS. This includes such activities as working with Departmental personnel, BearingPoint, and its subcontractors to:
  - 1) complete the analysis required to successfully convert the data contained in FAIMS into FBMS, and
  - 2) identify areas of FAIMS that will not be converted into FBMS.
  - 3) Work with department staff in establishing needs for the Lands module.

For additional information on this issue, contact Lori Bennett at 703/358 2033.





## National Coastal Wetlands Grant Program Announces Fiscal Year 2005 Awards

Ten states were recently awarded more than \$13 million in grants to conserve, restore and protect coastal wetlands with funding from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant program. This is one of several programs funded from the Sport Fish Restoration Account as part of the larger Wallop-Breaux program. The States awarded grants with fiscal year 2005 funds from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program include Alaska, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

The grants provide funding for 16 projects and will be supplemented with nearly \$13 million from state and private partners. The grants will be used to acquire, restore or enhance coastal wetlands for long-term conservation benefits to wildlife and habitat. Partners in this year's projects include state and local governments, private landowners and conservation groups such as Ducks Unlimited, the Trust for Public Land and the Wildlife Forever Foundation.

"Citizen-stewards are often our most effective conservationists, and programs like the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant program empower them." Interior Secretary Gale Norton said. "People working in partnership will help us ensure that we can pass along to our children and grandchildren a country that is as healthy and whole as the one we inherited."

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants are awarded to states through a competitive process. The program is funded by the 1990 Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act. Funding for the program is generated from excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat and small engine fuels. These taxes are deposited into the Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund.

To date, the Service has awarded almost \$152 million in grants to states and a U.S. territory under the program. When the 2005 grants projects are complete, they will have protected and/or restored almost 22,000 acres. Almost 189,000 acres will have been protected or restored since the wetlands grant program began in 1990. This year, the program became the first Service grant program to accept proposals electronically through grants.gov. The grants.gov website is a cross-agency E-Government initiative, spanning 900 federal financial assistance programs and \$350 billion in annual grants.

Descriptions of the 2005 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant projects follow.

### Fiscal Year 2005 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Recipients

#### Alaska

##### Gustavus Forelands: Snyder Parcel.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game will acquire 135 acres of wetlands and coastal habitats adjacent to Icy Strait in Alaska's panhandle. This parcel adjoins both Glacier Bay National Park and an area designated for the protection of the sandhill crane.

*Partners:* The Nature Conservancy.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$283,900
<i>Partner share:</i>	\$129,045
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$412,945

##### Nushagak Bay Watershed

##### Conservation, Wood-Tikchick: Phase II.

Alaska's Division of State Parks and Outdoor Recreation will acquire perpetual conservation easements on 7,000 acres along the Agulowak River within the Nushagak Bay Watershed. The Agulowak River is a major anadromous fish system. It provides spawning habitat and passage for nearly 2 million adult salmon, representing all five Pacific species.

*Partners:* The Conservation Fund and Nushagak-Mulchatna Wood-Tikchik Land Trust.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$1,000,000
<i>State share:</i>	\$10,000
<i>Partners share:</i>	\$444,500
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$1,454,500

#### Georgia

##### Clayhole Swamp Acquisition.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources will acquire 5491 acres in Clayhole Swamp in the Altamaha River Watershed. The Altamaha River supports Georgia's best stocks of anadromous fish including American shad, shortnose sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon. After acquisition the site will be available for hunting, fishing, hiking and other outdoor recreational use.

*Partners:* The Nature Conservancy.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$1,000,000
<i>State share:</i>	\$722,500
<i>Partner share:</i>	\$1,500,000
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$3,222,500

#### Maine

**Cobscook Falls:** Habitat Protection Initiative. Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will protect 257 acres including 2.68 miles of shoreline along Cobscook Bay. This project will add to protected areas along the Bay and preserve high value habitat for migratory birds.

*Partners:* A private landowner and the March Hill Real Estate Trust, Ducks Unlimited, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and the Quoddy Regional Land Trust.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$528,000
<i>Partners share:</i>	\$335,000
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$863,000

#### Massachusetts

##### Great Allens Pond Ecosystem Protection and Restoration Project.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation will protect about 156 acres along Buzzards Bay and restore 7 acres of salt marsh. The project area will become part a contiguous block of 1,000 acres of protected habitats, including salt marsh, coastal oak woodlands, and grasslands.

*Partners:* A private landowner, Buzzards Bay Project/Massachusetts Conservation Trust, Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust, Massachusetts Audubon Society, and Natural Resources Conservation Services.

*Coastal grant request:* \$600,000  
*State share:* \$109,500  
*Partners share:* \$1,545,615  
*Total cost:* \$2,255,115

**Sandy Neck/Barnstable Marshes Barrier Beach System Land Acquisition and Restoration Project.**

**Phase II.** The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation will continue to work with partners to protect 30.3 acres of in-holdings and further restore this regionally significant coastal resource system in Cape Cod's Barnstable County. The 7-mile beach at Sandy Neck is one of the largest barrier beaches on the North Atlantic Coast and provides nesting and feeding habitat for a number of shorebirds, including the federally-threatened piping plover and least tern.

*Partners:* Barnstable Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and the Town of Barnstable.

*Coastal grant request:* \$520,000  
*State share:* \$97,000  
*Partners share:* \$155,000  
*Total cost:* \$772,000

**Michigan Bete Grise Coastal Wetlands**

**Acquisition.** Michigan's Department of Natural Resources will acquire 1,800 acres in Keweenaw County adjacent to the Bete Grise Bay of Lake Superior. The Nature Conservancy and Michigan's Departments of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality have identified this area as being the single most important estuarine marsh remaining in the Upper Great Lakes.

*Partners:* The Nature Conservancy, Keweenaw Land Trust, Houghton/Keweenaw Conservation District, and the South Shore Association.

*Coastal grant request:* \$1,000,000  
*Partners share:* \$488,443  
*Total cost:* \$1,488,443

**North Carolina**

**Brown's Island.** The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will acquire 107 acres on Brown's Island located within the White Oak River Basin in Carteret County. Brown's Island is an undeveloped island that hosts a diversity of natural communities and has been designated by the State as a significant natural heritage site.

*Partner:* North Carolina Coastal Land Trust.

*Coastal grant request:* \$904,267  
*State share:* \$428,843  
*Partners share:* \$6,000  
*Total cost:* \$1,339,110

**Texas**

**West Bay Conservation Corridor.** Texas Parks and Wildlife will acquire 1,500 acres including marsh and coastal prairie habitats adjacent to West Bay in Galveston County. In addition, 42 acres of shallow open water will be restored to estuarine emergent marsh. The habitats protected and restored will benefit migratory birds and commercially and recreationally important fish species.

*Partners:* Harborwalk-Watkins Properties, Trust for Public Lands, and Scenic Galveston, Inc.

*Coastal grant request:* \$1,000,000  
*Partners share:* \$508,000  
*Total cost:* \$1,508,000

**Virginia**

**Protection of Mark's and Jack's Islands.** The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation will acquire 2,000 acres of salt marsh wetlands on the western side of the Chesapeake Bay in Accomack County. This acquisition will protect: spawning, nursery and feeding habitat for a variety of fish and shellfish; habitat for threatened and endangered species; and habitat for numerous species of resident and migratory birds.

*Partners:* The Nature Conservancy and Basic, Inc.

*Coastal grant request:* \$1,000,000  
*Partners share:* \$1,021,750  
*Total cost:* \$2,021,750

**Washington**

**Davis Bay Acquisition and Restoration.**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will acquire conservation easements and restore approximately 120 acres of estuarine and freshwater wetlands on Davis Bay, within the Puget Sound Ecosystem. The restoration includes the removal of the existing tide gate system, filling of drain ditches, raising two sections of roads that will be inundated by the restoration, and providing a new potable water system for several families. This project will provide rearing habitat for fish and important migration and wintering habitat for birds.

*Partners:* A private landowner, Ducks Unlimited, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, and the San Juan Preservation Trust.

*Coastal grant request:* \$1,000,000  
*State share:* \$10,000  
*Partners share:* \$1,083,000  
*Total cost:* \$2,093,000

**Lower Tarboo Creek Wetland Acquisition and Floodplain Restoration.**

The Washington Department of Ecology will protect 216 acres, 200 by purchasing the land and 16 acres through conservation easements. The project will also restore 1.5 miles of Tarboo Creek and 1.5 miles of tributary channels and 120 acres of wetlands that had been drained for agricultural use.

*Partners:* Private individuals, Jefferson Land Trust, and Northwest Watershed Institute.

*Coastal grant request:* \$875,000  
*State share:* \$350,000  
*Partners share:* \$50,000  
*Total cost:* \$1,275,000

**Willapa Bay/ Seal Slough Acquisition Project.** The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife will purchase 1,002 acres of fee title and 374 acres of conservation easement acquisition along Seal Slough, Lynn Point, and Willapa Bay tidelands and adjacent uplands. The project will include control of invasive *Spartina* on 300 acres of the tide flats, enhancing utilization by wintering shorebirds and foraging waterfowl.

*Partners:* Cascade Land Conservancy, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, and Wildlife Forever Foundation.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$900,000
<i>State share:</i>	\$5,000
<i>Partners share:</i>	\$562,400
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$1,467,400

**Wisconsin**

**Clough Island Preservation and Restoration Project.** Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources will acquire 350 acres of wetlands and associated upland habitat at the westernmost tip of the Great Lakes. Of these 350 acres, 133 acres of impaired wetlands will be restored. Clough Island is in the St. Louis River estuary, and is surrounded by the metropolitan areas of Superior, Wisconsin and Duluth, Minnesota. The State of Minnesota will work with Wisconsin to implement the proposal.

*Partners:* Duluth Audubon Society, Friends of Superior Municipal Forest, Lake Superior Chapter of Muskies Incorporated, McCabe Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Save Lake Superior Association, and Twin Ports Bass Masters (Minnesota B.A.S.S. Federation), and Western Skyline Preservation Alliance.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$1,000,000
<i>State share:</i>	\$1,000,000
<i>Partners share:</i>	\$650
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$2,000,650

**North Bay Mud Lake Ridges Land Acquisition.** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will acquire or

purchase conservation easements on 655 acres surrounding the North Bay of Lake Michigan in Door County. The project will protect important feeding, spawning and nursery grounds for a number of fish, including northern pike, smallmouth bass and whitefish.

