U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Inside Region 3

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'A Cleaner, Healthier Watershed'

Saginaw River Dredging Completed Ahead of Schedule

With PCB Tainted Sediment Removed, Service Joins State and Tribal Partners to Focus on Restoring Wildlife Habitat

The waters of Saginaw Bay on Lake Huron are cleaner today thanks to completion of a major dredging project that removed contaminated sediment from the lower Saginaw River. Officials from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality announced the successful removal of approximately 345,000 cubic yards of sediments from the river and bay that were contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs.

The dredging project began on April 13, 2000, and was completed Sunday, July 22, 2001, 17 days ahead of schedule. Planning, good weather and few problems with the operation allowed contractors to finish the job a few days early.

"We have just taken a huge step forward to make the Great Lakes a better place for people who live and recreate here and for the wildlife that use these lands and waters," said Bill Hartwig, Regional Director for the Service. "With contaminants removed, area residents can look forward to restoration of the fish, wildlife and habitat that make this region so special."

"The Saginaw Bay watershed is a cleaner, healthier place today due to the outstanding cooperation of all involved parties," said Russell J. Harding, director of Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). "The improvements resulting from this landmark settlement represent a true environmental and legal milestone in Michigan."

The Service, MDEQ, the Michigan Attorney General and the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, in their roles as natural resource trustees, negotiated a 1998 settlement with parties responsible for the contamination, including General Motors and the cities of Saginaw and Bay City. The settlement called for removal of the contaminated sediment and restoration of resources injured by the release of PCBs into the environment.

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The region's blue goose mascot strikes a pose with Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton during the congressional reception July 18.

Region's Blue Goose Mascot Goes to Washington

The Region 3 Centennial Blue Goose Mascot made its national debut July 18 as part of a Great Lakes-Big Rivers information booth at a Congressional Reception sponsored by the National Refuges program. Whether mugging with dignitaries such as Secretary of Interior Gale Norton, or hamming it up with children, the mascot instantly raised the profile of the blue goose symbol and heightened awareness of the Refuge System's upcoming Centennial in 2003.

Along with the mascot, staffers from Region 3 presented information on Horicon, Seney and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuges, Great Lakes coastal wetlands, coaster brook trout restorations, and Great Lakes waterfowl.

The event was well-attended by Congressional members, staffers and key officials from non-government organizations. Park Ranger Molly Stoddard from Horicon NWR portrayed the mascot during the reception.

Dan Sobieck, External Affairs

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Habitat to be Restored on Coastal Wetlands, Lakeplain Prairie

"Those responsible for this pollution have paid nearly $10 million to make this cleanup possible," said Michigan Attorney General Jennifer M. Granholm. "Clearly the Saginaw Bay watershed and the Great Lakes are better off now than just a few months ago."

The dredging project, managed and designed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District and carried out by Luedtke Engineering Company of Frankfort, Mich., used a specially designed, gasketted clamshell dredge bucket to remove sediment from the most contaminated parts of the river. Resuspension of material during dredging was controlled with careful use of the gasketted bucket (or conventional bucket when harder materials were encountered) and by silt curtains which completely enclosed the area being dredged.

The contaminated sediment was transported by barge to a confined disposal facility just outside the mouth of the Saginaw River. The material was loaded into trucks from the barges and then placed within a subcell in the northeast quadrant of the facility. The material will be capped with cleaner material from the Corps' maintenance dredging activities. Cost of the dredging project is estimated at $9.7 million and was paid for with funds from the settlement.

A specially designed clamshell dredge bucked limited resuspension of sediment.

The sediment removed from the Saginaw River was contaminated with PCBs released into the environment from industrial facilities and municipal wastewater treatment plants along the river starting in the 1940s. Saginaw Bay is regarded as one of the Great Lakes' primary walleye fishing and waterfowl hunting areas, and drains into Lake Huron. Contaminants in the river posed a continuing threat of affecting a much larger area if not contained.

