

IR3

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Inside Region 3

July 26, 2004



Midwestern Wolf Management Moves Forward

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**Lynx Den Found in Minnesota
Grand Excursion
Fishing Day Celebrations**

Service Announces Intent to Delist Midwest Wolves

Interior Secretary Gale Norton traveled to Minnesota July 16 to participate in events to announce the proposed delisting of the Eastern population of the gray wolf. At the Wildlife Science Center in Forest Lake, Minn., Norton joined Deputy Regional Director Charlie Wooley, representatives from the DNRs of Minnesota and Wisconsin, and the executive director of the

International Wolf Center to announce the proposal.

“The recovery of wolves has been dramatic,” Norton told a crowd of about 80 Service employees and partners in wolf recovery. “Three decades ago, the future of the gray wolf in the United States was precarious... We’ve come a long way in those 30 years, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the partners in wolf recovery.”

The event began dramatically, with a stirring pipe ceremony in honor of the wolf, performed by Lee Staples of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians. Following numerous speakers who extolled the successes of wolf recovery in the Midwest, the

event ended on an equally dramatic note as the Wildlife Science Center’s captive wolves began to howl in unison, reminding the audience of the wild creatures they were celebrating.

Following the formal program, Secretary Norton and other speakers held a news conference. All four local television stations, Minnesota Public Radio, the Minneapolis and St. Paul newspapers and other media were also present.

Following this event, the Secretary was rushed back to the airport and flown to Green Bay, Wis., for a similar event that afternoon. At the Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Norton joined representatives of the Wisconsin DNR and local Native American tribes to once again share in the success of wolf recovery efforts.

Again news media turned out in force, with four network news affiliates and several daily newspapers.



- USFWS Photos

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton watches as Lee Staples of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians performs a song to honor the wolf during the announcement ceremony.

Assistant Secretary Manson Visits Regional Office and Federal Duck Stamp Winner

Assistant Secretary Craig Manson was also in the Twin Cities on July 16. He attended the wolf event in Forest Lake, stepping in for the Secretary at the news conference. Manson then returned to the Regional Office for a question-and-answer session with employees and then traveled to Sartell, Minn., to attend the Federal Duck Stamp Artist’s Hometown event.

The Duck Stamp Artist’s Hometown Event honored Scot Storm, winner of the 2004-2005 Federal Duck Stamp competition. The day-long event included golf and sporting clay tournaments, a silent auction and dinner. Proceeds from the

event, estimated to be near \$7,000, will be matched by the Service and used to restore wetland and upland habitat on the newly acquired Prairie Storm WPA. The 320-acre WPA, located in Stearns county, was named in honor of the artist.



Asst. Sec. Manson presents Scot Storm with a letter of congratulations signed by the Secretary of the Interior.

More Information on Wolves

For more information on the proposal as well as the biology, status and population sizes of the wolves in Region 3, visit the regional wolf website located at:

<http://midwest.fws.gov/wolf>

Or, for information on wolves in a specific state, contact:

Michigan - Christie Deloria (906-226-1240), Mike DeCapita (517-351-6274) or Craig Czarnecki (517-351-8470)

Minnesota - Phil Delphey (612-725-3548 x206) or Dan Stinnett (x201)

Wisconsin - Joel Trick (920-866-1737) or Janet Smith (920-866-1725)

Eastern DPS or other questions - Ron Refsnider (612-713-5346) or Laura Ragan (612-713-5157)

New ARD for Ecological Services Selected

Wendi Weber has been selected as the new Assistant Regional Director of Ecological Services for Region 3. Weber succeeds Charlie Wooley, who became the Service's Midwest Deputy Regional Director in January 2004.

Weber's responsibilities will include directing the Service's Midwest Ecological Services program, including oversight of staff in 10 ecological services field offices and the regional office. Ecological Services administers the Endangered Species Act and works to recover imperiled species; seeks damages for resources injured or damaged by contaminants; helps private landowners restore wildlife habitat; and ensures compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other laws and programs aimed at conserving and protecting fish and wildlife resources.

Weber began her Service career in 1998. Prior to her selection as assistant regional director, she served in the Service's Pacific Re-

gional Office Endangered Species program, in Portland, Oregon, as a supervisory biologist.

Weber's previous assignments include supervisory biologist and advisory positions with the Service's Washington Endangered Species Office. She also worked as a marine research associate with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and a research biologist for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the University of Georgia.

