

# IR3

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## Inside Region 3

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NATIONAL  
WILDLIFE  
REFUGE



UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY  
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U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



### *Inside This Issue:*

**Great Gray Owls Seek Refuge  
HAPET Office Wins DU Award  
A Refuge From Industry**

## Region 3's Own Dan Sparks Wins Department "Four Cs" Award

For more than a decade, contaminants biologist Dan Sparks has worked tirelessly to make the Grand Calumet River in northwestern Indiana a better place for fish, wildlife, habitat and people. Those who work in the Bloomington ES Field Office know of the long hours Dan spends up in the Chicago area, collecting fish, cajoling partners, strategizing with lawyers, and convincing responsible parties to come to the table to find a solution to the area's contamination problems.

This month, Dan's decade and a half of effort earned him the Interior Department's Four Cs award. Along with Department of Justice colleague John Carlucci, Dan was recognized at a ceremony in Washington, DC, as the driving force

behind a 2004 settlement for nearly \$60 million to restore the Grand Calumet River under the NRDA program.

The award is granted to an Interior Department employee, group or team making exceptional contributions to promote the Secretary's initiatives embodying the 4 Cs: "Communication, Consultation, and Cooperation, all in the service of Conservation."

The award recognizes Sparks' outstanding efforts working with stakeholders, other federal agencies, state agencies, and private interests in northwestern Indiana to improve the region's natural resources.

Amid the factories, refineries, and urban development in northwestern Indiana are some of the

most valuable ecological resources in the Midwest. Globally rare dune and swale habitats, prairie wetland, savannas, marshes and lakeshores support a number of important fish and wildlife species such as the endangered Indiana bat and the Karner blue butterfly, and scores of migratory bird species that stop to loaf, nest and feed during their seasonal migrations.

"Dan has shown all of us what it means to work for a great cause," said Charles Wooley, Deputy Director for the Midwest Region. "His perseverance and dedication to restoring the health of the Grand Calumet River and southern Lake Michigan are making this corner of Indiana a better place for its residents and its resources." *Georgia Parham, External Affairs*

## HAPET Office Wins Professional Conservationist Partnership Award From Ducks Unlimited

The Region 3 Habitat and Population Evaluation Team received Minnesota Ducks Unlimited's Professional Conserva-

tion Partner of the Year award at the organization's 2005 state convention on Feb. 12 in St. Cloud, Minn.

HAPET provides biological support to wetland management districts and national wildlife refuges in the Prairie Pothole portion of Minnesota and Iowa. They also lend their support and partner with several conservation agencies and organizations. The office was established in 1987 to coordinate the annual FWS Waterfowl Breeding Population and Production Survey.

Since its inception, HAPET's mission has expanded to include strategic planning and evaluation for the full range of migratory birds occurring in the tall grass prairie portion of the U.S. Prairie Pothole Region. HAPET is co-located with the Fergus Falls Wetland Management District and the Fergus Falls Wetland Acquisition office. *Rachel F. Levin, External Affairs*



- USFWS Photo by John Christian

HAPET project leader Rex Johnson (center) accepted the award from Minnesota DU staff members Jon Schneider (left) and Roger Pederson.

## Midwest Refuges Reorganize Supervisory Responsibilities

The 52 National Wildlife Refuges and 10 Wetland Management Districts in the Midwest Region are being reorganized to reflect common resource goals and improve efficiency of supervision.

Midwest Region National Wildlife Refuge System Chief Nita Fuller said the consolidation will primarily affect internal “report to” relationships within the Refuge System’s supervisory chain and will take effect later this month.

The refuges will retain their current names, managers and staffs with little effect on day-to-day operations or service to the public.

The number of senior refuge area supervisors in the regional office will be reduced from three to two, and the chain of command will be realigned for managers at refuges in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio.

Barry Christenson, who served as area supervisor for refuges in Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio, is leaving for a new assignment as the Refuge Manager at Midway Atoll NWR. He will not be replaced. Supervisory duties for staffed refuges in his three states will be assumed by refuge supervisors Jim Leach and Jon Kauffeld. Jim Leach, supervisor for Minnesota stations, will also take on responsibility for refuges and wetland management districts in Wisconsin. Jon Kauffeld, currently the supervisor for Illinois, Iowa and Missouri refuges and a wetland management district, will also oversee stations in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio.

