

**U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

# **Inside Region 3**

*July 2014*



Black ash, an important cultural resource on tribal lands. Photo courtesy of Nicholas A. Tonelli.

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## RD Corner

### Surrogate Species

It's been an unusually wet spring and early summer across the region, but I was able to get my feet wet, so to speak, with a lot of streams in Michigan during a tour of our sea lamprey control program. I enjoyed seeing the fine work that our staff are doing to help control invasive species in the Great Lakes and its tributaries. I invite you to read the article on my visit on page 7.

It's also a busy time with our director recently attending the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA) meeting in Traverse City, Mich. At the meeting he highlighted a number of agency priorities that included surrogate species, Northern long-eared bat, and our role in the continuing fight against Asian carp.

Here in the region we continue to move forward with surrogate species. A great shout out of "thanks" for all the hard work of our staff and partners who created our initial list of surrogate species for the Eastern Tallgrass Big Rivers geography. Page 14 outlines what the region's immediate next steps are as we move into implementation. Also included in the list of our initial 21 surrogate species. See page 14. This summer we will also be starting the surrogate species selection process for the Upper Midwest Great Lakes geography. I have high hopes that our progress in the ETBR and UMGL geographies will kickstart new conversations about how programs can help transform the surrogate species approach from theory into practice.



Regional Director Tom Melius. USFWS photo.

A lot field work is going on out at our hatcheries, field stations, and refuges. Again, thank you for all that you do. No matter where you are, a friendly reminder to be safe. Everyone have a great summer!

T.O.M.

# Midwest Region Bird Conservation Biologists Receive National Award

On May 18, Midwest Region bird conservation biologists Katie Koch and Tom Will were honored as recipients of Point Blue Conservation Science's 2014 Outstanding Conservation Partner Award. Point Blue Conservation Science (formerly known as Point Reyes Bird Observatory) has been one of the key partners in the development of the Midwest Avian Data Center (MWADC).

Although Point Blue is located in California, it works nationally with the Avian Knowledge Network and was a logical organization to partner with in the development of the Midwest's premier portal to a wealth of bird-related information and decision support delivery tools. Katie Koch traveled to Bolinas, Calif. to accept the award on behalf of herself and Tom Will.

The award was made for invaluable contributions that Koch, Will and their U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Region colleagues have made to bird and ecosystem conservation over the years. Point Blue Conservation Science recognized the array of accomplishments of the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership and recommended that other regions use this approach to advance data-based bird conservation across shared landscapes.

Why is bird monitoring so important, and what are the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership, the Avian Knowledge Network, and the Midwest Avian Data Center?

Birds are colorful, vocal, and inhabit diverse environments ranging from wilderness areas to cities. Many people – amateurs and professional biologists alike – love the challenge of counting birds. Population monitoring is one of the foundations of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Migratory Bird Conservation Program.

Bird surveys are conducted to track changes in abundance and distribution,



Regional Bird Conservation Biologist Katie Koch speaks to attendees after receiving the Point Blue Conservation Science 2014 Outstanding Conservation Partner Award, May 18. USFWS photo.

better understand limiting factors, and evaluate the effects of management actions. However, the utility of bird monitoring is limited if it is not done using standardized protocols and statistically-based sampling frameworks. Management and sharing of bird population data are also critically important.

In 2009, the Midwest Region's Division of Migratory Bird Management established the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership to facilitate bird monitoring activities that inform conservation and management decisions through enhanced coordination and exchange of bird survey data. The

partnership is a regional network that sponsors regular workshops, an interactive website (<http://midwestbirdmonitoring.ning.com>), a registry of Midwest bird monitoring programs, and focused working groups.

An important, state-of-the-art tool that has been developed by the bird monitoring partnership is the Midwest Avian Data Center.

MWADC is a node of the Avian Knowledge Network, which is a network of regional access points to a common shared database of bird information. As such, MWADC provides a means to store, retrieve, and analyze a variety of information on bird populations in our Region.

MWADC's goal is to make timely and relevant scientific data and analyses readily accessible to habitat managers, conservation practitioners, scientists, and the public.

While Koch was in California to accept the Point Blue award, she also helped lead a strategic planning meeting and two-day hands-on workshop for the Avian Knowledge Network to facilitate the development of data centers like MWADC for other regions of the country.

By Steve Lewis

# Tribes in Michigan and Wisconsin Selected to Receive Grants From U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Conservation Work

Each year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service distributes competitive grant funding to federally recognized Tribal governments. These grants support tribes in the development and implementation of programs for the benefit of wildlife and their habitat. Species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and non-game species are often focused on in these projects.

