

Inside Region 3

An information product from the Accomplishment Reporting System
Volume 3, No. 8 External Affairs Office June 22, 2001

Service Endorses Fairfield Marsh Conservation Partnership Citizens Group That Opposed Proposed Leopold Refuge Sparks Conservation Partnership That Engages Private Landowners in South Central Wisconsin

After a two-year planning effort that relied heavily on community involvement, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is endorsing the Fairfield Marsh Conservation Partnership as the preferred approach to conservation efforts in the Fairfield Marsh area of south central Wisconsin. The Service's Midwest Regional Director, Bill Hartwig, recently signed a Finding of No Significant Impact, marking the official approval of an environmental assessment that evaluated alternatives ranging from no action to the establishment of a national wildlife refuge.

Located near the communities of Baraboo and Portage, the Fairfield Marsh was a once extensive wetland complex near the confluence of the Wisconsin River and the Baraboo River. The marsh was drained in the early 1900s and today a large portion of the former marsh is used for agricultural purposes.

The Service began exploring the possibility of restoring the marsh and promoting land conservation practices around it



—Photo by Gary Muelenhardt

Deep wetlands, wet meadows, tamarac bogs and Leech Creek (pictured above) could be restored under the Partnership.

in 1999. Initially the Service proposed establishing a national wildlife refuge to be named after Aldo Leopold, a renowned

ecologist. Leopold's book, 'A Sand County Almanac,' is based on his observations of wildlife and habitat at "the shack," a small cabin that still stands within a few miles of the Fairfield Marsh.

A decision to establish a refuge was suspended in December 1999, after a group consisting of landowners, elected officials, and representatives of conservation organizations asked for an opportunity to explore alternatives for restoration and conservation in the area. The group, Farming and Conservation Together (FACT), submitted its plan in September 2000.

Earlier this year, Service staff revised the environmental assessment to include a new Fairfield Marsh Conservation Partnership alternative that incorporated ideas from the FACT plan. The Partnership proposal does not include land purchases for a national wildlife refuge. However, the Service adopted the FACT committee recommendation to retain the landowner option to sell lands for

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Explosives Found on Industrial Area of Crab Orchard NWR

On June 6, ordnance inspectors from General Dynamics Corp. informed officials at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge near Marion, Ill., of their identification of approximately 2,700 pounds of outdated explosive materials in a storage magazine on an industrial area of the Refuge. The storage magazine is in an area closed to the public and is one of about 70 storage bunkers leased to General Dynamics. Since being notified, refuge officials have continued to monitor the ongoing evaluation of the material by ordnance experts from General Dy-

namics

"It's a safe situation for the public," said Jonathan Schafner, refuge manager. "The storage bunker is located in an area closed to the public. All storage bunkers adjacent to the General Dynamics bunker are empty. We've been working with General Dynamics to implement all necessary safety precautions. At the present time, we don't anticipate closing any public use areas of the refuge because of this situation."

The explosive materials of various types and quantities were identified dur-

ing a routine inventory of the bunker by General Dynamics. The company's ordnance experts determined that the material was not in a condition that presented safety concerns to public areas of the refuge. However, refuge officials and General Dynamics implemented safety procedures to further restrict access to the bunker while ordnance experts continue to analyze the materials and determine procedures for safely handling and disposing of the material. According to General Dynamics officials, the storage

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Service Partners With Missouri to Launch Bird Conservation Initiative

More than 40 people intrigued by the concept of implementing a conservation program for all birds in Missouri participated in a recent day-long workshop at the Missouri Department of Conservation headquarters in Jefferson City. The workshop initiated discussion and planning for a Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative (MOBCI) that would include state and federal agencies, private conservation organizations and interested individuals.

The Missouri Initiative is being modeled after North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI). The Service's Columbia, Mo., Field Office partnered with the Missouri Department of Conservation to help launch MOBCI.

Each organization and group

present at the workshop provided a brief overview of its goals and bird conservation efforts. More detailed descriptions of bird conservation activities were provided by the Service, Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

An open session on challenges to bird conservation raised a variety of issues ranging from tree harvest for chip mills and the need for education and legislation to preserve Ozark forests to finding ways to reduce impacts of human population growth on birds and habitats.

The meeting concluded with a consensus decision from the organizations present that a Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative is needed to share information on bird conservation efforts, identify the

challenges to better bird conservation, and to seek ways to cooperate on bird conservation. Participants also agree that a smaller group could more effectively create an organization and framework, identify a process and instill commitment from partners.

An Audubon Society member, who is also a professional facilitator, volunteered to help with the design of a process that will energize partners, stimulate a high level of commitment, and make available informational tools needed to develop an action plan. The charge of this group is to develop a MOBCI proposal for consideration by the full group within the next three months.

Charles Scott, Columbia Field Office

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Fairfield Marsh Conservation Partnership

federal waterfowl production areas. The Service will also partially fund a coordinator position for one year; and promote landowner participation in our existing Partners for Fish and Wildlife program.

The Service will be an active participant in the Fairfield Marsh Conservation Partnership especially through future efforts of the Leopold Wetland Management District in Mayville, Wis., and the Wisconsin Private Lands Office in Madison.