National Wildlife Refuges on or along the Mississippi and Illinois rivers in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri will become a separate area under the supervision of Don Hultman, cur-

rently manager of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and supervisor for Trempealeau (Wisconsin) and Driftless Area (Iowa) refuges.

Two National Wildlife Refuge complexes headquartered in Illinois that help protect, restore and conserve fish and wildlife habitat along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers will become part of this new Upper Mississippi River refuge area.

The Mark Twain Refuge Complex, headquartered in Quincy, Ill., and the Illinois River Refuge Complex, headquartered in Havana, Ill., will be added to the Upper Mississippi River area under Hultman. Dick Steinbach, manager of the Mark Twain NWR complex will continue to oversee his current refuges and supervise Ross Adams, manager of the Illinois River Refuge Complex. Steinbach will report to Hultman as part of the new Upper Mississippi River area.

“The decision to consolidate is based on the common resource

goals and issues facing all of these river refuges,” said Fuller. “These refuges also share many of the same contacts with the states, other federal agencies, and a host of non-government conservation groups who partner with us to conserve resources on these important rivers. The consolidation will provide a better coordinated and consistent management throughout the Upper Mississippi River System.”

The Mark Twain NWR Complex includes the following staffed refuges: Middle Mississippi River NWR, headquartered in Marion, Ill.; Port Louisa NWR, headquartered in Wapello, Iowa; Great River NWR, headquartered in Annada, Mo., and Two Rivers NWR headquartered Quincy, Ill., The Illinois River NWR Complex includes three refuges: Chautauqua NWR near Havana; Meredosia NWR near Meredosia, Ill., and Emiquon NWR located across the Illinois River from the Chautauqua refuge. *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*

### Hail & Farewell

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

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

This month, we welcome the following new permanent employees: **Vincent A. Becker**, Regional Office - Contracting and General Services; **Robert G. Jacobson**, Regional Office - Contracting and General Services; **Jonathan A. Priday**, Shiawassee NWR, **Kurtis E. Schilling**, Iron River NFH; **Barbara A. Boyle**, Tamarac NWR; **Alice M. Hanley**, Big Stone NWR; **Melinda G. Knutson**, Upper Miss. NWFR - LaCrosse; **Travis E. Robison**, Big Oaks NWR; and, **Mathew E. Weber**, Regional Office - Computer Support Group.

We also welcome the following new term, temporary and student employees: **Deborah A. Wiseman**, Reynoldsburg FO; **Daniel F. Chibnall**, Columbia FO; and, **Linda G. Nichols**, Regional Office -Federal Assistance.

We bid farewell and say thank you to the following retirees: **Robert L. Drieslein**, Upper Miss. NWFR - Winona, and **Carol J. Tovar**, Regional Office-Ecological Services.

# Birders Flock to Great Lakes Region For Rare Glimpse of Northern Owls

There's a buzz emanating from northern Great Lakes' forests and bogs this winter and it has nothing to do with bees. It's the sound of bird enthusiasts and wildlife photographers descending on parts of Minnesota, Wisconsin and even Iowa in search of northern owls. A November irruption of northern owls—great gray owls, northern hawk owls and boreal owls— from forests in Canada has propelled large numbers of the majestic birds south into the northern Great Lakes region.

The invasion is being led by large numbers of great gray owls. Although small numbers of great grays exist in areas of northern Minnesota, they are predominantly found in the boreal forests of Alaska and Canada. The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union (MOU) received its first sighting of a great gray on August 17. Since then, more than 1,700 great gray owls have been documented in Minnesota. Sightings have also been reported in Portage County, Wis., and as far south as the small town of Madrid, Iowa.