Contamination in the river and bay has affected fish and wildlife resources, resulting in advisories against consumption of all fish species in the river and many fish species in Saginaw Bay as well. Reproduction of bald eagles, which feed primarily on fish, has been significantly lower in contaminated areas than elsewhere. Removing contaminated sediments and cleaning up industrial facilities along the Saginaw River will hasten the day that fish are safe for humans and wildlife to consume in unlimited amounts from the river and bay.

Additional restoration plans include habitat protection of more than 1,600 acres of public land acquired under the settlement; restoration of 200 to 400 acres of coastal wetlands and lakeplain prairie on the acquired lands; management of the Green Point Environmental Learning Center in Saginaw; development of three areas for boat launching and nature viewing; and restoration of water flow between Saginaw River and Tobico Marsh to improve the health of the marsh and the fish that use it.

For more information on the Saginaw River and Bay restoration and NRDA settlement, visit the Service's website at http://midwest.fws.gov/nrda/saginaw .

Service Sea Lamprey Control Program Destroys 7 Million Lampreys in the Great Lakes, Thousands of Lake Trout Saved

Between May 1 and July 19, 2001, the Service's sea lamprey control program treated 23 Great Lakes streams (11 in Lake Superior, seven in Lake Michigan, three in Lake Huron, and two in Lake Erie)with lampricide to destroy larval sea lamprey populations.

These treatments destroyed an estimated 7 million larval sea lampreys including about 168,000 that would have metamorphosed to the parasitic phase in 2001 and entered the Great Lakes. Each parasitic phase sea lamprey would have been capable of killing upwards of 40 pounds of lake trout during its year long life in the lakes.

A single parasitic-phase lamprey can kill up to 40 pounds of lake trout in a single year.

The Service's sea lamprey control program is conducted under contract with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. The successful control program continues to ensure sport fish rehabilitation in the Great Lakes and protects a fishery valued at over $4 billion.

Partners in the effort include the Great lakes Fishery Commission and Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Sea Lamprey Control Centre. *Denny Lavis, Ludington Biological Station*

Hatchery Trout Treated to Halt Spread of Bacterial Kidney Disease

Fishery staff from Ashland Fishery Resource Office, Ashland, Wis., and Iron River NFH, Iron River, Wis., assisted fish health biologists from La Crosse Fish Health Center to treat more than 6,000 trout with an antibiotic that helps stop the spread of bacterial kidney disease (BKD). The fish, six strains of lake trout and two strains of coaster brook trout, were injected with Gallimycin (Erythromycin Phosphate) an antibiotic used by fish health experts to combat the spread of *Renibacterium salmoninarum* (Rs) the causative agent of bacterial kidney disease (BKD).

BKD is a slowly progressive chronic disease of salmonid fishes and is a major obstacle to the successful propagation of these fishes. Rs can be passed vertically from generation to generation by living inside the fish egg. The disease is reported from all parts of the Northern Hemisphere inhabited by trout and salmon. Lake trout and coaster brook trout brood fish at Iron River have shown no clinical signs or mortality associated with this bacterial pathogen. The injection of Gallimycin was prescribed to bring the hatchery's fish stocks back to a 'Class A' status and comply with a Great Lakes Fish Health sub committee rule on stocking low prevalence Rs fish into the Great Lakes.

--Photo by Terry Ott

Hatchery staff, SCEP students and others help inject more than 6,000 fish with an antibiotic that will help prevent the spread of BKD.

To support the registration and use of Gallimycin against BKD in trout and salmon the Food and Drug Administration - Center for Veterinary Medicine granted an Investigational New Animal Drug Permit (#8452) to inject salmon and trout brood fish. Antibiotics such as Gallimycin are commonly given to brood fish in two separate injections: one 8-10 weeks before spawning and another a month later. Bacteria such as Rs which causes BKD are carried in the perivittelin layer of the egg. That is the layer between the yolk and the membranes. The first injection is for the eggs; Gallimycin is deposited in the perivittelin layer and discourages bacteria from living there. The second injection is to clean up the fish before spawning and ensure the ovarian fluid is infection-free.

