



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Midwest Region

Fisheries & Aquatic Resources Program

Fish Lines



Removal of Balmoral Dam

Fish, Fish Everywhere;
300K and Counting



Vol. 8 No. 5
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Fish Lines

Fisheries & Aquatic Resources Program - Midwest 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.

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.

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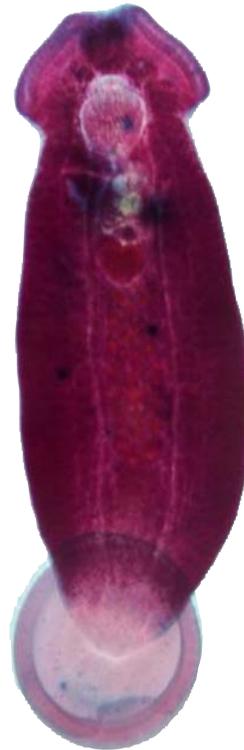
Removal of Balmoral Dam

Balmoral Dam, located on Mill Creek near the town of Muscoda, Wis., was successfully removed in the fall of 2009.
BY LOUISE MAULDIN, LA CROSSE FWCO

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Fish, Fish Everywhere; 300K and Counting

Crews from the Columbia Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Habitat Assessment and Monitoring Program have captured 296,899 fish since the inception of the program in 2005.
BY ANDY STAROSTKA, COLUMBIA FWCO



-USFWS/Becky Lasee
The parasite *Nitschia sturionis* was identified by staff from the La Crosse Fish Health Center.

Parasite Excites Biologists

BY SARAH BAUER, LA CROSSE FHC

Project leader Norm Heil of the Warm Springs Fish Health Center (FHC) in Region 4 contacted the La Crosse FHC about identifying a monogenetic parasite found on Atlantic sturgeon. La Crosse staff was enthusiastic about this rare opportunity because many of them are interested in parasitology, and it provided a chance to examine a parasite not commonly seen. The parasite was stained, mounted and identified to be *Nitschia sturionis* by Becky Lasee, project leader at the La Crosse office. *N. sturionis* is a member of the Capsalidae and one of the largest species (13-14 mm long), making it sometimes mistaken for a leech. Due to size and its direct lifecycle, this parasite can have disastrous effects on fish in aquaculture.

To view other issues of "Fish Lines," visit our website at:
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Fisheries/library/fishlines.htm>

fish lines

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-USFWS

Lori Criger samples stream water from a beaver pond in the Traverse River during a 2009 lampricide treatment.

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Removal of Balmoral Dam

BY LOUISE MAULDIN, LA CROSSE FWCO

Balmoral Dam, located on Mill Creek near the town of Muscoda, Wisconsin was successfully removed in the fall of 2009, reconnecting over 92 miles of stream to the lower Wisconsin River. Mill Creek is a 29.7 mile long stream of which the upper 14.3 miles of the stream is classified as a cold water class II trout fishery and the lower 15.5 miles, a warm water sport fishery. Balmoral Dam was approximately 21 ft high and constructed in 1922



-Clark Diaz, Inc.

The Balmoral Dam on Mill Creek in Richland County, Wisconsin, was removed in the Fall of 2009.

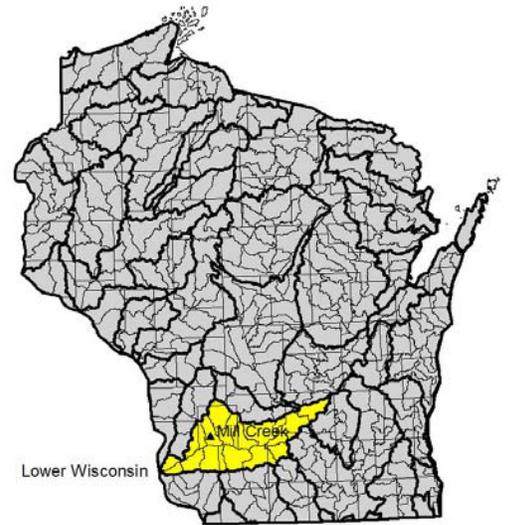
to generate power for the local feed mill and the Muscoda community. Hydroelectricity at this run of the river dam was finally discontinued in 1992. The dam impounded roughly 42 acres which was used primarily for recreational purposes. Over the years the mill pond silted in considerably, almost to the point of extinction. This led to poor habitat conditions for plants, fish and wildlife. It also contributed to poor water quality in the downstream reach of the dam. The dam itself was failing and was considered a public safety hazard. The Village of Muscoda, owner of the dam, filed with the state of Wisconsin to abandon its rights to operate the dam and impound water in 2007. Project partners, including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Village of Muscoda, Jewell and Associates Engineering, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and University of Wisconsin Extension, all worked several years towards final removal of the dam.

Prior to having final plans approved to remove the dam, summer flooding in 2008 damaged the secondary spillway and washed out a section of the highway downstream of the dam. The project was able to begin in July 2009 and consisted of removing the dam and its auxiliary structures, restoring the stream channel in the immediate project area, armoring the stream banks, and planting vegetation. Partially funded through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Fish Passage Program, this fish passage project improved natural stream flows and increased access to much needed spawning, feeding, nursery and overwintering habitats by smallmouth bass, sauger, walleye, trout, white and yellow bass, and other native fish species in the watershed.



Jewell and Associates Engineers, Inc.

After dam removal, the Balmoral Dam site was stabilized. This dam removal project was partially funded through the National Fish Passage Program and also contributes to goals and objectives of the Driftless Area Restoration Effort.