"I look forward to living and working in the Twin Cities area," Weber said. "I am excited for the opportunity to work with our many partners to conserve the countless wonderful natural resources of the Midwest."

Weber, a native of Rochester, New York, holds a master's degree in forest resources from the University of Georgia, and a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Rhode Island.

Hail & Farewell

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

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

This month, we welcome the following new employees:

Mark S. Rarey, Muscatatuck NWR; **John H Hartig**, Detroit River Intl WR; **Dawn Johnson**, HAPET, Fergus Falls; **Robert L. Simmonds, Jr.**, Carterville FRO; **Gregory J. Soulliere**, NAWMPO, East Lansing, MI.; **Greg M. Dehmer**, Sherburne NWR; **Adam S. Rawlinson**, Crab Orchard NWR.

There are no retirements this month.

Savanna District Project Leader Recognized for Superior Service

For 8 years, Ed Britton showed uncommon tenacity, creativity, and professionalism in bringing to fruition in September, 2003, the establishment of the 9,400-acre Lost Mound Unit of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The Lost Mound Unit



Savanna District Project Leader Ed Britton

makes up a large portion of the Savanna Army Depot scheduled for closure in 1995. The Unit contains the largest tract of tallgrass prairie remaining in Illinois, and several thousand acres of Mississippi River bottomlands critical to numerous rare, threatened, or endangered wildlife species. From the beginning, negotiations for the Lost Mound Unit were fraught with controversy, competing interests, and difficult contaminant issues. Mr. Britton handled these challenges with unfailing professionalism, forged lasting partnerships, and was the main author of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of the Army which paved the way for these important lands to become part

of the National Wildlife Refuge System. He withstood criticism, multiple changes in personnel working on the agreement, and uncertain policies to reach a conservation goal. Mr. Britton emerged as an expert on base closure issues and provided assistance nationally on other base closures and conservation agreements. The Lost Mound Unit will have a lasting impact on the well-being of scores of wildlife and plant species, and provide wildlife-dependent recreation and education opportunities for generations to come. For his excellence and outstanding contribution in making the Lost Mound Unit a reality, Mr. Britton is granted the Superior Service Award of the Department of the Interior.

Michigan and Minnesota Governors Visit Their Local Wildlife Refuge

Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty visited the Prairie Wetland Learning Center on July 16. The Governor arrived at the Center in a bus along with about 20 members of the Lake Region Community Partners group.

Pawlenty was met on the deck by 10 of the students from the Prairie Science Class who were holding welcome signs they had made themselves. The Governor introduced himself to each of the students and proceeded down the deck into the exhibit area. He spent some time in the sod house visiting with "a pioneer" (Missy Hermes of the local Historical Society was dressed and acting in period) and talked with the students about their class as well as the different artifacts in the exhibit.

The group gathered in the great

hall where the Governor chose to sit on the floor with the students. After a welcome from Project Leader Kevin Brennan, Dave Ellis, Prairie Science School teacher, gave a presentation on the Prairie Science Class (see June 2004 IR3). Tom Worthington, deputy regional refuge chief, gave a few comments on our partnership and the students each gave a presentation on their class.

The Governor made a few comments emphasizing innovation in education and the need for partnerships like the prairie science school. *Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD*

Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm toured the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge via boat on June 8 during a



- USFWS Photos

Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty tours the Prairie Wetland Learning Center with Project Leader Kevin Brennan.

statewide 'Hidden Treasures' tour. Governor Granholm and her group of aides, media and security rode in three, flat-bottomed boats chartered through Johnny Panther Quests Adventure Tours.

Gov. Granholm and her entourage saw bald eagles, hawks and numerous waterfowl species. Refuge staff picked up the group at the end of the tour and transported them to their waiting bus at the Refuge Headquarters. *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*



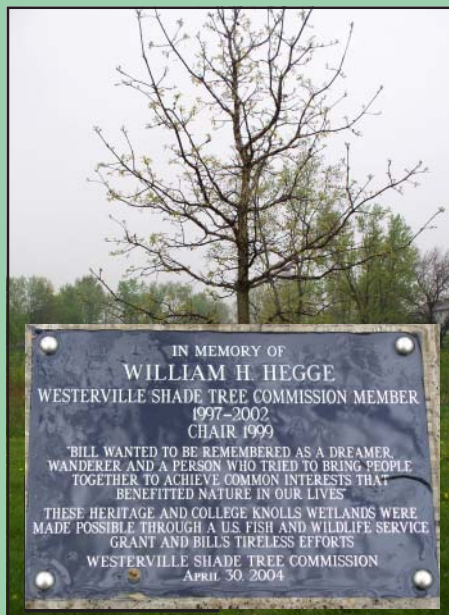
Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm (second row on right) prepares to disembark at Shiawassee NWR after a chartered boat tour.