This year, the Service announced \$4.6 million in Tribal Wildlife Grants awards to federally recognized tribes in 15 states to fund a wide range of fish and wildlife conservation projects. Two tribes in the Midwest Region, the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (Mich.) and the Stockbridge-Munsee Community (Wis.) received a total of more than \$399,000 in grants for conservation projects.

Since 2007, the Service has given out 24 grants to tribes in the Midwest. Projects range from moose population dynamics research in Minnesota, to biodiversity inventory of Potawatomi lands in Wisconsin, to arctic grayling and elk restoration in Michigan. The grants have supported numerous other conservation projects in the Midwest Region, such as planning fish and wildlife conservation, habitat and fish restoration, field surveys and population monitoring, habitat preservation and public education.

“Tribal nations share our conservation challenges in the United States,” said Service Director Dan Ashe. “The Tribal Wildlife Grants Program creates opportunities for tribes to build conservation capacity and for us to work together in a variety of ways, including species restoration, fish passage, protection of migratory birds



Wood turtles are threatened in Wisconsin. The Stockbridge-Munsee Community has identified these turtles on tribal lands and will consider this species in their herptile management and habitat restoration project. USFWS photo by Colin Osborn.

and efforts to cope with the long-term effects of a changing climate.”

The grants provide tribes opportunities to develop increased management capacity, improve and enhance relationships with partners (including state agencies), address cultural and environmental priorities and heighten tribal students’ interest in fisheries, wildlife and related fields of study. A number of grants have also been awarded to support recovery efforts for threatened and endangered species in the Midwest Region.

2014 TWG Awards in the Midwest Region:

## MICHIGAN:

Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (\$199,942) - Wildlife Habitat Assessment and Restoration Plan: Expansion and Implementation

The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of

the Potawatomi has received TWG awards in the past, which were used to develop and implement the first two years of a 10-year Wildlife Habitat Assessment and Restoration Plan for tribal lands. The tribe’s vision for the plan is the creation of a framework to manage the recent expansion and development of tribal lands in a sustainable manner while also restoring important cultural resources such as black ash and wild river rice, promoting green space and protecting wildlife and habitats. In receiving this award for 2014, the tribe will be able to continue moving forward with their restoration plan. The tribe and other partners will provide \$59,000 in addition to federal funds to cover costs of the project.

## WISCONSIN:

Stockbridge-Munsee Community (\$200,000) - Herptile Management and Habitat Restoration

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# Tribes in Michigan and Wisconsin Selected to Receive Grants From U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Conservation Work Continued

With the aid of this grant, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community will study herptile species and their habitats on tribal lands. Tribal staff have identified several state-threatened herptile species including the Blanding's turtle and the wood turtle and other state-listed species of concern including the four-toed salamander, the pickerel frog, the northern leopard frog, the mudpuppy, and eastern hog-nosed snake, among others, on tribal land. A majority of these state-listed species of concern have been impacted by loss of wetlands in Wisconsin. The tribe is planning to develop several key components for this restoration project including conducting a comprehensive herptile study, developing a comprehensive herptile management plan and completing several restoration plans designed to enhance herptile habitat. The tribe will match \$206,388 with the \$200,000 provided in federal grants.

Tribes have received more than \$64 million through the Tribal Wildlife



The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi is working to restore black ash, an important cultural resource, on tribal lands. Photo courtesy of Nicholas A. Tonelli.

Grants Program since 2003, providing support for more than 380 conservation projects administered by participating federally recognized tribes. These grants provide technical and financial assistance for development and implementation of projects that benefit fish and wildlife resources, including nongame species and their habitats.

The grants are provided exclusively to federally recognized tribal governments and are made possible through the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program. Proposals for the 2015 grant cycle are due Sept. 2, 2014.

For information about the Tribal Wildlife Grants application process, visit <http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/grants.html>.

By Joanna Gilkeson



Alpha female of the Miller Creek Pack, trapped and collared by the Stockbridge-Munsee Community during a research project supported by previous TWG funding. Photo courtesy of Randall Wollenhaup.

# Dedication Ceremony for Addition of the Former Germania Golf Course to Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge a Success

A dedication ceremony was held on May 12, 2014, to celebrate the addition of the former Germania Golf Course to Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) transferred this 135-acre tract to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. TNC's acquisition of this land was made possible through the generous support and partnership of the Dow Chemical Company.

The acquisition provides a unique opportunity for the refuge to reach out to the underserved, urban community. This tract is adjacent to some of the most impoverished neighborhoods of inner city Saginaw where residents have limited transportation opportunities. These neighbors will now have the ability to enjoy four miles of cart paths that wind through the property to see wildlife in a serene, natural environment within a short walking distance from their homes. Most of these paths are handicapped accessible. The tract has a large pond for fishing. Also, the

former golf course adjoins the refuge's Green Point Environmental Learning Center. Thus, it will significantly help to improve environmental education and interpretive programs there.

be enhanced as lawn maintenance fertilizers and pesticides will no longer be applied.