For further info about the La Crosse FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/lacrossefisheries/>

Fish, Fish Everywhere; 300K and Counting

BY ANDY STAROSTKA, COLUMBIA FWCO

Crews from the Columbia Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) Habitat Assessment and Monitoring Program (HAMP) have captured 296,899 fish since the inception of the program in 2005. If all these fish captured were placed end to end, they would stretch over 9.86 miles. More than a third of these fish were captured during the 2007 field season when 109,043 fish were handled. The majority of these fish are small young-of-the-year (YOY) – the age group this project is intended to answer questions about. Sturgeon and native large river chub species are of particular interest to this program. Sixty-five pallid sturgeon, 9,417 shovelnose sturgeon and



-USFWS/ColbyWrasse

These young-of-the-year sturgeon are a few of the thousands of sturgeon captured in the lower Missouri River while sampling for the Habitat Assessment and Monitoring Program (HAMP). To date, 65 pallid sturgeon have been identified during HAMP assessments.

1,139 unidentified (YOY) sturgeon have been captured. This constitutes one of the largest YOY sturgeon data sets from the Missouri River. Native chubs are thought to be important prey of the endangered pallid sturgeon and we have captured 59,838 to date. 2007 was a banner year for YOY fish and this led to the highest annual catch for the program to date. More than a third (37,297 to be exact) of the 2007 catch was YOY catfish. These catches combined with

high temperatures and humidity led to some very exhausted and sore-fingered field personnel.

HAMP was created to evaluate shallow water habitat in the channelized portion of the Missouri River. Shallow, slow moving areas were once abundant and have largely been lost due to changes to the river for navigation and flood control. This program's primary objective is to determine habitat use of YOY and small bodied fishes as it relates to shallow water habitat to guide habitat restoration efforts by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Along with capturing a lot of fish, HAMP crews have collected depth, water velocity and substrate information and have classified habitats associated with these fish. For example, they record whether a sample was collected in association

with a dike, whether that dike was notched, whether there was a sandbar associated with the sample, and whether large woody debris or aquatic vegetation was present. This information will allow identification of habitat types and other measurable physical features that are associated with a species or group of fishes so that appropriate habitat can be created.

The dynamic and complex nature of large river ecosystems make it difficult to understand all the important factors that drive fish year class strength and fish

communities. As HAMP crews collect more data in the future, this substantial data base will improve our understanding of large river ecosystems, restoration efforts and the needs of the species that call the river home.

These results will lead to our vision in leadership in science to recover an endangered species and protect sensitive communities.

For further info about the Columbia FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/columbiafisheries/>

40 Years of Going Green Together in La Crosse!

BY MARK STEINGRAEBER, LA CROSSE FWCO

Mark your calendars now for the 2010 La Crosse Earth Month celebration hosted by the La Crosse Earth Week Coalition (LEWC)! The LEWC is a group of public, private and nonprofit organizations working together to improve the quality of the environment in the Upper Mississippi River Valley. This year's theme, "40 Years of Going Green Together," is an invitation to all sectors of the La Crosse community – from public, private and nonprofit organizations to individuals – to celebrate Earth Day's 40th anniversary by seeking ways to reduce our impact on the environment – not only during Earth Month, but throughout 2010 and beyond.

The La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) is a proud partner in this celebration and encourages La Crosse community members to participate in LEWC-organized activities throughout April. The 2010 La Crosse Earth Month celebration will kick off with proclamations from Mayor Matt Harter and County Board Chair Steve Doyle, officially designating April as "Earth Month" in both the City and the County of La Crosse.

Scheduled activities during "Earth Month" include: a demonstration of sustainable food systems for urban communities by Will Allen, founder of Growing Power, Inc. and a 2008 MacArthur Fellow award recipient; an "Earth Day" concert and "Sacred Ground" talk by Native American musician Bill Miller, a three-time Grammy Award winner and former La Crosse resident; a Greens, Eggs, and Cheese Gala; a Green Rock Fest; a Green Film Festival; a Green Expo; sustainable farm tours; Green Homes tours; "Pull the Plug" Day; various "green" events for children, and much more!

On Saturday, April 24, La Crosse FWCO staff will participate in an Earth Fair held at the Three Rivers Waldorf School to highlight several environmentally conscious partnership programs it has recently helped to establish in the La Crosse community, including means to safely dispose of unwanted medications, prevent the release of unwanted pet fish into public waters, and connect children with nature and the outdoors.

Visit the La Crosse FWCO web site for more information on these programs. Better yet, visit www.greenlacrosse.com for a complete list of Earth Month events, partners and sponsors. Hope to see you "Going Green Together in La Crosse" this April!



-La Crosse Earth Week

The La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office is a proud partner in the La Crosse, Wisc. community's Earth Month celebration, with "green" activities scheduled throughout April.

For further info about the La Crosse FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/lacrossefisheries/>

Fish Disease Short Course

BY COREY PUZACH, LA CROSSE FHC

During the week of February 8, the La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC) taught its semi-annual "Introduction to Fish Health" course. The class is also commonly referred to as the short course. The short course is taught in cooperation with the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). Federal employees from Regions 2, 3, 5 and 6, in addition to state agency employees participated this year. Students had a wide range of careers including hatchery,

fish health and fisheries management experience, and administrative work. All of the course instructors were employees of the La Crosse FHC. There were also guest speakers from the U.S. Geological Survey Upper Midwest Environmental Science Center (UMESC), La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office, Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and Genoa National Fish Hatchery.

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.

The course was divided into lecture and laboratory, with lectures in the morning and “hands on” laboratory sessions in the afternoon. The class was instructed on many fish health topics such as fish anatomy, disease signs, bacteriology, virology, parasitology, nutritional problems and proper disinfection techniques. In the lectures, the students also worked on chemical dosage calculations and situational fish health problems. Guest speakers spoke on the investigational new animal drug (INAD) process, egg disinfection techniques, a study dealing with disinfection techniques to eliminate the virus Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS), and invasive species. Participants also toured the facilities at the UMESC.

Students took information from lecture material and applied it in a laboratory setting. In the lab, an orientation was given on proper microscope use. Students then worked on their necropsy techniques with different species of fish. On the second day, parasite searches were conducted on fish collected from the Mississippi River.

The introduction to this microscopic world is always an eye opening experience. On day three and four of the laboratory sessions, participants worked on bacterial unknowns, biochemical testing, staining bacterial samples, screening viral unknowns, and an exercise displaying the dangers of random antibiotic treatments. The course ran Monday thru Friday and will be taught again in February 2012.