Memorial Tree Planted in Honor of Bill Hegge

The Westerville Shade Tree Commission honored Bill Hegge in a memorial held April 30, 2004. The commission planted a magnificent swamp white oak at a local wetland that Bill's efforts made possible. A plaque dedicating the oak in memory of Bill was placed at the base of the tree.

Representatives from the Service's Reynoldsburg, Ohio Ecological Services Office attended the memorial to remember and honor their co-worker.

Bill lost a year-long battle with pancreatic cancer in early March 2004. He was a dedicated Service employee in Ohio since 1993. Prior to transferring to the Ohio Ecological Services Office, Bill worked with the Refuges program in the Washington Office and the Mackay and Montezuma National Wildlife Refuges. Bill was a leader in the Partners for Fish



This tree and plaque were dedicated to the memory of Service employee Bill Hegge.

and Wildlife Program. His leadership and friendship will be greatly missed. *Angela Zimmerman, Reynoldsburg Ecological Services Field Office*

Canada Lynx Dens Found in Minnesota

Canada lynx researchers at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, located three lynx dens by tracking the movements of radio-collared females. The three dens, containing a total of 11 kittens, may be the first ever documented in Minnesota.

Lynx have likely denned in Minnesota in the past and some of these dens may have been found accidentally by humans without being reported. However, the ability to track female lynx wearing radio-collars allowed scientists to successfully locate the dens.

Each den was well hidden and located in an area where accidental discovery by humans was very unlikely. Twin Cities ES Field Office Biologist Phil Delphey assisted researchers with ear-tagging, weighing, measuring and sexing the 4-5 week-old kittens at two of the den sites. Unfortunately, the third den was discovered too late to



- USFWS Photos by Phil Delphey

Left: A Canada lynx kitten is held by a researcher before it is weighed, measured and given an ear tag.

Below: Researchers use radio tracking equipment to locate a radio collared female Canada lynx.



work with the kittens. At 4-5 weeks of age, lynx kittens may be captured and are likely to retain their ear tags. Kittens remain with their mother for about one year.

Later this year, University of Minnesota researchers will attempt to recapture surviving kittens to fit them with radio-collars. Information obtained from the den visits

and future observations of the kittens will help researchers and managers better understand kitten survival, a key component of the ecology of this threatened species. *Phil Delphey, Twin Cities ES Office*

Wild Fish Health Assessments Completed at Mississippi River Pool 7

On June 28, members of the La Crosse Fish Health Center and the La Crosse Fishery Resources

Office completed an annual fish health assessment on pool 7 of the Mississippi River near

Dresbach Minn. 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 temperate bass families. The fish were screened for *Large Mouth Bass Virus*, which affects only large mouth bass, but

other centrarchids and percichthyids can be carriers.

Two other groups of fish of concern were the common carp and also members of the sucker family. In the spring of 2002 the *Spring Viremia of Carp Virus* was discovered in North Carolina and in Wisconsin. These were the first cases documented of the virus in the United States, and is considered an exotic pathogen.

Aside from the two viruses mentioned above, the samples were also screened for all other certifiable pathogens. Results from the tests will be available in the next couple of months. *Corey Puzach, LaCrosse Fish Health Center*



- USFWS Photo

Members of La Crosse Fish Health Center and La Crosse Fishery Resources Office take health samples from numerous species from the Mississippi River.

Fur, Fins and Feathers

Youth Fishing Day Celebrated Around the Region



Field stations across Region 3 helped families get their kids excited about fishing by hosting Youth Fishing Day events in May and June. A few of the stations that hosted events include: Big Muddy NFWR, Minnesota Valley NWR, Two River NWR, Whittlesey Creek NWR, Shiawassee NWR, Big Oaks NWR, DeSoto NWR, Horicon NWR, Neosho NFH, Ashland FRO, and many more.