The unprecedented numbers of owls, coupled with good accessible roads and viewing areas has

prompted the small invasion of birders into the region, all eager to view and photograph the rare owls. At Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge near McGregor, Minn., the incredible owl incursion has meant a huge increase in the number of refuge visitors, "During a normal winter we might have 3-4 visitors a day, primarily for cross country skiing," said Rice Lake NWR Manager Mary Stefanski. "Since the owls have shown up, it's not uncommon to have 30 or more visitors a day, all wanting to see owls," Stefanski said. "We only clear snow from two miles of refuge roads in the winter, but visitors are still able to see half-dozen owls from the road. That isn't too bad."

Great gray owl sightings started last May at Agassiz NWR in northwest Minnesota. intensity and

Seven great grays were observed on the refuge from May through August which is very unusual for Agassiz, according to Refuge Biologist Gary Huschle. "Since October we have had one or two great gray sightings along the main travel route, County Road 7, every month. There have been a couple great grays just off the Refuge that have been observed fairly consistently for the past two months."

Published stories in Twin Cities' newspapers report birders have descended on northern Minnesota owl viewing areas from as far away as Florida, Texas, California and even England. In a Feb. 13 article in the St. Paul Pioneer Press, MOU President Mark Alt said the owl invasion is unprecedented in

scale. "During the last owl invasion in 2000 it was considered big news if birders saw a handful of great gray owls in a day. Now, we know of someone who saw 214 great grays in a day," Alt said.

Ground zero for spotting great gray owls in northern Minnesota is the Sax-Zim Bog, about 45 minutes north-northeast of Duluth in St. Louis County. Concentrations of great gray owls can be seen there and along the North Shore of Lake Superior between Duluth and Two Harbors, Minn. For more information about the owl invasion, visit the

Minnesota Ornithologists' Union web site: <http://biosci.cbs.umn.edu/~mou/index.html>  
Scott Flaherty,  
External Affairs



## About the Cover



- USFWS Photo by Michelle McDowell

A great gray owl seeks refuge on a boundary sign at Rice Lake NWR.

- Photo by Refuge Friend Cindy Butler

Spotting the owls is made easier by their tendency to hunt near roads. This great gray perched near the refuge entrance in search of a meal.

### Funding and Participation Agreement Signed for Lawrenceville NRDA

The first Funding and Participation Agreement between an industry partner and state and federal Trustees in the State of Illinois was signed at ceremony in Chicago, Ill., this December. Regional Director Robyn Thorson, Illinois DNR Director Joel Brunsvold, Illinois EPA Director Renee Cipriano and President of Chevron Environmental Management Corporation Daniel Rocha all signed this precedent-setting agreement.

The Service, Illinois EPA, and Illinois DNR developed this cooperative Natural Resource Damage Assessment with ChevronTexaco for the former Indian Refinery Site in

Lawrenceville, Ill.

The site, located in southeast Illinois on the bank of the Embarras River, was established in the early 1900s and operated until 1995. During its operation, the refinery produced various products including gasoline, jet fuel, and asphalt material. Consequently, it also produced various waste products that were often disposed of on site.

The site provides habitat for several federal trust resources, including federally endangered and candidate mussels, as well as the copperbelly watersnake, which is protected under a conservation agreement between the Service and

the State of Illinois. Habitat for migratory birds, as well as the potential occurrence of the federally endangered Indiana bat and the bald eagle, make the identification of chemical pathways critical.

A technical team has been set up to develop an Assessment Plan, which will be developed concurrently with the Remedial Investigation. This process will allow the Team to determine natural resource information needed and to influence the choice and implementation of remedial alternatives to ensure the site provides safe habitat for fish and wildlife. *Ginger Molitor; Rock Island FO*

### Pheasant Fest 2005 Provides Opportunity to Share Service Mission and Support Our Partners

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Assistant Director Mamie Parker, along with staff from the Midwest Regional Office and several field stations joined more than 24,000 upland bird hunters, conservationists, exhibitors and other outdoor men and women during Pheasants Forever's Pheasant Fest, held mid-January in Omaha, Neb.