For further info about the La Crosse FHC: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/LaCrosseFishHealthCenter/>

The Risk Paid Off – Missouri Natural Resources Conference a Big Success!

BY JOANNE GRADY, COLUMBIA FWCO

Branch Chief of Fish Conservation Joanne Grady from the Columbia Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) served the Missouri Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) as the workshop chair for the annual Missouri Natural Resources Conference. Joanne coordinated with Andrew Branson and Doug Novinger of the Missouri Department of Conservation to develop the workshop agenda. The theme of this year’s event was “Purposeful Risk Taking: Making Decisions in Dynamic Times.” The planning committee felt it was appropriate in light of numerous funding cuts, retirements, and staff and program cuts throughout many of the natural resources agencies and organizations during this current economic crisis. In fact, there was some concern that for the first time in the conference’s history we would be paying a penalty fee to the hotel due to an expected drop in attendance caused by current economic conditions.

But this was not the case! In fact, the 2010 conference boasted the second highest attendance level in recent years. The workshops committee was credited in the post-conference meeting with helping to create this success with a great selection of conference sessions. We had been tasked with the goal of diversifying the speakers and topics at this year’s event in an effort to increase attendance.

I am happy and proud to say that the Region 3 Fish and Wildlife Service staff came through to help us meet this challenge! Invasive species coordinator Mike Hoff of the Fisheries program spoke about risk assessments in a session about invasive species.

Charlie Scott of the Columbia Ecological Services Field Office (ES FO) represented the Fish and Wildlife Service on a panel of agency leaders to discuss resource challenges in Missouri. Dave Mosby of Columbia ES FO organized and moderated a session about the impacts of lead in the Big River watershed. Andy Roberts and John Weber were also speakers. In addition, Rick Hansen of the Columbia ES FO and I developed a session about fish passage impacts and the Niangua darter. This session highlighted low water crossings we’ve helped to replace and data showing that darters are moving past these sites!

A session about identifying and conserving aquatic natural areas included a presentation by Ken Lubinksi (U.S. Geological Survey) who is the coordinator of the Fishers and Farmers Partnership. This session will be vital to our ongoing discussions about the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, Strategic Habitat Conservation and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, and where we prioritize aquatics spending in this state.

This annual meeting is organized and sponsored by the Missouri Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, the Missouri Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, Missouri Chapter of the Wildlife Society and the Show-Me Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. The responsibility for hosting the meeting rotates through the four societies. The event includes nationally recognized plenary speakers, scientific papers, educational workshops, professional society annual meetings, social gatherings, an awards evening and an exhibits hall.

For further info about the Columbia FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/columbiafisheries/>

Annual Fish Health Inspections at National Fish Hatcheries

BY COREY PUZACH, LA CROSSE FHC

In February, staff from the La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC) began spring inspections at the National Fish Hatcheries (NFH). Eric Leis and Corey Puzach completed the Iron River NFH inspection while Ryan Katona and Ken Phillips completed the Jordan River NFH inspection. Inspections are essential to ensure that disease-free fish are released in the wild, transferred to other hatcheries or used as brood fish for future egg sources. Inspections are performed on each “lot” of fish (fish of the same age,



-USFWS/CoryPuzach

Eric Leis shows off a healthy adult lake trout from the Iron River National Fish Hatchery.

from the same egg source and cultured in the same water supply). The La Crosse FHC sampled a total of 515 fish at Iron River NFH and 490 fish at Jordan River NFH for select viral, bacterial and parasitic pathogens during the inspection.

A kidney swab was taken to screen for the bacterial pathogens *Aeromonas salmonicida*, *Yersinia ruckeri* and *Edwardsiella ictaluri*. A second kidney sample was taken to be later screened for *Renibacterium salmoninarum*, a causative agent of Bacterial Kidney Disease. Next, kidney and spleen samples were collected for virology samples. The viruses screened for include Infectious Pancreatic Necrosis, *Oncorhynchus Masou* Viruses, Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia, Infectious Hematopoietic Necrosis Virus and Cutthroat Trout Virus. In addition, the heads of 60 young lake trout were removed and processed for *Myxobolus cerebralis*, more commonly referred to as whirling disease. This consists of cooking, crushing and digesting the heads to remove soft tissues. The samples are transported to the La Crosse FHC where they are analyzed in the laboratory. Results may take up to 45 days to be finalized.

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.

For further info about the La Crosse FHC: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/LaCrosseFishHealthCenter/>

Seneca Lake Wild Eggs

BY JAIME MASTERSON, PENDILLS CREEK NFH

Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) welcomed their newest arrivals on January 19, as our Seneca Lake strain of lake trout eggs hatched. The next day, the sac fry were moved to indoor tanks, where they will remain until June. In June, the fish will be moved to outdoor raceways. Again this year, instead of using creek water, well water is being used.

Well water runs at a constant 45°. Due to complications last year, we were unable to use strictly well water, which is a warmer and cleaner water supply. Well water will help boost the growth of the sac fry and get them on a healthy track for becoming next year’s production fish in support of the lake trout rehabilitation program.

For further info about the Pendills Creek NFH/Sullivan Creek NFH: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Fisheries/library/StationFactSheets/pendills.pdf>

And the winner is ... Acipenseriformes?

BY MARK STEINGRAEBER, LA CROSSE FWCO

Did you happen to be one of millions of television viewers around the globe who recently watched the Academy Awards? Did you hear a host announce Acipenseriformes a winner? No? I didn't either. Though I couldn't help but hope that one day in the future, members of this taxonomic order of ancient fish will be widely recognized as winners in their struggle to survive, despite the fact that their roe typically commands a 'king's ransom' when cured with salt and sold as caviar.