The event included words from Helen Taylor, State Director of TNC, Neil Hawkins, Corporate Vice President of Dow Chemical Company, and Steven Kahl, Refuge Manager, followed by a celebratory tree-planting symbolizing urban restoration. The event closed with the removal of a no trespassing sign at the main entrance to the new tract.



Rain did not dampen the enthusiasm of the partners. USFWS photo by Lionel D. Grant.

The acquisition also provides a tremendous opportunity to preserve and restore valuable habitat. The tract is directly contiguous with existing refuge lands and includes close to a half-mile of Tittabawassee River shoreline. What currently is a monoculture of Kentucky bluegrass will be restored to a diverse mix of native vegetation of woodland and open meadows. Floodplain capacity will be preserved and water quality will

<http://www.abc12.com/story/25492646/saginaw-county-golf-course-now-part-of-federally-protected-natural-area>

By Steve Kahl

Check out ABC 12's coverage of the event here: <http://www.abc12.com/story/25492646/saginaw-county-golf-course-now-part-of-federally-protected-natural-area>

## Director Melius Attends Sea Lamprey Tour with Partners

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) hosted a field tour of the Sea Lamprey Control Program in Michigan May 27 through May 30. The tour brought newly appointed commissioners together and invited guests from the U.S. and Canada to learn about the latest and greatest in sea lamprey control work through briefings and demonstrations. Participants included U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Regional Director Tom Melius. The tour passed through several sites including Ann Arbor, Mich., Cheboygan, Mich., and Sault Ste. Marie, Canada.

Sea lamprey control was established as a priority for the Service 58 years ago through a treaty with Canada and the Great Lakes Fishery Act of 1956. The Service is the main agency charged with carrying out the Sea Lamprey Control Program in U.S. waters of the Great Lakes. Regional Director Melius was in attendance at the tour to represent the Service's program, learn more about sea lamprey control and meet with our partners to discuss the invasive



Midwest Regional Director Tom Melius and Sea Lamprey Control Employee Bruce Eldridge at the site of the sea lamprey traps. Photo courtesy of GLFC.



Jason Krebill, Service employee, collecting sea lamprey larvae on the Au Sable River, Michigan. USFWS photo.

species. Currently, the Service uses several tactics to keep the sea lamprey population in check including barriers, trapping and lampricides, which are selectively toxic to this species. Several of these tactics were demonstrated during the tour.

Sea lamprey, native to the Atlantic Ocean, invaded the Great Lakes in the 1930s. Sea lamprey feed on important native fish such as lake trout, Pacific salmon, steelhead and lake sturgeon. Sea lampreys, which decimated Great Lakes fisheries in the 1940s and 1950s, have been reduced to less than 10 percent of their abundance prior to the start of control operations. To control

the sea lamprey in the Great Lakes, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission was formed in 1955. The Commission, in cooperation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Service, work together to keep the sea lampreys at bay and facilitate the restoration of the Great Lakes.

By Joanna Gilkeson

# Balancing Sea Lamprey Control Treatments and the Surrounding Ecosystem

**The Problem:** In 2009, the Hiawatha Sportsman's Club in Engadine, Mich. contacted the Sea Lamprey Control Program with concern that sea lamprey lampricide treatments were negatively impacting the aquatic invertebrates. In particular, the club was concerned about a potential decline in burrowing mayflies, which would result in a reduction of fish in Cold Creek, a tributary of the Millecoquins River in Mackinac County, Mich. Resolution of this concern was needed to ensure that the club would grant the program permission to access and treat Cold Creek.

Without sea lamprey control treatments the Millecoquins River system would contribute a substantial number of sea lampreys, which prey on fish in Lake Michigan. Treatment of the system is an important piece in controlling the sea lamprey population in the lake. The club owns 35,000 acres of land and a large portion of the Millecoquins River system flows through their property. Access permission is needed to treat the upper and lower Millecoquins River and Cold Creek.

**Solving the Issue:** The program embarked on a study to determine whether sea lamprey control treatments were affecting the aquatic invertebrate population in Cold Creek. This information would provide all parties with a better understanding of the impacts of treatments on non-target species of concern.

The Sea Lamprey Control Program regularly takes steps to reduce the effects of sea lamprey treatments and program operations on non-target species. The primary method used to control sea lamprey in the Great Lakes is the application of lampricide.



Brook trout were one of the fish species that the Hiawatha Sportsman's Club was concerned about. This species is native to Michigan. USFWS photo.

