U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fish Lines

Region 3 - Great Lakes/Big Rivers

Leadership in Conserving, Enhancing, and Restoring Aquatic Ecosystems

June 2004
Vol. 2 No.5

Shovelnose Sturgeon Return to Ohio Waters

(See the "*Feature Article*" on Page 5)

Thanks to a private-public partnership, shovelnose sturgeon have come back to the Buckeye state after nearly a 50-year hiatus. It is considered an endangered species in Ohio.

-ODOW/UFSWS photos

(Lt. to Rt.); Nate Caswell from the Carterville Fishery Resources Office (FRO) holds a shovelnose sturgeon captured during a fishery assessment in the lower Ohio River. Carterville FRO provides adults to the Ohio Department of Wildlife (ODOW) for a reintroduction program in the Scioto River; Biologist Don Swatzel from the ODOW poses prior to releasing this shovelnose into the Scioto River. Ohio biologists hope to restore this native fish to Ohio waters.

To view other issues of "Fish Lines", see our Regional website at: (http://midwest.fws.gov/Fisheries/)

Region 3 - Great Lakes/Big Rivers Region

The Mission of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people

Conserving America's Fisheries

Fisheries Program Vision for the Future

The vision of the Service's Fisheries Program is working with partners to restore and maintain fish and other aquatic resources at self-sustaining levels and to support Federal mitigation programs for the benefit of the American public.

Implementing this vision will help the Fisheries Program do more for aquatic resources and the people who value and depend on them through enhanced partnerships, scientific integrity, and a balanced approach to conservation.

Strategic Plan Vision Focus Areas

1. Partnerships and Accountability
Partnerships are essential for effective fisheries conservation. Many agencies, organizations, and private individuals are involved in fisheries conservation and management, but no one can do it alone. Together, these stakeholders combine efforts and expertise to tackle challenges facing fisheries conservation. The success of these partnerships will depend on strong, two-way communications and accountability.

2. Aquatic Species Conservation and Management
The Fisheries Program maintains and implements a comprehensive set of tools and activities to conserve and manage self-sustaining populations of native fish and other aquatic resources. These tools and activities are linked to management and recovery plans that help achieve restoration and recovery goals, provide recreational benefits, and address Federal trust responsibilities. Sound science, effective partnerships, and careful planning and evaluation are integral to conservation and management efforts.

3. Public Use
As the population in the United States continues to grow, the potential for adverse impacts on aquatic resources, including habitat will increase. At the same time, demands for responsible, quality recreational fishing experiences will also increase. The Service has a long tradition of providing opportunities for public enjoyment of aquatic resources through recreational fishing, habitat restoration, and education programs and through mitigating impacts of Federal water projects. The Service also recognizes that some aquatic habitats have been irreversibly altered by human activity (i.e. - dam building). To compensate for these significant changes in habitat and lost fishing opportunities, managers often introduce non-native species when native species can no longer survive in the altered habitat.

4. Cooperation with Native Americans
Conserving this Nation's fish and other aquatic resources cannot be successful without the partnership of Tribes; they manage or influence some of the most important aquatic habitats both on and off reservations. In addition, the Federal government and the Service have distinct and unique obligations toward Tribes based on trust responsibility, treaty provisions, and statutory mandates. The Fisheries Program plays an important role in providing help and support to Tribes as they exercise their sovereignty in the management of their fish and wildlife resources on more than 55 million acres of Federal Indian trust land and in treaty reserved areas.

5. Leadership in Science and Technology
Science and technology form the foundation of successful fish and aquatic resource conservation and are used to structure and implement monitoring and evaluation programs that are critical to determine the success of management actions. The Service is committed to following established principles of sound science.

6. Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management
Loss and alteration of aquatic habitats are principal factors in the decline of native fish and other aquatic resources and the loss of biodiversity. Seventy percent of the Nation's rivers have altered flows, and 50 percent of waterways fail to meet minimum biological criteria.

7. Workforce Management
The Fisheries Program relies on a broad range of professionals to accomplish its mission: biologists, managers, administrators, clerks, animal caretakers, and maintenance workers. Without their skills and dedication, the Fisheries Program cannot succeed. Employees must be trained, equipped and supported in order to perform their jobs safely, often under demanding environmental conditions, and to keep current with the constantly expanding science of fish and aquatic resource management and conservation.

Inside this Issue

Click here to visit our Fisheries Web Site

Great Lakes - Big Rivers Region Fisheries Field Offices

National Fish Hatcheries

National Fish Hatcheries develop and maintain brood stocks of selected fish strains with our primary focus on native species such as lake trout, pallid sturgeon, lake sturgeon and brook trout. Hatcheries also provide technical assistance and sources of fish and eggs to cooperating agencies, provide fish and eggs for research, stock fish and eggs as part of native fish restoration programs, stock fish in fulfillment of federal mitigation obligations and assist with restoration and recovery of native mussels and other native aquatic species.

Sea Lamprey Control Stations

Sea Lamprey Control Stations assess and control sea lamprey populations throughout the Great Lakes. This program is supported through funding from the State Department and administered through the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

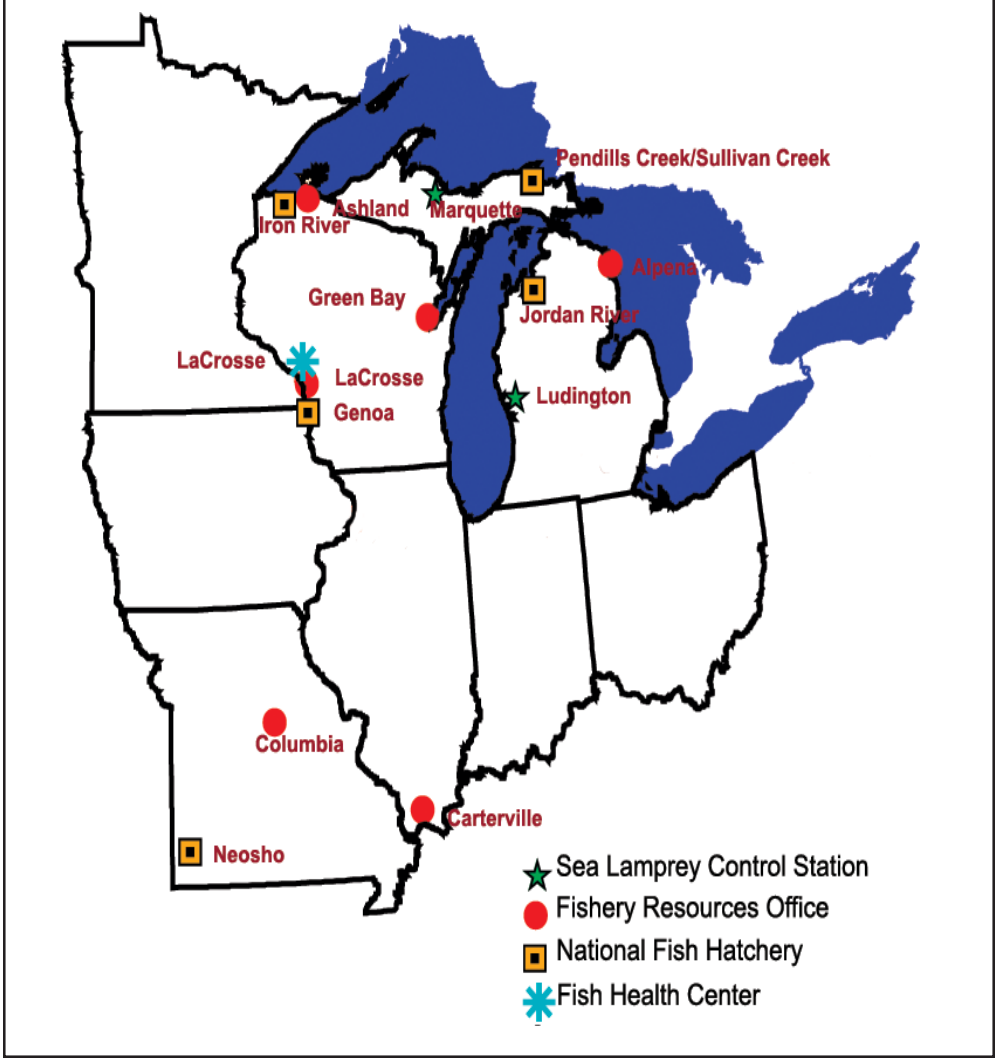
Fishery Resources Offices

Fishery Resources Offices perform key monitoring and control activities related to invasive aquatic species; survey and evaluate native fish stocks and aquatic habitats to identify restoration opportunities; play a key role in targeting and implementing native fish and habitat restoration programs; work with private land owners, states, local governments and watershed organizations to complete aquatic habitat restoration projects under the Service's Private Lands and the Great Lakes Coastal Programs; provide coordination and technical assistance toward the management of interjurisdictional fisheries; maintain and operate several key interagency databases; provide technical assistance to other Service programs addressing contaminants, endangered species, federal project review and hydro-power operation and re-licensing; evaluate and manage fisheries on Service lands; and, provide technical support to 38 Native American tribal governments and treaty authorities.