Approximately 6,120 fish were injected with the antibiotic at Iron River. Gallimycin injections at 200 mg/ml active erythromycin were administered to all fish in the peritoneal cavity posterior to the pelvic fins at a dosage rate of 20 mg/kg of body weight. Presumably these injections will reduce or eliminate the prevalence of Rs in the lake trout and coaster brook trout brood fish by preventing vertical transmission from adult to their progeny.

The second injection of Gallimycin will be administered Aug. 27- 28 to all trout receiving the first injection. Spawning of the brood fish will commence approximately 30 days post injection. Preliminary diagnostic assays performed by fish health staff using the direct fluorescent antibody technique and the enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay at Iron River have shown some promising results. *Terrence Ott, LaCrosse Fish Health Center.*

Ashland Staff Assists Grand Portage Tribe Plan Walleye, Coaster Brook Trout Hatchery

Fishery Biologists from Ashland Fishery Resources Office recently traveled to Grand Portage Indian Reservation to assist the tribe with its planning for a walleye and coaster brook trout fish hatchery. The tribe wants to develop a facility that will provide rearing space for a small number of eggs and fry. The fish will then be released back into the waters of their origin.

During the two-day visit, the Service biologists located a construction site, developed floor plans and drew up an inlet and outlet water piping plan. A key component of this facility will be the position of the outlet pipe. It will allow for the discharge of water into an artificial gravel bed that will provide spawning substrate for returning coaster brook trout.

The tribe is committed to this project. However, they will be dependent on other funding opportunities to assist them with the project's cost sharing requirements. *Frank Stone, Ashland Fishery Resources Office*

Tallgrass Prairie Planting Complete at Neal Smith NWR

Bulk tallgrass prairie plantings have been completed for spring at Neal Smith NWR with a total of 66 new acres planted and 16 acres over-seeded for diversity. Additional acreage will be planted in the fall.

Much effort has been focused on the diversity of existing plantings and stewardship within previous planted sites. Work continues to maintain the previous years plantings including mowing and brush removal on over 100 acres. *Christy Smith, Neal Smith NWR*

Iowa Fish Farmer Gets Confinement, Fined For Lacey Act Violations

The owner of an Amana, Iowa, fish farm was sentenced July 20 by a Federal Court in Des Moines to six months home confinement, fined $13,654 and three years probation for violating federal wildlife laws. As part of a plea agreement, Myron J. Kloubec, owner of Kloubec Fish Farms in rural Amana, pleaded guilty to four counts of illegally possessing and transporting non-native fish without a permit, and one count of killing federally protected migratory birds.

In May 1998, Kloubec directed his employees to bring "breeder" bighead carp from Randolph County Fish Farm in Missouri to his Iowa fish farm with the intention of raising the species in one of 63 ponds on the complex. These carp subsequently spawned, creating about 1 million bighead "fry" that were later returned to ponds at the Missouri farm. Kloubec knew it was illegal to possess, import or export bighead carp without a permit, but did not apply to the state for one.

Kloubec had applied for a permit to bring black carp into Iowa in 1992 and 1993. In both cases, permission was denied by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, citing potential dangers to native fish species should the carp be introduced into state waters. Black carp were similarly banned in Missouri. Despite the prohibitions, Kloubec bought 1,000 live black carp from a fish farm in Arkansas in May 1998, and transported them to the Randolph County Fish Farm in Missouri. He took 200 of the black carp to Iowa where he personally stocked them into ponds at his Amana farm.

In July 1998, Kloubec illegally imported 10,150 live gold sea bass "fry"to Iowa from Taiwan. Kloubec had a license to import wildlife from the Service, however, the license did not authorize Kloubec to import fish prohibited by state law.

Iowa law limits commercial propagation of fish to mostly native fish and requires special permits for propagation of non-native, potentially injurious fish species. The possession, import/export and interstate transportation of the black carp, bighead carp and gold sea bass violated sections of the Lacey Act, a federal wildlife protection law that prohibits trade in species protected or banned by state laws.

