



## The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Marquette and Ludington Biological Stations



May 2013

### **COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP**

Shawn Nowicki, Kasia Mullett, Michael Twohey, Bob Adair and Jeff Slade attended the Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) in Montreal, Quebec. Shawn presented the binational agent report of the 2012 sea lamprey control program activities and accomplishments.

Mike Fodale and Jessica Barber attended the Bad River tribal council meeting to seek approval to move forward with assessment of alternatives for a semi-permanent sea lamprey barrier in the Bad River watershed.

Michael Twohey attended an announcement in Grand Rapids that the Grand River has been accepted as one of eleven newly selected locations for the nation's Urban Waters Federal Partnership. The program reconnects urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies and collaborating with community-led revitalization efforts to improve our nation's water systems and promote their economic, environmental and social benefits. The program will work with a business and community-led effort to restore the urbanized river in downtown Grand Rapids, beginning with recreating the namesake rapids. Replacement of an aging dam that is important to sea lamprey control is an element of the project. Senator Debbie Stabenow, Mayor George Hartwell, Charlie Wooley (FWS R3 ARD) and several other agency representatives spoke at the ceremony.

Jessica Barber attended the final stakeholder meeting for the Grand River Restoration project in Grand Rapids to discuss alternatives to barrier removal.

Cheryl Kaye and Mary Henson coordinated with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, Lake Metro Parks, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, The Nature Conservancy, Ohio State University, and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History to collect dead non-target organisms during the TFM treatment of the Grand River and Conneaut Creek. The entire treated area in the State of Ohio was surveyed for each stream. This partially fulfilled the special instructions section required under the 2013 Ohio NPDES permit.

Tim Sullivan, Jenna Tews, Aaron Jubar (LBS), Shawn Nowicki, Lori Criger, Matt Symbal, Dan Kochanski, Cheryl Kaye (MBS), Brian Stephens, Tonia Van

Kempen (DFO), and Terry Hubert (UMESC) participated in a conference call regarding the development and implementation of a protocol to address unexplained fish kills. Logistical issues involving processing of fish blood and tissue samples were discussed, along with updates to the current written procedures. A trial run of the TOP is scheduled for the Cypress River in July, and the Big Otter River in September.

### **BIOLOGICAL ISSUES**

The LBS received a call from Katherine Schrouder, MIDNR, regarding the observation of adult lampreys spawning downstream of the dam on the Tobacco River, a tributary to the Tittabawassee River in the Saginaw River system. Based on the description of these animals from a local fisherman, there was concern that they could be sea lampreys. Aaron Jubar conducted an on-site investigation and took photographs of the various barriers in this system that would need to be breached by sea lamprey to reach the Tobacco River dam, but water levels were too high to make visual observations or to conduct larval assessment surveys. The larval assessment and barrier teams will follow up with more comprehensive surveys later this year when conditions are more favorable. Silver lampreys are present in this system, so it is likely and we are hopeful that the spawning adults observed were "silvers."

### **OUTREACH**

Jeff Slade met with Alan Wernette, Park Interpreter, Ludington State Park (Park), to discuss the potential of developing a sea lamprey control display for the park's visitor center. The Park is in the process of renovating their visitor center and Alan is currently brainstorming ideas and potential design concepts for the new visitor center. The center will likely incorporate a Great Lakes fisheries theme.

Alex Gonzalez was interviewed by the Traverse City Record Eagle regarding the lampricide treatment scheduled for Mitchell Creek.

During the week of May 20th, Amanda Reyes and volunteer Dale Ollila gave sea lamprey presentations to over 100 7th graders from Bothwell Middle School at Bay Cliff Health Camp.

Mike Twohey presented an overview of the Sea Lamprey program to 15-20 students from Purdue University studying environmental planning. Chris

Gagnon and Greg Klingler were also in attendance to demonstrate proper stream shocking and trapping techniques on the Carp and Rock rivers.

Volunteer Bob Kahl spoke to North Star Academy 3rd graders on sea lamprey control techniques.