Fish Health Center

The Fish Health Center provides specialized fish health evaluation and diagnostic services to federal, state, tribal and private hatcheries in the region; conducts extensive monitoring and evaluation of wild fish health throughout the region; examines and certifies the health of captive hatchery stocks; and, performs a wide range of special services helping to coordinate fishery program offices and partner organizations.

Great Lakes - Big Rivers Region Fisheries Field Offices



Great Lakes - Big Rivers Regional Fisheries Program

Feature Article - Shovelnose Sturgeon Return to Ohio Waters

Private-public partnership brings native fish back after 50-year hiatus

Shovelnose Sturgeon

The month of May is a pivotal season in Ohio, the fulcrum from the cold and wet spring, to the sweltering summer sure to follow. Dogwoods spatter their white blossoms across the hillsides, and the edges of upland streams are dotted with gravelly smallmouth bass nests. Turkey hunters take to the woods. It all happens about the same time every year - nature's clockwork. But this May, beneath surface of the Scioto River, something new may be going on for the first time in half a century: sturgeon spawning. Thanks to a private-public partnership, shovelnose sturgeon have come back to the Buckeye state after nearly a 50-year hiatus. It's considered an endangered species by the state of Ohio.

Water pollution and locks and dams eliminated the fish from the state. Not only did dams in the Ohio River prevent these highly mobile sturgeon from getting to upstream spawning habitats, the flat water impoundments behind them offer no habitat. If form follows function, then the shovelnose sturgeon is the prototype for a body form shaped for fast water. The spindly body and flat wedge-shaped snout allow the fish to take up station in fast-flowing chutes as it peruses the bottom for insects, snails, mussels and crayfish - prey quite vulnerable to water pollution.

But opportunity knocks.

According to Ohio Department of Wildlife (ODOW) biologist, Scott Schell, who leads the effort to restore this native fish, the Scioto River is cleaner now than it has been in decades. Moreover, the section of the Scioto where the shovelnose sturgeon were stocked has the largest number of fish and macroinvertebrate species than any other Ohio stream — and that speaks to high-quality habitat. The first dam on the Scioto that can block fish movement is 153 miles above its mouth on the Ohio River in the city of Columbus, and that means the shovelnose sturgeon will have room to roam.

-USFWS

Scott Schell, fishery biologist with the Ohio Department of Wildlife, holds a shovelnose sturgeon. Schell leads the effort to restore this native fish to the Scioto River, a tributary to the Ohio River.

The Fish & Wildlife Service's Carterville Fishery Resources Office, located in Marion, Illinois, routinely monitors shovelnose sturgeon populations in the lower Ohio and Mississippi rivers, where the species is much more abundant, and even affords commercial and recreational fisheries. It's these surveys that provide a source of sturgeon for the ODOW.

-USFWS

Nate Caswell from the Carterville Fishery Resources Office holds a shovelnose sturgeon captured during a fishery assessment in the lower Ohio River. The fish will be used to provide offspring for a restoration program in the Scioto River.

The five-year reintroduction effort is in its third year. Only 35 shovelnose sturgeon made it to the Scioto River in 2002; this spring 153 fish made the trip from near Paducah, Kentucky, to Circleville, Ohio. Last year the Fish and Wildlife Service shipped sac-fry to ODOW's Kincaid State Fish Hatchery where the sturgeon were grown out and stocked into the Scioto.

Those young fish were the product of an unusual partnership involving state and federal governments, private enterprise and academia.

"The Fish and Wildlife Service has been the ligament — the connective tissue that pulled this partnership together," said Greg Conover, the USFWS fishery biologist who leads sturgeon surveys on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.

Conover provided adult fish to Logan Hollow Fish Farm in Murphysboro, Illinois, a private commercial hatchery working with Southern Illinois University on early life history studies of shovelnose sturgeon. Some of the offspring went to university researchers, the others went to the ODOW. The partnership will provide more young fish over the next two years.

All of the young fish put in the Scioto River will be marked with an injected liquid-plastic tag visible just under the skin on the snout. Three years from now when biologists seek to measure success, they'll look for young shovelnose sturgeon without marks — fish spawned in the wild.

The five-year reintroduction effort is in its third year. Only 35 shovelnose sturgeon made it to the Scioto River in 2002; this spring 153 fish made the trip from near Paducah, Kentucky, to Circleville, Ohio. Last year the Fish and Wildlife Service shipped sac-fry to the Ohio Department of Wildlife's Kincaid State Fish Hatchery where the sturgeon were grown out and stocked into the Scioto River.

Young shovelnose sturgeon are marked with an injected liquid-plastic tag, visible just underneath the skin on the snout, before they are stocked into the Scioto River. Success will be when young shovelnose sturgeon are found in the Scioto River without marks - fish spawned from the wild!

"Biologists almost always want to get returns on tagged fish," said Conover. "But in this case, when shovelnose sturgeon show up without those little fluorescent tags on their snouts, we'll know our partnership has paid dividends — wild sturgeon." While it may be a number of years before Ohio anglers can set a trot line or deadline fish for shovelnose sturgeon, this private-public partnership is a large step forward.

But first things first says Schell: "After five years of transplants and stocking, I hope a few adult fish find each other on a riffle and spawn. That's when we'll know things are working and we're on track."

And that could be the fulcrum in returning this native fish to native waters, and an opportunity for Buckeye anglers to catch a swimming dinosaur.
Craig Springer, Fish and Wildlife Service

For more information, see (http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/wildlife/Fishing/shovelnose/shovelnose.htm)

Partnerships and Accountability

Dusk Delivery of Lake Trout to Minnesota Waters of Lake Superior

The last of the 2003 lake trout yearlings were stocked into Minnesota waters of Lake Superior in June from the Iron River National Fish Hatchery (NFH). Approximately 97,000, 6-inch fish were released. Iron River NFH raises approximately 1.4 million lake trout annually for stocking in the Great Lakes. The majority of the fish are raised as part of management plan objectives for lakes Michigan and Huron, but a portion is reserved for the Minnesota shore of Lake Superior. While most lake trout populations in Lake Superior are rehabilitated, there are still portions needing assistance. Along the Minnesota shoreline, we assist the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources with stocking of several shore sites. During a two week interval, two shore sites were stocked in the evenings. The fish distribution truck was loaded in the afternoons with lake trout of the Superior Isle Royal Wild (SIW) and the Superior Apostle Island Wild (SAW) strains. These yearlings were then driven to specific sites to be shore planted at sunset, to prevent the newly released fish from being preyed upon by predators such as gulls or terns. The fish arrived at their new homes in great condition and enjoyed their new found freedom!
Steve Redman, Iron River NFH

-USFWS

Iron River National Fish Hatchery staff shore stock 97,000 lake trout at a site in Minnesota waters of Lake Superior. The distribution truck is positioned as close as possible to the shore and a long pipe directs fish to their new home. While most of Lake Superior is restored, there are some portions that still require lake trout stockings.

Ashland Fishery Resources Office completes Fourth Year of Standardized Coaster Monitoring at Isle Royale National Park

Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) staff with assistance from the U.S. Geological Survey Lake Superior Biological Station conducted annual spring monitoring of coaster brook trout in Tobin Harbor, Isle Royale National Park. The purpose of this effort is to monitor trends in relative abundance, growth, and age of coaster brook trout in the embayment. The information gathered by Ashland FRO will be used to provide the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Isle Royale National Park with information on the status and trends of the native brook trout population with recommendations for future management actions. Two nights of electrofishing and two overnight sets of fyke nets yielded 22 coaster brook trout. Fish captured showed a wide range of sizes from yearlings at about 6” to adult fish in the 20" range. Most fish were young immature fish in the 10-13" inch range. The number of young fish is a positive sign for the future of this small, remnant population.
Mark Dryer, Ashland FRO

Invasive Education on Lake Huron during Michigan’s Aquatic Invasive Species Awareness Week

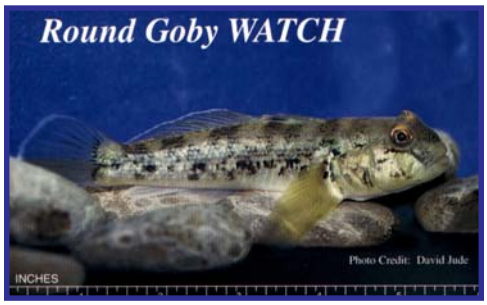
The Great Lakes harbor a number of aquatic invasive species (AIS). In an effort to raise public awareness about aquatic invasive species, Michigan Governor Granholm declared June 7-13, 2004 “AIS Awareness Week” in Michigan. This year is the second year the Governor has proclaimed a week for AIS Awareness.