Full-scale restoration of the Fairfield

Marsh will take the long-term commitment of local organizations, the FACT committee, elected officials, government agencies and primarily the landowners themselves.

Partners in this effort include the Aldo Leopold Foundation, Farming and Conservation Together, International Crane Foundation, Sauk County, Wis., Wisconsin Waterfowl Association and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. *Gary Muehlenhardt, Refuges & Wildlife*

Orchard is unique in that the refuge property includes resident youth camps, marinas, campgrounds, a private boat and yacht club, and several industrial sites — facilities not normally found on a national wildlife refuge. The refuge is also a very popular recreation spot for residents of southern Illinois, hosting 1.2 million visitors annually. *Scott Flaherty, External Affairs*

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Explosives Found on Crab Orchard Refuge

magazine would contain any "inadvertent initiation" of the explosive material.

General Dynamics is working closely with the refuge to ensure public concerns are addressed, and is providing the refuge with regular reports on the status of its evaluation of the explosives and plans for its disposal.

Crab Orchard NWR is a 43,890 acre refuge located near Marion, Ill. Crab

10 Endangered Species Conservation Projects Funded in Illinois and Iowa

The Rock Island, Ill., Field Office expended \$77,955 of its Fiscal year 2001 Recovery Funds on endangered species conservation in Iowa and Illinois, with \$41,387 going to Iowa, \$21,568 going to Illinois, and \$15,000 being spent on border waters of the Mississippi River shared by the two states.

Various threatened or endangered species were the benefactors including the eastern massasauga rattlesnake, Indiana bat, prairie bush clover, northern monkshood, Mead's milkweed, Higgins' eye pearly mussel, eastern and western prairie fringed orchids, the Illinois cave amphipod, and the Iowa pliestocene snail.

Ten different projects were funded ranging from status surveys and monitoring, to studies of basic biology and habitat improvements. Some of the funds went directly to the States while some were transferred to Division of Refuges offices. *Rick Nelson, Rock Island Field Office*

Fishing Day Celebrated on the Upper Mississippi River

On a cold and chilly Saturday in June, over 90 kids spread themselves along the banks of the swollen Mississippi River for a fishing adventure at the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge. Mayor of Winona, Minn., Jerry Miller, was there to proclaim the official start of the National Fishing Week celebration.

The kids dispersed onto boats to go fishing with Service employees, to the bank to fish with Trout Unlimited volunteers and funneled through environmental education stations conducted by a host of volunteers and Service employees. After all that adventure they were served a warm lunch by the Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges.

Winona Daily News reporter, Heather Sowers interviewed seven-year-old, Ciera Brewster who was holding up her catch of the day. "I did everything myself!" Brewer said.

Altaf Masoof and his children, Amber and Jaffar, have made attending the Fishing Day an annual event for their family. Masoof said, "The best part is going fishing, [the kids] have fun, and it's really nice this year with all the additions." The 'additions,' were the educational stations. At one of the stations kids were able to practice casting with USGS volunteer Joe Wlosinski. Joe stated, "It's good to pass along what you know to the kids." Other stations included Fish printing with frozen or plastic fish, Bugs in the Water, Fish Identification, Wonders of Wetlands, Knot Tying and Tackling Your Tackle Box.

A few of the kids became radio stars for the day as KWNO broadcast live from the event. D.J. Justin Adams interviewed some first time fishers and some more experienced fishers, bragging about the fish they caught. In addition, the local cable television station HBCI captured footage for airing the following week on their noon-time with Wayne Valentine show. They arrived when the kids had a fish in one hand and a hotdog in the other. Their smiles were contagious and the "fishing stories" had begun.

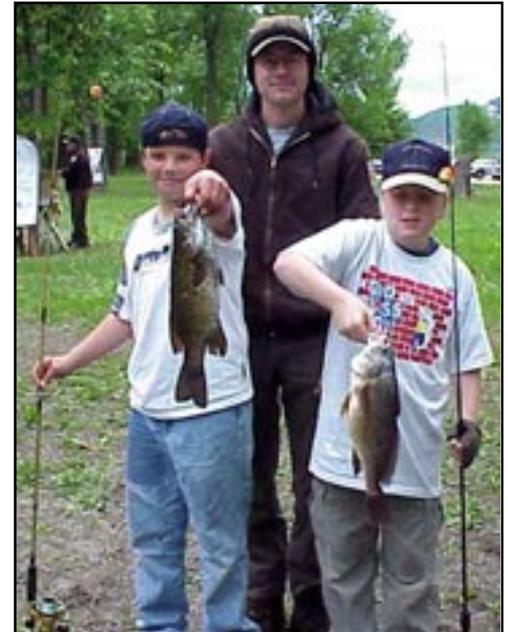
This marked the 11th annual Fishing Day Celebration for the Upper Missis-



--Photo by Cindy Samples
Refuge Operation Specialist Bill Thrune of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and his wife, Pam, return with a boat full of kids after spending the morning fishing on the Upper Mississippi River.



--Photo by Cindy Samples
Seven year-old Ciera Brewster proudly displays the fish she caught "All by myself!"