*Partners:* The Nature Conservancy and the Ridges Sanctuary.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$1,000,000
<i>State share:</i>	\$1,000,000
<i>Partners share:</i>	\$220,000
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$2,220,000

**Washington and Detroit Island Acquisition.** Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources will acquire or purchase conservation easements on about 250 acres, including 11,200 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline in Door County. These islands are at the tip of the Door

Peninsula, and provide spring and fall migration stopover habitat for songbirds and birds of prey.

*Partners:* Door County Land Trust and the Washington Island Art and Nature Center.

<i>Coastal grant request:</i>	\$788,833
<i>State share:</i>	\$960,750
<i>Partners share:</i>	\$65,000
<i>Total cost:</i>	\$1,814,583

For more information about the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, please contact Sally Valdes (Sally.Valdes@fws.gov, 703/358 1743) or Brian Bohnsack (Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov, 703/358 1801), or check the program's Internet home page at <http://www.fws.gov/cep/ewgcover.html>.



## Renewed Interest in Clean Vessel Act Program

Congress and many other long-time stakeholders are expressing renewed interest in the Service's Clean Vessel Act grant program. Much of this interest has resulted as a result of the role that available sewage pumpout stations for boaters have with the designation of areas as No-Discharge Zones by state agencies and federal agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The program is one of the Division's success stories and has proven to be an important tool with maintaining and improving the water quality of many of America's waterways. Since its inception, the Clean Vessel Act grant program has provided more than \$98 million in awards to state agencies.

Two relatively recent reports underscore the importance of this program and its importance to providing a critical service for recreational boaters. In May 2004, the General Accounting Office (GAO) issued its report "Water Quality: Program Enhancements Would Better Ensure Adequacy of Boat Pumpout Facilities in No-Discharge Zones." In this report (GAO-04-613), the GAO found that limited oversight by state and federal agencies of sewage pumpout facilities existed after No-Discharge Zones are established. The report urged the EPA to assess the continued adequacy of the pumpout facilities and to seek additional authority, if needed, to require periodic recertifications or reassessments of these facilities. The second report, titled "Final No-Discharge Zone Evaluation" prepared for the EPA presented the results of a survey of boaters and marina operators in 15 coastal and Great Lakes No-Discharge Zones. In this research, 93% of the boaters surveyed reported they had no occasions in 2003 when they could not find a working pumpout or toilet dump facility in a No-Discharge Zone. Only 9% of the boaters reported that they experienced trouble at a pumpout facility in the 2003 boating season. In addition, 63% of the marina operators that responded to the

survey indicated that their pumpout facilities were functional 100% of the time during the most recent boating season.

The Service recognizes the important service this program provides recreational boaters and continues to work closely with the program stakeholders to improve the program. Congress recently extended the authorization for this program and included \$6.6 million of funding for fiscal year 2005. Additional funding is likely to be available later in the fiscal year as Congress considers longer term funding for the Highway Bill which includes funding for the Clean Vessel Act. The American League of Anglers and Boaters consensus position for the program's reauthorization proposes a significant change to the program by recommending that coastal projects no longer receive a scoring preference. In addition, ALAB's consensus position will change the funding

process of this program to a specified percentage of the Sport Fish Restoration Account rather than a specific funding authorization as in previous years. These changes will be under consideration in review of the Highway Bill.

The Service accepted proposals for the Fiscal Year 2005 Clean Vessel Act grant program through early January and expects to announce the awards in the very near future. The Service received 38 proposals from 26 states requesting a total of \$15.9 million. The Service plans to issue funding to award recipients if Congress approves additional funding authorization for this program later in this fiscal year.

For additional information on this program contact Brian Bohnsack (703/358 1801: [Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov](mailto:Brian.Bohnsack@fws.gov)).



*Andre Boudreau (dressed as a clam) of the City of Block Island, Rhode Island, hands out education packets to boaters to inform them of the importance of proper disposal of their sewage to the island's aquatic ecosystem.*

## Public Access Civil Rights Program

The public access civil rights program, funded separately from Federal Assistance dollars, is a vital link to our State agency partners because of its mandate to ensure States' compliance with Federal civil rights laws and regulations. Recipients of Federal assistance must conduct programs, activities and services in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex (in educational programs).

Liaisons with multicultural community groups is a key component of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Public Access Civil Rights Program. Increased partnerships among the Service, State fish and wildlife agencies, and minority and disability groups provide a pro-active framework for meeting civil rights requirements. Active minority liaison associations and disability liaison associations with the State recipients can help prevent civil rights complaints, and resolve complaints at an early intervention stage. Liaisons with women's groups accomplish the same objectives on gender equity in educational programs such as hunter education and aquatic education.

Multicultural group liaisons and partnerships also facilitate conservation education in an increasing number of communities, thus enhancing the conservation mission of both the Service and the State agencies. Including traditionally excluded or under-represented groups in State recreational programs translates into more funding for critical conservation initiatives due to the increased receipts from excise taxes on the sale of recreational equipment. Minority group partners in particular can be instrumental in ensuring equal access for public beneficiaries with limited English proficiency (per Presidential Executive Order 13166), and for helping to ensure that environmental policies and practices do not have adverse impacts on minority or low income groups, in

adherence with Federally assisted environmental justice requirements. Partnerships with multicultural groups also facilitate attempts by State agencies to hire and retain more diverse workforces.

The Division of Federal Assistance works in full partnership with State agencies to resolve complaints of discrimination filed by the public against these State agencies, and to address any civil rights deficiencies identified during systemic reviews of the state agencies' programs and facilities. In the past few months, the Division of Federal Assistance worked closely with State agencies on voluntary alternative dispute resolution, to informally resolve complaints, including a pattern and practice race discrimination complaint, and crossbow-related complaints, where some State agencies voluntarily allowed bowhunters with disabilities to use a crossbow in bow hunting season as an accommodation. As part of program activities, State agencies are provided occasional updates on civil rights trends via a listserve provided by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

## Multistate Conservation Grant Program

The Multistate Conservation Grant Program, born out of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program Improvement Act of 2000, has awarded over 90 grants since 2001 to States, groups of States, and non-governmental organizations throughout the United States. The Multistate Conservation Grant Program is a cooperative effort with and has shared responsibilities between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). These grants support products that solve high priority problems affecting States on a regional or national basis and allow for efficient use of limited resources to address the National Conservation Needs of States established through the IAFWA.

In its fifth year of awards, the unique work of the Program is continued by addressing the highest priority needs of the States. The technical scoring criteria applied for the first time to 2005 project proposals awarded more points to



proposals that benefit more States, use sound science, propose reasonable project costs and measurable products and deliverables, and clearly state the expected benefits to State Fish and Wildlife Agencies. (Please see the September 2004 Program Update for more details on the significant changes instituted by the IAFWA and the Service to improve the quality and acceptability of project proposals.) This year the number and quality of proposals received were impressive and the amount of funding requested exceeded that available. On October 1, 2004, the IAFWA submitted the following list of priority projects to the Service's new Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs for funding from the 2005 Multistate Conservation Grant Program. All grants were awarded by the Service in December 2004.

This year the IAFWA also amended the Service's current Multistate Conservation Grant to conduct the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (National Survey) to add \$50,000 to the grant annually for the next three years. The purpose of the additional funds is to conduct side-by-side tests during the conduct of the National Survey. These tests will determine the viability of using state hunting license databases to supplement the Census Bureau's database. If results are comparable, this method could potentially reduce the cost of future National Surveys by over \$1 million.

The States, non-governmental organizations, other partners and the public now have access through the Web to review grant products generated and to learn more about the benefits derived through the Multistate Conservation Grant Program. Internet access to grant information is available at <http://faims.fws.gov>. The Federal Assistance Information Management System provides readers with funding details, project descriptions, quarterly progress reports and annual accomplishment details for each

Multistate Conservation Grant awarded, whether the grant is ongoing or completed and closed.

For additional information on this issue, please contact Pam Matthes.



## 2005 Multistate Conservation Grant Proposals Selected for Funding

ID	Project Title	Submitter	2005 WR	2005 SFR	2006WR	2006 SFR	2007 WR	2007 SFR	Total Grant Request
05-001	Step Outside--Expanding Recruitment Opportunities	National Shooting Sports Foundation	\$49,250	\$49,250	\$73,200	\$73,200	\$73,200	\$73,200	\$391,300
05-002	The Future of Hunting & Shooting Sports: Research Strategies to Increase Participation & Retention	National Shooting Sports Foundation w/Responsive Management	\$11,964		\$174,000		\$203,000		\$388,964
05-003	Status of Western Native Freshwater Fishes	Western Division of the American Fisheries Foundation		\$50,000		\$30,000			\$80,000
05-005	Hunter Education Program Reviews: A Peer Evaluation Approach	International Hunter Education Association	\$45,000		\$45,000		\$45,000		\$135,000
05-006	OWP's Approach to Expanding Multistate Collaboration & Communication	Organization of Wildlife Planners	\$2,250	\$2,250					\$4,500
05-009	How Much is Enough for 2007? A regional wildlife habitat needs assessment for the 2007 Farm Bill	Wildlife Management Institute	\$91,000						\$91,000
05-014	Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture	Conservation Management Institute		\$250,781		\$180,810			\$431,592
05-019	Enhance & Improve the <i>Design Handbook for Recreation &amp; Fishing Access Facilities</i> to include new standards and technical considerations	State Organization of Boating Administrators		\$96,145					\$96,145
05-020	Enhancement of the Multi-State Aquatic Resources Information System (MARIS) to support the National Fish Habitat Initiative	American Fisheries Society		\$188,294		\$188,294		\$192,719	\$569,307
05-021	National Master Naturalist Initiative	Texas Parks & Wildlife Department	\$45,700	\$45,700					\$91,400
05-023	Focus on The Woman-- Recruitment & Retention Strategies and Tactics for Women Involved in Outdoor Recreation	National Wild Turkey Federation	\$39,440	\$39,440					\$78,880
05-026	Case Studies and Guidebook for Conducting Instream Flows for Riverine Resource Stewardship	Instream Flow Council, Inc.		\$32,400		\$65,900			\$98,300
05-027	Management Assistance Team	IAFWA	\$216,294	\$216,294	\$232,798	\$232,798	\$237,814	\$237,814	\$1,373,814
05-028*	Furbearer Management & Communication Professional Development Workshops for Fish & Wildlife Professionals and Colleges/Universities with Wildlife Programs	IAFWA Furbearer Resources Task Force & Education, Outreach, & Diversity Committees	\$25,000						\$25,000
05-029*	New Strategies to Increase Fishing License Sales, Revenues & Participation	IAFWA's AWADS Task Force & the American Sportfishing Association		\$151,250		\$130,430		\$109,920	\$391,600
05-030*	Coordination of the National Fish Habitat Initiative	IAFWA Fisheries & Water Resources Policy Committee		\$151,250		\$130,430		\$109,920	\$391,600
05-031	A Summary of the Best Current Practices for Recruiting & Retaining Participants in Hunting, Angling, Boating & Shooting Sports	IAFWA	\$8,187.50	\$8,187.50					\$16,375
05-035	Representation of the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies in Intl Conventions & Protocols	WAFWA	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,9950	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$35,200
05-036	Representation of the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies in Intl. Conventions & Protocols	SEAFWA	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,9950	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$35,200
05-037	Representation of the Northeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies in Intl. Conventions & Protocols	NEAFWA	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,9950	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$35,200
05-038	Representation of the Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies in Intl Conventions & Protocols	MAFWA	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,9950	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$35,200
		Total	\$553,886	\$1,214,340	\$544,799	\$921,233	\$589,814	\$644,453	\$4,468,525