Kloubec also pleaded guilty to one violation of killing federally protected migratory birds. In June and July 1998, Kloubec was observed shooting birds flying over his ponds, killing at least two terns and one kingfisher. The birds are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The investigation was conducted jointly by Service special agents and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. *Walt Kocal, Des Moines Law Enforcement Office*

Marianne Kronk of Seney NWR uses a microscope viewer to show visitors how wildlife exists in most anyone's backyard.

Seney Refuge Visitors Learn About Wildlife Habitat in Their Own Backyards

More than 400 visitors learned about wildlife habitat, and specifically how to create a healthy environment for plants and wildlife in their own backyards during Backyard Habitat Day July 7 at Seney National Wildlife Refuge.

Visitors constructed bird feeders out of recycled materials, planted native seeds, and learned about animal/plant interrelationships. Kids enjoyed the crafts and sang along with the characters in a puppet show about backyard wildlife.

The Seney Natural History Association provided funding for craft supplies and refreshments. Newberry Bottling Company provided craft supplies. Wild Birds Unlimited of Marquette, Mich., donated door prizes. *Marianne Kronk, Seney NWR*

Assessment of Mississippi River Basin Paddlefish Progresses

This year, the Interjurisdictional Fishes Subgroup of the Ohio River Valley Ecosystem Team (ORVET) was awarded $20,000 from Region 3 Challenge Cost-Share funds with a match of $220,000 from partners to process data for an assessment of Mississippi River Basin paddlefish.

The paddlefish is an important interjurisdictional fish, yet management strategies for this species are highly variable across the basin. Paddlefish are listed as a species of special concern by 10 basin states, are sport and/or commercially exploited in 12 other basin states, and have been stocked in at least 12 states over the last five years. Because of the decline of European sturgeon stocks, North American paddlefish and sturgeon have been subject to increasing harvest to supply eggs to meet the worldwide demand for caviar.

The Service operates and manages a coded-wire tag/data processing center in support of a basin-wide paddlefish stock assessment project being conducted by the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association (MICRA), an organization of 22 state natural resource agencies.

The ORVET ranked this project second of the 20 projects submitted to the team. This project is co-managed by Chuck Surprenant and Greg Conover at the Carterville Fishery Resources Office and Jim Milligan and JoAnne Grady at the Columbia Fishery Resources Office.

Greg Conover of the Carterville Fishery Resources Office (FRO) displays a large paddlefish taken during surveys on the Mississippi River. The Service's Carterville and Columbia FROs operate a coded-wire tag processing center that helps track paddlefish in the Mississippi River Basin.

Thus far, staff at the Carterville and Columbia Fishery Resources Offices have inputted field data for 91 sampling trips and 20 hatchery releases from calendar-year 2000. A total of 1,797 wild-ranging paddlefish were captured in 2000. Of these fish, 1,763 were tagged and released, and 172 were recaptures. All reference tags (>3,500) from wild and hatchery tagged paddlefish have been read and entered into the database. All recapture tags (~200) have been extracted, and approximately half have been read.

Future data analysis will include identifying crucial data gaps, evaluating contribution of hatchery paddlefish, and quantifying movements and harvest. Results from this project will directly benefit Service offices in several regions including refuges and hatcheries.

This project is part of a larger basin-wide paddlefish assessment project on the Mississippi River managed by MICRA. Biologists in the 22 MICRA states have collected six years of tag and recapture data from paddlefish throughout the basin. More than 1.2 million hatchery-reared paddlefish and an additional 10,000 wild-ranging paddlefish have been coded-wire tagged and released. Recapture data are available from more than 1,000 recaptured paddlefish. This stock assessment is expected to continue for at least another five years.

Partners in the project include 22 state natural resource agencies within the Mississippi River Basin and The Nature Conservancy. *Leslie TeWinkel, Ohio River Valley Ecosystem Team*

Sea Bees Volunteer Training Benefits Mingo National Wildlife Refuge

Mingo NWR was the big beneficiary of a recent weekend of military training by a U.S. Navy construction unit. Sea Bees from Detachment 0428, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion-28 applied their construction skills to numerous Refuge maintenance and improvement projects July 7 and 8.