--Photo by Cindy Samples
Refuge Biology Technician Brian Stemper was the 'expert' fishing guide for Brady Severson and his buddy. The fishing pair were quite proud of their catch.

sippi River Refuge. More than 400 volunteer hours and Refuge staff time helped make the event a huge success. Donations of food, T-shirts, ice, labor, and equipment were received from the Brock

Candy Company, Ramer Fish Company, Coca-Cola Company, Country Market, Trout Unlimited, Paul Wildenborg, Jay and Dee's Specialty, and Z's Tees.



Eastern massasauga rattlesnake.

--Photo by Michael Redmer

Chicago Field Office Initiates Surveys for Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnakes in Illinois

The Service's Chicago Field Office (CIFO) recently initiated surveys for the Eastern massasauga rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus*), a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Historically, four population clusters of the massasauga were documented in four northeast Illinois counties.

One cluster is believed to have been extirpated since the early 1980s. Until the late 1980s massasaugas were commonly seen at three other historical site clusters. The frequency of confirmed massasauga sightings declined throughout the early 1990s. Between 1995 and 2000, fewer than 10 individuals were seen in the entire Chicago region.

As is the case elsewhere in the species' range, habitat loss and persecution are implicated as factors contributing to declines in the Chicago region. The Eastern massasauga has been listed as endangered by Illinois since 1995.

Most recent massasauga work in northeast Illinois was concentrated in two localities, while little attention was given to other historical localities. In March 2001, CIFO staff organized a meeting with the Illinois DNR, local land managers, and massasauga experts to

discuss survey/research and conservation needs. The most immediate needs identified were to determine areas of potential habitat remaining in and near this historical populations; and to begin surveys to determine status at known sites where other studies are not already underway.

Late winter surveys by CIFO staff identified 12 discrete sites with potential massasauga habitat within, or immediately adjacent to, the historic population clusters. All are potential targets of future snake surveys.

In 2001, Illinois Departments of Transportation and Natural Resources and local land management agencies contracted surveys at three sites, and CIFO biologists Mike Redmer and Kristopher Lah conducted spring field surveys at two other sites. Only one massasauga was found, but it confirmed presence of this species at a site where it was probably last found in 1991.

Additional surveys are planned for late summer 2001, and other cooperative projects with local agencies are being discussed. Service staff is working closely with the Illinois DNR to coordinate future efforts. *Michael Redmer, Chicago Field Office*

Service Joins Missouri Agencies to Relocate Threatened Geocarpon From Highway Construction Zone

Through the cooperative efforts of the Missouri Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Service's Missouri Ecological Services Field Office and Missouri Department of Conservation, improvements to a state highway in St. Clair County were completed without the destroying a population of a federally threatened plant.

When MDOT began plans to expand State Highway 13 to four lanes it was discovered that a population of the federally-threatened plant, 'geocarpon' occurred directly in the path of the project. In association with the Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation, MDOT, the Columbia Field Office, and Missouri Department of Conservation developed a plan to transfer geocarpon to suitable habitat in a sandstone glade purchased by MDOT on the opposite side of the highway. This was the first known attempt to remove and transplant geocarpon.

The task was complicated by the plant's very small size (less than one half inch tall when fully grown) and that little is known about its habitat and life history requirements.

Biologists removed approximately 400 plants and a thin layer of soil from the sandstone glade, placed the plants and soil in buckets and transported the mixture across the highway to its new protected location. Nine relocation plots and two control plots were established.

The number of plants and year observed at the relocated site are: 329 (1998), 1332 (1999), 328 (2000), and 1905 (2001). While the number of plants will vary each year, data clearly indicates that the transplanted population is secure on the protected site and will continue to increase. The relocation effort has also been valuable in gathering information on the plant's habitat requirements and in developing an important technique to assist in the recovery of this rare plant. *Charles Scott, Columbia Field Office*

Spring Fish Marking at Pendills Creek Hatchery Assists Biologists Evaluate Trout, Provide Outreach Opportunities

This spring at Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery, four temporary employees helped mark 762,000 yearling lake trout by clipping the right pectoral and left ventral fins of each fish. The fin-clipping operation was conducted March 5 to May 10, and took 1,245 hours to complete.

Clipping one or more fins on the fish every year allows fishery biologists and researchers to evaluate survival, growth, recruitment, and to track the fish movements in the Great Lakes. A five year rotation of different clips is needed in order to readily determine the year fish were stocked. The clip also identifies a particular fish as a hatchery product. The goal is to see an increasing percentage of unclipped fish/wild fish in the Great Lakes which indicates that restoration objectives are being met for this species.

In order to guarantee that most of the lake trout yearlings are properly marked, fin clipping efficiency counts are performed at least twice a day and four times total for each raceway of approximately 50,000 fish. There are 16 raceways of fish at Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery. Two hundred fish are sampled from each raceway in four separate samples of 50 fish each. The fish are counted as clipped or not clipped based on the quality of the clip. Poor or partial clips are considered as 'not clipped'.

This year we have confidence that 98.4 percent of the fin clips will be readily



--Photos by David Radloff

Employees at Pendills Creek NFH helped mark more than 762,000 yearling lake trout this spring. The markings help biologists evaluate the success of stocking and other fishery management practices. The operation attracted numerous visitors to the hatchery.

discernable throughout the life of stocked lake trout. Only 1.6 percent of the clips may be hard to identify.