# **Special Highlight Section of Region 5**



## Special Highlight Section of Region 5

### Federal Assistance in the Northeast

The Northeast, Region 5 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, encompasses 13 states and the District of Columbia. Stretching from the rocky coast of Maine to the sands of the Eastern Shore of Virginia, from the hills and hollows of West Virginia to the age-old mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire, Region 5 contains some amazing natural resources. The area also has approximately a quarter of the U.S. population, with 70 million people living in a “megalopolis” stretching from Washington D.C. to Boston. The combination of unique natural areas and continuing, centuries-old pressure from human development presents a challenging environment for state and federal fish and wildlife agencies. In this Program Update, we have tried to show the breadth and depth of fish and wildlife conservation funded with Federal Assistance in the Northeast. In many states, we have showcased a grant from the new State Wildlife Grants program, to highlight the important new work undertaken and partnerships being formed. The species presented in these examples represent only a subset of those that will be included in Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies to be developed by each State by October 1, 2005.

The Region 5 Division of Federal Assistance (FA) staff are organized by skills and background into areas of specialty: Administration, Fisheries (including Aquatic Resource Education), Wildlife (including Hunter Education), and Lands and Development. Grant specialists work with project leaders and the Federal Assistance coordinator in each state within their area of expertise, providing technical assistance as well as grant oversight. State agency staff are encouraged to call upon FA for help at any stage of the grant process, from proposal development to implementation. This easy flow of communication facilitates the grant approval process and compliance with federal laws and regulations, by solving problems in the draft proposal stage. Because the FA grant specialists see

projects across the region, they can offer suggestions on potential collaborations, best practices, pitfalls to avoid, and more efficient/effective methods. Ultimately, the goal of Federal Assistance is to serve the hunters, anglers, boaters, and other constituents by ensuring that grant funds are spent wisely and efficiently. The specialist organizational structure, where FA staff are viewed as a technical resource, contributes to that goal by fostering productive relationships with state agency professionals.

Region 5 FA staff work with over 30 state agencies in the Northeast. A wide variety of programs and projects are funded within these agencies, but there are some commonalities. Federal expenditures for some standard activities in the SFR and WR programs in the Northeast Region are depicted in the pie charts below. These data are for grants that ended in calendar year 2002 and are accessible at the individual grant level in the online version of the Federal Assistance Information Management System (iFAIMS). iFAIMS also contains information on certain units of accomplishments of Federal Assistance grants. Some of these for calendar year 2002 are highlighted below for the SFR and WR programs in the Northeast.

The category of highest SFR expenditures was for research and survey grants, with 223 projects completed. Hatchery fish production activities were second highest and resulted in the stocking of over 120 million fish, of which 74 percent were for put, grow and take stocking, 24 percent were for restoration stocking, and 2 percent were for put and take stocking. Ten boating access site construction or renovation projects were completed and over 1,200 existing boating access facilities were managed. SFR funding also supported the operation and maintenance of another 1,200 areas and facilities including fishing lakes, fishing piers, and fish passage facilities. Technical guidance was provided to Federal, State and local agencies to avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resource from proposed development projects, to fisheries technical committees regarding status of sport fish populations, and to private landowners to recommend techniques to properly manage sport fish habitat. Finally, 1,800 new educators were trained and approximately 210,000 students or participants were reached through aquatic resource education programs.

District of Columbia Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

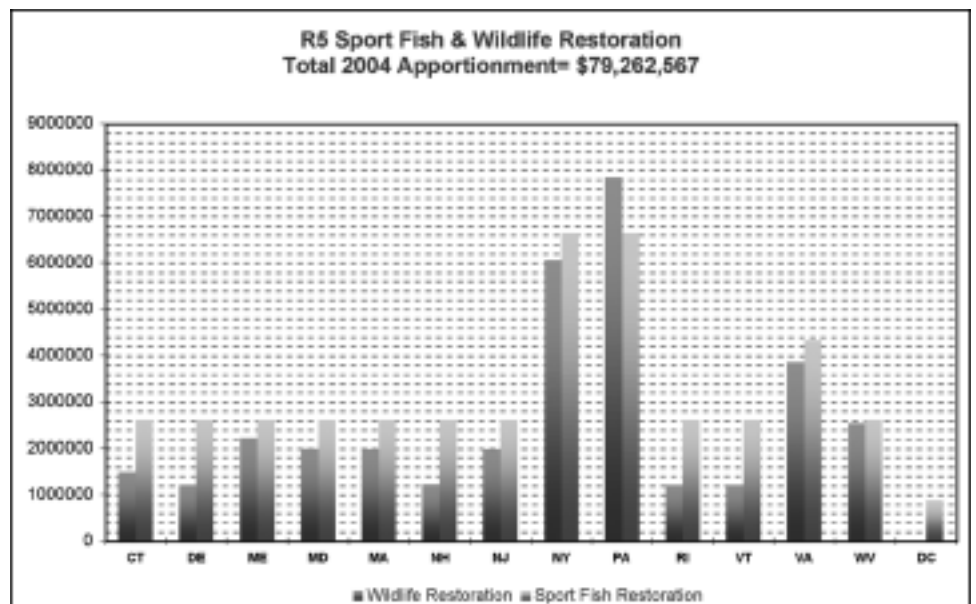
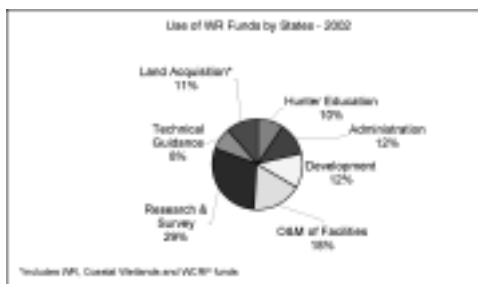
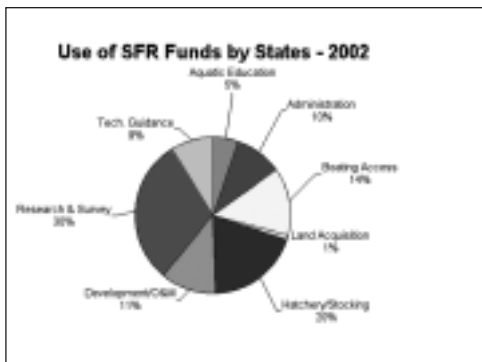


Research and surveys was also the category with highest expenditures in the WR program, with 280 projects completed. The next highest category was operations and maintenance of wildlife management areas and facilities totaling over 6.2 million acres. Habitat improvement projects such as tree planting, wildlife food plots, disking or burning were completed on approximately 84,000 acres. Technical guidance was provided to Federal, State and local agencies to avoid and minimize impacts to wildlife from proposed development projects and to private landowners to recommend practices to manage habitat for wildlife. Approximately 113,000 volunteer hours of effort were involved in the training of over 5,000 volunteer instructors and 127,000 students in hunter education programs.

## 2004 Apportionment

	Wildlife Restoration	Sport Fish Restoration
CT	\$ 1,486,607	\$ 2,605,270
DE	\$ 1,210,263	\$ 2,605,270
ME	\$ 2,219,066	\$ 2,605,270
MD	\$ 1,987,636	\$ 2,605,270
MA	\$ 1,974,680	\$ 2,605,270
NH	\$ 1,214,574	\$ 2,605,270
NJ	\$ 1,974,680	\$ 2,605,270
NY	\$ 6,055,166	\$ 6,630,580
PA	\$ 7,837,535	\$ 6,628,025
RI	\$ 1,207,123	\$ 2,605,270
VT	\$ 1,207,123	\$ 2,605,270
VA	\$ 3,845,157	\$ 4,325,856
WV	\$ 2,537,373	\$ 2,605,270
DC		\$ 868,423
Total	\$34,756,983	\$44,505,584

Total R5	\$ 79,262,567
Total Nationwide	
WR	\$203,674,379
SFR	\$260,526,978
	\$464,201,357
Proportion of R5 to Nation	17%



## Connecticut

Like most agencies, the Connecticut Wildlife Division has many more opportunities for public education and outreach than its staff could possibly address. The Master Wildlife Conservationist Program (MWCP) fills this pressing need within the agency by training participants in the fields of wildlife management, natural history, and interpretation. These individuals, in turn, make up a volunteer corps that provides education and outreach programs to environmental organizations, libraries, schools, and the general public. The MWCP is an important communication tool for the agency, allowing many more of the requests for educational programs to be fulfilled, and creating a committed group of agency stakeholders that is very knowledgeable about agency issues and priorities.

Participants in the MWCP receive 40 hours of intensive classroom and field training and have one year, following certification, to provide 40 hours of volunteer service. Twenty additional hours of service are required each additional year a volunteer chooses to remain active in the program. The MWCP training is conducted by Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) biologists, educators, and other professional staff. The following topics are covered: interpretation and communication, wildlife conservation, wildlife ecology, habitat management, wildlife management issues, wildlife management success stories, Connecticut specific wildlife management issues, and the mission and structure of the DEP and the Wildlife Division. The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program provides the majority of funding for research and management activities in Connecticut. Educational materials and Wildlife Division staff time devoted to training MWCP volunteers in communicating about the benefits and accomplishments of FA-funded work is covered by an outreach grant.

Over 80 individuals have completed the Master Wildlife Conservationist Program

training, and have consequently donated 4,300 hours of time in communicating with the public about Connecticut's wildlife resources and the role of Federal Assistance funds in conserving them.