Biologist Anjie Bowen from the Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO) in Alpena, Michigan was interviewed by Gillian Harvey of Alpena’s Upper Great Lakes Network TV station about AIS Awareness Week and efforts conducted to combat the spread of invasives. Bowen noted that their office has provided educational materials and outreach on AIS to a number of bait and tackle dealers and marinas along the Lake Huron coast and the St. Marys River from Sault Ste. Marie to Bay City, Michigan. The information is then passed along to anglers, boaters, and water users. Efforts are targeted at educating the public about the harmful effects of invasives, how to recognize them, and what should be done if they locate an invasive. Eurasian ruffe, round goby, sea lamprey, Asian carp, purple loosestrife, Eurasian watermilfoil, and the zebra mussel were some of the invasive species highlighted. Cooperation with bait

and tackle dealers is the key to getting the word out to the public who frequent their shops for fishing and boating needs.

In addition, Biologist Susan Wells developed an AIS display for visitors to the Alpena Federal Building, showing images of invasives, noting their harmful effects, and their ranges within the Great Lakes. Information was also provided on what the Alpena FRO is doing to combat invasives in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River, and what the public can do to help prevent their spread. Governor Granholm viewed the display on June 7 during her visit to the Alpena Federal Building to meet with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Partnerships and efforts to address threats to native aquatic species for effective conservation and management are important components of the Fisheries Strategic Vision. Media contacts were made to broadcast information about invasive species and materials were provided to over 44 partners to educate over 13,000 water users about aquatic invasive species on Lake Huron and the St. Marys River during Michigan's AIS Awareness Week.
Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO



A Howling Good Time at Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery

From November 2003 through March 2004, Biological Science Technician James Anderson, Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH), was part of a Michigan wolf survey conducted by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division. The survey is part of the State of Michigan's attempt to get a firm count on the number of wolves in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Sullivan Creek staff was made aware of the survey when Christie Deloria, Ecological Services – East Lansing Office, was helping with the lake trout spawning. Deloria indicated that the Sullivan Creek area would be a great place to gather wolf information due to its remote location in the middle of the Hiawatha National Forest. After some coordination between hatchery staff, Deloria, and the State of Michigan, Anderson became part of the wolf survey.

Anderson collected information such as tracks, scat, and sightings after work hours to complete the data collection during the five month survey. He used a 4x4 truck, snowmobile, and snowshoes to gather data. Once the data was collected, forms were filled out with points plotted on maps to show locations of wolf activity. During the survey, Anderson did make visual contact with a wolf in early November 2003 which was a hair-raising experience. This partnership provided valuable information on the local wolf population in the eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan.
James Anderson, Sullivan Creek NFH

Construction Update of New Fish Culture Facilities at Iron River National Fish Hatchery

Construction continues on new buildings which will protect valuable lake trout and coaster brook trout at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery (NFH). Both previous dome structures over the raceways have been completely demolished and the new buildings are rapidly taking shape! The production dome was deflated on June 7, after the last load of fish were taken out of the raceways. Crews began cutting the material into manageable pieces that same day with some of the material used to construct temporary shelters over a few of the production raceways that contain next year's crop of fish. These shelters will protect the fish from predators and sun damage while the new building is under construction. The concrete footings and walls for the production building are now being poured. The new brood stock building has all of its concrete walls and footings, and the steel frame for the roof and walls is being bolted in place. Steel beams and the tin for the roof have arrived on site, waiting to be installed! Boldt Construction, with local contractors, is proceeding rapidly with the project, without too many major glitches. Stay tuned for the next update!
Angela Baran, Iron River NFH

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Brook Trout Stocking in Whittlesey Creek, Wisconsin

On June 2, yearling brook trout were stocked at a number of different locations along the upper stretches of Whittlesey Creek located on the south shore of Lake Superior in Wisconsin. The stocking is an action item of the long term plan of the Fish and Wildlife Service and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to establish a self-sustaining migratory (coaster) brook trout population in Whittlesey Creek. The fish were reared at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery (NFH) and are genetic descendants of "coasters" collected at Isle Royale National Park. This particular stocking followed an egg stocking effort this past winter. Over the next six years, stocking and monitoring of various life stages will continue.

Stocking was conducted by employees of the Iron River NFH, Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge, and Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO). Assistance was provided by Trout Unlimited members and high school students from Conserve School. The fish were carefully carried up to ½ mile over steep terrain in 5-gallon buckets by many helpful hands to ensure they were scatter stocked in areas of suitable habitat.

Jessica Krajniak, Ashland FRO

-USFWS

Stocking of coaster brook trout in Whittlesey Creek near Ashland, Wisconsin was conducted by employees from the Iron River National Fish Hatchery, Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Ashland Fishery Resources Office, Trout Unlimited, and students from Conserve School. This stocking is an action item of the long term plan of the Fish and Wildlife Service and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to establish a self-sustaining migratory (coaster) brook trout population in Whittlesey Creek.

Sea Lamprey Control Program destroys Lampreys to Save Lake Trout

During May-June, the Sea Lamprey Control Program treated 21 Great Lakes streams (4 in Lake Superior, 9 in Lake Huron, and 8 in Lake Michigan) with lampricide to eliminate larval invasive sea lamprey populations. The treatments destroyed an estimated 1,131,500 sea lampreys including about 32,000 that would have metamorphosed to the parasitic phase in 2004 and entered the Great Lakes. There, 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. The successful control program continues to ensure sport fish rehabilitation in the Great Lakes and protects a fishery valued at over $4.0 billion.

Dennis Lavis, Ludington Biological Station

Genoa National Fish Hatchery Staff thrilled with Walleye Pond Harvests

Every spring the personnel from the Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH) begin brood stock netting operations for three weeks on the Mississippi River in order to collect and spawn adult walleye and sauger to enhance and restore current wild fish populations under cooperative management plans with Federal and state agencies. The eggs are collected and placed in incubating jars at the hatchery. After 7-10 days the eggs hatch and millions of fry swim into a holding tank awaiting dispersal. In 2004 alone, 5 million fry were stocked throughout the United States, including Arkansas, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota.

The Genoa NFH also rears fingerling walleye in its outdoor rearing ponds through the spring and summer. The advanced growth fingerlings have a higher chance of survival after stocking. Three rearing ponds were stocked in May with 375,000 walleye fry. The walleye averaged 1.5" after 44 days of growth and were harvested June 21st with a total production of 215,000 fingerlings. This represents a 57% survival rate which is an increase of 22% from last year.

Approximately 175,000 walleyes were stocked into Iowa and Wisconsin waters, including 25,000 fingerlings which received an oxytetracyline (OTC) mark. An OTC mark is accomplished by immersing the fish in an oxytetracycline bath for a period of 6 hours at a concentration of 500 parts per million. OTC permanently stains the otolith bone of the fish which can later be used as an identifier by fish

management biologists. The discernment between hatchery fish and wild fish provides data to determine the overall success of stocking programs.

In addition, 25,000 walleye were stocked into the hatchery's 11 acre pond in order to grow to a size of 6" by October. These 6" walleye are requested to be stocked on tribal lands in Wisconsin and Minnesota as well as the Desoto National Wildlife Refuge. Due to the increased growth, the fish have a much higher chance to survive in lakes with established predator fish populations. Walleye are one of many species of fish reared at the hatchery which benefit aquatic resources across the nation, as well as National Wildlife Refuges and tribal lands.

Nick Starzl, Genoa NFH

-USFWS

Thousands of recently hatched walleye fry are in this hatching tank at the Genoa National Fish Hatchery. Eggs are first collected from wild adults, hatched, and then used in support of management plans throughout the United States.

Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass Spawn Successfully at Genoa National Fish Hatchery

May and June are busy months at the Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH), yet each year the crew looks forward to its largemouth and smallmouth bass operations. The hatchery propagates bass under cooperative management plans with Federal and state agencies to enhance and restore wild fish and endangered mussel populations. Rearing largemouth and smallmouth bass at the Genoa NFH begins by collecting adult fish from disease free wild populations in early fall to maintain genetic diversity and to replace aged brood stock held at the hatchery. Recent collections included 160 smallmouth and 80 largemouth bass from the Wisconsin River in 2003.