Looking back just a bit further in time, it seems somewhat peculiar that here in the frozen Midwest, I received an unexpected phone call while at work on February 11 from a woman in southern California. Speaking with a strange accent, she asked me what CITES permits were required to conduct legitimate international trade in paddlefish caviar, an increasingly popular and less costly domestic substitute for most sturgeon caviars. As a biologist with no previous experience in fielding a regulatory question like this, and feeling just a bit out of my league, I quickly consulted a special agent with an office down the hall who recommended the woman contact a Fish and Wildlife Service wildlife inspector in the Los Angeles area for more detailed information.

Whether it is beluga sturgeon from the Caspian Sea, Atlantic sturgeon on the east coast, lake stur-

For further info about the La Crosse FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/lacrossefisheries/>

Fall Lake Trout Assessment at Six Fathom Bank

BY ANJANETTE BOWEN, ALPENA FWCO

Alpena Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) has been conducting fall lake trout spawning surveys at two offshore reefs since 1993-Six Fathom Bank and Yankee Reef. Both of these reefs are located in the central part of Lake Huron and have the preferred habitat, honeycomb limestone rock, of spawning lake trout. Alpena FWCO attempts to conduct a spawning survey annually at both reefs; however, the weather during the fall can be quite challenging with gale force winds and high seas, which may not provide an opportunity for Alpena FWCO to sample one or both reefs. As a result, each year the priority reef alternates in the event that two fall cruises are not possible.



-USFWS images

Fish classified in the Order Acipenseriformes, such as the paddlefish in the left image and sturgeon in the right image, supply most of the worldwide demand for caviar.

geon in the Great Lakes or paddlefish in Midwestern rivers, a network of Fish and Wildlife Service personnel from Washington D.C. to the Port of Los Angeles to the National Forensics Laboratory, as well many others in field and regional office locations around the country, all play diverse supporting roles to protect and conserve sturgeon and paddlefish populations on a global scale.

So the next time you hear that caviar is being served as an appetizer at the post-Oscar award celebrations, remember the cast of unseen extras comprised of hundreds of dedicated Fish and Wildlife Service employees who help make this possible. And if you happen to be one of them, remember to take a bow... you've earned it!

This year, survey efforts proved to be quite challenging due to weather. The priority reef in 2009 was Six Fathom Bank which is located about 40 miles offshore of Alpena, Mich. The *M/V Spencer F. Baird* arrived in Alpena on October 14. Due to consecutive days of gale force winds and high seas, the staff from the Alpena FWCO had to wait nearly two weeks to conduct the lake trout spawning survey. On October 27, the vessel finally cast lines and departed for Six Fathom Bank. On board the *Spencer F. Baird* was the vessel crew which consisted of captain Michael Perry, marine engineer Robert Bergstrum, seamen fishermen David Bohn along with the assessment crew which consisted of John Johnston, Scott Koproski and Adam Kowalski.

Three 400' gangs of gill nets were deployed on Six Fathom Bank. Each gang consisted of one 100' panel of 4.5", 5.0", 5.5" and 6.0" stretch mesh and was fished for one night. The effort and sites have been standardized at Six Fathom Bank since the inception of this survey in 1993. In total, 113 lake trout were captured between the three sites, marking the third highest catch since implementing this survey. More notable is that over 27% (31 wild fish) of the total lake

trout catch were unclipped fish (presumable wild), which is the second highest catch of unclipped fish at Six Fathom Bank. Catch per effort (CPE) of unclipped lake trout in 2006, 2007 and 2009 are 21.4, 28.2 and 27.4 respectively. The increase in wild fish encourages staff and further justifies the Fish and Wildlife Service's efforts to rehabilitate lake trout populations in Lake Huron.

For further info about the Alpena FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/alpena/index.htm>

La Crosse FHC Monitors Sturgeon

BY SARAH BAUER, LACROSSE FHC

Opening day of lake sturgeon spearing from the Lake Winnebago system occurred on February 13th. Dave Wedan, Eric Leis and Sarah Bauer of the La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office and La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC) traveled to Oshkosh, Wis. to take fish health samples from sturgeon. Twenty-two lake sturgeon were sampled for bacterial and viral pathogens of concern. The La Crosse FHC has been monitoring the health of Lake Winnebago sturgeon for the past 10 years and no target pathogens have been detected. This is very important considering that Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia was isolated from Lake Winnebago in 2007. Laboratory results of this year's fish health sampling are still pending.



-USFWS

A fish health biologist checks a harvested lake sturgeon for an internal tag at a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources registration station.

For further info about the La Crosse FHC: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/LaCrosseFishHealthCenter/>

Search & Destroy Asian Carp Mission

BY ANN RUNSTROM, LA CROSSE FWCO

The La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) teamed up other Fish and Wildlife Service and Illinois Department of Natural Resources sampling crews led by the Carterville FWCO to capture Asian carp in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship



-USFWS

Fish and Wildlife Service and Illinois Department of Natural Resources crews work together to launch their boats on the snow covered ramp in preparation for the Asian carp "Search and Destroy" mission on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.



-USFWS

Biologists Brad Rogers and Heidi Keuler haul in common carp from a gill net set while searching for invasive Asian carp.

Canal near Cicero during the week of February 15. DNA evidence collected by Notre Dame suggests that Asian carp have advanced up-stream of the electric barrier

built to stop them, and may be dangerously close to invading Lake Michigan through the canal. This particular reach of the canal is long and large, contaminated by chemicals and sewage. Everywhere along the canal there are signs posted that read "This water is not suitable for wading, swimming, jet skiing or any human body contact." Sampling here at any time of year is never pleasant. Sampling in February adds the additional factor of dealing with cold temperatures; however, perhaps it keeps the smell down, and it might aid in congregating fish near sites of warm water effluent such as sewage treatment plant outfalls. Despite the negative aspects of the entire project, the crews kept a positive attitude and gave their best effort for this mission. No Asian carp were collected during the week.

Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic invasive species are one of the most significant threats to fish and wildlife and their habitats. Local and regional economies are severely affected with control costs exceeding \$123 billion annually. The Fisheries Program has focused its efforts on preventing introductions of new aquatic invasive species, detecting and monitoring new and established invasives, controlling established invasives, providing coordination and technical assistance to organizations that respond to invasive species problems, and developing comprehensive, integrated plans to fight aquatic invasive species.



-USFWS

Scott Yess and Heidi Keuler hold a goldfish captured while sampling the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.

For further info about the La Crosse FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/lacrossefisheries/>

La Crosse FWCO assists the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge

BY SCOTT YESS, LA CROSSE FWCO

La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) staff worked at the Annual Ice Fishing Clinic which was sponsored by the Winona District of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The event took place on Lake Winona in front of the Lake Park Lodge in Winona, Minn. Approximately 60 kids between the ages of 6 and 13 participated in ice fishing, fish identification and minor regulations activity. Children first learned how to safely ice fish and the benefits of certain types of warm clothing. Children were then split into groups with a group leader and went ice fishing for about an hour before heading in for a lunch. While inside the Lake Park Lodge, children were able to “ice fish” through a table for about 15 different species of cutout fish images.



-USFWS

About 60 kids between the ages of 6-13 participated in ice fishing and fish identification at the Annual Ice Fishing Clinic held on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

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.

Children identified them, measured them, and decided if the “fish” could be legally kept. Gummy worms were given as prizes for participating in the activity. Children were also able to construct their own ice fishing bucket.

After lunch, the kids headed back outside to fish for another hour or two. Children had the opportunity to try fishing in and outside of several different kinds of ice fishing shanties. At the end of the day, prizes such as augers, ice fishing poles and fishing tackle were raffled off. Every participant went home happy because everyone received something to take home such as a photo of themselves, sunglasses, key chains, etc. This public outreach event was a great way for the Fish and Wildlife Service to give something back to the community in which they work in and for the public to learn about natural resources benefits provided from the Fish and Wildlife Service activities.

For further info about the La Crosse FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/lacrossefisheries/>

Federal Agencies ‘Hook Up’ with Winding Rivers Library System & ‘Dive’ into the 2010 Summer Reading Program

BY HEIDI KEULER, LA CROSSE FWCO

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and Fish and Wildlife Service are no strangers to “Connecting Children with Nature.” Randy Hines from the USGS Upper Mississippi Environmental Sciences Center (UMESC) and Heidi Keuler from the La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) teamed up to assist approximately 40 librarians from the Winding Rivers Library System (WRLS) during their summer 2010 reading kickoff workshop titled, “Make

a Splash...Read.” Librarians and biologists hope that connecting children with nature will stimulate children and their families not only get outside, but to also read more.

The WRLS covers 39 libraries in Buffalo, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau and Vernon counties in Wisconsin. On February 25, library staff “checked out” what biologists from the two agencies had to offer and say about planning summer angling

programs for children. Resources provided included websites, curriculum or activity guides, angling equipment, available staff to provide angling education for families, Fishing for Fun Backpacks, information on local outdoor events, mussel and fish identification books and much more. Librarians received presentations from Randy and Heidi as well as a tour of

For further info about the La Crosse FWC: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/lacrossefisheries/>

UMESC to show how biologists work with aquatic resources. Not only did librarians walk away with many valuable resources and information, but the two agencies “hooked” some keeper information as well. Check out the WRLS website for more shared information: www.wrlsweb.org/SLP2010.htm.

Genoa NFH Aquarium makes a Road Trip

BY JIM LUOMA, GENOA NFH

The Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH) set up their aquarium with fish and mussels that are found in the Upper Mississippi River basin for public viewing by sportsmen and women, children and all other attendees at the 33rd annual La Crosse Boat, Sports and Travel Show.



-USFWS

Genoa National Fish Hatchery provided a stocked aquarium for the Fisheries display at the 33rd Annual La Crosse Boat, Sports and Travel Show.

For further info about the Genoa NFH: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/genoa/>

The show is an annual event held at the La Crosse Center in La Crosse, Wis. where many local businesses display their products or services and other community groups and organizations can educate the attendees on their respective organizational missions.

The local Fish and Wildlife Service offices including the Genoa NFH, La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office and La Crosse Fish Health Center staffed a booth at the show from February 11-14. Over 1,600 persons passed through the booth area and were able to ask questions to Fish and Wildlife Service personnel, view display materials including maps, pamphlets, fish mounts and to view live fish and mussels.

Fish that were brought to the show included rainbow and brook trout, walleye, small and large-mouth bass, catfish and lake sturgeon. Mussels that made a showing included the black sandshell, plain pocketbook and hickorynut.

The Genoa NFH along with other Fish and Wildlife Service offices view outreach events such as this as an excellent opportunity to show and educate the public on their missions and on how this agency is dedicated to public service of conserving and protecting America's natural resources for the continuing benefit of the American people.

Genoa NFH Biologists Present Egg Disinfection Protocol at the La Crosse FHC

BY JENNIFER BAILEY, GENOA NFH

Project Leader Doug Aloisi and biologist Jenny Bailey of the Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH) were invited to present the hatchery's *Wild Egg Disinfection Protocol* and the hatchery's *Biosecurity Plan and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point* plans at the La Crosse Fish Health Center's (FHC) Introduction to Fish Health 2010 class. The La Crosse FHC provides the class through the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). Other locations for Introduction to Fish Health are Bozeman, Montana, and NCTC.

Aloisi and Bailey served on a panel of presenters addressing topics that affect fish health including exotic and invasive species, emerging diseases and new research on preventing and eliminating fish pathogens in cultured fishes. Other presenters included Corey Puzach and Ken Phillips of the La Crosse FHC, Calvin Geri of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge – La Crosse District, Heidi Keuhler of the La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office, Maren Tuttle-Lau of

the Upper Midwest Environmental Science Center (UMESC).

Presentations such as this are important for increasing awareness of factors affecting fish health and for safeguarding hatchery and wild fish populations from disease.