*The first graduating class of Master Wildlife Conservationists*

Connecticut DEP, Wildlife Division

### State Wildlife Grant Program Aquatic Resource Investigations

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Inland Fisheries Division, has identified a number of native fish species whose status are of concern. River herring (alewife and blueback herring) populations in the Connecticut River have declined dramatically in the past 20 years. Blueback herring counts at the Holyoke Fish Lift, the first main stem barrier, have gone from hundreds of thousands of fish observed in the mid 1980s to only hundreds in 2003. The rapid and steep decline has resulted in herring fishery closures in Connecticut's portion of the river and concern over the ecological implications. It was clear that obtaining critical fish population data was imperative to begin to identify factors that may be responsible for the declines and to better understand the dynamics of the herring runs in other streams as well. The SWG Program has funded a two-year

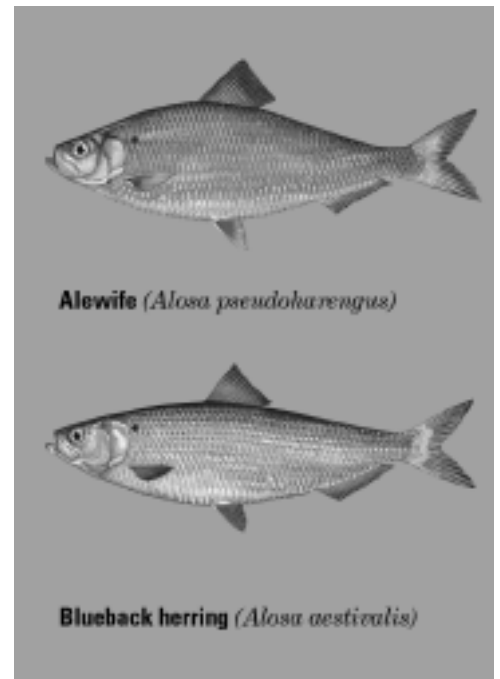
study through the University of Connecticut that was recently completed in December 2004 that focused on this important fishery resource issue.

Researchers studied two herring populations in a tributary to the Connecticut River (Roaring Brook) and in a nearby coastal stream (Brides Brook). Through intensive field sampling operations in 2003 and 2004, starting in early March and extending into June, the size, timing, age structure, reproductive condition, lengths and weights of the herring run was examined. The selection of Brides Brook had the advantage of comparing biological and population measures from a herring study conducted in the mid 1960s.

The researchers determined that the Brides Brook alewife run was approximately 40% lower than in the 1960s study and that the age structure had also shifted dramatically. The spawning run in the 1960s had a high

proportion of age-5 and age-6 fish with fish as old as age-8 observed and most were repeat spawners. The 2003 and 2004 Brides Brook survey showed that age-3 and age-4 fish were the dominant age classes and most spawners were virgins, as opposed to repeats. The observed shift to younger age classes was also noted with historical blueback herring data from the Connecticut River and the Roaring Brook data.

Comparisons between Brides and Roaring Brook in 2003 and 2004 showed Roaring Brook had older age alewives present that were also larger-at-age. The Roaring Brook alewives were also more likely to be repeat spawners. However, the Brides Brook alewives were shown to have a higher reproductive potential (at size) than those from Roaring Brook. The study provided important baseline data that will be useful in examining trends and aid in contributing to the science-based management of these two herring species.



## Green Eggs and Sand

How do you help students learn about the joys of managing natural resources in a democracy? One way is to send teachers to a Green Eggs & Sand workshop, an innovative educational program supported in part by Sport Fish Restoration aquatic resource education funds in three states.

The Atlantic coast horseshoe crab/shorebird phenomenon presents a valuable case study of a multiple-use resource controversy, one that has leaped into the public eye and taken up agency staff time over the past decade. Recognizing the opportunity to educate about the issues raised by this controversy, in 2000, educators from Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey (states at the epicenter of the horseshoe crab population and management controversy) convened to launch a unique project, aimed at presenting middle school through college level educators with the tools, knowledge and resources needed to engage their students in exploring this fisheries management challenge via a balanced, problem-solving, critical-thinking approach. To achieve this, the team enlisted the help of fisheries scientists, managers, and representatives of the various stakeholder groups involved in the controversy to collaborate with a group of experienced classroom teachers in developing an intensive workshop experience and comprehensive, carefully-sequenced curriculum to teach the topic and issues.

Using a mixture of interactive activities, video clips, powerpoint-driven mini-seminars with world class researchers and agency staff, and field experiences, the Green Eggs & Sand instructional team builds an understanding of the issues surrounding the horseshoe crab management controversy from the ground up. Starting with the biology and life cycle of the crab, moving to the linkages to hemispheric shorebird migration (birds such as the red knot rely on horseshoe crab eggs on Delaware Bay beaches as a key food item to fuel their spring

migrations from South America to the Arctic), then bringing in the economic value of horseshoe crabs from ecotourism, their use by humans as bait (supporting the coastwide conch and eel fisheries), and in biomedical applications (horseshoe crab blood being the source of a test that serves as the worldwide standard for ensuring the safety of all injectable medicines and implantable devices used in human health), and culminating with a chronology of the ensuing management process, participants acquire a thorough and balanced foundation in the issues, while gaining insight into the process used in developing this innovative program and curriculum.

In the five years since the project was launched, demand for the Green Eggs & Sand workshops and curriculum has increased exponentially, from one workshop offered in Delaware the first year to full-with-a-waiting-list workshops to be held in six different Atlantic coast states in 2005. Over the previous years, more than 400 educators, scientists, resource users, and managers from 13 states and 3 foreign countries have taken part in GE&S workshops. This explosion of interest demonstrates the interest and need that is out there among educators for bringing natural resource phenomena and issues into the classroom curriculum. The program also serves as a model for agencies to use in designing education programs around other natural resource management challenges.



*Local waterman Frank "Thumper" Eicherly and USGS biologist Dave Smith explain how scientists estimate horseshoe crab populations and how watermen use them in the conch fishery.*

Michael Oates, Anew, Inc.

## Connections to Nature in the Nation's Capital

How do you connect kids to nature in the middle of the hustle and bustle of the Nation's capital? The District of Columbia's Fisheries and Wildlife staff do so through their comprehensive aquatic resource education program, funded with Sport Fish Restoration dollars.

In their school program, the DC education staff provide classroom presentations on such topics as aquatic ecology, fish biology, wetlands, and the Chesapeake Bay to elementary, middle and high school students in all eight wards of the District. They typically reach over 3,500 students a year, helping them understand the importance of clean water to wildlife and their place in the local watersheds. The program also offers teacher workshops to increase educators' scientific knowledge and comfort level with aquatic ecology and fisheries. The summer angler education program gets youth outdoors on the banks of the Potomac or Anacostia River, where kids discover that their rivers are indeed habitat, learn the skills and ethics of responsible fishing, and enjoy the thrill of landing their first sunfish all by themselves. DC staff also manage a tackle loaner program and offer clinics at big special outdoor/fishing events held each year on the mall.

One of the highlights of the DC program is the Aquatic Resource Education Center, located next to the Anacostia River. The District refurbished an existing building and has just finished an extensive addition. The ARE Center has interpretive exhibits and aquaria exploring the aquatic ecology of the local

rivers, creeks and wetlands and helps visitors see their connection to the distant Chesapeake Bay. District schools are invited to visit the Center for programs and—with new classrooms, offices, aquaculture and lab space for the Fisheries staff—the Center will provide new opportunities and support for the ARE program. One last, critical service the Fisheries and Wildlife staff provide is to give presentations at school career days, serving as enthusiastic role models for future conservation professionals.



*First catch!*



*Girls and boys from a YMCA summer camp take part in an educational program at DC's Aquatic Resource Education Center before heading out for a hands-on fishing experience at the Anacostia River.*

### Maine Canada Lynx Study: Maximizing the Impact of Grant Programs

Little was known about the Canada lynx in the northeast U.S. when a group comprised of State, Federal, and provincial wildlife biologists, university researchers, conservation organizations, and timber industry representatives met in Bethel, Maine in 1997. In fact, there was no certainty that a population existed below the Canadian border. A proposal to list lynx under the Federal Endangered Species Act originating in the western U.S. generated interest in whether this species was present, what was known about its ecological requirements in the east versus the west, and what impacts listing would have on State management programs. The consensus was that presence or absence needed to be verified, and Maine would be the place to begin.

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Service's Division of Federal Assistance collaborated to develop a multi-year proposal to gather status information on this species.

Field research was initiated in 1999 using Wildlife Restoration funds, over a year before Canada lynx was listed as Threatened. Survey efforts located lynx sign in northwest Maine, and subsequent capture efforts verified that lynx indeed were present in Maine. Subsequent monitoring led to the discovery that lynx were not just transient migrants from adjacent Canada, but were in fact resident animals breeding and reproducing in Maine. To date, well over 100 lynx have been marked, including 84 kittens and 43 adults with radio collars. Important information on habitat use, survival, dispersal, and efficacy of monitoring

techniques have been generated. While this study was initiated with Wildlife Restoration funds, the establishment of Wildlife Restoration and Conservation Program and State Wildlife Grants funding has led to these sources taking over the bulwark of federal support, augmented by Section 6 endangered species funding. These funds have been used to leverage private funding from conservation organizations and timber companies alike. Information from this study is generating greater knowledge of northern forest carnivore conservation needs, and leading to on-the-ground management guidelines. This effort is truly an example of a conservation partnership that is bringing together stakeholders from all parts of the conservation spectrum. The glue that holds this together is the support from several funding sources administered by the Division of Federal Assistance.



*Lynx kittens at a den site.*



*Lynx kittens are weighed and measured.*

Credit: John Organ/USFWS

## Maine's Landowner Incentive Program

In Fiscal Year 2004, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIF&W) and the Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) were awarded \$1.12 million under Tier 2 of the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP). MDIF&W and MNAP have combined their skills and expertise to develop a first-rate program focusing conservation efforts for at-risk species on private lands. The objectives for Maine LIP are:

- to protect nesting sites for the endangered bald eagle;
- to protect habitat for the endangered piping plover and least tern;
- to protect and restore habitat for the endangered Furbish lousewort;
- to restore habitat for seabird populations on Stratton Island; and
- to purchase conservation easements to permanently protect habitat in fifteen species-at-risk focus areas on private lands in Maine.