Lampricide is applied to streams to remove sea lampreys during their larval stage of the life cycle. Often times, these treatments are amplified with a formulation of what is called Bayluscide. Bayluscide helps to increase the toxicity of lampricide to sea lampreys, and allows the control team to use less lampricide. When used in the appropriate amounts, these treatments are estimated to eliminate about 95 percent of sea lamprey larvae in treated areas.

Alternative methods used to control populations include barriers to block and traps to capture spawning adults. These operations have the potential to affect non-target organisms and the program takes care to minimize potential mortality by implementing special procedures where other sensitive species may be encountered.

**The Study:** To address the club's concerns, the program conducted a

study to: 1) assess the presence of burrowing mayflies and their habitat; 2) assess the effect that lampricide exposure had on aquatic invertebrate populations; and 3) determine the diet composition of resident fish before, during, and after the lampricide and whether exposure to the treatments affected their ability to forage.

**Results:** The study demonstrated that no burrowing mayflies were in the mainstream of Cold Creek. The substrate in the stream consists mostly of sand bottom with woody debris which is not preferred habitat of burrowing mayflies.

While burrowing mayflies were not present in the stream, a total of 58 other aquatic invertebrate species were collected and identified in the study's sampling units. The study found that the treatment of Cold Creek did not result in a reduction

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# Balancing Sea Lamprey Control Treatments and the Surrounding Ecosystem

of any aquatic invertebrates. However, there was a difference following the treatment in two invertebrates, a type of mayfly and the stonecase caddisfly but not in the treated area of the stream. In both cases, the density of the species decreased in the untreated area, while they either increased (mayfly) or stayed the same (stonecase caddisfly) in the treated area.

The study showed that a lampricide treatment can affect the feeding behavior of opportunistic brook and rainbow trout. Comparison of stomach contents showed that the number of aquatic invertebrates consumed by the fish during the treatment increased by 40 percent. The fish temporarily abandoned their normal food items in favor of a drifting fingernet caddisfly that spins fine-meshed nets on the underside of rocks where they are usually unavailable as food for fish. One week following the treatment, stomach contents of fish in Cold Creek were similar to the pre-treatment period.

**The Verdict:** The study was successful in demonstrating that lampricide treatments do not negatively affect the invertebrate or fish populations in Cold Creek. By conducting this work, the program was able to reach an agreement on access permission with the club that will continue to provide for the safe and effective removal of larval sea lampreys from the Millecoquins system and protect Lake Michigan.

By Cheryl Kaye

## Paul McKenzie Wins Wings



Paul McKenzie received the 2014 Wings Across the Americas Award from the U.S. Forest Service. USFWS photo by Amy Salveter.

## Across the Americas Award

Paul McKenzie, biologist with the Service's Columbia, Missouri Ecological Services Field Office, received a 2014 Wings Across the Americas Award from the U.S. Forest Service for his work to protect Barton Fen, a 50-acre area on Mark Twain National Forest designated as critical habitat for the federally endangered Hine's emerald dragonfly. The Wings Across the Americas Awards recognize outstanding individuals from the Forest Service and partner organizations for their work in advancing bird, butterfly, bat and dragonfly conservation. The awards were announced March 12, 2014, in

Denver, Colo., as part of the 79th annual North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

By Georgia Parham

# Freshwater Mussel Conservation

## Sportfish Carry Native Mussels Back to the Chippewa River

On May 30, media were invited to partake in Genoa National Fish Hatchery's release of 4,500 walleye, lake sturgeon and smallmouth bass into the Chippewa River in Chippewa Falls, Wis. Though the fish will support recreational fishing in the area, their true mission was to carry small passengers back to the river. On the gills of every host fish were as many as 1,000 freshwater mussel larvae.

Freshwater mussels are important to river systems because they filter algae and bacteria from stream water, and serve as indicators of water quality and stream health. Declines in mussel populations in the Chippewa River has occurred for many reasons including loss of habitat, water quality issues and invasive species.

The multi-year project to restore native mussels in the Chippewa River is being led by Genoa National Fish Hatchery's biologist, Nathan Eckert. With funding provided by Xcel Energy's Natural Resources Fund in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Eckert's work stocking sportfish carrying larval black sandshell, mucket and hickorynut mussels will help ease the environmental impacts of six hydro projects on the Chippewa River.

Look for the Midwest Region's biologist, Nathan Eckert, in the next edition of Fish and Wildlife News. He will be featured in the series, A Day in the Life. Keep reading for a sneak peek!

By Katie Steiger-Meister



Above: Nathan Eckert talks to the local media about the importance of native mussel restoration on the Chippewa River in Chippewa Falls, Wis. USFWS photo.

Below: Nathan Eckert from Genoa National Fish Hatchery will be featured in the new segment of Fish and Wildlife News, A Day in the Life. USFWS photo.