The adults are held in a two acre outdoor holding pond until the following spring when the two species are separated into spawning ponds. The adult smallmouth bass begin to spawn in mid-spring and by May 15 fry can be seen swimming above the nest. The hatchery crew has only a handful of days to catch and restock the "little guys" before "mom and dad" get hungry. 100,000 fry were sent to Harrison Lake State Fish Hatchery in Virginia, while 47,000 were reared to 1.5" fingerlings in ponds until late June and then stocked in Iowa and Wisconsin.

The Genoa NFH also filled its largemouth bass requests by harvesting 50,000 1.5" largemouth bass in late June. Largemouth bass have similar spawning behavior, yet they tend not to prey on their young quite as much as smallmouth. Nests can be seen in the pond throughout the month of May, but spawning doesn't usually occur until the middle of the month. If adult bass get too hungry from all their activity, their babies become an easy lunch. This prompts hatchery staff to harvest the pond and stock out the fingerlings. Some of the bass remain on the facility until the following spring to serve as fish hosts for the hatchery's endangered mussel program or until fall for advanced fingerling stockings on National Wildlife Refuges and tribal lands.

Nick Starzl, Genoa NFH

-Duane Raver, USFWS

Smallmouth Bass

-USFWS

Nick Starzl collects smallmouth bass fry from a spawning pond at the Genoa National Fish Hatchery. Adults are allowed to spawn naturally in ponds. After their eggs hatch, the young fry are netted and moved to a rearing pond that is free from other fish predators.

Public Use

Pendills Creek/Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery Complex makes New Friends

The by-laws have been written and the final paperwork sent to the regional office for signatures. The Friends of the Pendills Creek Fish Hatchery are almost ready to start planning activities. The group was founded by five local individuals who want to provide community support for the hatchery. They are hoping that with some of the events they are eager to sponsor, word will get out about what they want to accomplish and their membership will grow. There are several activities on the list for this year with the largest being the open house/dedication ceremony for the new brood stock building at the Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) on August 7. The Friends Group will be co-sponsoring the event and assisting the hatchery staff by answering questions and handing out information. The members are also interested in fixing up the public beach area on Lake Superior that is owned by the hatchery. So they're off and running with big plans, and we hope the community responds with an abundance of memberships, because there's a lot of work ahead!
Tracy Roessner, Pendills Creek NFH

-USFWS

The Friends of the Pendills Creek Fish Hatchery are organized and ready to start planning activities. Pictured are the five friendly founders (lt. to rt.); President Paula Badder, Secretary Pauline Rice-Goetz, member George Goetz, Treasurer Carol Eccleston, Membership Director Samantha Small.

We'll Keep the Doors Open For You!

Iron River National Fish Hatchery (NFH) hosted an open house on June 12. Approximately 75-100 people attended the three hour event. While touring the facility, the visitors were able to ask questions about the construction of new buildings, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and exactly what happens at the hatchery. Mike Mlynarek, Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge, greeted the incoming people, getting them signed in and providing them with informational brochures. Denise Johnston was inside the tank room answering questions about fingerlings and the stocking program, also allowing people to watch as she gave the regular feedings throughout the day. John Johnston was in the tank room demonstrating how growth and health of fish are monitored at the hatchery. The history of the hatchery and information about the construction project was provided by John Anttila as he talked with people throughout facility. Angela Baran answered general questions about the lake trout and coaster brook trout programs using posters and other visual aids in the visitor center. Guests were able to see the different life stages of the fish in the visitor center aquariums. Additional aquariums were set up for the event to allow people a closer look at yearling and fingerling fish. Children were excited to color pictures of lake trout and coaster brook trout. These "works of art" now brightening up the walls in the visitor center!
Angela Baran, Iron River NFH

-USFWS

Assistant Project Leader Denise Johnston answers questions about the production program at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery. The NFH hosted an open house in June which attracted about 100 visitors.

Neosho National Fish Hatchery hosts Fishing Derbies

Neosho National Fish Hatchery (NFH) hosted its annual Kids Fishing Derby on June 4th. One hundred and twenty-five kids between the ages of 9 and 12 attended the event. Participants started arriving as early as 8:00 a.m. although the derby wasn't actually scheduled to start until 9:00 a.m. Participants rotated around five stations during the morning hours receiving skills in

casting, knot tying, fish identification, conservation, and boating safety. Everyone was served lunch and afterwards, the fun began! It was a wonderful day and almost everyone caught their limit.

One week later the hatchery did it all again by hosting the annual derby for individuals with physical disabilities. Twenty-five participants from two counties attended the event. Again, the fish cooperated and the fun was on! The huge smiles on everyone's face including the staff, told the story of another wonderful day of fun, food, and fishing.

The Friends of the Neosho National Fish Hatchery provided much of the volunteer help during the annual fishing derbies. Forty volunteers provided over $4,000 in materials and service for the event. Lunch was provided and served by Friends Group members. Mako Fly Fishers taught 12 kids the art of fly tying and fly fishing.
David Hendrix, Neosho NFH

-USFWS

Fishing derbies at the Neosho National Fish Hatchery are an annual event. Participants learn casting, knot tying, fish identification, conservation, and boating safety skills before the fishing event, and of course, before a lunch prepared and served by the Friends Group.

Upper Mississippi River Offices take part in the Grand Excursion

The Grand Excursion 2004 retraced the original excursion of 1854. The Grand Excursion 2004 was a collaboration of many upper Mississippi River communities and organizations as the Grand Flotilla traveled 400 miles through four states. The original Grand Excursion was a flotilla of historical paddlewheel steamboats that carried 1,200 people from Rock Island, Illinois to St Anthony's Falls in 1854. The original excursion was to mark the completion of the first railroad to reach the banks of the Mississippi River. According to the Galena Jeffersonian, "The object of the original excursion, on the part of its projectors, is not so much pleasure merely, as a desire to make a thousand more or less, men of capital and influence acquainted with the enchanting beauty, the boundless resources and the unexampled prosperity of the Great West." Today the river has changed much from the days of 1854, but the river towns that sprung up after the excursion still rely on the river's natural resources as well as its functionality as a mode of transportation.

The reenactment of "The Grand Excursion" locked through Corps of Engineers Lock and Dam number 8 in Genoa, Wisconsin on June 30th. The Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH) helped the community of Genoa mark the event by staffing a booth displaying native fish of the river, and describe ongoing programs of the Fish and Wildlife Service's Fisheries Program. The Friends Group was present to assist staffing the booth and recruit new membership. As part of the celebration, a bicycle tour was also following the river route, and increased the number of folks in attendance. An estimated 1,000 people attended the gathering, with the "live fishes of the river" display gathering a lot of attention.

Grand Excursion events were also held at Riverside Park in La Crosse, Wisconsin with an estimated attendance of 2,250. This grand day of celebration provided staff from the La Crosse Fishery Resources Office (FRO), La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC), Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Fishery Services, and Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges to reach out to the community. A booth was set up for the three offices and each put out displays on important points of interest such as fish health, duck identification, and invasive Asian carp. Visitors were able to take home literature about various issues concerning wildlife, view a video about silver carp and their impact on boaters, and admire an aerial photograph of the Mississippi River.
Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH
Anne Bolick, La Crosse FHC
Carlos Lozano, La Crosse FRO

-USFWS

Upper Mississippi River offices participated in the "Grand Excursion 2004." The event marked 150 years since the original excursion which celebrated the completion of the first railroad to reach the banks of the Mississippi River.

Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery Staff measures up at Seney National Wildlife Refuge's Kids Fishing Day

On Saturday, June 19, Seney National Wildlife Refuge held its annual Kids Fishing Day, and once again, members of the Pendills Creek staff were there to help. Biologist Tracy Roessner and Administrative Technician Debbie Jones along with friends group member Samantha Small spent the day assisting the Seney staff and most importantly – measuring fish for the fishing contest. The Pendills Creek staff always enjoys helping out at this event and hopes to continue to do so in the years to come.

Tracy Roessner, Pendills Creek NFH

-USFWS

Tracy Roessner (pictured) along with Debbie Jones and Friends Group member Samantha Small register fish at the kids fishing contest held at the Seney National Wildlife Refuge. Pendills Creek/ Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery staff enjoy helping at this annual National Fishing Day event.

Carterville Fishery Resources Office provides Management Assistance to Scott Air Force Base

Scott Air Force Base (AFB), located in southwestern Illinois, contains two small lakes (Scott and Cardinal) which provide recreational fishing opportunities for military personnel, base employees, and visitors. Carterville Fishery Resources Office (FRO) provides management assistance for the Scott AFB fishery. Carterville FRO conducts annual electrofishing surveys of the fishery and monitor water quality within the lakes which was completed on June 15th this year. The data collected is useful when making management decisions regarding the fishery. FRO staff also assists Scott AFB personnel in placing brush piles in Cardinal Lake each year. These brush piles improve the fishery by creating additional fish habitat and concentrate fish for anglers. An annual report is being prepared that details the status of the Scott AFB fishery and includes management recommendations.