MNAP and MDIF&W are receiving significant assistance in developing and implementing LIP from a Steering Committee made up of representative from non-governmental organizations and Federal, State and local agencies. Projects are underway to protect bald eagles, piping plovers, least terns, seabird populations on Stratton Island, and Furbish lousewort habitat. After an initial call for projects, the State of Maine received requests for more than \$1.45 million. Six conservation easement projects were awarded a total of \$553,300 in federal funds, with more than \$3.1 million provided in private matching funds. Given this level of demand for the LIP funds, MDIF&W and MNAP plan to apply for additional Tier 2 funds in the next funding cycle (FY2005).



Stephen W. Kress

*Staff and volunteers of the National Audubon Society staff remove Asiatic bittersweet, an invasive plant species, to improve habitat for nesting seabirds on Stratton Island in Maine.*



Maine Natural Areas Program

*Centrally located within a 2,500 acre roadless area in mid-coast Maine, two properties totaling nearly 350 acres and covering 2.5 miles of frontage on the Sheepscot River will be conserved with LIP funds. The Sheepscot River Focus Area is home to the federally listed Atlantic salmon and Bald eagle and several other globally rare species.*



### Maryland Striped Bass Research Contributes to Atlantic Coast Stock Recovery

Chesapeake Bay has historically been a major spawning area for the migratory population of striped bass from Maine to North Carolina. Atlantic Coast striped bass stocks declined dramatically after harvests reached record levels in the mid-1970's. Maryland initiated intensive studies of adult striped bass population characteristics in 1981, using Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) funding since 1987. Pound net and gill net surveys of pre-migratory and spawning populations provide measures of relative adult stock abundance, age structure, and estimates of relative spawning stock biomass. Maryland has also conducted a beach seine survey to monitor striped bass juvenile abundance since 1954 (with SFR funding in many of the 50 years since) that allows predictions of future adult population size.

These surveys, conducted with the support of the Maryland SFR grant, help ensure that thousands of Atlantic Coast anglers enjoy a quality fishery that is also effectively managed to ensure its long term conservation. The stock assessments resulting from the combined studies support an adaptive management framework for Maryland and other Atlantic Coast states. This grant was recently recognized by the Fisheries Administrators Section of the American Fisheries Society as the top SFR grant in the research and survey category for 2004. The striped bass fishery has evolved from a total moratorium in Maryland in 1985, to reopening a conservative coastwide fishery in 1990, to a declaration of recovered status of the Atlantic coast stock in 1995. With this recovery, estimated angler expenditures on Atlantic Coast striped bass fishing trips increased from \$85 million in 1981 to \$560 million in 1996. Striped bass has been the top marine species by weight harvested recreationally along the entire Atlantic Coast every year since 1996.



*Large spawning striped bass captured in Maryland's gill net surveys.*



*Juvenile Atlantic Sturgeon in a Maryland hatchery*

### Development of Captive Broodstock for Atlantic Sturgeon in Maryland

Atlantic sturgeon are considered to be below minimum viable population size in Chesapeake Bay. Maryland has been rearing a captive population of Atlantic sturgeon of Hudson River origin since 1992 and the largest of these fish will be available for spawning in 2-3 years. There is a need to refine early life history culture, marking and feeding techniques so that everything is in place when captive brood fish reach maturity, are spawned, and larvae reared. Maryland will do this by experimental trials with fertilized Atlantic sturgeon eggs from Canada. The resulting cultured fish will not be released into Maryland waters, but will provide invaluable information on proper culture techniques that will be employed when it is time to spawn the captive brood stock.

In addition to the research on early life history culture, this SWG grant is supporting genetic analyses of wild juvenile Atlantic sturgeon captured in commercial fishing gear to assess origin and to provide data to the coastwide database. To date, 34 wild caught sturgeon have been determined to be genetically distinct enough from the hatchery origin fish and have been added to the captive broodstock. Additional research is being conducted on improving and expediting the conversion of wild captive sturgeon from natural foods to commercial diets. Results with a variety of methods have shown wild fish to take anywhere from 4-39 weeks to convert to commercial diets. However, a preferred method appears to keep conversion down to 4-9 weeks. All of the activities described above will further Maryland's ability to restore the Atlantic sturgeon, a species that is currently extirpated within the state.

MD DNR

### **From Nine-Inch Smelt to Nine-Foot Sharks: Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Research Covers the Waterfront**

Marine fisheries research conducted by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and supported by Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration is fairly unique in its broad scope of species studied. Many marine fish species of recreational importance that migrate along the Atlantic Coast, like bluefish and summer flounder, are managed cooperatively through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Massachusetts uses Sport Fish Restoration funding to enhance the sample size of the national Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey for better estimates of catch of these coastal marine fishes.

Like many Northeast States, the Massachusetts Recreational Fisheries Program includes common anadromous species like striped bass and alewife/blueback herring (river herring). Striped bass research includes characterization of harvested fish by size, age and sex for compliance with the interstate fishery management plan, tagging of fish greater than 28 inches to monitor the impact of fisheries along the Atlantic Coast, and analysis of diet composition. The focus of river herring work is restoration of coastal spawning runs through improvement and development of fish passage structures at dams. Rainbow smelt is another anadromous species that receives little attention in other states. Massachusetts is monitoring spawning habitat and spawning success of smelt in tributaries to Massachusetts Bay to determine if stock enhancement through a hatchery program is needed.

Massachusetts is unlike most other Northeast States in that it also uses Sport Fish Restoration funds to study pelagic species like tunas and large sharks that are primarily found outside the 3-mile state territorial limit. Researchers recently completed a study of tuna and shark physiology associated with angling

stress. Results showed that the physiological stress typically does not threaten these big fish and also provided suggestions on safe release. Monitoring of tuna and shark fishing tournaments provides information on size, age and sex composition for stock assessment purposes. A 15-year longline survey targeting sharks provides information on relative abundance by species. So from anadromous species that spawn in freshwater to coastal migratory species to offshore pelagic species, Massachusetts literally covers the waterfront in its Sport Fish Restoration research.

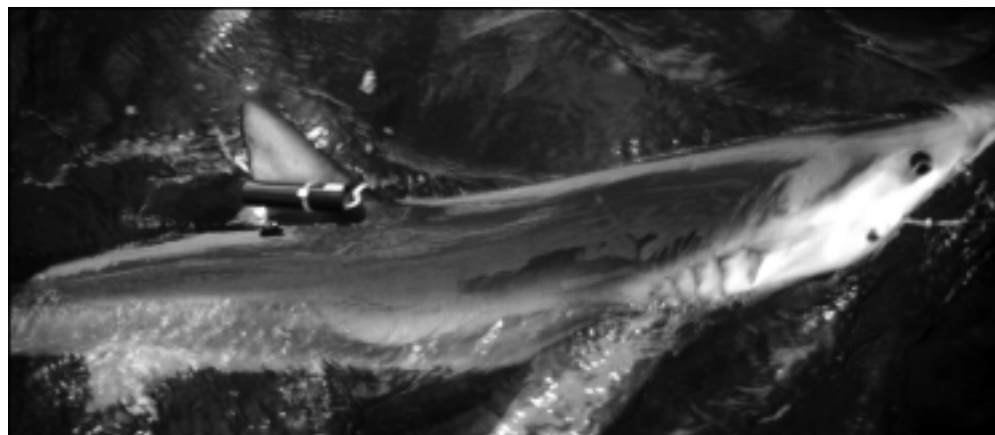
### **Habitat Protection a Priority in Massachusetts**

In 2002 the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife utilized a combination of Wildlife Restoration, Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program and State Wildlife Grant funds to acquire and create the 1638 acre Burrage Pond Wildlife Management Area in the towns of Halifax and Hanson. Currently the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is losing more than 14,000 acres of open space to development each year. The Division recognizes that one of the most critical components of conserving the state's biodiversity is habitat protection, and has made conserving large tracts of habitat a priority. In 2005 the Department will once again utilize the State Wildlife Grant and

Wildlife Restoration Programs to acquire, in fee-simple title or conservation restriction, approximately 1,059 acres from five landowners, to create new or enhance existing Wildlife Management Areas within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



*Blood sampling of blue shark for stress physiology studies.*



*Blue shark with acoustic tag.*

### New Hampshire's Majestic Moose

Moose are an iconic symbol of New Hampshire, a foundation of rural economies, and since 1988, a species that several hundred lucky hunters each year are fortunate to pursue. With hunting success rates of over 65%, thousands of pounds of moose meat are shared and consumed each year, as well. With this much interest in the species, there is a great need for accurate information on the factors affecting New Hampshire's moose population. Through their Federal Assistance wildlife survey and inventory grant, the Fish and Game Department keeps tabs on vital population parameters and answers important moose management questions.

The Department uses a portion of their grant funds to collect and analyze some of the standard check station data familiar to deer hunters: sex of hunter-killed animals, weight of many, crude age based on tooth wear patterns, and antler beam diameter of yearling male moose. They also collect reproductive tracts from female moose whenever possible to assess ovulation rates. Other information is collected through hunter surveys and allows for the Department to determine hunter effort and success rates and to index moose abundance based on sighting rates. Such indices, when combined with field data on populations, prove very useful for establishing population goals and evaluating the results of management efforts.

In wildlife management, questions often arise that require intense field work. This has certainly been the case in the moose program in New Hampshire. Information on vital rates such as reproduction, survival of young animals, and survival of adults are required to develop and update population models. A current project, in cooperation with the University of New Hampshire, has involved capturing and fitting moose, some adults but primarily 6 month-old calves, with radiocollars to determine the factors affecting recruitment and annual survival, to



NH F&G

*Moose are blindfolded to calm them, protecting both the moose and the researchers.*

estimate survival rates, and to investigate habitat use. Capturing calves may sound simple, but by fall they weigh several hundred pounds and inhabit some rugged habitat. Several dozen calves and adult moose have been captured, using helicopter netgunning, in late fall each year since 2001 and fitted with radiocollars. Some of the animals have been outfitted with GPS collars that collect detailed information on moose movements and seasonal habitat preference. This project has documented rather high rates of winter mortality of calves; for example, 7 of 22 calves collared in December 2003 died by May 2004, most attributable to the effects of parasites. This type of field work is the only way that the Department could gather information on such vital population parameters and make informed management decisions.



*Moose are captured using a netgun fired from a helicopter.*

### New Hampshire's Owl Brook Hunter Education Center

The Owl Brook Hunter Education Center is the first facility of its kind in New Hampshire, opening for classes and programs in 2004. Located on 500 acres in the center of the state, the center includes an office/classroom building with room to accommodate up to 60 students. Adjacent to this building is a far-target practice archery area and a 25-yard covered firing range suitable for small-bore and muzzleloader training. In addition, there is a shotgun training area, hunter skills trail, orienteering course and a 14-target field archery course. The center, including its interpretive trails, is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The 14-target archery course is open seven days a week, from dawn to dusk. Major funding for the construction of the center and its continuing operation and maintenance is provided by the Hunter Education Section 4C and Section 10 portion of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program.