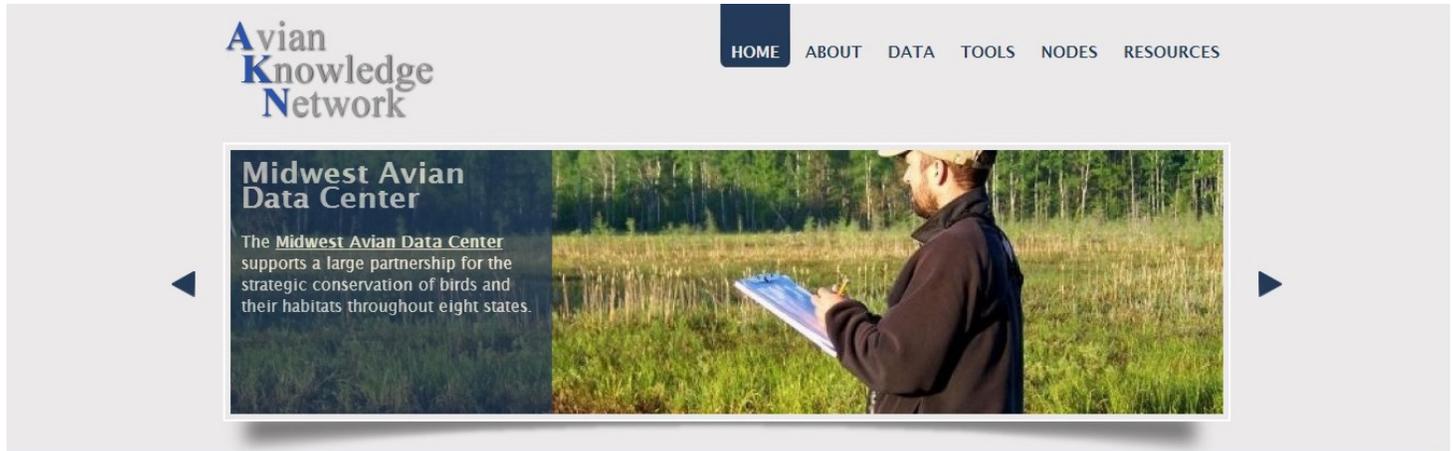


## A Day in the Life of a Midwest Region Mussel Biologist

Nathan Eckert, a mussel biologist at Genoa National Fish Hatchery, is a true pioneer in endangered freshwater mussel restoration. Depending on the day, he may be in dive gear looking for gravid mussels in the St. Croix River, tirelessly working in the mobile freshwater mussel rearing unit, or at a community event teaching children the value of freshwater mussel conservation. His research on alternate host fish and efforts to develop captive host fish populations are giving many endangered freshwater mussels a fighting chance to survive.

By Katie Steiger-Meister

# National Point Count and Marshbird Databases Now Supported by Avian Knowledge Network



## WELCOME TO THE AKN!

The Avian Knowledge Network (AKN) is a partnership of people, institutions and government agencies supporting the conservation of birds and their habitats based on data, the adaptive management paradigm, and the best available science. AKN partners act to improve awareness, access to, and use of data and tools at scales ranging from individual locations to administrative regions and species ranges.

The Avian Knowledge Network website, pictured here, hosts the new application. USFWS photo.

- AKN Goals
- AKN Approach
- Get Involved

### News

USGS Point Count and

It's now easier and faster to enter and manage your landbird and marsh bird breeding survey data online. The Migratory Bird Program and National Wildlife Refuge System Inventory and Monitoring Initiative, working in close coordination with an inter-agency team, brought the National Point Count and Marshbird databases from USGS to the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN).

The AKN is a partnership of people, institutions and government agencies supporting the conservation of birds and their habitats based on data, the adaptive management paradigm, and the best available science. AKN partners act to improve awareness of, purpose of, access to, and use of data and tools at scales ranging from individual locations to administrative regions and species ranges.

The new online data management system accepts marshbird data collected using the Conway et al. protocol (2011) and landbird point count data from several protocols, including the Knutson et al. protocol (2008). You can go directly to the new data entry application through this link: <http://www.avianknowledge.net/>

Moving these databases to the AKN streamlines online data entry, enables access to automated data quality checks and analytical outputs, and promotes data sharing for landscape analysis with the greater scientific community.

A brief training webinar was held on May 19, and it has been archived for viewing at: <http://nctc.adobeconnect.com/p5ciuwecf5o/>.

For more information, contact Katie Koch, Migratory Bird Biologist, (906) 226-1249 or Jana Newman, I&M Branch Chief, 970-266-2922

By Katie Koch

# Serving Nature

Bill McCoy has helped expand the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge. There was no Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge when Bill McCoy came here in 1990.