The clipping operation also provides great outreach opportunities. Tours were given to 181 people in six pre-school groups, one college aquaculture class, and two adult groups. In addition,



reporters from the Bay Mills Indian Community visited the hatchery to do a feature article on the finclipping operation. *David Radloff, Pendills Creek NFH*

Ashland Office Gets "Helping Hands" Through Local Job Programs

The Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) is receiving some "helping hands" this summer courtesy of two Wisconsin training programs that are funding two part-time positions at the station in exchange for valuable job training and work experience.

Randy Mueller comes to the Ashland FRO through the W-2 Skills Training Program with Ashland County Health and Human Services Agency. Mueller, an experienced auto technician, has

welding and general maintenance skills that will be helpful to Ashland FRO. Mueller will work three days a week for four hours each day.

Jonathan Northern comes to the Ashland FRO through the Youth Summer Employment Program offered through the Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program. Northern, 15, is a student with enthusiasm for computer work. Three days each week, he will be scanning slides and

photos for the station library, entering reprints into our station library database, and doing general clerical work. He will also assist at the Whittlesey Creek NWR, and other activities as allowed under Wisconsin Child Labor law.

Both assistants come to the Ashland FRO through state training programs that provide opportunities develop employment skills. Salaries for both of these employees will be paid by the State of Wisconsin. *Mark Dryer, Ashland FRO*



--Photo by Rick Julian

Bob Hiltner of Rydell NWR loads tanks onto a trailer bound for the White Earth hatchery.

Excess Fish Tanks Provided to White Earth Band Fisheries Program for Sturgeon Project

Excess fish rearing tanks from Rydell National Wildlife Refuge have found new homes with a Native American fish hatchery and Genoa National Fish Hatchery. The plywood and fiberglass tanks and hatching batteries will be used by the White Earth Tribe's Ice Cracking Lake Fish Hatchery in Becker County, Minn., to raise lake sturgeon and other fish species.

Staff from Genoa National Fish Hatchery helped remove the large, in-floor

tanks, valued at \$10,000 a piece. On June 7, Randy Zortman, fisheries manager at the Ice Cracking Lake fish Hatchery, came to Rydell NWR to pick up three small tanks to be used for the Tribe's lake sturgeon rearing program. Young sturgeon is being provided to the White Earth Band by the Service for restoration projects on Reservation lakes in Becker County. The remaining large tanks will be moved to GenoaNFH later this summer. *Rick Julian, Rydell NWR*

Service Helps Fund Natural Resources Education Program For InterCultural Youth Week-Long Youth Camp Explores Relationship Between Cultural Beliefs And Conservation

In August, a one-week "Protectors of the Earth' Youth Camp will be held for American Indian and African American students to study scientific and cultural knowledge regarding natural resource topics. Soil science, toxic waste clean-up, emergency response procedures, water quality issues, wildlife & fishery management & biology are included among other study areas.

Each resource study area will relate cultural beliefs and scientific information to the value of our natural re-

sources.

Fifteen sponsors are supporting the first year camp which will include youth from each of the 12 tribes in Michigan. The regional office is coordinating technical expertise, identifying presenters and providing information to support natural resource elements, such as eagles, that has significant tribal cultural value. A funding proposal has been developed and distributed to several potential sources. *John Leonard, External Affairs*

Federal Aid Helps Indiana Fund Shooting Range Improvement Projects

The state of Indiana, with funding from Federal Aid, is cooperating with the Ideal Fish and Game Club to improve its public shooting range. The club is using the funds to replace two trap houses, build a new rifle/pistol range and a new classroom/clubhouse, and make the entire facility accessible.

The improvements will result in greater user capacity, safety, and comfort for hunter education students, club members, and public shooters, and will provide full accessibility to disabled users. The club's ranges are used for public recreational shooting, firearms proficiency training and hunter education.

The renovations project is one of five similar shooting range improvements accomplished in Indiana with the assistance of Federal Aid funding. *Herb Conley, Federal Aid*

State-Endangered Salamander Found on Muscatatuck Refuge

Muscatatuck NWR is adding a new species to its current list of Herptofauna. The state endangered four toed Salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*) was an incidental discovery in the Muscatatuck Seep Spring Research Natural Area.

Indiana University Professor Dr. Meretsky discovered the salamander during her work with the water observation well addition to the seep spring study. The salamander is associated with mature forests with wetlands with mossy edges and the young need a couple of months in the water before they come out on land.

Records from central and southern Indiana appear to be based upon very small isolated colonies, some of which may no longer exist. *Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR*

Recommended Lake Trout, Whitefish Harvest Limits For 1836 Treaty Waters Provided to Great Lakes' Tribes

The Technical Fisheries Committee (TFC), created in the 2000 Consent Decree and chaired by Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO) Project Leader Jerry McClain, completed development of lake trout and whitefish harvest limits for 1836 Treaty Waters of Lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron June 6.

Representatives from Bay Mills Indian Community, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa, Grand Traverse Bay Band of Ottawa and Chippewa, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa, Little River Band of Ottawa, State of Michigan, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, working in consultation with university modelers, spent two years developing and refining computer simulated models to provide the harvest recommendations for 2001.