The mission of the center is to educate individuals in the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to become safe and responsible hunters, trappers and stewards of the state's natural resources. The center will host workshops, special events and talks conducted by Fish and Game staff, hunter education and center volunteers, and in partnership with non-governmental organizations, such as the N.H. Trapper Association and the National Wild Turkey Federation. These educational programs will allow individuals and families to start the lifelong journey of becoming safe and responsible hunters and trappers, with an emphasis on interactive, "hands-on" and "learn by participation" teaching methods.

### Protecting Natural and Historic Treasures in New Hampshire

In 2004 the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department utilized State Wildlife Grant Funds for the acquisition of a conservation easement on 101 acres of



New Hampshire Fish and Game

*The Owl Brook Hunter Education Center features a 14 target field archery course that allows bowhunters to practice with life-sized foam wildlife targets.*

critical wildlife habitat. The property located in the towns of Gorham and Randolph possesses the following natural and historic attributes:

The property is part of an important north-south and east-west wildlife travel corridor, contributing to the preservation and conservation of the region's biodiversity;

The property contains exemplary wildlife habitats including the Moose River, and its associated riparian areas and vernal pools, beaver pond complexes and lowland spruce-fir forest, which provide a broad range of mammalian, avian, reptilian amphibian, and aquatic species of conservation concern;

The property contains high quality mature lowland spruce-fir, a declining forest type statewide;

The property includes part of a Northern New England High Energy Riverbank Community, a unique natural community documented by New Hampshire Natural



The Trust for Public Land

*This land was protected in partnership with The Trust for Public Land.*

Heritage Bureau; The property contains an intact and well-preserved example of a prehistoric Native American hunting encampment, dating to the Paleoindian Period, eligible for listing on the National and New Hampshire State Registers of Historic Places;

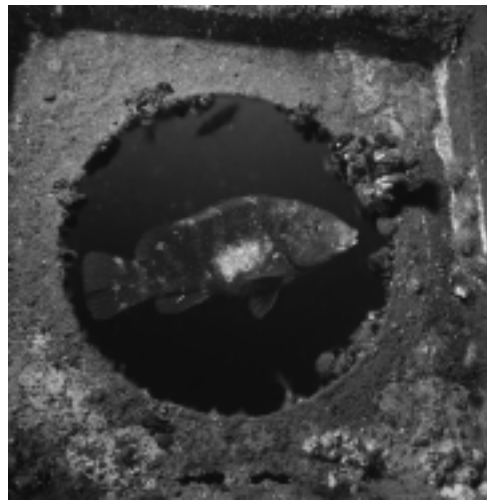
Over the next two years, donations of additional conservation easements by abutting landowners will bring the total acres conserved under this project to 245 acres. The conservation easements ensure public access for low-level, wildlife based outdoor recreation, such as hiking, nature observation, cross-country skiing, fishing and hunting.

This project was completed in partnership with New Hampshire's Land and Community Heritage Program with assistance from The Trust for Public Land.

### Artificial Reef Program Benefits Saltwater Fishing in New Jersey

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program is having a big impact on saltwater fishing in New Jersey. The impetus provided by federal funding has spawned an extensive ocean reef construction effort, which is supported at the grassroots level by fishing organizations, private industry and numerous government agencies.

During the past two decades, New Jersey's Reef Program established a network of 14 reef sites encompassing 25 square miles of ocean floor and made almost 4,000 deployments of various reef materials – more than any other state in the country. These materials included 7 million tons of rock, 130 sunken ships and barges, and thousands of fabricated concrete reef units. The hard-substrate habitats created on these reef sites are now home to more than 150 species of fish and marine life. Sport Fish Restoration research with experimental reef habitats has demonstrated that the dense populations of sea life colonizing the reefs account for more than 800 times more biomass than an equivalent area of sandy sea floor.



*Tautog seen through a former porthole of a tugboat sunk on the Sea Girt Artificial Reef*

Recreational anglers and divers along the entire New Jersey coast welcome the new reefs, a marine resource they did not have prior to 1984. Fish tagging research has showed that black sea bass, the primary finfish species targeted by New Jersey reef anglers, remain close to reefs from May to November with 40 percent recaptured within one mile of the tagging site and 83 percent recaptured within five miles of the tagging site. In 2000, anglers caught 4.8 million black sea bass, tautog, scup, summer flounder and other species on reef sites, accounting for 18 percent of the entire recreational catch in all of New Jersey's saltwaters. Anglers and divers using the reefs generate \$50 million each year for coastal tourism and fishing industries. A portion of these expenditures ultimately returns to the Sport Fish Restoration Program in the form of fishing equipment excise fees and motorboat fuel taxes.

### New Jersey's Landowner Incentive Program

In Fiscal Year 2004, the New Jersey Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) was awarded \$1.12 million under Tier 2 of the Landowner Incentive Program. With these federal funds and more than \$360,000 in private matching funds, ENSP will implement approximately 25 projects on private lands throughout the State of New Jersey. These projects will result in the conservation and restoration of forests, grasslands, and wetland habitats and protection of federally endangered bog turtles, declining grassland bird species, rare plant communities and other at-risk species in New Jersey.

Projects include installation of warm season grasslands, prescribed burning of pine barren habitat, grazing cattle to maintain early successional wet meadow habitat, and trail construction to reduce foot-traffic impacts on a rare plant community. The ENSP is partnering with private landowners, farmers and non-governmental organizations including



New Jersey Field Office, Natural Resource Conservation Service

*LIP funds will be used to burn warm-season grassland to enhance habitat for grassland-nesting birds in New Jersey.*

The Nature Conservancy to implement these projects. In addition, ENSP has developed strong partnerships with other agencies and organizations administering incentive programs, including the Natural Resource Conservation Service, USFWS Partners Program and Environmental Defense, to ensure that these conservation efforts are coordinated and to share administrative oversight and monitoring of projects.

With the assistance of Landowner Incentive Program funding, conservation on private lands in New Jersey has been taken to a whole new level. New Jersey expects to expend all current funds within this year, and will apply for additional funds to continue their private lands work.

## New York Catalogues its Amphibians and Reptiles

Since 1991, New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has received Federal Assistance funding through Partnerships for Wildlife, Section 6, and State Wildlife grants to develop a Herp Atlas. With the help of multiple organizations and multitudes of volunteers, reptile and amphibian species throughout the state were found, documented, mapped, and described. The information gathered was critical in developing the species lists and conservation strategies that are required for the State Wildlife Conservation Plan due to Congress in October 2005.

Led by Al Breisch, herpetologist for the DEC's Endangered Species Program, a network for public education and training of volunteers was begun in 1990. For 10 years these volunteers scoured the leaf litter, downed logs, ponds, and streams throughout 99% of the topographic quads in the state to report their findings. As the years progressed, the database grew to over 59,000 species reports, resulting in the first comprehensive survey of the distribution of these small secretive members of our regional fauna which includes 69 native species plus 3 introduced species. An additional 20,000 reports were transcribed from museum collections and archived field notes of professional herpetologists. Preliminary results of the atlas were presented at numerous regional and national conferences as well as to local organizations and college groups and preliminary distribution maps are posted on the DEC website. The atlas resulted in the discovery of several very significant range extensions but also revealed that some species were not as widespread and abundant as indicated in the field guides. The atlas data has also been used to identify "hot spots" for herp diversity and sites where roadway mortality is high. One unexpected use of the data was the ability to compare dates of frog vocalizations at the beginning of the 1900s with the end of the 1990's. These results,

published in Conservation Biology, revealed that several species of frogs were calling as much as 2 weeks earlier; a result that correlated significantly with an increase in average temperature over the preceding 100 years.

While New York's atlas is still in digital form, time and funding for final text editing of the impressive hard copy has kept it from the shelves of conservationists and herpetologists. Priorities have shifted to further monitoring and on-the-ground conservation measures for these species, so we may yet have a wait to own personal copies of this sure-to-be bestselling guide!



Logo for New York's Herp Atlas



Matthew Garrison holding a Blanding's turtle hatchling.

## Sport Fish Restoration Research and Management Improving Lake Ontario's Fisheries

The New York Department of Environmental Conservation's Bureau of Fisheries (DEC Fisheries) annually conducts an array of fisheries studies, research, and management programs in Lake Ontario. Over time, Lake Ontario has been negatively impacted by pollution, overfishing, and invasive species in addition to other threats that have reduced or eliminated many native fishes. The many challenges faced by fisheries managers have often been most successfully addressed through cooperative programs, most notably the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. As a member on this Commission and its numerous technical committees and work groups, DEC fisheries biologists provide important technical expertise as well as critical management and research data used to develop fisheries plans and monitor the status of fish populations, fisheries, and aquatic habitats for Lake Ontario.

The DEC Lake Ontario Fisheries Unit and other DEC fisheries staff conduct an annual fishing boat census to track catch and effort data, targeting important recreational species such as Chinook salmon, coho salmon, walleye, lake trout, brown trout, smallmouth bass, and yellow perch. Although total fishing boat trips (80,000 trips in 2003) and trips targeting trout and salmon have declined since the 1990 peak, catch rates for trout and salmon reached record high levels in 2003. Public involvement in management is important to DEC Fisheries as is the ability to provide the best scientific information to make informed decisions. Reductions in trout and salmon stocking rates in 1993, based upon declines in important prey fish abundances, have slowly been increased in the last few years through stakeholder involvement. In September 2003, DEC Fisheries working with stakeholders, agreed to increase New York's Chinook salmon stocking from 1.6 million to 1.76 million (10%).

Alvin R. Breisch

The lake trout restoration program in Lake Ontario includes juvenile stockings of several different strains, then through sampling, determining which strain is most successful. In 2003, a total of six naturally produced lake trout (4 to 16 inches) were collected with bottom trawls. This finding and other years' data suggests that lake trout are successfully reproducing in the lake. Recently completed genetic analysis of 180 wild juvenile lake trout has shown the greatest strain contribution coming from Seneca x Seneca strain lake trout (48-50%). The 50ft DEC Research Vessel "Seth Green" is an important sampling platform for much of the fishery independent population assessments such as bottom trawling, gill netting, hydroacoustic surveys, monitoring water quality and plankton and many other measures essential for detecting changes or trends in measures over time in Lake Ontario.