The Sea Bees are a division of the U.S. Navy that specializes in construction. The unit spend its unit training weekends sharpening construction skills, this time at Mingo NWR. The Sea Bees spent 56 man hours grading and rocking roads (rock tonnage 250), 128 man hours completing dozer work, 144 hours deck building, 78 hours bridge rebuilding, and 24 hours mount out box constructing. The Refuge supplied all materials and the Sea Bees volunteered all the labor. The high quality, professional standards were evident in the work completed. Heat index of 110 degrees was experienced throughout the weekend! Mingo NWR might have the pleasure to host part of the group in the future for smaller projects. Both parties look forward to a strong, long standing, commitment to assisting each other meet their needs in the near future. *Molly Mehl, Mingo NWR*

Photo by Wayne Fischer

Staff from the Rock Island Field Office join others to survey Eastern prairie fringed orchids in Iowa .

Iowa's Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchids Blooming and Booming

Staff at the Rock Island, Ill., Field Office assisted Jackson County Conservation Board staff and researcher Bill Watson with the annual survey of Iowa's largest known population of the eastern prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*) July 12. The final tally was more than 1700 flowering plants, an increase of more than 600 flowering plants from the survey conducted in 2000.

Eastern prairie fringed orchids were first discovered on the site in 1994, at about the same time the Rock Island Office was working with Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Jackson County Conservation Board to complete a Partners for Fish and Wildlife project to stabilize and enhance the berm that maintains the adjacent marsh. The population of orchids at the time was 74 flowering plants.

The enhancement and stability of water levels in the marsh as a result of the partners project is apparently providing better growing conditions for the orchids as evidenced by the expansion of the population.

Photo by Wayne Fischer

Eastern prairie finged orchids.

The Rock Island Field Office is also assisting the County Conservation Board in its battle to control reed canary grass on the site using recovery funds. A combination of controlled burns and herbicide application is being evaluated as a means of stopping the canary grass from invading the primary orchid population area.

Photo by Wayne Fischer

A booming population of orchids

Rock Island staffers Rick Nelson, Gerry Bade, Lauri Walters, Desiree Sheets, Wayne Fischer and intern Kiersten Madden assisted with the survey.

Partners in the project include the Jackson County Conservation Board and Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Rick Nelson, Rock Island Field Office

Fergus Falls WMD Exotic Plant Control Project Gets Impressive Results

A program that uses environmentally friendly weed eating beetles instead of chemicals to treat exotic plants is getting a big "thumbs-up" from staff at Fergus Falls Wetland Management District in Fergus Falls, Minn. Results from a one year monitoring effort have proven the proven the effort to control leafy spurge so successful, that similar strategies may be adopted by private landowners.

The project began last summer, when Fergus Falls WMD staffer D.J. Rieger led a team to North Dakota to collect about 300,000 leafy spurge flea beetles. The beetles were brought to Fergus Falls, Minn., and released at 17 sites on five waterfowl production areas. Approximately 15,000 to 20,000 thousand beetles were released on each site. A year after the beetles were released, control results from these sites have been amazing. Spurge control at most sites have seen a better than normal kill diameter than what is usually found with an average release size of 5,000 beetles.

These photos, taken at the same release site in June 2000 and June 2001, show the spurge almost completely gone after one year. An 80 to 100-foot circle of dead stalks exists around the stake (center of top photo) beetles having decimating the population of spurge in this isolated site.

The successful control program is also providing enough beetles for future years, and will allow District staff to harvest beetles and move them from one site to another. The program's initial success will reduce the need for chemical treatment of leafy spurge.

Burning Stimulates Beetles

Last fall, Delong Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) was burned to stimulate grass seedings, and also stimulate the spurge beetles. The beetles on this site were active up to two weeks before beetles on the non-burned sites. District staff also saw an explosion of beetle numbers at this site since the burn. Other sites were burned on Agassiz-Beachline WPA on May 29.

District staff had feared that the burn occurred too late in the season, and that the beetles may have been killed. After the vegetation grew again, staff observed the vegetation on a deer trail had not burned, but the spurge all around it had. The unburned spurge was normal and had flowered. The burned spurge was short and did not flower. The beetles were fine also!

