



## Accomplishment Reports From The Columbia Fishery Resources Office

July 2003



### Partnerships and Accountability

#### Missouri River Mitigation Workgroup Plans to Restore and Monitor River Habitats

Jim Milligan represented Columbia FRO at a series of workgroup meetings to develop a plan for the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) Missouri River Habitat Mitigation Project. The Missouri River Mitigation Project is designed to mitigate for fish and wildlife habitat losses that resulted from past channelization efforts on the Missouri River. The Project extends 735 river miles from Sioux City, Iowa to the mouth of the Missouri River near St. Louis. The workgroup consists of representatives from the state fish and game agencies, the COE, and FWS. In addition to determining viable habitat restoration projects, the group is working to develop a monitoring program to assess the quality of the restored and created habitats. Columbia FRO has been monitoring restored habitats in portions of the Lower Missouri River since 1997.

Contact: Jim Milligan



*Sandbar habitat at Cranberry Bend unit of the Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge.*

### Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

#### Endangered Pallid Sturgeon stocked in the Missouri River

Endangered pallid sturgeon were successfully raised and stocked into the Missouri River this year. Mulberry Bend, Nebraska was stocked with 1936 fish on July 15<sup>th</sup>; Bellevue, Nebraska was also stocked with 1936 fish on July 16<sup>th</sup>; and Booneville, Missouri was stocked with 1423 fish on July 17<sup>th</sup>. The pallid sturgeon were raised at Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery in Yankton, South Dakota. The fish were tagged with Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags, which provide the fish with individual identification numbers. Jim Milligan, Project Leader, coordinated the hatchery stocking within FWS, and with state agencies and the media. As Coordinator of the Middle Basin Pallid Sturgeon Recovery Workgroup, Jim is responsible for maintaining the Lower Missouri River fish stocking plan. All the fish stocked at Booneville looked healthy even after 18 hours in the hauling truck. Kudos to the Gavins Point hatchery staff! Our staff hopes to recapture some of the fish to assess fish health, movement, and habitat preference in our fall trawl and winter gill net sampling.

Contact: Jim Milligan

## Leadership in Science and Technology

### Columbia FRO educates Missouri teachers about large river trawling



*Wyatt Doyle shows teachers adult shovelnose sturgeon collected in otter trawl.*

CMFRO participated in an event coordinated by Missouri Department of Conservation which brought Missouri's public school teachers in contact with the Missouri River. MDC shuttled by boat over 100 teachers through various stations along 15 miles of the river teaching the educators about the various interests on the River including Army Corps of Engineers functions and ecology of the River's fish, amphibian and avian communities. CMFRO participated in this event by giving a hands-on demonstration of trawling procedures used to collect benthic fishes and to capture the endangered pallid sturgeon. CMFRO trawled along a sand bar directly in front of one station as an MDC biologist was

finishing talking about the various species of fish as well as the different gears used to collect them. Our trawl net was able to capture numerous species of fish as well as various sizes of shovelnose sturgeon to show the group first hand what these fish looked and felt like. Our biologists, Wyatt Doyle and Andy Starostka, explained to the teachers the biology of the various fish and showed examples of the more common shovelnose compared to relatively rare Hybrid pallid X shovelnose sturgeon which was collected in one of the samples. This was an exciting demonstration for the teachers and gave a rare opportunity to combine classroom knowledge with hands on experience for teaches to promote the need to restore and conserve our Missouri River resources.

Contact: Wyatt Doyle

## Workforce Management

Tiffanie Hamilton of Kansas City, Missouri joined us in the field at the Cranberry Bend unit of the Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge for a day of fish sampling. Tiffanie is a student at UM-KC, majoring in fisheries and wildlife. She discovered the opportunity to work with us at the volunteer.gov website.

Contact: Joanne Grady