Fur, Fins and Feathers

Invasive Species Found at New Locations in Superior

Four invasive species were captured along the south shore of Lake Superior in a spring aquatic nuisance species survey conducted by the Ashland Fishery Resources Office. The captured species included Eurasian ruffe, threespine stickleback, zebra mussel and Eurasian watermilfoil. Ruffe were captured from two new locations within the Keweenaw Waterway and sticklebacks were also captured in two new locations, including Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore and Grand Marais, Mich.

Spanning from Superior, Wis., to Grand Marais, Mich., this survey uses bottom trawling to target aquatic nuisance species habitat and high risk introduction locations. The survey will also be conducted during summer and fall, and is composed of permanent monitoring stations which provide long-term biological data and early detection. Gary Czypinski, Ashland FRO



A "Grand" Celebration on the Upper Mississippi River

Field Stations along the Mississippi River celebrated the recreation of the original 1854 "Grand Excursion." The celebration began on June 15 in the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois and ended on July 5 in the Twin Cities in Minnesota.

The celebration included a flotilla of paddleboats that travelled up the Mississippi River, through the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, stopping at towns along the way for celebrations.

Service employees travelled on the boats and hosted stations at local celebrations -- allowing us to

help educate thousands of people about the Mississippi River and the Service.



- USFWS Photo

Cindy Samples (left) and Pam Steinhaus (right) were among the many Service representatives talking with visitors about the Mississippi River and the Service during the Grand Excursion.

Accomplishment Reports

The following accomplishment reports were processed between June 14 and July 15, 2004:

1. Biological Opinion completed on Forest Plan Revisions for Chippewa and Superior National Forests

Susan Rogers, Twin Cities FO

2. Meeting of the Binational Executive Committee

Craig Czarnecki, East Lansing FO

3. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, Change of Command Ceremony

Craig Czarnecki, East Lansing FO

4. The Grand Excursion 2004 Visits La Crosse, Wisconsin

Richard Nelson, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

5. Green Bay Fishery Resources Office Meets With Marinette County Environmental Board

Stewart Cogswell, Green Bay FRO

6. Sturgeon Assessment on the St. Louis River

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

7. Mussel Recovery Effort Now 'In-Synch' With Nature

Mark Steingraeber, LaCrosse FRO

8. Canada Lynx Dens Found in Minnesota

Phil Delphey, Twin Cities FO

9. Agreement to Manage Listed Species Habitat at US Army Joliet Training Center

Michael Redmer, Chicago FO

10. Diversity

Laurie Gucinski, Iron River NFH

11. Human Resources Slide Show Updated

Anita Simons, ABA (Personnel)

12. Chicago Office Assists Pilot Survey of Mudpuppies and Mussels

Michael Redmer, Chicago FO

13. Ohio Memorial Honors Bill Hegge

Angela Zimmerman, Reynoldsburg FO

14. Staff Received Training to Protect Federal Endangered and Threatened Species

John Heinrich, Marquette Bio Station

15. Grand Excursion Cruises By The Genoa National Fish Hatchery

Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH

16. Service and Corps Team Up Again Via Letter to Editor

Craig Czarnecki, East Lansing FO

17. U.S. Policy Committee Meets to Discuss Great Lakes Progress

Craig Czarnecki, East Lansing FO

18. Fish Health Assessment Completed On Pool 7 of the Mississippi River

Corey Puzach, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

19. 7th Annual Buffalo Day is a Chip Chucking Success!