This summer, D.J. Rieger, Stacy Salvevold and Doug Wells monitored all previous releases dating back to 1998. They found that many sites were already decimated, but they also found some sites where the beetles had not survived the winter. Sites were again chosen for releases, and Stacy took a crew to Morris WMD to collect beetles. The crew collected 170,000 beetles and released them on 10 WPAs throughout the district.

About 220,000 beetles were collected from sites at Delong and Tomhave WPA and distributed to 25 sites on 10 WPAs. Smaller release numbers were used this year as advised by Tony Cortilet of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. The demand for flea beetles has increased greatly, and the state is having trouble providing everyone with beetles. About 5,000 beetles are all that's needed to establish a good colony.

District staff believes they will have enough beetles to be self-sufficient, even by next year. A number of sites contain large enough numbers and have decimated a large majority of the existing spurge. The beetles will be moved to new sites to prevent death by starvation, and to combat other spurge problems that have been sprayed in the past.

Summer 2001

A more sufficient monitoring program was established for the leafy spurge beetle release sites during Summer 2001. Doug Wells, DJ Rieger, and Stacy Salvevold outlined issues including repetitive photography for each site, GPS locations of each site, and just monitoring and recording data about each site to determine how well the beetles over-wintered each year.

The Fergus Falls WMD has also established a cooperative agreement with Otter Tail County that establishes a program for getting leafy spurge flea beetles onto private land. The District has offered funding and staff to assist with collections and distributions. We are now trying to establish a 10-year "non-treatment" agreement with the landowners who will benefit from the bio-control.

The District has also partnered with U.S. Department of Agriculture to monitor spotted knapweed insectary at Delagoon City Park in Fergus Falls, Minn. *Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD.*

Exotic Goby More Abundant, Widespread in Illinois Waterways

A series of waterways in metropolitan Chicago connect the Great Lakes and Mississippi River drainage basins. For more than a decade, these shipping channels have facilitated the spread of the now infamous zebra mussel, an aquatic nuisance species, from Lake Michigan to many environmentally sensitive portions of the Mississippi River basin. Now there are growing concerns that the round goby, a non-indigenous fish recently introduced to the Great Lakes from central Asia, may likewise expand its range to the midst of North America with adverse consequences for native aquatic fauna.

In response to this goby threat, Service staff and volunteers from seven offices in four states recently participated in the 6th annual survey to determine the range and assess the relative abundance of round goby in portions of the Illinois Waterway System. This surveillance activity was led by staff from the La Crosse Fishery Resources Office and encompassed a nearly 90-mile continuous reach that included parts of the Sanitary and Ship Canal, the Des Plaines River, and the Illinois River from metropolitan Chicago downstream to near Hennepin, Illinois. Partners in the four-day survey included representatives from three federal, three state, and two local natural resource agencies, as well as one university. In addition, five private businesses provided logistical support for this year's survey by allowing some participants direct access from land to several sites along the bank that were otherwise difficult to sample in a safe and effective manner. Fish were collected in near shore habitats with baited wire-mesh minnow traps set overnight or by angling.

Dr. David L. Thomas, chief of the Illinois Natural History Survey, lifts a minnow trap at a privately-owned business site where round goby were captured.

Results of the 2001 survey indicated that although round goby did not progress any further downstream from where they were detected one year ago (Des Plaines River mile 285), their relative abundance nearby had now increased 10-fold since they were first observed here less than two years ago. In addition, three grass carp and two bighead carp were found by survey participants near La Salle and Peru, Ill., (Illinois River mile 222-225). Although these fish were dead when located, their presence here suggests that these nuisance species are continuing to expand their range further upstream in the Illinois Waterway toward Lake Michigan. An oriental weatherfish was also collected on the periphery of metropolitan Chicago in a downstream reach of the Sanitary and Ship Canal (river mile 292) where this exotic species has seldom been previously reported.