Research conducted jointly between the Fish and Wildlife Service and UMESC has shown the methods described by Aloisi and Bailey to be safe and effective in eliminating Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia virus. The egg disinfection and bio-security protocols described have been used for several years by the Fish and Wildlife Service to safeguard hatcheries from bacterial and viral infection. Tools offered in all of the day's presentations help prevent the spread of invasive and exotic species, reduce risks of fish diseases and help fish culturists provide the healthiest fish possible to conservation programs.

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.

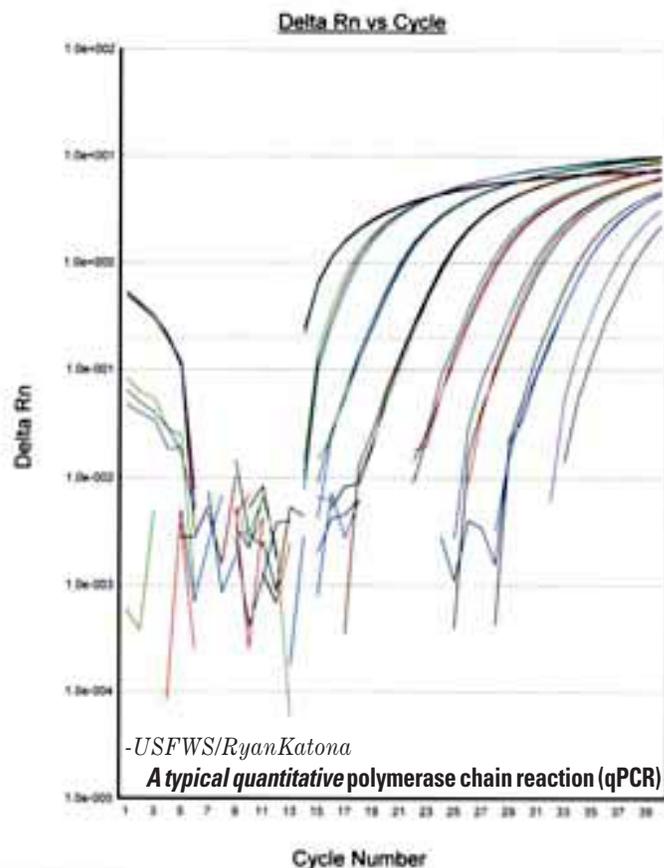
For further info about the Genoa NFH: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/genoa/>

Western Fisheries Research Center Hosts qPCR Workshop

BY RYAN KATONA, LA CROSSE FHC

In February, Ryan Katona of the La Crosse Fish Health Center (FHC) attended the qPCR workshop for fish health diagnostics in Seattle, Wash. The workshop was primarily held to further validate the *Renibacterium salmoninarum* qPCR assay, but many topics were discussed over the three days.

Topics included qPCR trouble shooting, how to develop your own qPCR assay, current qPCR assays of other fish pathogens and other topics. This was a very informative workshop that helped further our understanding of qPCR assays and how to properly interpret the results.



For further info about the La Crosse FHC: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/LaCrosseFishHealthCenter/>

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.

Osage River Lock and Dam #1 Meeting

BY TRACY HILL, COLUMBIA FWCO

Project Leader Tracy Hill accompanied Ecological Services Field Supervisor Charlie Scott to Jefferson City MO, for a meeting with the Missouri Department of Conservation and Missouri Department of Natural Resources regarding Lock and Dam #1 on the Osage River. The purpose for the meeting was for the Fish and Wildlife Service to present potential funding options available to stabilize and provide fish passage at the structure.

Several funding options were presented with advantages and disadvantages of each option discussed. All groups involved in the meeting agreed that they would like to see fish passage provided at the structure which has the potential to benefit many native riverine species. Discussions will continue as the agencies work together to provide fish passage at this structure.

For further info about the Columbia FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/columbiafisheries/>

Volunteer's Dedication Pays Off

BY JAIME MASTERSON, PENDILLS CREEK NFH

Randy Obermiller of Traverse City, Mich. has worked as a volunteer in two different federal hatcheries taking him from Michigan to Maine and



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Randy Obermiller has worked as a volunteer at the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery over the last six years and was recently selected to be the station's biological technician.

For further info about the Pendills Creek NFH/Sullivan Creek NFH: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Fisheries/library/StationFactSheets/pendills.pdf>

What do You want to be When You Grow Up?

BY JOANNE GRADY & BRIAN ELKINGTON, COLUMBIA FWCO

I'll never forget a comment J.C. Bryant made upon his retirement from the Fish and Wildlife Service. As he was leaving as manager of the Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge, he said "I can't believe my career is over. I still haven't figured out what I want to be when I grow up!"

Columbia Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO) biologists Brian Elkington and Joanne Grady spent three Thursday afternoons in February trying to help local middle school students answer this very question. Career Week is an annual event in the Columbia Public School system. Our biologists have been offering the Fish and Wildlife Service as a career choice for several years. Students are presented with professionals in various job fields during their elective courses.

I spoke with students in the Spanish and French classes. I was able to dust off my own school-age French to greet the class and open my presentation. I also shared a session at Gentry Middle School with a local city council person. While students had some questions about the Fish and Wildlife Service and endangered species, they couldn't get over the idea

back again. At Green Lake National Fish Hatchery (NFH), located in Ellsworth, Maine, he helped with the Atlantic salmon restoration/recovery

program for the Gulf of Maine. Then for the past six years, Randy has volunteered at Pendills Creek NFH helping with the Great Lakes rehabilitation of lake trout. He has now come to join us permanently as our new biological science technician. Randy started his new position on February 28th, but as he already knows the ins and outs of hatchery life, has settled right in. Welcome home Randy!

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.

that our local city council members are unpaid! We were both public servants, but a pay check was attached to my job!

Brian shared his sessions at Smithton Middle School with our local Fire Department and at Lange Middle School with the human resources manager for our local Bass Pro Shops. In both cases, the students were interested in our work but really perked up when they saw some of the gear we use and fish we catch. Although competing with the local fire department for a 7th graders attention can be tricky, Brian thinks the Fish and Wildlife Service held its own and, in the end, the students were the real winners that day!