Scott Ford, Neal Smith NWR

20. Ludington Biological Station Hires Staff For The Field Season

Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

21. Birthday Party Tour at the Iron River Fish Hatchery

Nik Grueneis, Iron River NFH

22. Minnesota Watershed District Leaders Tour Hamden Slough Refuge

Michael Murphy, Hamden Slough NWR

23. U.S. Sea Lamprey Control Program Destroys Lampreys to Save Lake Trout

Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

24. Region 3 completes Motorboat Operator Certification Course with Open Water Module

Continued on Next Page

Accomplishment Reports

Continued from Previous Page

Stewart Cogswell, Green Bay FRO

25. Sturgeon Bay Open Water Course

Adam Kowalski, Alpena FRO

26. Green Point Hosts Camp for Youngsters

Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR

27. Development of Walleye Rearing Ponds at the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

28. Fishery Office Assists Refuge With Loosestrife Biocontrol

Gary Czapinski, Ashland FRO

29. Regional Evaluation of the 2004 TWG and TLIP Grants

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

30. Chicago Field Office Participates in NRCS Habitat Fair

Michael Redmer, Chicago FO

31. Ludington Biological Station Reaches Out to Visitors

Denny Lavis, Ludington Bio. Station

32. Brilla Wildlife Habitat Restoration Site Completed

Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO

33. Red Cliff Tribal Members Assist Service in Battle Against Sea Lamprey

Terry Morse, Marquette Bio Station

34. Evaluation of Lake Michigan Lake Trout Stocking Presented at Natives Species Workshop

Charles Bronte, Green Bay FRO

35. Alpena Fishery Office Delivers a Presentation to the Exchange Club

Scott Koproski, Alpena FRO

36. Native Habitat Restoration Proposal Presented For Schuneman Wildlife Preserve

Annette Trowbridge, Twin Cities FO

37. Fish Passage Restoration on the Jordan River

Susan Wells, Alpena FRO

38. Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewas Approves Plan for Sea Lamprey Control in Red Cliff Creek

Terry Morse, Marquette Bio Station

39. Pendills Staff Measures Up at Seney Refuge's Kids Fishing Day

Tracy Roessner, Pendills Creek NFH

40. Fifth Annual LaFarge Riverfest

Susan Wells, Alpena FRO

41. Rice Lake Participates in Rivers and Lakes Fair

Mary Stefanski, Rice Lake NWR

42. Friends of Big Muddy Instrumental in River Cleanup Effort

Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR

43. APHIS-Wildlife Services Deputy Administrator Reviews Kirtland Warbler Recovery Program

Craig Czarnecki, East Lansing FO

44. Kane County ADID Wetland Study Finalized

Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO

45. Alpena FRO Conducts Lake Whitefish Netting

Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO

46. Ashland FRO Assist with Scoring the 2004 TWG and TLIP Grants

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

47. Vocational Achievement Award Presented to Refuge Manager

Michael Murphy, Hamden Slough NWR

48. Savanna District Manager Ed Britton Earns Department of Interior Superior Service Award

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

49. Ashland FRO Helps to Schedule TWG/TLIP Workshop

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

50. Spring Fire Season: Flaming, Windy, and Wet

Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

51. Amphibians Accompany Wetland Presentation

Wayne Fischer, Illinois Private Lands Ofc

52. Chicago MBRT Field Tour Inspects four Mitigation Banks

Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO

53. Ohio Field Office Joins with State and Federal Partners to Develop Botanical Expertise

Jeromy Applegate, Reynoldsburg FO

54. New Wildlife Crossing at Palisade Creek on U.S. Highway 61

Paul Burke, Twin Cities FO

55. Big Muddy Refuge Goes Fishing

Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR

56. Shiawassee Refuge Sponsors Free Fishing Day for 350 Kids

Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR

57. Big Muddy Refuge Helps on Big Rivers Workshops

Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR

58. Thousands Attend Two Rivers Family Fishing Fair

Curt McMurl, Mark Twain NWR-Brussels Dis

59. We'll Keep The Doors Open For You!

Angela Baran, Iron River NFH

60. Neosho National Fish Hatchery's Annual Fishing Derby for Individuals with Physical Disabilities

David Hendrix, Neosho NFH

61. Service Hosts Annual Meeting of Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Wisconsin

James Ruwaldt, Wisconsin Private Lands Ofc

62. Invasive Education on Lake Huron During Michigan's Aquatic Invasive Species Awareness Week

Anjanette Bowen, Alpena FRO

63. Michigan Governor Visits Shiawassee Refuge

Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR

64. Menominee Reservation Lake Sturgeon Committee Considers Opening Fishery

Ann Runstrom, LaCrosse FRO

65. Big Muddy Refuge Dedicates Missing Link to River

Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR

66. ESPN Outdoors Website Features Detroit River Refuge

Jane Lardy-Nelson, Refuges&Wildlife

67. Majority Whip of the House of Representatives Visits Neosho National Fish Hatchery

David Hendrix, Neosho NFH

68. Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge Hosts Second Annual Take A Kid Fishing Day

Jason Lewis, Big Oaks NWR

69. Talking Points, Media Advisory Produced for Secretary Norton Visit

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

70. New Waterfowl Display at North Dakota Zoo

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

71. 178 Kids Learn About Fishing at Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center