The increased abundance and expanded distribution of several exotic fish species observed during the 2001 round goby survey of the Illinois Waterway is alarming. Should these and other non-indigenous fish continue to spread unchecked across Illinois, they may pose a significant threat to some native fish species that inhabit tributaries like the Kankakee, Fox, and Des Plaines rivers which also flow through portions of surrounding states. An electrical fish barrier is now being constructed at a site along the Sanitary and Ship Canal near Romeoville, Ill., and should be in operation later this summer. Although round goby have already passed beyond this site, the barrier may yet diminish the spread of round goby downstream, prevent Asian carp from entering Lake Michigan here, and help to deter the movements of other fish species between the Mississippi River and Great Lakes drainage basins.

Partners in the effort include the U.S. Army; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Illinois Natural History Survey; Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Cook County Forest Preserve District; Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago; Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program (University of Illinois); Material Service Corporation; Garvey Marine Incorporated; Dillingham, Healy, Grow, & Dew Incorporated; Heritage Environmental Services, LLC and Egan Marine Incorporated. *Mark Steingraeber, LaCrosse Fishery Resources Office.*

Prescribed Fire Improves Habitat on 3,065 Acres at Litchfield WMD

With the help of more than a dozen Service firefighters from across the country, Litchfield Wetland Management District's (WMD) Prescribed Fire program recently recovered from early inclement weather blues to burn 3,065 acres of native habitat on 14 waterfowl production areas and one private land site across six Minnesota counties.

The District's near-record fire effort was assisted by staff from Service field stations in Texas, California, Nebraska, and Minnesota. Seeded tall grass prairie and wetland emergents were specifically targeted for fire treatment to enhance growth and diversity, as well as control exotic and woody vegetation encroachment.

With fire planning emphasizing increased safety and efficiency, additive equipment and extra firefighters were essential for successful execution of this year's burning project. ***Todd Luke, Litchfield WMD***

Ducks Unlimited Helps Fund Wetland Restorations at Litchfield WPAs

Ducks Unlimited (DU) has committed $17,000 towards four wetland restoration projects on the Weiner, Taylor, Arctander, and Johnson Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA) located within the Litchfield (Minnesota) Wetland Management District.

Dollars derived from a North American Wetlands Conservation (NAWCA) grant enabled DU to deliver this exceptional assistance as well as leverage an additional $9,000 in matching funds from the Region's Prairie Pothole Joint Venture office. Eight drained WPA basins encompassing 100 acres of premiere waterfowl habitat will be recreated.

Nestled in reseeded prairie landscapes, the wetlands will greatly enhance wildlife and public use on the WPAs. ***Todd Luke, Litchfield WMD***

24 Great Lakes Coastal Program Projects Funded

The East Lansing Field Office and the Ashland Fishery Resources Office has distributed all Great Lakes Coastal Program project funding for 2001. The cumulative total of $173,500 was distributed to deserving projects across the Great Lakes.

In total, 24 projects were funded; 12 associated with coastal habitats of Lake Superior, seven in Lake Michigan, three in lake Huron, one in the Detroit River and one in Lake Ontario.

Type of projects funded include five planning and research project, nine restorations, five outreach and education projects, three critical habitat improvements and two aquatic nuisance species projects. In selecting these projects, fund managers chose those that involved a variety of partners, a variety of ecosystems, and a variety of strategies.

Other selection criteria prioritized projects that emphasized Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team focus areas, "on-the-ground" results for coastal ecosystem habitat, "off-the-shelf" projects that require minimal start-up time, and partially funded projects where Coastal Program funds are leveraged.

Unfunded Great Lakes Coastal Program project needs exceeded $300,000 in only its second year of requesting proposals. *Mark Dryer, Ashland FRO*

Accomplishment Reports Received

Accomplishment reports with accomplishment dates between July 5-16 are listed below. Reports filed during this period, but with accomplishment dates ocurring before July 5 are not listed here, but can be found by using the Report Manager Utility on the ARS.