Annual harvest recommendations will be provided to the parties based on interagency efforts for stock assessment, harvest monitoring and computer

modeling, and will regulate the sport, commercial, and Tribal subsistence fisheries in the affected waters over the 20-year life of the agreement.

Interagency cooperation and collaboration are essential elements of the agreement and are intended to protect the Great Lakes fish stocks, provide harvest opportunities for the parties, and facilitate the lake trout rehabilitation effort for which the Service plays a key management role. The Service provides leadership for execution of the sea lamprey control effort in U.S. waters of the Great Lakes, rears a majority of the lake trout stocked for the rehabilitation effort, and provides technical assistance for the monitoring of lake trout stocks and evaluation of the hatchery lake trout performance in the wild.

Recommended harvest limits for lake trout and whitefish were provided to the parties on May 14 and June 6, respectively.

The generation of harvest limits is intended to provide harvest opportunities for sport, commercial, and subsistence fisheries, protect Tribal Treaty rights, and facilitate the Great Lakes lake trout rehabilitation effort.

Interagency cooperation and collaboration for implementation of the 2000 Consent Decree is essential for success, and will require continued commitment from all parties to monitor the fisheries and to make sound biological decisions to protect the resource and the fishing opportunities.

Partners include the State of Michigan, Bay Mills Indian Community, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Grand Traverse Bay Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority and Michigan State University. *Jerry McClain, Alpena FRO*

Service Co-hosts Kids Fishing Day at Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center

More than 200 kids and adults attended the the annual Pathways To Fishing- Kids Fishing Day event hosted by the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center partnership in Ashland, Wis.

Service employees Mark Dryer and Henry Quinlan of Ashland Fishery Resources Office; Pam Dryer and Heidi Hagman of Whittlesey Creek NWR; and Dale Bast and Jim Johnston of Iron River NFH, assisted with the annual event.

Dale Bast and Henry Quinlan gave presentations on fishing ethics and catch-and-release techniques. Mark and Pam Dryer; Jim Johnston and Heidi Hagman helped kids learn to cast in preparation for the final station where the kids caught trout stocked in a nearby pond. *Mark Dryer, Ashland*

Study of Illinois Wetlands Begins Biologists at Chicago Field Office Will Assess Habitat, Biological Functions of Wetlands

The Service's Chicago Field Office is assisting in an Advanced Identification (ADID) study of wetlands in Kane County, Ill. ADID studies are conducted under the authority and with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to identify in advance of specific project proposals the highest quality wetlands and aquatic resources in a given area.

Jeffrey Mengler of the Chicago Field Office is coordinating the assessment of habitat and biological functions of wetlands in the study.

The assessments are taking advantage of GIS and computer projection technology to screen aerial photographs of wetlands larger than one acre. Screenings will be followed by field evaluation of those wetlands that appeared less disturbed on the aerial photographs.

Field evaluations in 2001 will focus on

habitat and biological functions of the wetlands and result in designation of high quality wetlands that are considered unsuitable for filling. This information will be used for evaluation of stormwater and water quality functions during 2002 as part of the study. This information will also ultimately be used by planners, land owners, and regulators to better protect and avoid impacts to the highest quality aquatic resources of Kane County.

Partners include Kane County, Ill., U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, Kane County Forest Preserve District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois State Water Survey, St. Charles Park District and Fox Valley Land Foundation. *Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago Field Office*

Chicago Hosts Conference For Society of Wetland Scientists

The Society of Wetland Scientists, an International association of approximately 5000 wetland professionals recently held its 22nd annual conference in Chicago, Ill. The conference featured a theme of urban wetlands and was organized by a committee co-chaired by Jeffrey Mengler and John Rogner of the Service's Chicago Field Office.

An estimated 450 people from across the country and around the world attended this event which included technical sessions, field trips, and a banquet at the Shedd Aquarium.

The plenary sessions featured remarks by Illinois Lt. Gov. Corinne Wood and by John Meagher from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's headquarters in Washington DC. The conference facilitated a tremendous exchange of ideas and research results on wetland management, urban wetland contaminant is-

suces, wetland education and public outreach, and wetland assessment tools with over 250 papers and posters presented.

The conference reached wetland professionals from governments, private sector and academia from across the world. International attendees came from Ireland, Japan, Czech Republic, Vietnam, Australia, and Canada.

The conference provided an invaluable opportunities for attendees to network and exchange information. The conference also provided student stipends for 21 graduate and undergraduate students to attend and present posters or papers.

A new program was initiated that targeted high school students and included judged poster presentations by teams from five area high schools. This high school program aimed at fostering interest in wetlands and natural resource careers was a pilot

program for future efforts across the country.