Several of the students were intrigued to learn that we hire high school students every summer through the city's C.A.R.E. program. I expect a few of them to submit applications for this program in the coming years. We'll continue to work with the Columbia Public Schools and Columbia Parks and Recreation Department to offer youth these opportunities to learn about the Fish and Wildlife Service and natural resource careers.

For further info about the Columbia FWCO: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/columbiafisheries/>

Congressional Actions

S. 1214 (is) To conserve fish and aquatic communities in the United States through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation, to improve the quality of life for the people of the United States, and for other purposes. [Introduced in Senate]

H.R. 2565 (ih) To conserve fish and aquatic communities in the United States through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation, to improve the quality of life for the people of the United States, and for other purposes. [Introduced in House]

S. 2870 (is) To establish uniform administrative and enforcement procedures and penalties for the enforcement of the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act and similar statutes, and for other purposes. [Introduced in Senate]

H.R. 146 (enr) To designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes. [Enrolled bill]

H.R. 146 (eas) [Engrossed Amendment Senate]

S. 22 (es) To designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes. [Engrossed in Senate]

S. 22 (pcs) To designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes. [Placed on Calendar Senate]

H.R. 3086 (ih) To coordinate authorities within the Department of the Interior and within the Federal Government to enhance the United States' ability to conserve global wildlife and biological diversity, and for other purposes. [Introduced in House]

H.R. 2192 (ih) To establish an integrated Federal program to protect, restore, and conserve the Nation's natural resources in response to the threats of climate change and ocean acidification. [Introduced in House]

S. 1933 (is) To establish an integrated Federal program that protects, restores, and conserves natural resources by responding to the threats and effects of climate change, and for other purposes. [Introduced in Senate]

H.R. 4363 (ih) To establish a regulatory system and research program for sustainable offshore aquaculture in the United States exclusive economic zone, and for other purposes. [Introduced in House]

H.R. 2188 (rh) To authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the United States [Reported in House]

H.R. 2188 (ih) To authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the United States [Introduced in House]

H.R. 2188 (eh) To authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the United States [Engrossed in House]

H.R. 2188 (rs) To authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the United States [Reported in Senate]

H.R. 2454 (ih) To create clean energy jobs, achieve energy independence, reduce global warming pollution and transition to a clean energy economy. "Calendar year Required annual percentage [Introduced in House]

H.R. 2998 (ih) To create clean energy jobs, achieve energy independence, reduce global warming pollution and transition to a clean energy economy. "Calendar year Required annual percentage [Introduced in House]

H.R. 2996 (rs) Making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes. [Reported in Senate]

H.R. 2454 (rh) To create clean energy jobs, achieve energy independence, reduce global warming pollution and transition to a clean energy economy. "Calendar year Required annual percentage [Reported in House]

H.R. 2454 (eh) To create clean energy jobs, achieve energy independence, reduce global warming pollution and transition to a clean energy economy. "Calendar year Required annual percentage Calendar year Required annual percentage [Engrossed in House]

H.R. 2454 (pcs) To create clean energy jobs, achieve energy independence, reduce global warming pollution and transition to a clean energy economy. "Calendar year Required annual percentage Calendar year Required annual percentage [Placed on Calendar Senate]

H.R. 2996 (pp) Making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes. [Public Print]

H.R. 2188 (rfs) To authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the United States [Referred in Senate]

H.R. 1080 (ih) To strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and for other purposes. [Introduced in House]

H.R. 1080 (eh) To strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and for other purposes. [Engrossed in House]

H.R. 1080 (rfs) To strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and for other purposes. [Referred in Senate]

H.R. 1080 (rh) To strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and for other purposes. [Reported in House]

S. 2913 (is) To establish a national mercury monitoring program, and for other purposes. [Introduced in Senate]

Source is <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/bills/index.html>
Searched database by keyword = "fish"

Midwest Region Fisheries Divisions

National Fish Hatcheries

The Region's National Fish Hatcheries primarily focus on native fish restoration/rehabilitation by stocking fish and eggs, such as pallid and lake sturgeon and by developing and maintaining brood stocks of selected fish strains, such as lake trout and brook trout.

Hatcheries also provide technical assistance to other agencies, provide fish and eggs for research, stock rainbow trout in fulfillment of federal mitigation obligations and assist with recovery of native mussels and other native aquatic species.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices conduct assessments of fish populations to guide management decisions, perform key monitoring and control activities related to invasive, aquatic species; survey and evaluate aquatic habitats to identify restoration/rehabilitation 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 Partners for Fish and Wildlife and the Great Lakes Coastal Programs; provide coordination and technical assistance toward the management of interjurisdictional fisheries; maintain and operate several key interagency fisheries databases; provide