Assistant Director Parker presented a special Award of Appreciation to Pheasants Forever to recognize the organization's enormous contributions as a partner in restoring and conserving wildlife habitat throughout the United States. According to Greg Brown, Region 3 chief of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program, Pheasants Forever has been an active partner with the Service for more than 15 years. "Since 1989, Pheasants Forever has helped us to restore and conserve thousands of acres of grassland habitat that has benefited numerous migratory birds and other wildlife," said Brown. During the Fest, staff

from the Partners program talked with landowners about restoration opportunities on their land.

In addition to the Partners program, the Service had representatives from its Fisheries, Ecological Services and Refuge System programs on-hand to answer questions and provide information during the Fest. Ecological Services and Fisheries staff talked with attendees about endangered species, invasive species – especially Asian carp – and other aquatic and terrestrial habitat conservation programs. Corey Lee, biological technician from the Columbia Fishery Resources Office, noted that people were eager to learn about the Service's programs in the Missouri River and its floodplain. Refuge System staff operated a comput-

erized firearms safety training simulator that allowed youth hunters to learn about gun safety while on a computer simulated hunt.

This is the second Pheasant Fest and its popularity and attendance continues to grow. Staff members who attended the event continue to see the Fest as an excellent opportunity to inform the public about the Service's mission and programs. *Chuck Traxler; External Affairs*



- Pheasants Forever Photo by Mark Herwig

Pheasants Forever VP of Governmental Affairs Dave Nomsen and Assistant Director Mamie Parker attended Pheasant Fest to help celebrate the successful partnership between PF and the Service.

# A Career Spent Helping Waterfowl

It may be some time before someone is found to fill the shoes of Steve Kufrin, Region 3's Partnership Coordinator who retired last month. And, while it's likely that a new coordinator will be hired in the future, it's unlikely that the new person will ever replace Steve. "He's irreplaceable," said Private Lands Program Chief Greg Brown of his colleague and friend.

Steve retired after 15 years with the Service; quite a few years earlier than he'd planned. Diagnosed last summer with brain cancer, Steve decided it was time to spend more time with his family than with his colleagues at Fort Snelling. A larger gathering of friends, fans and fellow employees joined Steve January 21 at the Regional Office to celebrate his career and wish him well as he transitions into his new life as a Service retiree.

More than 70 people, including many friends and NGO partners, filled the Regional Directors con-

ference room during the afternoon send-off. The guest list was a virtual who's who of wildlife conservation in Minnesota and included: Federal Duck Stamp artists Jim, Bob, and Joe Hautman and Jim's wife, Dorothy, retired Regional Director Harvey Nelson, hunting partner and Minneapolis Star Tribune columnist Doug Smith and representatives from partners Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever and Minnesota Waterfowl Association. Nearly everyone had stories about their experiences with Steve to tell. Steve also collected a variety of mementos and gifts, including three hand-carved duck decoys.

"The best part of working for the Service for all these years is the people," Steve said. "The people I've met and worked with along the way really made my job worthwhile." Steve also helped set the celebratory mood, sharing the good news that recent medical tests indi-



- USFWS photo by Dan Sobieck

During his career with the Service, Steve worked tirelessly to improve waterfowl habitat across the region, he was given several hand carved decoys at his retirement party.

cated his condition had stabilized and he was looking forward to the days ahead.

While with the Service, Steve coordinated the distribution of millions of dollars in cost-share funding that helped protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat on Service-owned and private lands across the region. He also coordinated the National Wetland Conservation Awards for the region and organized 10 "Hometown Duck Stamp Events" for regional winners of the Federal Duck Stamp Contest.

More information on Steve's career, and details about his 40 year impact on waterfowl and habitat in Minnesota were contained in a full-page feature story ("*One Man's Fight*") in the Sunday, February 13 edition of the Minneapolis Star Tribune. The story can be accessed on the Internet at: <http://www.startribune.com/stories/531/5236361.html> Scott Flaherty, External Affairs



- USFWS photo by Dan Sobieck

Steve coordinated 10 "Hometown Duck Stamp Events" during his career with the Service. Joesph, James, and Robert Hautman (left to right), shown here with Steve at his retirement party, collectively won the contest seven times during Steve's career.