1. Tallgrass Prairie Invasive Plant Species Curtailed at Neal Smith NWR
Christy Smith, Neal Smith NWR

2. Muscatatuck NWR Helps With the Crosley Goose Banding
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

3. Muscatatuck NWR displayed Centennial exhibit at the Scott County fair
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

4. Muscatatuck NWR Hosts Jennings County Field Days
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

5. Spring Tallgrass Prairie Planting Completed at Neal Smith NWR
Christy Smith, Neal Smith NWR

6. Muscatatuck NWR completed the Indiana Amphibian Monitoring Program
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

7. Muscatatuck NWR Involved With June Goose Banding
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

8. Muscatatuck NWR Tests Water Quality of Surrounding Creeks
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

9. Sea Lamprey Electrical Barrier and Fishway Experiences Success
Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

10. Lamprey Control Program Destroys 7 Million Sea Lampreys, Lake Trout Saved
Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

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11. Rydell NWR Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan Completed. Open House Set for July 19
Rick Julian, Rydell NWR

12. More Than 6,000 Trout Get Antibiotic Treatment to Halt Spread of Bacterial Kidney Disease
Terrence Ott, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

13. Assessment of Mississippi River Basin Paddlefish Progresses
Leslie TeWinkel, Ohio River Valley EcoTm

14. Prairie Pioneer Days
Darrell Haugen, Morris WMD

15. Grand Portage Fish Hatchery Project
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

16. Results of 2000 RONS Exotic Species Control Project
Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

17. Iowa's Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchids Blooming, Population Booming
Rick Nelson, Rock Island FO

18. Blue Earth County Kids Learn About Wolves
Laura Ragan, External Affairs

19. Survey of Mandy Lake Examines Impact of Winter Kill on Refuge Fishery
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

20. She Got Swamp Mud Between Her Toes
Molly Mehl, Mingo NWR

21. Prairie Wetlands Learning Center Hosts Agriculture Meeting
Kenneth Garrahan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

22. Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Becomes A Reality; Public Invited on Weeklong Prairie Tour
Dan Sobieck, External Affairs

23. Ducks Unlimited Helps Fund Wetland Restorations at Litchfield Waterfowl Production Areas
Todd Luke, Litchfield WMD

24. Partners Join Landowners to Resurrect Zwinggi Lake in Nicollet County Minnesota
Todd Luke, Litchfield WMD

25. Litchfield Wetland Management District Burns 3,065 Acres to Improve Habitat
Todd Luke, Litchfield WMD

26. Service, MetroParks and the Ohio Division of Wildlife Team Up to Restore Wetlands and Grasslands
William Hegge, Reynoldsburg FO

27. Regional Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

28. Refuge Visitors Enjoy Backyard Habitat Day at Seney NWR
Marianne Kronk, Seney NWR

29. Mingo National Wildlife Refuge Gains Over 53 Days of Volunteer Assistance From US Navy Sea Bees
Molly Mehl, Mingo NWR

30. Crab Orchard Refuge's Wolf Creek Public Fishing Area Renovated
Judy Pharris, Crab Orchard NWR

31. 100 Acres of New Tallgrass Prairie In The Making
Rick Julian, Rydell NWR

32. Cypress Creek Refuge Staff, Volunteers Assist With Illinois Frog and Toad Surveys
Elizabeth Jones, Cypress Creek NWR

33. 24 Great Lakes Coastal Program Projects Funded
Mark Dryer, Ashland FRO

34. Ditch Cleaning Project Helps Preserve Bottom Land Hardwood at Mingo NWR
Molly Mehl, Mingo NWR

35. Volunteers Lend a Hand at Mingo NWR
Molly Mehl, Mingo NWR

36. This Year's Duck Stamps Designed by Minnesota Artists
Judith Miller, Minnesota Valley NWR

37. Muscatatuck NWR Stanfield Lake Opens for Fishing
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

38. Muscatatuck NWR Hosts National Promises Team
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

39. Muscatatuck NWR and TNC Binkley Cave System Site Conservation Plan Nearly Complete
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

40. The Nature Conservancy Received Check for $1.63 Million for Wetland and Prairie Restoration
Rick Julian, Rydell NWR

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Reports not listed here can be viewed online at the Region 3 Accomplishment Reporting System Website : http/ars.fws.gov
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Inside Region 3

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