Colby Wrasse, Carterville FRO

Friends of the Neosho National Fish Hatchery Projects

The Friends of the Neosho National Fish Hatchery has decided that their next two projects will be: 1) to obtain funding for road signs that provide directions to the hatchery from major roads, and 2) to have a mold and ultimately a replica of the beautiful seahorse made that used to sit on top of the flag pole long ago. The finished product will be a beautiful bronze three foot seahorse with wings outspread. We hope to put it in our new visitor's center once the facility is built. Neosho's Friends Group provides tremendous support for the hatchery and recognizes the facility as a valuable part of the community.

Dave Hendrix, Neosho NFH

Lake Taneycomo Mitigation

Neosho National Fish Hatchery (NFH) stocked 8,782 10" rainbow trout into Lake Taneycomo, near Branson, Missouri, during the month on June. The trout stocking is part of a fishery management plan for Lake Taneycomo. The Missouri Department of Conservation provides 500,000 rainbow trout and Neosho NFH provides 225,000 rainbow trout annually. To date, 170,100 fish have been stocked towards mitigation commitments of 225,000.

David Hendrix, Neosho NFH

-USFWS

Staff from the Neosho National Fish Hatchery and the Missouri Department of Conservation loads a state fish distribution truck with rainbow trout as part of a mitigation plan for Lake Taneycomo in southern Missouri.

Cooperation with Native Americans

Sturgeon Assessment on the St. Louis River

The restoration of lake sturgeon to historic areas is a high priority to the people of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Using set lines (baited with squid), gill nets, and Windemere trap nets; the Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) is assisting the Fond du Lac Band in assessing the recruitment of these fish. This study will be conducted in 2004, 2006, and again in 2008. Several river sections within a 20 mile section of the upper St. Louis River, upstream of Cloquet, Minnesota, will be sampled for sturgeon. This study was conducted in 2001, but it must be repeated periodically to determine the survival and recruitment from four years of stocking (1998, 1999, 2000, and 2003). The sturgeon stocked between 1998 and 2000 should be of a size that make them more susceptible to capture gear.

The objectives of this study are to determine survival, recruitment, growth rate, distribution, habitat use, and the best capture techniques for this lake sturgeon population. The assessment program began in June as the first of five surveys to be conducted this summer. Although only catfish and red suckers were collected during this first assessment, the crew is optimistic that they will soon be able to locate juvenile sturgeon.
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

-USFWS

Set lines, baited with squid, are used as an assessment tool for lake strugeon. Ashland Fishery Resources Office is assisting the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa with sturgeon assessment in the upper St. Louis River, upstream from Cloquet, Minnesota.

Lake Trout for Keweenaw Bay, Lake Superior

Biologist Steve Redman from the Iron River National Fish Hatchery (NFH) stocked approximately 90,000, 6" yearling lake trout with assistance from personnel of the Keweenaw Bay Tribal Resources Department. Fish were planted in the evenings at two locations in Keweenaw Bay waters of Lake Superior. The stocking fulfills a cooperative agreement that began in 1997 between the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. The Tribal Community provides a disease free isolation facility to rear future brood lots for the National Fish Hatchery System and the Fish and Wildlife Service stocks coded wire tagged and clipped yearling lake trout. This joint collaboration contributes to the conservation of the Great Lakes fishery resources.

The fish distribution truck was loaded in the afternoons with lake trout of the Superior Traverse Island Wild (STW) strain. These yearlings were then driven to specific sites to be shore planted at sunset, preventing the newly released fish from being preyed upon by predators such as gulls or terns. The fish arrived at their new homes in great condition and happily swam off into the sunset! The Iron River NFH raises approximately 1.4 million lake trout annually for stocking programs in the Great Lakes. The majority of the fish are raised for stocking lakes Michigan and Huron, but a portion is reserved for Lake Superior. While most of Lake Superior is considered to be fully restored, there are still areas needing assistance.
Steve Redman, Iron River NFH

Biologist Style "Caviar"

Lake sturgeon once inhabited the Red River of the North and its tributaries. In 1926 a lake sturgeon weighing 176 pounds was caught in White Earth Lake. However, since the turn of the century lake sturgeon populations have declined due to over harvest, pollution, and water development projects. The last record of a lake sturgeon in this area came from Lake Lida in 1957. In 1997 the White Earth Natural Resources Department assisted by the Fish and Wildlife Service, Rainy River First Nations, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) entered into an agreement to restore lake sturgeon in White Earth Lake and Round Lake on the White Earth Reservation.

Lake sturgeon are primitive fish that historically inhabited many of Minnesota's large rivers and the lakes associated with those rivers. Native American cultures were dependent on the availability of lake sturgeon. Indian villages were often located near waters were sturgeon spawned.

Early European settlement on Lake of the Woods was due to commercial fishing for lake sturgeon when their caviar and fine flesh were known worldwide.

It is a goal of the resource agencies to restore lake sturgeon to this part of its original range. The management plan calls for 8,000 fingerlings to be stocked in White Earth Lake and another 5,000 fingerling to be stocked in Round Lake. Prior to stocking fingerlings, a significant team effort takes place. One huge hurdle is to test the sturgeon for viral infections prior to shipping the eggs. First, Rick Nelson (La Crosse Fish Health Center) negotiated an agreement with the Minnesota DNR to conduct the viral sampling. Then, Scott Yess from the La Crosse Fishery Resources Office (FRO) traveled to Emo, Canada to work with Joe Hunter and his staff at the Rainy River First Nations Hatchery to collect 30 sturgeon fin clips. The fin clips were delivered to Joe Marcino (Minnesota DNR) on April 27th by Dave Wedan (La Crosse FRO). Results of the viral tests proved negative and were completed on Friday, May 7th. On May 9th Randy Zortman and Tom McCully (White Earth Natural Resources Department) along with Scott Yess assisted Joe Hunter and his staff with spawning over 18 adult lake sturgeon. On May 13th the eggs were delivered to the Genoa National Fish Hatchery. In late summer the sturgeon will be tagged and then transported to the White Earth Reservation. This was an incredible team effort and thanks to all who participated.
Scott Yess, La Crosse FRO

-USFWS

Scott Yess (center) from the La Crosse Fishery Resources Office poses with Randy Zortman (left), White Earth Natural Resources Department, and Joe Hunter (right) from Rainy River First Nations during an egg collection project for lake sturgeon. In 1997, the White Earth Natural Resources Department assisted by the Fish and Wildlife Service, Rainy River First Nations, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources entered into an agreement to restore lake sturgeon in White Earth Lake and Round Lake on the White Earth Reservation..

Alpena Fishery Resources Office conducts Lake Whitefish Netting

From June 3 to June 16 staff from the Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO) conducted experimental gill net sets as part of the fishery independent lake whitefish survey in 1836 Treaty waters of northern Lake Huron. Staff involved included Treaty Unit Coordinator Aaron Woldt, Biologist Adam Kowalski, Biologist Scott Koproski, Assistant Project Leader Tracy Hill, and Project Leader Jerry McClain. Three types of gear were set: bottom-set, variable mesh 6' deep survey nets, thermocline oriented 12' deep nets, and variable mesh survey nets legged 3' off the bottom. The purpose of these sets was three-fold: 1) to document early June lake whitefish and lake trout gillnet catch rates to compare with historic and July/August 2004 survey data; 2) to test the utility and effectiveness of thermocline oriented nets in catching lake whitefish; and 3) to determine if nets legged 3' off the bottom catch less lake trout and more lake whitefish than conventional bottom set survey nets.

The Alpena FRO has been conducting a fishery independent lake whitefish survey in 1836 Treaty waters of Lake Huron since 2002. In 2002, the Modeling Subcommittee (MSC) of the Technical Fisheries Committee identified fishery independent lake whitefish data as a critical information need. The MSC annually collects data and conducts model runs to determine lake whitefish harvest regulation guidelines for five management units in northern Lake Huron under the Year 2000 Consent Decree.

In 2003 the Alpena FRO began paired setting of legged nets with bottom set nets to determine if legged nets reduced lake trout bycatch in the survey. The legged nets provide a 3' gap near the substrate that allows the strongly bottom oriented lake trout to pass under the net. Limited 2003 results showed that legged nets reduced lake trout catch rates without significantly reducing lake whitefish catch rates. However, lake whitefish catch rates were low in both gears. This year we intend to fish more legged nets to expand our data set set and thermocline oriented nets to evaluate if lake whitefish are foraging in or near the thermocline more due to lack of diporeia on the lake bottom. In 2002 and 2003 we conducted the fishery independent lake whitefish survey in mid-May to mid-June. At the spring 2004 MSC meeting, researchers agreed to move the survey to mid-July to mid-August to see if lake whitefish catch rates would be higher at this time. We conducted sets at a limited number of our 2004 survey

sites in June so that we could make temporal comparisons between June and July/August catch rates. This survey will continue annually and will be tailored to meet the needs identified by the MSC. All data from this survey will be compiled, maintained, and analyzed at the Alpena FRO.