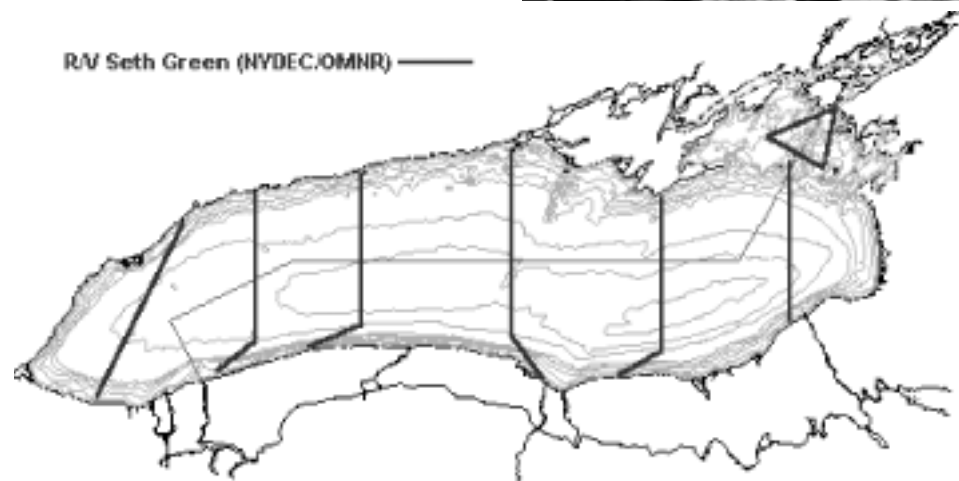
In 2002, several experimental stocking strategies were evaluated with the goal of improving survival of stocked brown trout, lake trout, steelhead, and Chinook salmon. Study fishes were marked with Coded Wire Tags and stocked by barge offshore. The intent was to reduce losses resulting from near shore predatory fishes and Cormorants at certain release sites. Subsequent fish survey data indicate improved survival for offshore stocked lake trout sampled as yearlings. Results for brown trout were mixed, at some locations there was a substantially higher yield (3.9 times) for barge stocked trout, while at two other study locations near shore stocked trout out performed barge stocked trout. In addition, pen-rearing of steelhead and Chinook salmon vs. traditional hatchery rearing and stocking was studied with some results indicating improved contributions from pen-reared fish. The evaluation of what stocking or rearing strategies will maximize survival of stocked salmonids is scheduled to continue in Lake Ontario, benefiting anglers and local economies.



NY DEC

*The NY DEC's RV Seth Green used for fisheries research and assessment programs.*

*Stocking salmon smolts offshore by barge in Lake Ontario.*



*Lake Ontario with hydroacoustic sampling transects.*

## Marine Species Well Represented in New York's State Wildlife Grant Program

New York's large human population is a major reason that the State received the fourth largest apportionment of State Wildlife Grant (SWG) funding in fiscal year 2004 (behind Alaska, California and Texas). In recognition of that human population, New York has used a very comprehensive staff and public input process resulting in a diverse set of projects that address species of greatest conservation need—within all animal groups, in all areas of the state, and ranging in scale from ecosystems to subspecies. New York is fairly unique among Northeast states in providing SWG funding for fish and invertebrate species utilizing marine environments.

American eel and Atlantic sturgeon are two marine finfish species being studied with SWG funding in New York. Although actually a catadromous species that spends most of its life in freshwater, the American eel spawns in saltwater and has recently been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Through SWG funding, New York is analyzing historic and current eel population data in each of the drainage basins in the state. The State is also examining trends in young eel (glass eel) recruitment from saltwater into freshwater streams and pre-spawning eels (silver eels) migration from freshwater back into saltwater. Atlantic sturgeon stocks along the Atlantic Coast are also at dangerously low levels. New York will use a trawl survey to determine the relative abundance and habitat use of this species in the Atlantic Ocean off the south shore of Long Island. This work will complement a similar survey off New Jersey to provide comparable data across the New York Bight.

Horseshoe crab is another marine species being studied in New York's SWG program that plays a vital ecological role by laying eggs on beaches that are eaten by shorebirds. New York is one of several



DE DNR

*Horseshoe crabs play a vital ecological role by laying eggs on beaches that are eaten by shorebirds.*

Mid-Atlantic states supporting a coastwide benthic survey for this invertebrate species initially in the vicinity of Delaware Bay, but potentially from Virginia through New York. The relative abundance and biological information from this survey will be used to determine population trends of sub-adult and adult horseshoe crabs. New York is also conducting a survey of horseshoe crab spawning activity in its state waters which will map potential spawning sites for a spawning habitat assessment, collect biological information on spawning crabs, and determine localized movements through tagging.

The final marine portion of New York's initial SWG Program funding involves shellfish restoration. The bay scallop has experienced a 99 percent decline in abundance since 1985 in the Peconic Bays on the eastern end of Long Island due to repeated algal blooms known as "brown tides." SWG is supporting the establishment of a pilot spawner sanctuary in an area that historically

supported bay scallops. An evaluation program that is gathering information on spawning, fertilization success and recruitment will ultimately be incorporated into a Comprehensive Bay Scallop Restoration Plan for the State. American oyster resources in New York State have declined as a result of pollution, siltation, dredging and loss of hard bottom. SWG funding is being used to investigate the feasibility of oyster restoration in the Lower Hudson River; identify specific sites that would support oyster restoration, and conduct a small scale oyster habitat restoration demonstration project.



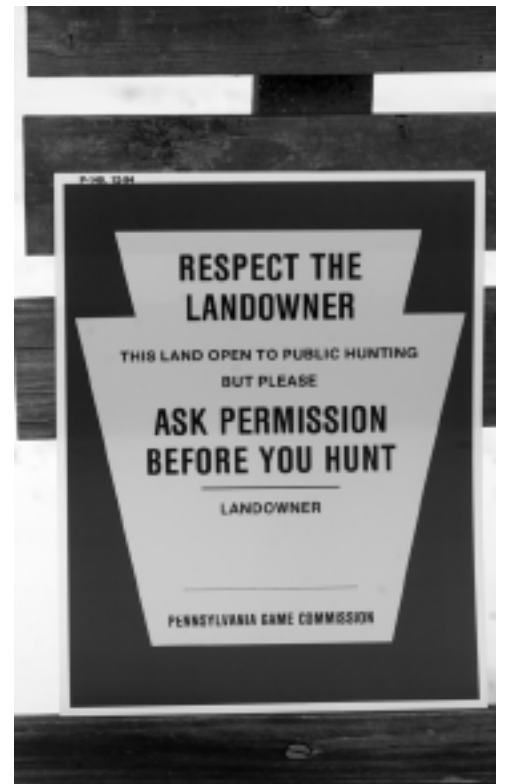
## Pennsylvania State Game Lands

In 1920 the Pennsylvania Game Commission began purchasing land, called State Game Lands, specifically for wildlife and public hunting. Over time it became obvious that the Commission could never afford to purchase enough land to satisfy the needs of a half million hunters. After some study, in 1936 the Commission created the Farm Game Program. To ease private landowner concerns about safety and encourage them to allow public hunting on their land, a safety-zone law was passed, and enrollment in the Farm Game Program entitled them to certain incentives and assistance from the Game Commission. These included help with safety zone signage, conservation plantings, and even fencing in some areas. More importantly, the project acted as a focal point and clearing house to improve and maintain landowner/hunter/agency relations.

For many years, this activity has been funded under a Wildlife Restoration Grant, currently Pennsylvania W-74-D. The accomplishments are remarkable. This year there are over 30,000 signed agreements with private landowners in Pennsylvania that keep approximately 4.5 million acres open to public hunting. This land, added to almost 1.4 million acres of State Game Lands, provides a solid base for conserving wildlife and the hunting tradition of Pennsylvania.



PA Game Commission

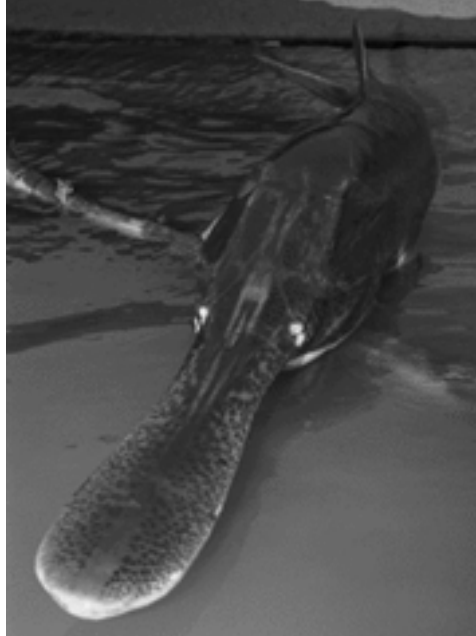


### State Wildlife Grant Program Aquatic Resource Investigations Paddlefish in Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (Commission) developed the “Paddlefish Population Status, Abundance, and Restoration Planning” project with the goal of restoring this extirpated species to rivers within its historic range. In Pennsylvania, paddlefish were known to historically occur in the Ohio, Allegheny, Clarion, and Kiskiminetas rivers, with the last recorded observation in 1919. The paddlefish is long lived (up to 30 year) and may attain a length of 6 ft and weigh in excess of 100 pounds. Paddlefish feed on plankton and invertebrates by filtering water through sets of gill rakers. Commission fishery biologists point to river channelization, dam building, and water quality degradation as primary factors in the loss of these fish populations.

Juvenile paddlefish were stocked starting in 1991 in the Ohio and Allegheny river. Improvements in water quality initiated in the 1970s, and an interest in restoring paddlefish to the Commonwealth, resulted in the juvenile paddlefish stockings starting in 1991 in the Ohio and Allegheny rivers. Juvenile paddlefish have been cultured at the Commission’s Linesville Fish Culture Station through the cooperation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and have also been transferred from the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR). Beginning in 1995, all stocked juveniles have been Coded Wire Tagged (CWT) through protocols developed by the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association. However, limited funding has prevented an evaluation of the stocking program in addition to desired surveys of habitat likely to hold these fish.