Partners include: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Geological Survey, Illinois State Geological Survey, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Lake County Forest Preserves, Illinois Institute of Technology, University of Illinois, V3 Consultants, TAMS Consultants, CTE Engineers, Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd., Planning Resources Inc., USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Chicago Department of Environment, U.S. Forest Service, Chicago Environment Fund, Chicago Wilderness, American Society of Civil Engineers - Illinois Section, and 48 financial supporters in addition to the Society of Wetland Scientists national Board of Directors. *Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago Field Office*

Service to Assist Illinois Counties to Regulate Isolated Wetlands in Wake of Supreme Court SWANCC Decision

Lake and Kane Counties in Illinois have decided to amend their county-wide stormwater management ordinances to include county regulation of isolated wetlands. Each county had made this decision in view of the SWANCC Supreme Court decision (Solid Waste Agencies of Northern Cook County vs. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) which determined that the Corps of Engineers could not regulate such wetlands under the 'migratory bird rule.'

In the interest of protected the wetland resources of their county, both counties have sought the technical assistance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in developing their own regulatory programs. Jeffrey Mengler of the Service's Chicago Field Office sits

on the Technical Advisory Committee for Lake County's Stormwater Management Commission, and has also been invited to review and provide input on a pre-public ordinance draft in Kane County.

The Service anticipates both Illinois counties will adopt ordinance language to protect isolated wetlands through countywide stormwater ordinances. By providing each county with technical assistance in developing ordinance language, the Service hopes to have local regulatory programs in those counties that provide technically sound protection of isolated wetland resources that are of tremendous importance to migratory birds. *Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago Field Office*

Spring Prescribed Fire Season Completed at Fergus Falls WMD

During the Spring 2001 burn season, the Fergus Falls WMD performed 31 prescribed fires, burning a total of 3,200 acres. Two wildfires totaling 25 acres, also occurred on the District.

District staff also assisted the Minnesota DNR with two of its prescribed fires totaling 240 acres. Many staff members believe that although more acres were burned last year and in previous years, this year was the most beneficial burn year for the resource, as staff were able to burn land that had never been burned, or that had not been burned in many years. Over all it was a very successful burn season, which showed much promise for years to come. *Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC*

Recent Inventory Will Help Regional Programs With Record Keeping Decisions

A major inventory of records maintained by the Regional Office was conducted June 4-8 by Bill Greathouse, senior records analyst with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). More than 30 employees from all Regional Office programs were interviewed during the inventory, which will identify what types of records are being generated and maintained by Region 3 offices, including electronic files.

Results of the Region 3 interviews will be combined with similar interviews done at the Service's Region 7 and the Washington Office to update the Service's records retention schedule which was last updated in 1978. The new

record retention schedule will reflect the impact of computer technology in records management since 1978. Computers, electronic filing and tracking systems and databases have brought about major changes in the way the Service stores its records.

NARA will provide a written summary of the Region 3 inventory will be provided to the Regional office soon for comment. The records inventory and updated retention schedule will provide programs guidance on what records to keep and which records to dispose of. The Regional Office inventory was coordinated by Anne Shea, External Affairs. *Anne Shea, External Affairs*

Migratory Bird Program Biologists Increasing Assistance to Refuges

The Division of Migratory Birds added two new biologists to its staff in Fiscal Year 2001, and has been able to increase its technical assistance to national wildlife refuges (NWRs) and wetland management districts (WMDs) on a number of issues, including nongame bird monitoring, evaluation of population survey data, and prairie, wetland, and forest management.

In April and May 2001, assistance was provided to Ottawa, Seney, Sherburne, Squaw Creek, and Union Slough NWRs. Division staff also reviewed or helped develop goals and objectives for Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) for Crab Orchard, Illinois River, Mark Twain, Minnesota Valley, and Shiawassee NWRs and the Minnesota WMDs, and will have continuing involvement with these and other CCPs in the future.

Migratory birds are an important Trust resource on National Wildlife Refuge System lands and it is the Division's goal to ensure that CCPs address migratory bird conservation in the context of larger initiatives, including Partners in Flight, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, U. S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, and North American Bird Conservation Initiative.

Technical assistance provided to refuges and wetland management districts will result in better management and monitoring of migratory birds on Service lands. It will also enhance the ability of refuges and WMDs to make appropriate contributions to larger-scale initiatives like Partners in Flight, the U. S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, and the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan. *Steve Lewis, Migratory Birds & State Pgm*



--Photo by Nancy Gilbertson

Iowa Lieutenant Governor Sally Pedersen presents retired Congressman Neal Smith with a certificate during a ceremony at Neal Smith NWR June 5.

Recognition Ceremony Highlights Iowa Lt. Governor's Visit to Neal Smith NWR

Iowa Lieutenant Governor Sally Pedersen presented retired Congressman Neal Smith with a certificate in recognition of his contribution to arts, culture, and tourism in Iowa during a June 5 visit to Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. Pederson's visit was part of her 'Discover Iowa' tour, which includes stops at

36 Iowa communities to celebrate cultural sites and events Iowa has to offer.

Friends, local residents of Prairie City, Iowa, and refuge staff were present during the presentation. A similar certificate was presented to the community of Prairie City. *Nancy Gilbertson, Neal Smith NWR*

Rydell Refuge Sets Schedule For 'Learning at the Lakes 2001'

The following programs will be held at the Rydell National Wildlife Refuge visitor's center at 2 p.m. on Sundays. For more information call the Rydell Refuge at 218-687-2229.