Data collected in this survey will improve the accuracy of current population models being used to set lake whitefish harvest guidelines in 1836 Treaty waters of northern Lake Huron. Good model output is essential to sound and sustainable management of the lake whitefish resource in northern Lake Huron, and lake whitefish is the central component to the Native American commercial fisheries in 1836 Treaty waters. Harvest limits allow lake whitefish fisheries to be executed while still protecting the biological integrity of lake whitefish stocks. This outcome is consistent with the Fish and Wildlife Service's goal of maintaining self-sustaining populations of native fish species while meeting the needs of tribal communities.

Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO

-USFWS

Alpena Fishery Resources Office staff set experimental gill nets as part of the fishery independent lake whitefish survey in 1836 Treaty waters of northern Lake Huron.

Red Cliff Tribal Members assist Fish and Wildlife Service in Battle against Invasive Sea Lampreys

Members of the Red Cliff Tribe of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Natural Resource Department assisted personnel from the Fish and Wildlife Service's Marquette Biological Station in a lampricide treatment of Red Cliff Creek in northern Wisconsin. The Tribal members observed and documented non target mortality during the course of the two day treatment which prevented thousands of invasive sea lampreys from escaping to Lake Superior. The results of the Tribe's efforts will be detailed in a written report which will be submitted to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Terry Morse, Marquette Biological Station

-GLFC

Tribal members from the Red Cliff Tribe of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians assist sea lamprey control staff during the lampricide treatment of Red Cliff Creek in northern Wisconsin.

Menominee Reservation Lake Sturgeon Committee considers Opening Fishery

The La Crosse Fishery Resources Office (FRO) facilitated the annual meeting of the Menominee Reservation Lake Sturgeon Enhancement Committee on June 8. Additional participants on the committee include representatives from the Menominee Conservation Department, Menominee Environmental Services Office, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH), and the Green Bay Field Office. The group reviewed the past year's progress, plans for 2004, and discussed the possibility of a limited lake sturgeon fishery for 2004-2005. This would be the first fishery since implementation of the Menominee Reservation Lake Sturgeon Management Plan and the first opportunity for the Menominee people to harvest lake sturgeon since the 1950s.

Lake sturgeon from Genoa and Neosho NFHs have been stocked annually into Legend Lake since 1994. Over 56,000 lake sturgeon have been stocked to date. Data collected by the La Crosse FRO in the fall of 2003 indicate that these fish have grown to a large enough size to be harvestable. The Lake Sturgeon Enhancement Committee is now drafting proposals for a limited winter spear fishery for the Tribal Conservation Committee to consider. The Tribal Conservation Committee will then make recommendations to the Tribal Legislature who will vote and make the final decision on the type of fishery and related regulations.

Ann Runstrom, La Crosse FRO

Ashland Fishery Resources Office assists with Scoring the 2004 Tribal Wildlife Grants and Tribal Landowner Incentive Program Grants

Frank Stone from the Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) assisted in the scoring of the Fish and Wildlife Service's 2004 Tribal Wildlife Grants (TWG) and Tribal Landowner Incentive Program (TLIP) grants. This was a regional scoring of resource projects submitted by Region 3 tribes. A total of 23 grant proposals were received (18 – TWG and 5 – TLIP) from 17 tribes. The proposals represented a variety of resource concerns including a wide range of wildlife and plant species; black bear, cougar, bald eagles, walleye, wild rice, and lake sturgeon.

The TWG and TLIP programs provide new funding opportunities to tribes for activities that protect and restore habitats that will benefit fish and wildlife species of tribal significance. These grant programs also support the efforts of tribal governments to develop or augment the capacity to manage, conserve, or protect fish and wildlife species of concern through the provision of funding and technical support.
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

Fish Health Inspection at the Lac du Flambeau Tribal Fish Hatchery

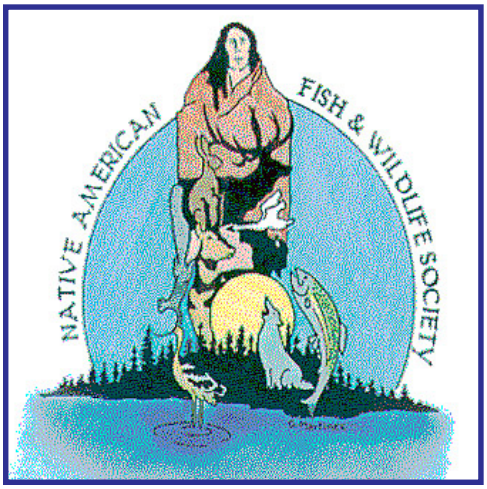
The Lac du Flambeau Tribal Fish Hatchery in Woodruff, Wisconsin requested a fish health inspection by the La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC) as part of a Memorandum of Understanding for diagnostic services in 2004. Rick Nelson, project leader for the La Crosse FHC sampled rainbow trout being raised at the facility. The facility has had an excellent record of fish culture sanitation, obtaining disease free eggs, and training staff. They have a fee fishing operation that is very successful and draws lots of tourists from the area. They also hatch walleye eggs and stock fry in most of the 120 lakes on the reservation creating an excellent fishery.
Rick Nelson, La Crosse FHC

Development of Walleye Rearing Ponds at the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community

Frank Stone from the Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) traveled to the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community to discuss the Tribe's plan to construct two walleye rearing ponds. Also in attendance were representatives from the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The plan calls for each pond to be approximately ½ acre in size and lined with a high density rubber mat. Each pond will receive water from surface runoff, and a small reservoir that will be constructed at the site. Two water control structures will be installed to maintain consistent water levels. Harvest kettle designs are now being reviewed. Under consideration is the use of one external kettle rather then separate kettles for each pond. The intent of this project is to provide walleye fingerlings that could be stocked in nearby lakes.
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

Ashland Fishery Resources Office helps to Schedule Tribal Grant Workshop

Frank Stone, Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO), attended a planning meeting of the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society (NAFWS) to schedule the events for the 2004 Regional Conference to be held at Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin. Frank presented a proposal to include a Tribal Wildlife Grant (TWG) and Tribal Landowner Incentive Program (TLIP) workshop to be held during the conference's biological session. The two regional presenters for this workshop will include John Leonard (Region 3 Tribal Liaison) and Bud Fuchs (Office of Federal Aid). Frank's proposal was well received and the committee scheduled a full day workshop for both John and Bud to discuss the grant programs.
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO



Leadership in Science and Technology

Endangered Pallid Sturgeon recaptured

Columbia Fishery Resources Office (FRO) efforts finally paid off when a crew led by Wyatt Doyle and Andy Starostka were able to recapture an endangered wild pallid sturgeon that had been implanted with a sonic transmitter and archival tag. The fish was originally captured by Columbia FRO and tagged by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in March, 2003. The USGS out of Columbia, Missouri had been tracking the fish throughout the year gaining valuable movement and related habitat data; however, the fish needed a new sonic tag for continued tracking and another archival tag for recording depth and temperature information.

Numerous attempts had been made by both offices over the last year to capture the tagged fish without success. During this attempt and a previous one, a hatchery stocked pallid was captured while attempting to recapture the tagged fish. This suggests different pallids find the same habitat attractive. Only one of the more common shovelnose sturgeon was captured in over a dozen drifts while searching for the pallid. The avoidance of the pallid to our net was quite comical at one point, since the fish surfaced out of the water five feet from the USGS boat which was tracking the exact location while we drifted nets. It was not until we went to a larger mesh gillnet that we were able to catch the pallid. During the process we learned that the position the fish takes in the river along with net avoidance suggests different sampling techniques will be needed in the future.
Wyatt Doyle, Columbia FRO

-USFWS

The Columbia Fishery Resources Office and the U. S. Geological Survey finally recaptured this pallid sturgeon. Staff needed to implant a new sonic transmitter and archival tag. Information from the tags will further our understanding of the habits of this endangered fish species.

Native Mussel Propagation expanded at Genoa National Fish Hatchery

Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH) in Genoa, Wisconsin has been actively involved with the recovery of the Federally endangered Higgins' eye pearlymussel since 1999. In 2003, Genoa biologists began steps to expand their propagation efforts to state listed mussel species by identifying a new host fish for the hickorynut and positively tested cage culture of the black sandshell.