## Around the Region

Keweenaw Bay Tribal Natural Resources Secretary Sharon Brunk prepares to set a modified Windermere trap during a fish assessment in Lake Superior's Huron Bay. The Ashland FRO partnered with the Tribe to conduct the survey.



- USFWS photo by Gary Czynpinski



- USFWS photo by Scott Flaherty

Regional Director Robyn Thorson presents special stained glass Blue Goose mementos to NRCS Minnesota State Conservationist Bill Hunt, Minnesota TNC Director Ron Nargang, and Minnesota DNR Commissioner Gene Merriam during a ceremony transferring management authority for Glacial Ridge NWR.



- USFWS photo by Debbie Jones

Pendills Creek NFH Fishery Biologist Tracy Roessner nets lake trout fingerlings from the hatchery's raceway for fin clipping.



- USFWS photo by Chris Mensing

Ludington Biological Station Fishery Biologist Amy DeWeerd speaks with a student about using the USAJOBS website during a Career Day at Michigan State University.



- USFWS Photo by Nate Caswell

Carterville FRO Fishery Biologist Colby Wrasse handles a fyke net in Swan Lake located on Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge.



- USFWS Photo by Rebecca Hinkle

Madison Hinkle compares her height to the height of a tundra swan during Ottawa NWRs First Annual Swan Festival.

## How Do I Get a Photo in Here?

**Do you have photos you would like to share of the great work we do and great people we have here in the Midwest Region? If so, send them to Chuck Traxler ([charles\\_traxler@fws.gov](mailto:charles_traxler@fws.gov)) in the Office of External Affairs. While an ARS report to support the photo is preferred, it isn't required.**

**For any photos you send, please include a description of who (or what) is in the photo and what they are doing. Also, please include the name and title of who took the photo.**

### Building North America's Only International Wildlife Refuge in the Industrial Heartland

By John Hartig, Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Manager

Preserving open spaces, sustaining wildlife, and enhancing quality of life are priorities in the Detroit-Windsor Metropolitan Areas. The Service is helping these communities to reach those goals by building North America's only International Wildlife Refuge in a region that is best known as the automobile capital of the U.S. and Canada.

The Detroit River and Western Lake Erie are at the intersection of two major North American flyways. Birds come to rest, nest, and feed along the shoreline of many islands and marshes. Over 30 species of waterfowl, 17 species of raptors, 31 species of shorebirds, 160 species of songbirds, and 117 species of fish are found along -- or migrate through -- the Detroit River corridor. This biodiversity and the diversity of requisite habitats have given the region international acclaim. The Detroit River has been recognized for its biodiversity in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network, and the Biodiversity Investment Area Program of Environment Canada and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

These unique attributes led Rep. John Dingell to spearhead the creation the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge in 2001.

In just three years time, much has happened at the refuge:

- Mud Island was donated to the refuge by National Steel Corporation (now U.S. Steel).
- Calf Island was acquired.
- 44 acres of waterfront property on the lower Detroit River in Trenton was acquired from Diamler



- USFWS photo

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Manager John Hartig talks with Assistant Secretary of the Interior P. Lynn Scarlett during a recent visit to the refuge.

Chrysler Corporation to serve as the gateway to the refuge -- including trails, a visitors center, an outdoor classroom, wildlife viewing stations, and more.

- Humbug Island and Marsh, the last mile of natural shoreline on the U.S. mainland of the Detroit River, have been preserved.
- BASF has made significant ecological improvements to the 1,500-acre Fighting Island and received Wildlife Habitat Council certification.
- DTE Energy has signed a cooperative management agreement for 650 acres of land at its Fermi Power Plant, helped develop greenway trails, enhanced habitat at its facilities, and helped plant over a million trees.
- Soluita has rehabilitated 25 acres of waterfront property for wildlife habitat and enhanced aquatic habitat along its shoreline.
- Ford Motor Company has rebuilt its Rouge Plant using principles of

“green design,” including installing the world's largest living roof that will save millions of dollars in maintenance, replacement, and water quality compliance costs.

And, the list goes on.