Dennis Smith provided information to the Toledo Zoo on sea lamprey in the Great Lakes for an invasive species display for future presentation.

Rachel Guth gave a sea lamprey presentation to approximately 15 middle school students at North Star Academy.

The Marquette Biological Station participated in a program hosted by Northern Michigan University entitled "Young Wildcat Scholars." About 45 grade school students from NMU charter schools throughout Michigan visited the Marquette area and were exposed to a variety of educational experiences. They learned how non-native species have a negative impact on the Great Lakes ecosystem and what is being done to stop their distribution. They were able to see and touch various fish, aquatic insects, and amphibians, and gained an understanding of how these species play a vital role in the health of our ecosystem. Retired Service biologists Bob Kahl volunteered to take the students to a local marsh where they netted and identified aquatic invertebrates, something most had never done before. Michael Twohey and Mary Wilson assisted with the event.



*Bob Kahl with Wildcat Scholars collecting invertebrates. (Photo by Mike Twohey, USFWS)*

Shawn Nowicki presented information about sea lampreys to 35 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at Father Marquette Elementary School in Marquette on May 6th.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Pete Hrodey, Dennis Smith and Jake Van Effen successfully deployed the St. Marys traps on May 22nd. Water levels and temperatures were still low, but all traps should be fishing by the start of the run. Water levels finally cooperated to allow placement of the Manistique River trap on May 28. USGS/MSU research staff assisted with placement of the trap.

Pete Hrodey deployed an eel ladder-style trap (ELST) at the Brule River sea lamprey barrier in northern Wisconsin. The Brule trap gets a very large sucker run and the ELST may help to sort lampreys from suckers and make trap processing more efficient.



*An eel ladder-style trap (ELST) deployed in the Brule River sea lamprey barrier trap. The ELST divides the trap in half and (hopefully) acts to sort lampreys from other fin fish. (Photo credit Pete Hrodey, USFWS).*

Pete Hrodey and Sara Ruitter performed several barrier inspections within the River Raisin watershed near Dundee, MI. The inspections, along with larval survey work conducted by LBS staff, will inform the barrier consultation process for a large river restoration project near the city of Monroe, MI.

The Ludington control team successfully treated the Shiawassee River, a tributary to the Saginaw River on Lake Huron.

It has been a very long and cold spring in the Upper Peninsula. The Marquette Lampricide Control team was finally able to treat both the Ford and Cedar rivers successfully in May although challenged in multiple ways including extremely high water levels and difficult access. The Nemadji River treatment has been postponed until October due to similar extreme conditions.

A joint team from the Ludington and Marquette biological stations successfully treated the Grand River and Crooked, Raccoon and Conneaut creeks, which are all tributaries to Lake Erie.

Droance Brege and Michael Fodale assisted the Ludington Lampricide Control team in their successful efforts to treat the Grand River and Conneaut Creek by meeting with staff of the Ohio Department of Environmental Quality and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to discuss treatment details multiple times.

The Ludington larval assessment team completed collections of larval sea lampreys, which were transported to HBBS and will be utilized for research purposes. Over 25,000 larval sea lampreys were collected from February – May.

Larval assessment staff continued to implement an enhanced assessment of the St. Clair River.

Marquette larval assessment crews started participating in the USFWS Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership's National Investigation New Animal Drug (INAD) program by using Benzoak as an anesthetic to identify sea lamprey larvae.



*Lynn Kanieski fills a syringe with 0.3cc of Benzoak concentrate.  
(Photo by USFWS)*

## **WORKFORCE**

The Ludington Biological Station received several shipments of lampricides that will be used for upcoming treatments.

Ludington and Marquette Biological stations held a tornado drill and an after-hours all employee recall drill.

Tiffany Opalka-Myers presented a “Tick Talk” during the May safety meeting in Marquette.

## **PERSONNEL**

Casey Ford resigned her position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife to begin work with the U.S. Forest Service. Good luck, Casey!

*Prepared by Mary Wilson, MBS*