“The first thing they told me was ‘there’s a glitch in the project,’” he remembers. It took four years to jump the hurdles and weed through politics, but McCoy believes it was worth it.

He still remembers the day the wildlife refuge and management area was officially created: Sept. 7, 1994.

Under McCoy’s leadership, they’ve acquired more than 8,408 acres of land from willing sellers.

“But our goal is much bigger than that,” he said. “It’s 22,473, actually, so we have a long way to go.”

That doesn’t undermine the 8,000 acres they do have. Public usage has become significant, and McCoy says wildlife use of the refuge is beginning to improve.

“We’re acquiring land and managing it, but [wildlife] is losing more and more habitat every year that goes by; even things like monarch butterflies are in jeopardy because of our land use practices in the country related to farming practices,” he said.

Organizations are working to save the monarchs, and some people even create butterfly gardens for them, McCoy said.

“I’m a true believer - if we’re going to preserve our wildlife population in this country...we have to have these kind of places set aside to meet the needs of these wild animals.”

McCoy, a friendly man with a white beard and bright blue eyes, doesn’t



Meet Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge Manager Bill McCoy. Photo courtesy of Michael Caterina of the Daily Clarion.

blame anyone for the situation the environment is in.

“So much of what we do is unintended... that’s one reason we need to educate people to have a better understanding of the natural world around us and how these different creatures thrive without our help but they also die if we take actions that destroy their homes... there may be more wildlife coming here because there’s habitat that’s being managed for them that they don’t have anywhere else,” he said.

“The refuges like this place, will become in the future more and more important to maintain any kind of a representative sample of our wildlife because they’re not going to have suitable habitat outside of these protected and managed areas.”

McCoy has experience working in wildlife refuges all across the U.S. He grew up in rural southwest Pennsylvania, going to a one-room school

through eighth grade.

“I wanted to work in the outdoors,” McCoy said. “I loved hunting and fishing.” He took his first job at Crab Orchard Refuge in southern Illinois, helping build numerous nature trails. Years passed, and McCoy worked at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge in Minnesota, then at Erie National Wildlife Refuge back in Pennsylvania and Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge was where he was posted when the opportunity at Patoka River opened.

“I could probably talk about him for an hour,” said Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge specialist Heath Hamilton. “He has rightfully earned the utmost respect in the conservation community for the work he has done, he’s a great mentor for me; I feel extremely lucky to work with him.”

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## Serving Nature Continued

The refuge is not a zoo, McCoy says. Wildlife has “the same needs we do; they need a home where they can find food, water and safety and places to breed and multiply. That’s what this refuge is all about - biodiversity, all kinds of species from insects like butterflies up to birds and mammals.”

Some of the animals are endangered, like the Indiana bat, and find their summer habitat at the refuge.

Christian Freitag, executive director of Sycamore Land Trust, has worked with McCoy for two years on land protection projects, notably the acquisition of the Columbia Mine Preserve last year.

Freitag says McCoy’s service is unique because of its involvement with nature.

“He’s devoted his life to improving nature for people and critters,” he said. “He cares very deeply about the place he lives and the place he works,” Freitag said. McCoy has “protected the place he loves the most.”

Nancy Gehlhausen, a volunteer with the Friends of the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge says McCoy is filled with enthusiasm.

“He is probably one of the most inspirational and optimistic persons I’ve ever met; he’s very intelligent, very knowledgeable,” Gehlhausen said.

“Even when things just look bleak - like with the acquisition of the Columbia Mine, he just never gave up,” she added.

“Lack of funds is the problem, not lack of willing sellers,” McCoy says.

“People know me from past dealings,” he said, “They weren’t ready to sell 10, 15 years ago.”

And if owners don’t want to sell now, maybe they’ll be interested in the future. “I’ll call ‘em about every five years,” he said.

The refuge’s biggest source of money has been mitigation settlements, he said, and they do receive grants, which help when it comes to land acquisition.

When they applied for the \$1 million North American grant they had to identify the properties they would buy, he said. They planned to get one property with more than 600 acres.

“And we got the grant, and we entered into negotiations, and they sold to somebody else above appraised value - so we didn’t get it,” he said with a chuckle. “So, I have to make up those 600 acres because I’ve got a commitment.... It happens all the time,” he said. It can be disappointing, but McCoy, like Gehlhausen says, is optimistic.

“I have two years to spend that money, so that’s what I’m working on,” he said.

The Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge is one of more than 560 in the U.S. and its territories.