In May and June, staff inoculated 600 yearling walleye with black sandshell mussel larva (glochidia). Five hundred of the host walleye went to Iowa and were released into the Iowa River below the Coralville Reservoir to allow juvenile mussels to transform and drop off into their new homes, while the remaining walleye were placed in three culture cages in Lake Pepin near Lake City Minnesota. In addition, 100 yearling lake sturgeon were infested with hickorynut glochidia and placed in culture cages in the Pool 9 of Mississippi River. The sturgeon were removed after juvenile transformation.
Tony Brady, Genoa NFH

Fish Health Assessment on Pool 7 of the Mississippi River

The La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC) and the La Crosse Fishery Resources Office completed an annual fish health assessment on Pool 7 of the Mississippi River near Dresbach, Minnesota. Annual assessments are a useful tool for biologists to track the health history of a fishery. Health assessments have taken place on pool 7 since 1999. This year 13 species were sampled for a total of 138 fish. Species were sampled mainly from the sunfish and the temperate bass families. These groups were screened for Largemouth Bass Virus which negatively affects only largemouth bass, but other Centrarchides and Percichthyides can be carriers of the virus.

Two other groups of fish of concern were the common carp and members of the sucker family. In the spring of 2002, Spring Viremia of Carp was discovered in North Carolina and Wisconsin. These were the first documented cases of this virus in the United States, and it is considered an exotic pathogen. Samples were also screened for all other certifiable pathogens.
Cory Puzach, La Crosse FHC

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Brilla Wildlife Habitat Restoration

On May 17, the last tree was planted on the Brilla Wildlife Habitat Restoration. This partnership project was conducted on the Brilla Dairy Farm and restored, enhanced, and protected 171 aces of wildlife habitat in Bayfield County, Wisconsin. Sixteen thousand trees and shrubs consisting of 10 different native species were planted on 50 acres of the project site. Tree and shrub species planted consist of white pine, red pine, white spruce, balsam fir, red oak, paper birch, mountain ash, chokecherry, ninebark and American plum. The trees were planted in groups of species at specific locations to match preferred habitat and soil conditions.

This project is a partnership with the landowner, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency (FSA), County Land Conservation District, and the Fish and Wildlife Service's Ashland Fisheries Resources Office (FRO). The Ashland FRO received funding from the Fish and Wildlife Service's Challenge Cost Share Program to help restore native forest on cleared areas, which had been converted to hay production.

A tree planter was rented from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the landowner, Dick Brilla and his son, donated equipment, fuel, and many hours of labor to get the trees in the ground. The native species and the planting scheme used in the project were selected to maximize wildlife benefits for migratory birds such as the golden-winged warbler, Canada warbler, olive sided flycatcher, and wood thrush. The project will also help provide much needed travel corridors for other area wildlife. The entire site will be protected from any development under the FSA's Debt for Nature program and a conservation management plan for a minimum of 50 years.

Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO

-USFWS

Planting trees on the Brilla Wildlife Habitat Restoration. This partnership project was conducted on the Brilla Dairy Farm and restored, enhanced , and protected 171 acres of wildlife habitat in Bayfield County, Wisconsin.

Fish Passage Restoration on Michigan's Jordan River

Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO) staff participated in a construction meeting for a road stream crossing on the Jordan River in northern Lower Michigan. The site is located approximately three river miles downstream of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery. The project was partially funded with the Fish and Wildlife Service's FY 2003 Fish Passage Program funds. Additional funding partners include the Conservation Reserve Alliance (CRA) and Trout Unlimited. Completion of this project will involve replacing an undersized culvert with a bottomless culvert. Antrim County Road Commission, CRA, Michigan Department of Natural Resource's (DNR) Natural Rivers Office, and the Fish and Wildlife Service attended the meeting. Issues discussed included when construction will begin, along with the logistics for the dewatering process and how to control the sediment during construction. The project is slated to begin in late August. Once complete, the project will improve access to approximately five river miles of brook trout habitat. This is an example of collaboration between Federal, state and local governments to enhance aquatic habitat and foster positive working relationships for the benefit of fish and wildlife resources. This project is a priority for the Michigan DNR and local non profit organizations including Trout Unlimited. The Jordan River watershed has been identified as a valuable system for native trout species and is listed as a State Natural River.

Susan Wells, Alpena FRO

-USFWS

This undersized culvert is a barrier to fish passage on the Jordan River watershed near the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery. It will be replaced by a bottomless culvert and is partially funded through the Fish Passage Program. Additional funding partners include the Conservation Reserve Alliance and Trout Unlimited.

Michigan Wetlands: Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Wetland Protection Act

In 1979, the Michigan Legislature passed the Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of this legislation the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Agency, and other partners including the Fish and Wildlife Service sponsored a statewide wetlands conference. The conference was held in Traverse City, Michigan at the Northwest Michigan College Water Studies Institute. Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO) Biologist Heather Enterline attended the conference along with many natural resource agency professionals, conservation organizations, educators, and consultants. Several Fish and Wildlife Service employees gave presentations and led concurrent sessions including Jim Hudgins, Jim Hazelman (East Lansing Private Lands Office) and Barbara Hosler (East Lansing Field Office). Presentations varied widely in subject matter from the politics surrounding wetland issues, to wetland management, to flora and fauna inhabiting the wetlands, and the current status of biological populations.

The conference was very educational for the attendees, and it also provided many outreach opportunities for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners). Presentations were given on the program and a display was present throughout the conference with Partners information available in the form of fliers and fact sheets.

Heather Enterline, Alpena FRO

Fishery Office assists Refuge with Invasive Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol

The Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) assisted Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge in a biocontrol treatment of invasive purple loosestrife recently found at the mouth of Whittlesey Creek, a tributary of Chequamegon Bay, Lake Superior. Refuge Technician Mike Mlynarek and Fishery Technician Gary Czypinski traveled by canoe to the mouth of Whittlesey Creek and transplanted 12 young loosestrife plants into drainable plastic pots. The 12 loosestrife transplants were then transported by canoe ¼ mile to a road access point where they were transported overland to refuge headquarters, the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center. The pots were then placed into three small, plastic child size swimming pools filled with three inches of water. Insect netting was attached to each potted plant in preparation for beetle introduction, and a display was erected describing the biocontrol process to the visiting public (the species of beetle used is a natural control agent for purple loosestrife in its native range). Mlynarek siphoned 10 beetles (each about 1 mm in length) at a time from a jar into a screened soda straw, and blew all 10 beetles into each netted pot. The netting was then closed off, and over the next six weeks the newly introduced adult beetles will lay their eggs. The hatching larvae will burrow into the plant, consuming and eventually killing the loosestrife as they grow to adulthood.

After this six week period, the 12 infected loosestrife plants will be transported by canoe back to the mouth of Whittlesey Creek, where they will be transplanted among the invading loosestrife. The newly emerging adult beetles will then spread, and infect the entire colony of loosestrife. The beetles will die off naturally after the loosestrife colony is eradicated. Loosestrife biocontrol is effective, inexpensive, and requires a relatively small investment in labor.

Gary Czypinski, Ashland FRO

-USFWS

The Ashland Fishery Resources Office assisted Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge in a biocontrol treatment of invasive purple loosestrife recently found at the mouth of Whittlesey Creek, a tributary of Chequamegon Bay, Lake Superior. Treatment consisted of introducing a beetle, a natural control agent of purple loosestrife in its native range, to the plants.

Aquatic Vegetation, Not Always a Benefit

Aquatic vegetation is normally a great asset; however, when it takes over a fishing pond it can be a nuisance. This was the case at the Tomah Veterans Administration Medical Center's fishing pond. In an effort to provide better fishing conditions for the patients, staff from the La Crosse Fishery Resources Office, La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC), and the La Crosse District of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge removed vegetation to allow fishing access. After a day of raking, several areas were cleared for shoreline fishing.

Cory Puzach, La Crosse FHC

Workforce Management

Staff receives Training to Protect Federal Endangered and Threatened Species

Risk management staff completed a site visit to Grand Marais, Michigan to improve skills to identify the endangered piping plover and threatened Pitcher's thistle and their preferred habitats. The new skills will be shared with field crews at the Marquette and Ludington Biological Stations and used to minimize the risk to the rare organisms during activities of the sea lamprey management program. The training was provided by Christie Deloria, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, East Lansing Field Office, Upper Peninsula Sub-Office Ecological Services. Two piping plovers and more than 25 Pitcher's thistles were observed. The sea lamprey program continues to work closely with partners to control populations of sea lampreys in tributaries of the Great Lakes to protect the fishery and related economic activities in the basin (an estimated benefit of $4-6 billion/year to the region). *John Weisser , Marquette Biological Station*

-USFWS

Sea lamprey program staff made a site visit to Grand Marais, Michigan to improve skills to identify endangered piping plover preferred habitats. The skills will be shared with field personel of their program to minimize their impacts on threatened and endangered species.