June 17: Birdwatching Basics

Learn how to identify several common Minnesota birds and learn about their habits and habitat. Tips on binocular selection and a short birding hike will be presented by John Logering of the University of Minnesota, Crookston.

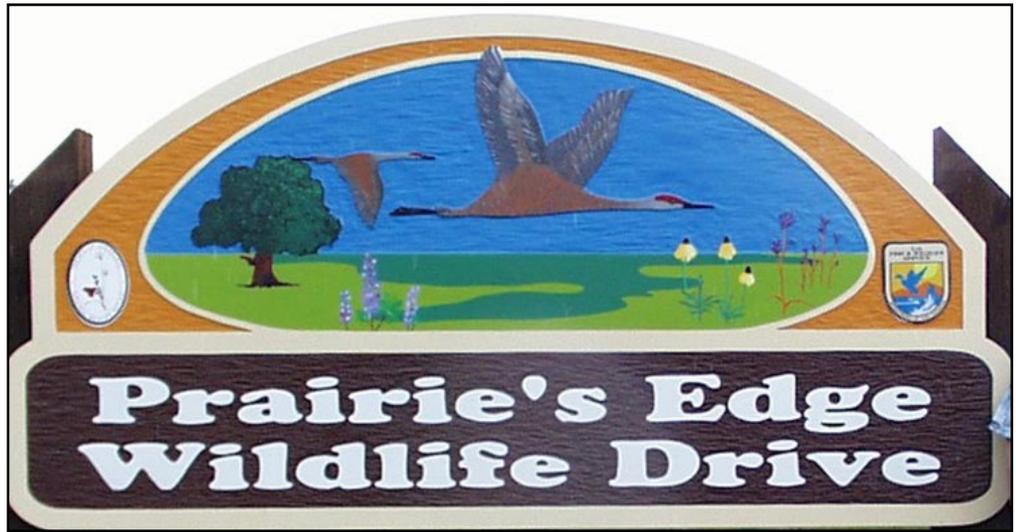
June 24: So You Want to Camp Experienced outdoor enthusiast Diane Bach will share tips on how to prepare yourself properly for your next adventure so your camping outing is fun and relaxing. The program will include product displays and demos.

July 8: Bald Eagle and Great Horned Owl - LIVE! This entertaining program will feature Greg Brooks, wildlife rehabilitator and licensed falconer; Destiny, a 7-year-old Bald Eagle and Sully, a one year old Great Horned Owl. The is a very popular program with the kids and adults alike.

July 22: The Sundew Bog One of the rarest features on Rydell Refuge is the Sundew bog and its unique ecosystem. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Region 1 Plant Ecologist Janet Boe will provide insights on our bog and lead a tour on the Bog Walk.

These programs are cosponsored by the maple Lake Improvement District, Union/Lake Sarah Improvement District, American State Bank of Erskine and The Friends of the Rydell Refuge Association and its contributing members.

In addition, on August 12, the Annual Rydell Refuge Open House will be held. This years focus will be on the history of the Refuge. All are welcome. *Rick Julian, Rydell NWR*



--Photo by Nancy Haugen

New Prairie's Edge Wildlife Drive sign depicts wetland scene with cranes.

Wildlife Drive at Sherburne NWR Has New Sign

Through the efforts of the Friends of Sherburne, a new custom designed sign was produced and installed June 6 at the entrance to the Prairie's Edge Wildlife Drive at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge. The colorful sign depicts a wetland/oak savanna scene typical at the Refuge with a pair of sandhill cranes flying overhead.

The new sign, designed and produced by Perkins Signs and Graphics of Clear Lake, Minn., was funded through a Service Challenge Cost-Share Grant with matching funds from

the Friends of Sherburne. The Friends of Sherburne is a non-profit group formed to give assistance and support for Refuge projects and educational programs. The Friends of Sherburne is in the process of fundraising for a number of improvements to the Wildlife Drive which will enhance wildlife viewing opportunities for visitors. The Wildlife Drive currently averages 20,000 visitors a year. It is a key Refuge facility for wildlife observation and photography. *Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR*

Federal Aid Program Helps Fund Fisheries Research in Iowa

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service continues its funding of the Iowa Fisheries Research Program. Approximately 75 percent of Iowa's fisheries research work is funded through Federal Aid's Sport Fish Restoration Program with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources funding the remaining 25 percent.

The primary objective of the program is to obtain information and develop new methods and techniques needed to maintain and improve Iowa's fisheries resources. Some of the 19 studies that are currently being funded include activities such as: interior river

habitat evaluations; walleye population evaluations at Rathbun Lake; evaluation of special regulations in Iowa's natural lakes; walleye, sauger and channel catfish evaluations in the Upper Mississippi River; and intensive fish culture and diet evaluations.

Results of these studies will ultimately become a routine part of Iowa DNR's comprehensive fisheries management and education programs. Findings assist fish managers and educators in their efforts toward maintenance and improvement of fish habitat and fishing in Iowa. *Ann Schneider, Federal Aid*

Accomplishment Reports Received

The following accomplishment reports were processed by the ARS during the period June 5-15. Reports filed during this period, but with accomplishment dates occurring before June 5 are not listed here. Those reports can be found by using Report Manager on the Accomplishment Reporting System.

1. Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) Receives "Helping Hands" Through Local Training Programs
Mark Dryer, Ashland FRO

2. Rydell Refuge Announces Program Schedule For Learning at the Lakes 2001
Rick Julian, Rydell NWR

3. Muscatatuck NWR Coordinates Earth Day/Arbor Day Events
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

4. State Endangered Salamander Found on Muscatatuck Refuge
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

5. Explosives Found on Industrial Area of Crab Orchard NWR Pose No Danger to Public
Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

6. Muscatatuck NWR Highlights Centennial
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

7. Muscatatuck NWR Featured on Indiana Outdoors
Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

8. Horicon Refuge Staff Lead Project WET Teacher Training
Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR

9. Spring Prescribed Fires Improves Habitat on 2,700 Acres at Morris WMD
Gaylord Bober, Morris WMD

10. Fishing Day Celebrated on the Upper Mississippi
Cynthia Samples, UMRNW&FR-Complex HQ

11. Service Endorses Fairfield Marsh Conservation Partnership in Wisconsin
Gary Muehlenhardt, Refuges & Wildlife

12. Chicago Field Office Initiates Surveys for Massasaugas, Begins Coordinating Local Recovery Group
Michael Redmer, Chicago FO

13. Recent Inventory of Regional Records Will Help Programs With Record Keeping Decisions
Anne Shea, External Affairs

14. Hatchery's Spring Fish Marking Operation Provides Opportunity For Outreach
David Radloff, Pendills Creek NFH

15. Annual Buffalo Day Celebration a Success
Nancy Gilbertson, Neal Smith NWR

16. Ashland Fisheries Office Staff Attend Wisconsin Private Lands Meeting
Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO

17. DCR Hosts Open House
George Kubik, ABA (DCR)

18. Service Supports Funding Request for Tribal Youth Education
John Leonard, External Affairs

19. Partners in Flight Enhances Landbird Conservation in the Midwest
Tom Will, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

20. Excess Fish Tanks Provide to White Earth Band Fisheries Program for Sturgeon Project
Rick Julian, Rydell NWR

21. Federal Aid Program Funding Fisheries Research in Iowa
Ann Schneider, Federal Aid

22. Wildlife Drive at Sherburne NWR Has New Entrance Sign
Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR

23. Service Partners With Missouri to Launch Bird Conservation Initiative
Charles Scott, Columbia FO

24. Flex Funds Support Nongame Bird Conservation in Region 3
Steve Lewis, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

25. New Statewide Land Acquisition Grant For Iowa
Dick Tolbers, Federal Aid

26. Almost \$78,000 Spent in Iowa and Illinois on Endangered Species Conservation
Rick Nelson, Rock Island FO

27. Service-Led Committee Recommends Lake Trout, Whitefish Harvest Limits For 1836 Treaty Waters
Jerry McClain, Alpena FRO

28. Technical Assistance Provided to Refuges on Migratory Bird Issues
Steve Lewis, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

29. Cooperative Effort Saves Threatened Plant During Highway Construction
Charles Scott, Columbia FO

30. Agassiz NWR Fire Management Plan Approved
Margaret Anderson, Agassiz NWR

31. Spring Prescribed Fire Season Completed at Fergus Falls WMD
Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

32. Region 3 Partners with USGS on Integrated Bird Conservation
Steve Lewis, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

33. Recognition Ceremony Highlights Iowa Lt. Governor Pederson's Visit to Neil Smith NWR
Nancy Gilbertson, Neal Smith NWR

34. Service Advocates Migratory Birds, Endangered Species During Minnesota Forest Summit
Steve Wilds, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

35. Fall Study Will Examine Impact of Hunting on American Woodcock in Minnesota
Steve Wilds, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

36. East St. Louis and Vicinity, Illinois, Ecosystem Restoration and Flood Damage Reduction Project
Joyce Collins, Marion Illinois FO

37. Mourning Dove Call-Count Survey Completed, Results Due in Late June
Sean Kelly, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

38. Service Assists Fond du Lac Chippewa With Sturgeon Assessment on the St. Louis River
Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

39. Federal Aid Funding Helps Indiana Fund Shooting Range Improvement Projects
Herb Conley, Federal Aid

40. Field Trial Review Will Benefit Habitat, Hunters at Some Indiana Fish and Wildlife Areas
Brad Johnson, Federal Aid

41. Computer Support Group Connects DeSoto Refuge Offices Via Wireless Bridge
John Herron, ABA (CSG)

42. Bird Banding Demonstration at Rydell Draws 50 Visitors

rick julian, Rydell NWR

43. Illinois ADID Study Begins Aerial Photograph and Field Evaluations of Wetlands

Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO

44. National Fishing Week, Kids Fishing Day Event at Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center

Mark Dryer, Ashland FRO

45. DeSotoRefugeFest: \$10,000 Prize and Family Fun At DeSoto

Cindy Myer, Desoto NWR

46. Chicago Hosts Successful Society of Wetland Scientists Conference

Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO

47. Service to Assist Illinois Counties to Regulate Isolated Wetlands in Wake of SWANCC Decision

Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO

48. Joint Venture Office Assists with Red River NAWCA Grant

Barbara Pardo, Joint Venture

Inside Region 3



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