Not only are southeast Michigan and its international wildlife refuge becoming internationally recognized for wildlife, habitats, and wildlife-compatible recreational opportunities, but they are now being internationally recognized for its public-private partnerships. Businesses are making major investments in their home in an effort to remain competitive and help attract and retain the next generation of employees.

U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Gail Norton in a 2003 speech along the Detroit River noted that “this refuge is an outstanding model for promoting partnerships” for the entire national wildlife refuge system. “It's a great example of everyone working together.”



## Accomplishment Reports

The following accomplishments reports were processed between Jan. 1 and Feb. 15, 2005:

1. Goby Manuscript Peer-Review Completed, *Mark Steingraeber, LaCrosse FRO*
2. Wildlife Toxicology Special Poster Session at 2005 Annual Meeting of The Wildlife Society, *Ken Stromborg, Green Bay FO*
3. Birders Flock to Great Lakes Region For Rare Glimpse of Northern Owls, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
4. Teachers Investigating Science Resource - Kansas City, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
5. Green Bay Fisheries Office Conducts Informational Meetings to Discuss Federal Assistance Programs, *Stewart Cogswell, Green Bay FRO*
6. National Wildlife Refuge System Consolidates Management Responsibilities For Midwest Refuges, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
7. Leadership Education/Action Development Visit to Squaw Creek Refuge, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
8. Will \$593,454 Bring Prairie and People Together?, *Scott Ford, Neal Smith NWR*
9. Commercial Fishers Gathering Important Data on Lake Superior Lake Sturgeon, *Glenn Miller, Ashland FRO*
10. 2004 Lake Superior Binational Program Activities, *Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO*
11. 850 Visitors Attend Winterfest at Sherburne Refuge, *Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR*
12. Presentation on Coded Wire Tag Studies in Lake Michigan, *Charles Bronte, Green Bay FRO*
13. Ashland Fishery Office Fish Passage Projects are Rolling, *Lee Newman, Ashland FRO*
14. Ashland Fishery Office Can Now Read OTC Marks, *Frank Stone, Ashland FRO*
15. Horicon Refuge Celebrates Volunteers!, *Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR*
16. Partners Help Complete Whittlesey Creek Engineered Log Jam Project, *Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO*
17. Genoa National Fish Hatchery Works to Increase Workforce Diversity, *Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH*
18. Squaw Creek Refuge Manager Bell Presents Program at Tan-Tar-A, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
19. Habitattitude Campaign Poster Available, *Mark Steingraeber, LaCrosse FRO*
20. Shiawassee Refuge and Friends Host Endangered Species Talk, *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*
21. Genoa National Fish Hatchery Receives Coaster Brook Trout Eggs, *Nick Starzl, Genoa NFH*
22. Green Bay Fishery Resources Office Processes Coded Wire Tags for Lake Michigan Partners, *Dale Hanson, Green Bay FRO*
23. Service Exhibit at 'Government on Display' Attracts Mallgoers, *Rachel Levin, External Affairs*
24. Getting Greener at DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, *James Murcia, Desoto NWR*
25. Columbia Fishery Office Continues Work on Pallid Sturgeon Monitoring Project, *colby wrasse, Carterville FRO*
26. Catch Summary Completed for Lake Superior's Huron Bay Fish Assessment, *Gary Czypinski, Ashland FRO*
27. Lake Whitefish Age Determination, *Scott Koprofski, Alpena FRO*
28. Research Results Presented at Scaphirhynchus Conference, *Wyatt Doyle, Columbia FRO*
29. High School Students Collect Soil Samples on Shiawassee Refuge, *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*
30. Lake Trout Strain Recommendations Accepted for Lake Michigan Restoration Program, *Charles Bronte, Green Bay FRO*
31. Visitor Responses to Squaw Creek Refuge, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
32. Pendills Creek NFH Biologist Tracy Roessner Attends Lake Huron Meeting, *Crystal LeGault-Anderson, Pendills Creek NFH*
33. Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery Provides Lake Trout Eggs to Purdue University, *Crystal LeGault-Anderson, Pendills Creek NFH*
34. Speech: Efficacy and Leadership, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
35. Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery 2004 Lake Trout Spawning Season Report, *Crystal LeGault-Anderson, Pendills Creek NFH*