“People will appreciate this place more and more as time goes by. How many people get this chance to do this? To create something that should be lasting. It is frustrating to see what’s going on outside of the refuge, which sort of spurs me on more to believe in the refuge... we’re losing things in other places, you know, and that’s kind of scary,” McCoy said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Wildlife Refuge System is the only one like it on Earth, McCoy said.

“I love what I’m doing,” he said.

McCoy also has a goal to educate people

about the natural world.

“There are 380 species of birds and mammals; it’s got forests, uplands, lowlands...all kinds of little warblers. This refuge area offers a tremendous resting and feeding area for them. Most people don’t even see them or know they’re here...it’ll become famous for it eventually,” McCoy said.

“This is a legacy for the future,” he said.

Snakey Point and Dillin Bottoms are two of his favorite spots in the refuge.

“You never know what you’re going to see” at Snakey Point, McCoy says.

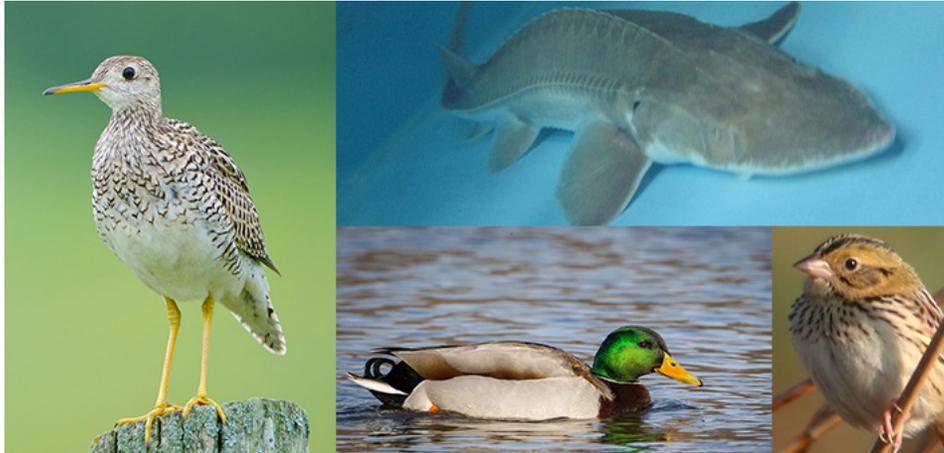
He likes to visit Dillin Bottoms because it’s a “peaceful place to go to and just sit and observe. It’s common to see bald eagles there, Mississippi kites...you really get away from civilization when you go down there... you always notice the sky down there, the clouds. It always seems like there’s puffy white clouds.”

Climate change has always been around, McCoy believes. “It’s just we’re making it worse.”

By Tabitha Waggoner

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# Implementing Surrogate Species in the Midwest Region



Implementation in the Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers geography will begin with four spotlight surrogate species:(Clockwise) Pallid sturgeon, Henslow's sparrow, mallard and upland sandpiper. USFWS photos.

In 2013 the Midwest Region completed work on Version 1.0, a preliminary surrogate species list for the Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative geography. In 2014 work is focused on identifying goals and conservation needs for particular species, and moving toward implementation with our partners.

To be successful we will have to work together as one region and one Service. The Surrogate Species Regional Oversight Committee has established a field-based Implementation Team co-led by Doug Helmers, Iowa Private Lands Coordinator, and Greg Conover, Large Rivers Coordinator. The current field-based core team created to help guide first steps towards implementation includes:

- Tim Yager, Upper Mississippi NWFR
- Gwen White, ETPBR LCC
- Kraig McPeck, Rock Island ES FO
- Sean Blomquist, Ottawa NWR

The core team is developing a process for engaging field offices and our key partners in the ETPBR geography. Their work over the coming months will include developing scalable population objectives, landscape scale decision support tools and monitoring protocols that will enable us to measure the effects of our conservation delivery.

Implementation for some surrogate species will be able to begin quickly due to previous and ongoing efforts of Service employees and our partners to develop species management plans and population objectives. As a result we have identified Henslow's sparrow, upland sandpiper, mallard and pallid sturgeon as "spotlight" surrogate species for implementation in the Midwest Region.

We continue to seek enthusiastic participants for the implementation team to assist in identifying how we will align programs and budgets to successfully implement the surrogate species approach in the ETPBR geography and Midwest Region. We encourage you to be part of the future by being part of the team today. Speak with your supervisor

and then contact Doug Helmers or Greg Conover for more information.

For more information, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/science/>.