The State Wildlife Grant Paddlefish Project will determine the best methods for sampling paddlefish and conduct surveys in targeted 50 kilometer reaches of the Ohio and Allegheny rivers. The



PA Fish Commission.

survey will sample for tagged fish and tag those captured without tags, refining and improving assessment techniques over time. Paddlefish fry will continue to be imported from WVDNR, where broodfish are taken from the Ohio River. Commission fishery biologists will determine the most appropriate; stocking locations based upon habitat, stocking rate, and the size/age of fish to be stocked. This project will also include an overview of the first fifteen years of the program, describe the current population abundance (origin – hatchery vs. wild), status of the hatchery program (stocking strategy effectiveness), identification of population levels necessary to trigger a change in population status (extirpated, endangered, threatened, or candidate protected), and a comprehensive review of current regulations on paddlefish.

The Commission is responsible for managing and protecting the Commonwealth’s fishes, aquatic invertebrates, reptiles, and amphibians. A total of 54 fish species have been identified as species of concern (endangered, threatened, or candidates), that represents 26% of the total fish species that exist in Pennsylvania. The fact that the Commission’s budget had

less than 1% dedicated to nongame species purposes at the beginning of the new millennium highlights the critical need and value of the State Wildlife Grant Program, to protect and restore Pennsylvania’s diverse aquatic resources.

### Access for All Boaters in Rhode Island

Several months ago, Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Almond joined officials from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), Governor's Commission on Disabilities, and City of East Providence in celebrating the completion of a new award winning, handicap-accessible boat ramp and parking lot at Haines Memorial State Park in East Providence. Located on Bullocks Cove in a densely populated area, the facility is expected to ease overcrowding that traditionally has been a problem on weekends, by providing additional launch lanes and more parking spaces.

The boat launch improvement project at Haines Memorial State Park replaced an aging, inadequate facility and was completed over a two-year period. The modernized facility features a 60-foot wide concrete ramp. Two floating courtesy docks, one eight feet wide that is handicap-accessible and another measuring six feet wide, have been constructed on either side of the ramp. Adjacent to the boat ramp is a new paved parking area with 67 vehicle/trailer parking spaces and 12 vehicle-only parking spaces. The parking lot also includes a drainage and stormwater treatment unit that will prevent 80 percent of solids and grease and oil from entering the Cove.



RIDEM

*The award-winning Haines Memorial State Park Boat Access Facility.*

The facility opens up the northern reaches of Narragansett Bay to East Bay boaters and also boaters from Massachusetts. It received national acclaim when the State Organization for Boating Access conferred its Outstanding Project Award for an Intermediate Facility. Moreover, the facility joins four other contemporary facilities constructed since 1996 by the RIDEM which surround Narragansett Bay and have attracted national attention

for their innovative designs to provide handicap-access. The Haines Memorial State Park Boat Access facility was constructed at a cost of approximately \$870,000 which was provided by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program through RIDEM's Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Governor's Commission on Disabilities.

### Sport Fish Restoration of American Shad in Virginia

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries manages a diverse array of fish species across the Commonwealth. The Sport Fish Restoration Program plays an important role in funding Virginia's American shad restoration that currently targets the James, Pamunkey, and Rappahannock rivers. The James River American shad run was reported to once run over 375 upstream from its mouth in Chesapeake Bay. Similar to many other larger rivers in the northeast, dams were constructed in the 1800s on the James which effectively blocked significant reaches of spawning and nursery habitat for that species and many others. Due to habitat loss, pollution, and overharvest American shad were placed under a protective harvest moratorium in Virginia's portion of Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries in 1994 as harvest numbers reached all time lows.

Restoring depleted and extirpated American shad stocks in Virginia requires providing access to historic spawning and nursery habitat by fish passage construction or dam removals and stocking hatchery produced fry. Evaluations on the fry stocking program



are made possible by a mark created by immersing the young fish in a dye bath for a short period of time. The dye binds with bony tissue such as ear bones (otolith). Examining the otoliths enables researchers to determine the origin of the fish as wild or hatchery-raised. Beginning

in 1992, the James River was stocked with 52,000 fry; that number has grown to 8.7 million fry stocked in 2003. The Pamunkey River was stocked with a total of 2.8 million fry in 2003 and has received hatchery fry since 1994. In 2003, the Rappahannock River was also stocked with 1.3 million fry for the first time. Fry stocking goals were exceeded in all three rivers in 2003.

Wild fish, primarily from the Pamunkey River, make up the broodstock needed to supply the large number of eggs (a total of 23.4 million fertilized eggs in 2003). A total of 2,144 adult fish were spawned over 29 days. A total of 2.6 million fertilized eggs were also taken from American shad in the Potomac River in 2003 and used for the Rappahannock restoration. The fertilized eggs are hatched out, advanced to fry, and marked at Virginia's King and Queen Fish Culture Station and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Harrison Lake National Fish Hatchery.

Sampling of adult shad in the upper James River in 2003 produced the third highest measure of abundance in the past four years surveys were conducted, more than twice that measured in 2000. Hatchery fish, as determined by the ear bones marked with dye, made up 86% of the sample. Further analysis of this data set show that the percentage of hatchery fish in the younger age classes is shrinking, evidence that the hatchery raised fish are reproducing naturally in the wild. These encouraging results indicate that that the restoration strategy is effectively working to restore this important native fishery resource to Virginia. The growing American shad stocks will provide tremendous fishing opportunities and numerous ecological benefits as a result of this important work.



## Multi-state Cooperation in Indiana Bat Research

Multiple states have joined forces and funds to study the federally listed Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*). In the past decade, the Indiana bat has become the focus for research and monitoring for West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, and Connecticut. This research has been funded through numerous funding sources, including Federal Assistance grants through ESA Section 6 and State Wildlife Grants.

Through the dedication of agency biologists and volunteers, Herculean efforts have been made to catch, radio-tag, and track these tiny bats within a narrow window of time in early spring when they all move from their hibernacula to their yet unknown summer habitats. Logistical planning for round-the-clock tracking both on the ground and by small aircraft has been both challenging and rewarding, and subsequent years will benefit from lessons learned in the first. So far, northeast populations do not appear to move as far as southern and western populations; this difference may have dramatic consequences for regional species viability and these data will provide guidance for future conservation efforts.

Staff from Vermont, New York, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have worked together on a maternity colony study to characterize maternity colony roost trees and foraging habitat at three sites in the Champlain Valley. One site now has banded 65 of over 200 Indiana bats in a colony which has been studied since 2001. Part of the work will include landscape analysis using GIS and FRAGSTATS to characterize the surrounding landscape with respect to cover, fragmentation, nearest road, nearest wetland, slope, elevation, and aspect. Work to test the validity of the landscape analysis will begin in 2005.



Alan Hicks, NY DEC

*Indiana bat with radio-transmitter attached.*



*Biologists from multiple state and federal agencies hold Indiana bats to warm them after attaching the radio transmitters.*

### Black Bears in West Virginia

Solid information on the population, distribution, and rates of increase of wildlife species are important to allow state wildlife agencies to make informed management decisions. For over twenty years, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources has devoted a portion of its wildlife research Federal Assistance grant to collecting information on the dynamics of the black bear population, using biological information from harvested bears and conducting field research projects to estimate bear productivity and survival in the traditional range.

West Virginia black bears have been expanding their range in the southern portion of the state and apparently increasing in number over their traditional range. In 1999, the Division turned their attention to the issues surrounding the expansion of the black bear population into Southern West Virginia to learn about how those bears were behaving in suburban areas where they had not been before.

This research is no small undertaking. Division staff handled 339 bears a total of 671 times during the 2003-2004 reporting period; 76 females and 38 males were marked with radiocollars to monitor survival and nuisance activity and to allow researchers to find dens in the winter to determine reproduction by females. Division staff observed 174 cubs during visits to female dens in 2004, for a mean litter size of 2.8, including 2 litters of 5 cubs. Survival during the 2003 hunting season was 83% and 62% for radiocollared females and males, respectively. Similar information collected during previous years has allowed the Division to better understand the dynamics of this expanding bear population, what role hunting may play in managing the population, and what future trends in terms of distribution and abundance might be expected under a variety of management scenarios.



West Virginia DNR



*West Virginia biologists inspect a black bear den site.*

### Restoration of Trout Streams in West Virginia

*adapted from "West Virginia's Resurrected Trout Fisheries," Walter S. Brown, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, December, 2003.*

About 400 miles of trout streams in West Virginia are severely degraded as a result of acid precipitation or acid mine drainage. This loss is manifested in damaged stream ecosystems, reduced populations of trout and other sensitive fish species, loss of angling opportunities, and economic losses from reduced recreational expenditures. The damage is mounting in many watersheds as the soil's acid-neutralizing capability is permanently depleted. While acid source reduction is a priority of both state and federal governments, instream acid neutralization remains the most immediate method of restoring acid degraded streams. It is, in fact, the only economically feasible method of stream restoration in many severely affected watersheds.

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) has studied and implemented two principal methods of instream acid neutralization with Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) funds over the past two decades. Both techniques utilize limestone treatment. The first method, and the older of the two, uses a waterdriven, self-feeding, limestone drum facility to grind limestone aggregate into a fine slurry that is continuously released into the stream, neutralizing stream acidity as it dissolves. The second method, developed more recently, uses fine limestone sand that is simply dumped into the stream, again neutralizing acidity as it dissolves.

The WVDNR and West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection have partitioned the responsibility for restoring the state's acid impacted trout streams. WVDNR uses hunting and fishing license revenue and SFR dollars to fund treatment of waters impacted by acid precipitation. Agency policy prohibits the



Walter S. Brown

*Limestone sand is dumped into a stream to neutralize acid.*

use of this revenue to treat acid mine drainage. Treatment of mining-induced acidification is the responsibility of WVDEP, which receives substantial federal funds that can be used for that purpose. Some restoration projects involve partnerships between WVDNR and WVDEP and, in some cases, other entities such as the U.S. Forest Service, Trout Unlimited, and private land companies.

Currently SFR funds are used to operate and maintain limestone drum facilities on three streams, restoring 40 miles of trout fishery at an annual operating cost of \$84,000, or an average annual cost per mile restored of \$2,854. Limestone sand is used to treat 124 miles of 25 streams at an annual cost of \$43,000, or an average annual cost per mile restored of \$444. In addition, 68 acres of acidic lakes are treated with limestone sand at an annual cost of \$3,300.

Using SFR funds, hunting and fishing license revenues and monies from a variety of other sources, nearly 75% of the

trout streams degraded by acid precipitation or acid mine drainage are being treated in West Virginia. The 295 miles of restored trout streams support an estimated 194,000 days of angling use annually. The economic impact of recreational angling on these restored waters approaches \$12 million annually, the majority of which accrues to private businesses. This equates to a cost/benefit ratio of each dollar spent on acid stream restoration yielding \$46 in benefits to the private sector.

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