36. Twenty People Brave Frigid Temps to Go on Winter Night Hike at Shiawassee Refuge, *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*
37. Invasive Species Information Presented at Great Lakes Captain's Association Meeting, *Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO*
38. Green Bay Fisheries Office Staff Attend Upper Menominee River Watershed Assessment Workshop, *Stewart Cogswell, Green Bay FRO*
39. Lovells Road Bridge on the AuSable River Scheduled for Replacement, *Heather Enterline, Alpena FRO*
40. Experience Works Program a Success at Horicon Refuge, *Diane Kitchen, Horicon NWR*
41. Recent Staff Training at Squaw Creek Refuge, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
42. USFWS Networks with MSU Students at 2005 Diversity Career Fair, *Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station*
43. Silver Creek Fish Passage Project Meeting, *Susan Wells, Alpena FRO*
44. Dave Wedan Reaches 20 Year Career Milestone, *Heidi Keuler, LaCrosse FRO*
45. Ashland Fishery Office Completes Lake Superior Angler's Creel Lake Trout Scale Reading, *Glenn Miller, Ashland FRO*
46. Crane Meadows Refuge Honors 55 Volunteers at Recognition Dinner, *Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR*
47. Squaw Creek Refuge Meets Public at St. Joseph Sport Show, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
48. Aging Techniques Attempted for Macrhybopsis Chubs, *Jennifer Johnson, Columbia FRO*
49. Fishery Staff Attend Pheasant Fest 2005, *Corey Lee, Columbia FRO*
50. Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy Plan Developed for Loess Bluffs in Missouri, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
51. Information on Propagated Pallid Sturgeon Presented at Scaphirhynchus Conference, *Andrew Starostka, Columbia FRO*
52. Indiana Deer Farmer to Pay \$575,000 in Fines and Restitution as Part of Plea Agreement, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
53. Region 3 MOCC Instructors Coordination Meeting Held, *Adam Kowalski, Alpena FRO*
54. Conservation in Black & White: Diversity in Natural Resources, *Tameka Dandridge, East Lansing FO*
55. Highway Projects and Wildlife Crossings in Northern Minnesota, *Paul Burke, Twin Cities FO*
56. Service Honors Partnership With Pheasants Forever at Pheasantfest, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
57. Rock Island Field Office Participates in Annual Bald Eagle Days, *Rick Nelson, Rock Island FO*
58. Annual White-tailed Deer Hunt on Squaw Creek Refuge, *Ron Bell, Squaw Creek NWR*
59. Great River NWR - One Weekend...Two Managed Deer Hunts, *Dave Ellis, Great River NWR*
60. Jordan River Hatchery Visitor Center Receives Snowmobiler Support, *Timothy Smigielski, Jordan River NFH*
61. Shiawassee Refuge and Friends Host First Nurturing Nature Meeting, *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*
62. Columbia FRO Biologist Attends Conservation Landscape Meeting, *Andrew Starostka, Columbia FRO*
63. Partnerships at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in 2004, *Ron Knopik, Minnesota Valley NWR*
64. Jordan River Hatchery Staff Member is "Certifiable", *Timothy Smigielski, Jordan River NFH*
65. Bloomington Field Office First Quarter FY 2005 Federal Activities Report, *Michael Litwin, Bloomington FO*
66. 2004 Coded-Wire-Tag Data Compiled, *Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO*
67. Community and Conservation Groups Offer Reward For Information on Injured Refuge Bison, *Scott Ford, Neal Smith NWR*
68. Columbia Fishery Office Provides 2004 Activity Highlights for Big Muddy Refuge, *Louise Mauldin, Columbia FRO*
69. Age and Growth Analysis Underway for Missouri River Fish Species, *colby wrasse, Carterville FRO*
70. Ashland Fishery Office Biologist Assists at Iron River Hatchery, *Jonathan Pyatskowitz, Ashland FRO*
71. Alpena Fishery Office Staff Conduct Equipment Maintenance and Repair, *Scott Koprofski, Alpena FRO*
72. Ashland Contributes to GLBET Sturgeon Committee Efforts to Rehabilitate Lake Sturgeon, *Henry Quinlan, Ashland FRO*
73. Pine River/Van Etten Lake Tour for Landscape Restoration Projects, *Susan Wells, Alpena FRO*
74. Comprehensive Conservation Plan Completed For Necedah Refuge in Wisconsin, *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*
75. Funding and Participation Agreement Signed for Lawrenceville NRDA, *Ginger Molitor, Rock Island FO*
76. Service Reads Lake Trout CWT's for CORA and Michigan DNR, *Adam Kowalski, Alpena FRO*
77. Missouri Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy Meeting, *Tracy Hill, Columbia FRO*
78. Iowa Army Ammunition Plant Fisheries Management Plans Complete, *Andrew Starostka, Columbia FRO*
79. Indianapolis is Last Appearance for Sea Lamprey Display in 2004, *Terry Morse, Marquette Bio Station*