Pam Dryer, Whittlesey Creek NWR

72. Refuge's Fourth Annual DeSotoRefugeFest a Success

Cindy Myer, Desoto NWR

73. Big Muddy Refuges Celebrates Big Winners

Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR

74. Big Muddy Staff Continues Fire Training

Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR

75. Fish Health Examination at Tribal Fish Hatchery in Wisconsin

Richard Nelson, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

76. Dusk Delivery Helps Minnesota Lake Trout Populations!

Steve Redman, Iron River NFH

77. Carterville Fishery Office Forms Partnerships for the Reintroduction of Shovelnose Sturgeon

colby wrasse, Carterville FRO

78. Teaching About Water

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

79. Kids Fishing Day at Horicon Refuge

Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR

80. Service Aids In Aquatic Plant Removal

Corey Puzach, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

81. Alpena Fisheries Office Represented at Alpena Public Schools Science Safari

Scott Koproski, Alpena FRO

82. Big Muddy Refuge Co-Hosts River Conference

Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR

83. Service Presents Watershed Plan to Kane County Mayors

Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO

84. Green Bay Fisheries Office Surveys Large Predators in Lake Michigan

Dale Hanson, Green Bay FRO

85. Horicon's Refuge Distance Education Classes

Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR

86. Jordan River Hatchery Receives Results of Annual Fish Health Inspections

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

87. Celebrating Birds at Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge

Lisa McCurdy, Trempealeau NWR

88. Humbug Marsh Contaminant Survey Completed

Judy Edwards, Twin Cities FO

89. Rice Lake and Friends Reach Out to Community Members

Mary Stefanski, Rice Lake NWR

90. Guinevere Strikes Again - and Again

Elizabeth McCloskey, Northern Indiana ES Sub Ofc

91. Rice Lake Refuge Celebrates IMBD With Movie and Music

Michelle McDowell, Rice Lake NWR

Midwest Memories

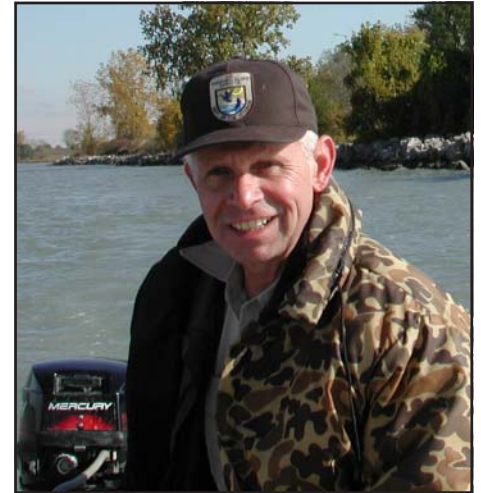
By Doug Spencer

As a career employee with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the last 26 years, my family and I have made many major career decisions, which is common to Service families. Nearly a year ago we came to a crossroad in our lives - do I remain with the government or retire at the age of 55? This year I became 55 years old, with 30 years of government service, which includes four years with the U.S. Air Force. Many of us baby boomers are going through these same decisions today. After days and weeks of frustration, we came to a conclusion that leaving the Service now was not the right time, a 14 year old daughter beginning high school and my love of working with other dedicated individuals to improve habitat for our wildlife, made us decide to stay with the Service.

Once we decided that retirement wouldn't come anytime soon, we made a decision that I would apply for positions in the West. My wife and I always wanted to live in the Northwest. Our dream came true when I was told this spring that I was selected to be the new Refuge Manager for Willamette Valley NWR Complex in Corvallis, Ore. At first we were extremely happy of the news. Within a short period of time reality set in and we thought of all our friends, regional Service employees and all the acquaintances we came in touch with while managing Shiawassee and Michigan Islands NWRs and the newly established Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. So many great memories and so many great people here in the Midwest! This move became one of the hardest moves for me and my family.

As I reflect back during the last 13 years in Michigan, I can be very

proud that I had the privilege and opportunity to witness so many great things that happened. All of the following accomplishments could not have happened if it wasn't for the dedicated, motivated, hard-working Service employees that are found in the Midwest. The Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team is one of the first teams established by the Service in the Midwest to provide guidance for ecosystem management. This team is still functioning today providing guidance to all our partners in the Great Lakes. The establishment of the Great Lakes Islands Committee, which has recently contracted with The Nature Conservancy to develop a data base program to assist in the management of the islands. The establishment of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, the first international wildlife refuge in the United States and Canada, beginning at the Ohio border and ending within the City of Detroit. The Saginaw Bay NRDA, which was a settlement between the Service, General Motors, Inc., and the Cities of Saginaw and Bay City. This settlement provided the cleanup of PCBs from the Saginaw River, wetland restorations, the purchase of Big and Little Charity Islands and a 200 year lease with the City of Saginaw for the Service to manage Green Point Environmental Learning Center. Local planning for a major environmental educational facility in Bridgeport Township, adjacent to Interstate 75, called the "Great Lakes Discovery Center." Many Service employees and the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team members assisted in the planning of this facility. The thousands of acres of wetlands,