By Greg Conover

## Proposed Version 1.0 List of surrogate species for the Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big River Landscape

1. Henslow's sparrow
2. Grasshopper sparrow
3. Bobolink
4. Upland sandpiper
5. Weed shiner
6. Topeka shiner
7. Blackside darter
8. Greater redhorse
9. River redhorse
10. Shoal chub
11. Pallid sturgeon
12. Shovelnose sturgeon
13. Black redhorse
14. Paddlefish
15. Green-winged teal
16. Mallard
17. Pectoral sandpiper
18. Marsh wren
19. Virginia rail
20. Smallmouth bass
21. Pugnose minnow

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## Employee Profile: David E. Hendrix, Hatchery Manager

### Neosho National Fish Hatchery

Hatchery Manager Dave Hendrix oversees the daily production and operation of the newly renovated Neosho National Fish Hatchery (NHF) in Neosho, Mo. Nary a photo can be found of Hendrix without his signature cowboy hat and matching smile. His wide grin has earned him the name ‘Mr. Wonderful,’ and his hat comes from an important man in his life. “My father always wore a cowboy hat,” he says, “I guess it’s a tribute to him.”

Neosho NFH is the nation’s oldest operating federal fish hatchery. The daily operations of the hatchery include endangered pallid sturgeon recovery, endangered Ozark cavefish protection and education, raising host fish for the recovery of endangered mussels and experimenting with mussel propagation. The hatchery is adding Topeka shiner propagation as part of the recovery effort this fall and mandated rainbow trout production through reimbursable funds from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Hendrix acts as the face of the hatchery with legislators, both state and federal, and every segment of the community on a daily basis.

Born in Monroe, La., Hendrix grew up on a small farm of about 200 acres in Waverly, a small town in the Northern part of the state. He is one of 13 children. His family lived off the land. They hunted, fished, gardened and produced cotton. Due to this background, Hendrix enjoyed nature and was attracted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). Hendrix joined the Service in 1977. “It was an easy attraction and it gave me an opportunity to give back after using our natural resources to survive as a young person,” says Hendrix.



Hendrix enjoying fishing with the kids. Photo courtesy of David Hendrix.



Left to right: Bradley, Anthony, Allyson and Hendrix. Photo courtesy of David Hendrix.

Hendrix says that it was all very serendipitous. “I discovered the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by accident,” he says. “I had a break in-between classes and I was walking past the room where the Service was doing interviews.

I saw the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the door and saw they were doing interviews for summer programs and I decided to check it out.” He changed into a suit and

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## Employee Profile: David E. Hendrix, Hatchery Manager

### Neosho National Fish Hatchery Continued

returned for an interview. “I got the summer job and then after successfully completing the program, I was selected for the CO-OP program at that time. After successfully completing the CO-OP program I was brought on as a permanent employee and it just took off from there.”

“I attended Southern University and Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, La. I received my Fisheries Training at Louisiana State University and my Medical Technology Training at Southern University.” Hendrix also worked on some studies toward his master’s degree at Iowa State University.

Hendrix has worked at numerous facilities over the years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service including, among others:

- New London National Fish Hatchery
- Princeton Fishery Management Station
- Genoa Fish Health Center (now the La Crosse Fish Health Center)
- Detail at the Lake Mills National Fish Hatchery
- Jordan River National Fish Hatchery
- Leetown Fisheries Academy (now National Conservation Training Center)
- Pendills Creek/Hiawatha Forest National Fish Hatchery Complex
- Regional Office in EEO Office (now Human Resources Office)
- Neosho National Fish Hatchery (present)



Left to right: Hendrix, Allyson, and Anthony. Photo courtesy of David Hendrix.

When asked about the biggest challenge that faced in implementing his program, Hendrix says there wasn’t one, “because of all the wonderful support from the leadership at the Regional and Washington Level. We have a super Friends Group that is second to none, and they have been priceless in this effort.” He advises other field stations to do the same in efforts to launch similar programs.

Hendrix says his major accomplishments have been when working with regional leaders, Washington leaders, friends groups, legislators, and others in the construction of the state-of-the-art Visitor Center which will increase visitation to over 100,000 annually at the Neosho National Fish Hatchery. “This center is an educational center that is utilized as a wonderful tool in reaching thousands of young people as we work to connect them with nature.” Hendrix says. “The other one would be the transition into the recovery work here at the Neosho National Fish Hatchery.”

Hendrix has five children: Paige Marie - 28; David E. II - 27; Allyson Evelyn Nicole - 26; Anthony David William - 23; and Bradley David - 16. He loves children. “I have a lot experience working with thousands of young people over the years during my career with the Service,” he says. “I have educated young people over the years about the Service and about what we do for the resources.” His emphasis he says has been on the importance of good water quality, good habitat, fishing ethics and pollution prevention.

Hendrix closed the interview on a positive note. “The U.S. Fish and Wildlife gave me an opportunity to do something I love and I try to encourage our young people as well as my own children on a daily basis to find their niche and excel.” “I encourage them to represent on a daily basis!”

By Valerie R. Redmond



## U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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