Volunteering Pays Dividends

Former volunteer and current student Mike Donofrio stopped by the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) to talk to Assistant Manager Crystal LeGault and to snap a few photos. Mike is putting together a power point presentation about both the Pendills Creek and Sullivan Creek NFHs to give to students at Hocking College at the end of the semester.

Hocking College is a two year technical college in southeastern Ohio that offers students hands-on experience in many natural resource fields including fish and wildlife management. In addition to their regular classes, students are required to work or volunteer for a state or Federal field station for an entire quarter in order to graduate with their Associates Degree. For several years now, Pendills Creek has offered students the chance to do their volunteer work at the hatchery. Hocking College professor Lloyd Wright, a former Fish and Wildlife Service employee, sends students to different Federal hatcheries all over the country, including Pendills Creek and Jordan River NFHs in Michigan.

That is how Donofrio found his way up to Michigan a few years ago, by fulfilling his volunteer credits at Pendills Creek in the summer of 2001. He has now transferred to Lake Superior State University, in nearby Sault Ste. Marie, to complete his Bachelors Degree. Wright has asked Donofrio to put together a presentation outlining the operations at Pendills Creek and Sullivans Creek. The presentation will not only give students a glimpse of a working cold water fishery, but hopefully will encourage them to volunteer at this or other Federal hatcheries. *Tracy Roessner, Pendills Creek NFH*

Faber Bland Retires After 30+ Years with the Fish and Wildlife Service

Faber Bland, fisheries biologist at the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH), retired as of April 17. The staff at Pendills Creek and Sullivan Creek NFHs had a potluck luncheon as a going-away party complete with balloons, banners, cake, and too much food from everyone attending! Three Jordan River NFH staff also took part in the good-byes.

Bland had a long career with the Fish and Wildlife Service encompassing 30+ years including Pendills Creek NFH, Sullivan Creek NFH, Jordan River NFH, Eagle Creek NFH, and Ecological Services. He was also a member of the U.S. Navy for four years and a member of the National Guard for over 20 years. Bland plans on staying in the Brimley area. *Crystal LeGault-Anderson, Pendills Creek NFH*

-USFWS

Faber Bland retires after 30+ years with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Sturgeon Bay Open Water Course

Motorboat Operator Certification Course (MOCC) Open Water Module (OWM) instructors Adam Kowalski and Aaron Woldt from the Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO), lead instructor Stewart Cogswell (Green Bay FRO), John Decker (Law Enforcement Special Agent), and Tim Peiffer and Kyle Krysiak (Marquette Biological Station) put on a four day MOCC with OWM course in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin in June. The OWM was established in Region 3 in 2002 and is designed to give training to Department of the Interior employees who operate and/or work on vessels in open water. The OWM was created because the basic MOCC course did not meet the training needs of employees who work on large, open bodies of water.

The following is a list topics covered during the course: navigating using only a chart and charting tools, operating a global positioning system (GPS) unit, using a marine radio correctly, surviving in the water, using floatation devices correctly, anchoring correctly, required and recommended equipment for open water vessels, how to obtain current weather conditions before boating, changing a propeller while the vessel is still in the water, how to right a capsized vessel, and a demonstration of a Coast Guard helicopter performing rescue operations. The basic MOCC course does not cover many of the above topics. Instructors also gave students practical exercises in boat handling, charting, navigating, and GPS and radio operation.

Overall this course was a success, and all 9 students completed the training. Students reported that they learned a great deal and felt that this course should be taken by everyone operating on open water. Open water and MOCC training are valuable curricula designed to make Fish and Wildlife Service personnel competent and safe boaters. Teaching MOCC courses is consistent with the Fish and Wildlife Service's goal to maintain and support an adequately-sized, strategically positioned workforce with state-of-art training, equipment, and technologies in their career fields.

Adam Kowalski, Alpena FRO
Jonathan Pyatskowit and Glenn Miller, Ashland FRO

New Drivers tame the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery's Fish Hog

The Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) "fish hog" is actually a diesel Sterling truck equipped with a 3,000 gallon fish hauling tank. The big tank is divided into three separate compartments, each of which is outfitted with micro pore stones for oxygen, fresh-flo aerators for water circulation, and its own gated outlet to release the fish. The fish hog is an integral part in the lake trout distribution season and hauls yearling lake trout during the months of April, May, and June from Pendills Creek, Jordan River, and Iron River National Fish Hatcheries to the stocking vessel M/V Togue. All three NFHs produce lake trout as prescribed in rehabilitation plans in the Great Lakes.

Two new drivers handled the fish hog this spring; Tracy Roessner – biologist at Pendills Creek NFH; and James Anderson – fisheries biotech at Sullivan Creek NFH. Both obtained their class 'B' CDL licenses and were trained on the use of the truck by experienced drivers. Both Anderson and Roessner have been involved in numerous fish distribution trips in past years, driving smaller fish hauling trucks.

Crystal LeGault-Anderson, Pendills Creek NFH

-USFWS

Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery Biologist Tracy Roessner unloads lake trout from the "fish hog" onto the M/V Togue at the Charlevoix Coast Guard Station. Tracy is a new driver of the large fish distribution truck based out of Pendills.

Great Lakes - Big Rivers Regional Fisheries Offices

Regional Office, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4056; 612/713-5111
Gerry Jackson (*gerry_jackson@fws.gov*)

Michigan

Alpena Fishery Resources Office
Federal Building; 145 Water Street
Alpena, MI 49707
Jerry McClain (*jerry_mcclain@fws.gov*)
989/356-3052

Jordan River National Fish Hatchery
6623 Turner Road
Elmira, MI 49730
Rick Westerhof (*rick_westerhof@fws.gov*)
231/584-2461

Ludington Biological Station
229 South Jebavy Drive
Ludington, MI 49431
Dennis Lavis (*dennis_lavis@fws.gov*)
231/845-6205

Marquette Biological Station
1924 Industrial Parkway
Marquette, MI 49855
Gary Klar (*gerald_klar@fws.gov*)
906/226-6571

Pendills Creek/Sullivan Creek
National Fish Hatchery
21990 West Trout Lane
Brimley, MI 49715
Curt Friez *(curt_friez@fws.gov)*
906/437-5231

Missouri

Columbia Fishery Resources Office
101 Park Deville Drive; Suite A
Columbia, MO 65203
Tracy Hill (*tracy_hill@fws.gov*)
573/234-2132

Neosho National Fish Hatchery
East Park Street
Neosho, MO 64850
David Hendrix (*david_hendrix@fws.gov*)
417/451-0554

Illinois

Carterville Fishery Resources Office
9053 Route 148, Suite A
Marion, Illinois 62959
Rob Simmonds (*rob_simmonds@fws.gov)*
618/997-6869

Wisconsin

Ashland Fishery Resources Office
2800 Lake Shore Drive East
Ashland, WI 54806
Mark Dryer (*mark_dryer@fws.gov*)
715/682-6185

Genoa National Fish Hatchery
S5689 State Road 35
Genoa, WI 54632-8836
Doug Aloisi (*doug_aloisi@fws.gov*)
608/689-2605

Green Bay Fishery Resources Office
2661 Scott Tower Drive
New Franklin, WI 54229
Mark Holey (*mark_holey@fws.gov*)
920/866-1717

Iron River National Fish Hatchery
10325 Fairview Road
Iron River, WI 54847
Dale Bast (*dale_bast@fws.gov*)
715/372-8510

LaCrosse Fish Health Center
555 Lester Avenue
Onalaska, WI 54650
Richard Nelson (*rick_nelson@fws.gov*)
608/783-8441

LaCrosse Fishery Resources Office
555 Lester Avenue
Onalaska, WI 54650
Pamella Thiel (*pam_thiel@fws.gov*)
608/783-8431

Fish Lines
Region 3, Great Lakes/Big Rivers
June 2004 Vol. 2 No. 5

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Region 3
Divsion of Fisheries
1 Federal Drive
Ft. Snelling, MN 55111

Phone: 612/713-5111

Questions or comments concerning ***Fish Lines*** can be addressed to Dave Radloff, 612/713-5158 or email at david_radloff@fws.gov

Printed on 30% Recycled by Fiber Weight Paper

Windows in time

A Glimpse into our Proud Past

A busy levee in La Crosse, Wisconsin from days gone past.

Fish Lines is produced by the Fisheries Progam, Region 3, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Ft. Snelling, Minn. Items included are selected from monthly reports submitted by Region 3 fisheries offices. Photos included are used by permission and may be copyrighted.
Questions or comments concerning ***Fish Lines*** should be addressed to Dave Radloff, 612/713-5158 or email at david_radloff@fws.gov