## Local Heroes

This issue of *Inside Region 3* shares the news of the award presented to Dan Sparks, of the Ecological Services Office in Bloomington, Ind. I was pleased to be in the Department of the Interior auditorium the first week of February to see Dan's work be recognized by the Secretary of the Interior.

I'm quite certain that standing on a stage with the Secretary wasn't what Dan had in mind 14 years ago when he first trekked through abandoned industrial areas in northern Indiana and sensed that something didn't look right (or smell right) in these wetlands. Dan applied his expertise in contaminants to steadily build the scientific and legal case for assessing damage and pursuing funding for a remedy. Fourteen years later the corporations responsible for the damage agreed to pay nearly \$60 million to restore natural resources injured by the release of hazardous substances in the area. This case couldn't have been made without additional science support, expert legal counsel, and the cooperation of many state and local agencies. But it all started with Dan, our local hero.

Another article in this issue shares news about Rex Johnson, who heads up the HAPET office in Fergus Falls, Minn. Rex, and HAPET, conduct surveys and develop models to provide natural resource managers with the tools and information they need to conserve and restore wildlife habitat. This work is essential to landscape conservation, but at times they have worked in obscurity. That's no longer the case – the Service and other conservation organizations have come to rely on these skills, and Rex and HAPET were hon-



- USFWS photo by Chuck Traxler

RD Thorson takes the opportunity to talk with local heroes -- Service employees, volunteers, partners and friends -- as she travels across the Region.

ored this month by the Minnesota Chapter of Ducks Unlimited as the Conservationist of the Year. Rex and his crew believe mightily in what they do; it is great to see that commitment recognized, honored and supported.

There's another recent tribute to Service employees this month. On Sunday, Feb. 13, the Minneapolis Star Tribune printed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the front page of the "Outdoors" section in tribute to Steve Kuftrin, recently retired from a career distinguished by enthusiasm and passion for wildlife. "Kuf" worked as partnership coordinator for Refuges in the Regional Office, but no job description could begin to cover his wide portfolio of involvements, relationships, interests and energies. He loves the resource and that fueled him to work on every possible project that could make things better. His work in the Service would continue unabated if not interrupted by the need to divert his energies to fight a brain cancer diagnosis.

These three people apply themselves to natural resources day in

and day out because they care about conservation. They didn't do great things in order to achieve glory, and that's why highly earned recognition and reward are so fitting for them. They are appreciated first by colleagues and subsequently recognized by more people and a larger audience. These heroes go by many names in Region 3: Todd, Pam, Ross, Aaron, Joe, Kelly, Jane, Lisa, Tracy, Al, Gina, Rick, Dave, and on and on. Each merits recognition.

My congratulations to Dan Sparks, Rex Johnson and Steve Kuftrin for the honors due to them. My thanks and congratulations further extend to all Midwest Region employees who, like those who have been recently recognized, are giving your best every day. You make a difference for wildlife and fisheries conservation, and that is why you are important. That is why you are our local heroes.

Thank you for that.

- **Regional Director**  
**Robyn Thorson**