- USFWS Photo

Doug Spencer spent 13 years in Michigan with Region 3. He recently accepted a new position as Refuge Manager at Willamette Valley NWR in Oregon.

established through the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. These are just a few of the many accomplishments that I have seen. You should all be very proud of what you have accomplished.

As I stated earlier, we find it very hard to say good bye to all our friends and acquaintances in the Midwest. Yet, once we saw what we are moving to - the mountains, the ocean and better still, a newly built house outside of town, we became very excited! This is the first newly built house we have ever owned during our 36 years of marriage. To top all of this, the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges are beautiful, diverse and teaming with wildlife. I may not be retiring for sometime, but I'm going to set aside a time to enjoy the Northwest and do some fishing, hiking and hunting with my family. We can now call the Northwest our home, but we will always remember the fond memories of the Great Lakes, the Midwest and all of you. We hope our paths cross again sometime in the future.

Region 3 Employees Continues to Shine

The professionalism of Region 3 employees was in the national spotlight this month with the attention on recovery of the gray wolf. In a July 16 ceremony at the Wildlife Science Center in Forest Lake, Minnesota, hosted by the Service and partners, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton announced the proposal to no longer list the Eastern U.S. population of gray wolves as endangered species.

As little as three decades ago wolves were on the brink of extinction throughout the lower 48 states. Through the work of the Service and many partners, we have reversed this decline and now have a success story that the country will use as a model for the recovery of other at-risk species.

I was honored to conduct the ceremony where Secretary Norton and Assistant Secretary Craig Manson lauded the rebounding population of wolves. I share their praise and recognition for everyone in Region 3 who helped this success happen. In addition to outstanding conservation and stewardship of the species for many years, Region 3 devoted long hours documenting the science for delisting.

Many people contributed great effort leading up to the July 16 day of celebration for the wolf and I'd like to recognize their outstanding work: Christie Deloria, Phil Delphey, Kim Mitchell, Georgia Parham, Joel Trick and Michael



- USFWS Photo

Deputy Regional Director Charlie Wooley hosts the July 16 announcement to delist wolves in the Midwest region.

Amaral (R5) were involved throughout the process of writing the rule for the gray wolf; Karla Bartelt, Cathy Carnes, Pete Fasbender, Brian Huberty, Sandy Jackson, Brandon Jutz, John Leonard, Rachel Levin, Lynn Lewis, Tracy Mattheis, Kim Mitchell, Brian Norris, Georgia Parham, Carlita Payne, Laura Ragan, Ron Refsnider, Janet Smith, Jennifer Stifter, Dan Stinnett, Chuck Traxler, Annette Trowbridge, and Jane West played key roles in outreach and the announcement event.

And as Secretary Norton and Judge Manson pointed out, our

partners were essential in this recovery success. They include: Ty Bauman of Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Peggy Callahan of Wildlife Science Center, Scott Hassett of Wisconsin DNR, Mark Holsten of Minnesota DNR, Walter Medwid of International Wolf Center, and Lee Staples of Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

With three decades of work by the Service and our partners, there are undoubtedly other names for this list, and I salute and thank all of them as well.

We cheer a job well done by this dedicated group of individuals who worked to achieve this delisting proposal, but there is still much work to be done. I've seen as each of you continually strive to add chapter after chapter of successes and I am grateful to you for that. Your pride and professionalism is not taken for granted, and events like this celebration for the wolf give us a moment to reflect on the constant good work from each of you. Work that can only lead us to even brighter successes for the future of conservation.

Charlie Wooley



- USFWS Photo by Jane West

Wolves at the Wildlife Science Center keep a close watch on all the activity surrounding them during the announcement.

Have a View You Would Like to Share?

Send your articles to Chuck Traxler in the External Affairs Office. Phone: 612-713-5313 or email: charles_traxler@fws.gov