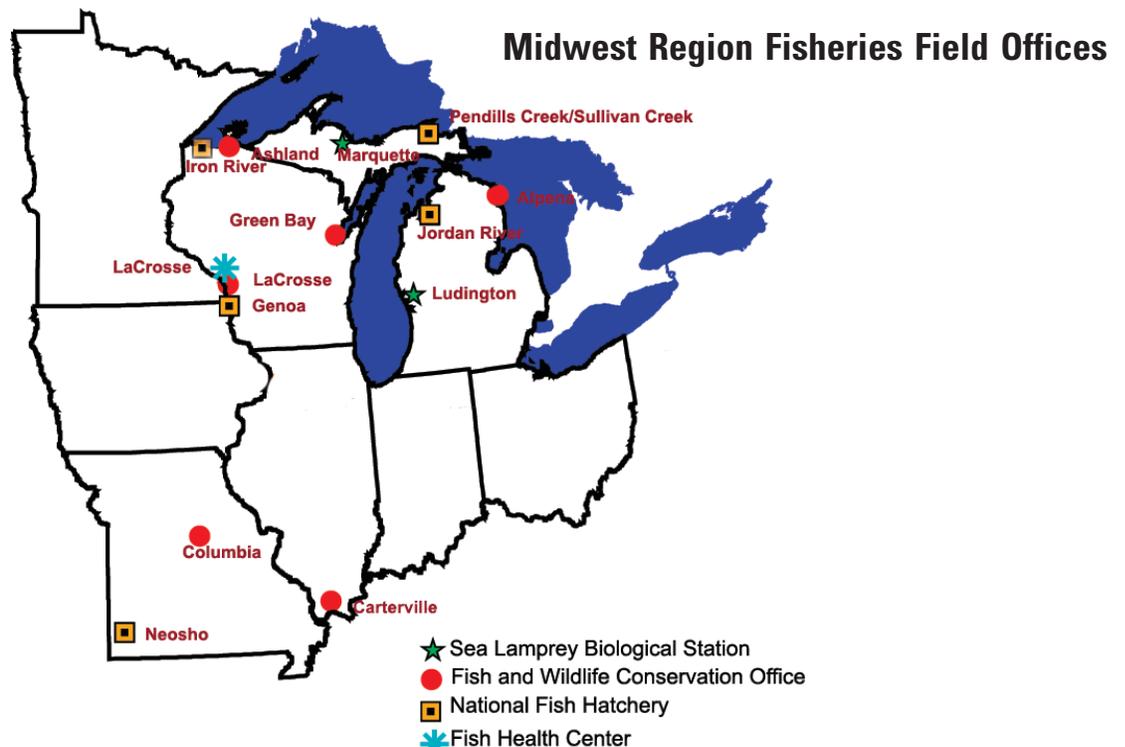
technical expertise to other Service programs addressing contaminants, endangered species, federal project review and hydro-power operation and relicensing; evaluate and manage fisheries on Service lands; and, provide technical support to 38 Native American tribal governments and treaty authorities.

Sea Lamprey Biological Stations

The Fish and Wildlife Service is the United States Agent for sea lamprey control, with two Biological Stations assessing and managing sea lamprey populations throughout the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission administers the Sea Lamprey Management Program, with funding provided through the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Fish Health Center

The Fish Health Center provides specialized fish health evaluation and diagnostic services to federal, state and tribal hatcheries in the region; conducts extensive monitoring and evaluation of wild fish health; 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.



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Fish Tails

“Fish Tails” includes articles that are included in field station reports that are not published in the “Conservation Briefs.” These articles are categorized by focus area and includes the article title, author and field station. The website link, where the full article can be viewed, is highlighted in blue type.

Partnerships and Accountability

- **Little Kids on Hard Water. La Crosse Area Fisheries Office Kids Ice Fishing Day a Great Time!**
 - Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH
- **Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study Meeting**
 - Tracy Hill, Columbia FWCO
- **Multi-Agencies Gather for Wildlife and Habitat Review**
 - Heidi Keuler, La Crosse FWCO

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Aquatic Invasive Species

Public Use

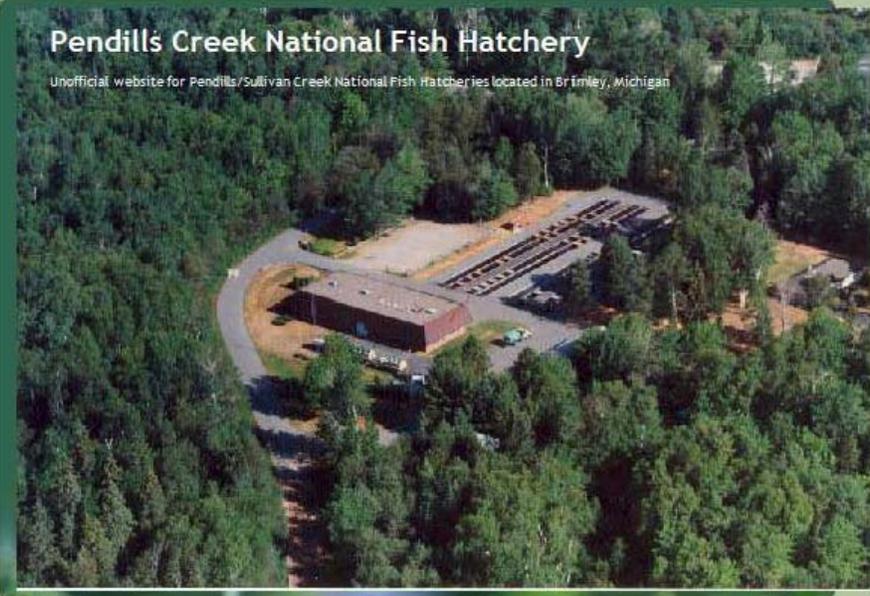
- La Crosse Fish Health Center Participates in Annual Kids Ice Fishing Event
 - Sarah Bauer, La Crosse FHC

Cooperation with Native Americans

Leadership in Science and Technology

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Workforce Management



Search This Blog <http://pendillscreeknfh.blogspot.com/>

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Technology Is Knocking And The FWS Is Answering!

BY JAIME MASTERSON, PENDILLS CREEK NFH

Recently, the Fish and Wildlife Service has started allowing the use of social media such as Blogspot, Facebook and Youtube as a way of getting our message out to the mass populous. Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) has created a blog, which can be accessed at <http://pendillscreeknfh.blogspot.com/>. Since the hatchery does not yet have an official website, the new blog (unofficial website) will help better inform the public of what we do here. It will also keep people up to date on what is new at the hatchery, which will be important as they have several major construction projects in the near future. These projects include a new raceway building and early rearing station that will be constructed over the next few years. Blogging will also allow the Pendills Creek NFH to post “up and coming” events such as the “Annual Children’s Fishing Event” and “Children In Nature” projects. The blog will be used to keep people current on Pendills Creek NFH activities. Links will soon be added to the Fish and Wildlife Service and *Friends of Pendills Creek Hatchery* web sites.