



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Inside Region 3

Information from the Accomplishment Reporting System for July 31 - August 31, 2002

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Nation's Smallest Refuge Provides Habitat for Common Terns

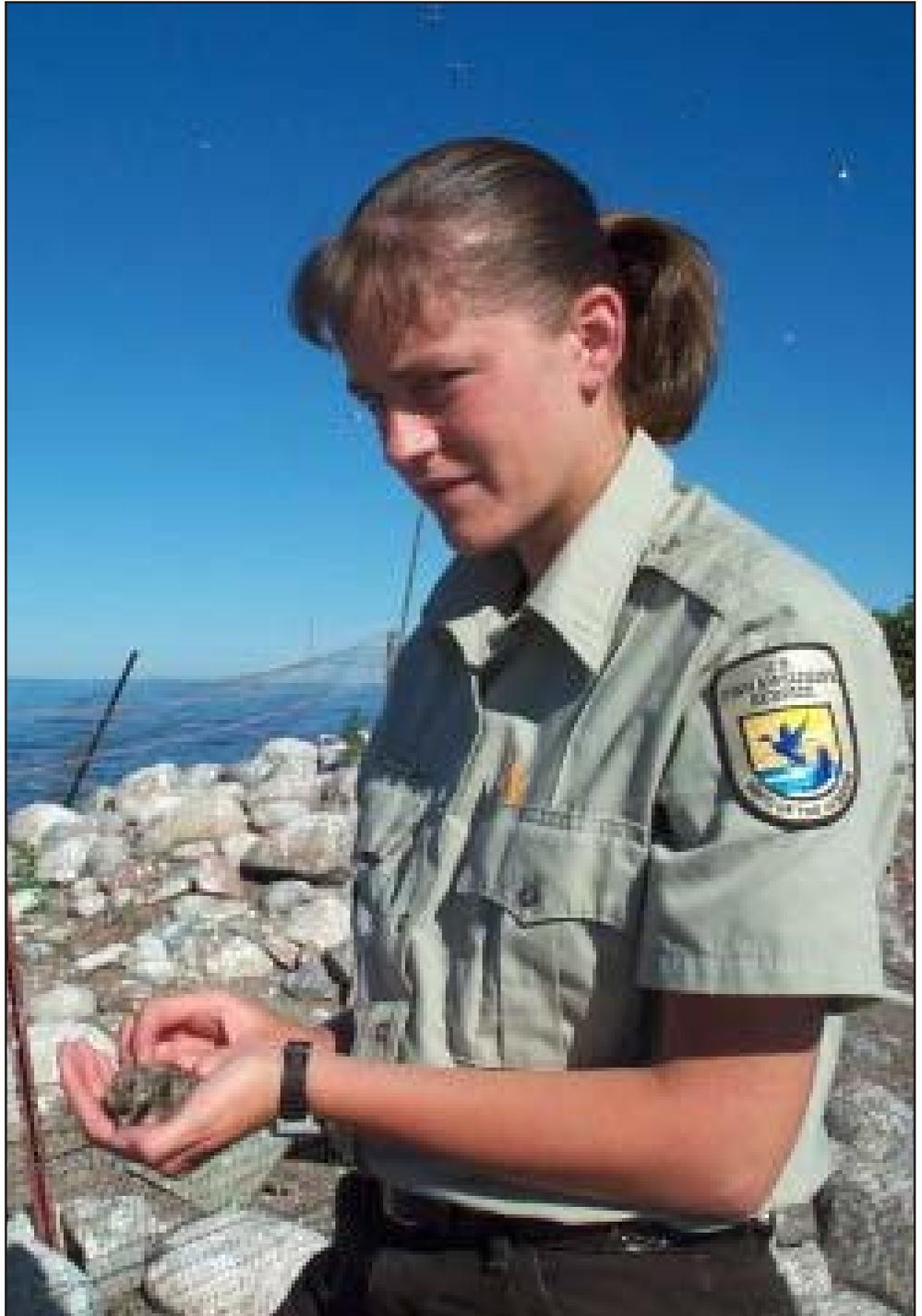
Mille Lacs National Wildlife Refuge is comprised of two 0.5 acre islands in Lake Mille Lacs (Mille Lacs County, Minn.) Spirit Island was set aside by Executive Order 2199 on May 14, 1915 and Hennepin Island was added on October 13, 1920. The two islands were designated as a "preserve and breeding ground for native birds."

Mille Lacs Refuge is not only the smallest refuge in the National Wildlife Refuge System, it is also the site of one of only four common tern nesting colonies in Minnesota. The common tern is currently listed as a threatened species in Minnesota; they are not listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act, but are considered a species of management concern.

The two major threats to terns on Hennepin Island are competition for nesting sites with ring-billed gulls and weather. To help alleviate the gull threat, a gull-deterrent string-grid system was incorporated on the island in 1993. This year, 56 percent of the tern nests initiated on the island were located under the grid, an additional 38 percent were located on a low gravel "spit" of the island.

There were no successful gull nests on the island and a peak count of 181 common tern nests were counted this year. The record for tern nests was set in 2000 when the peak was 212.

Weather did have a negative effect on nests this year. Heavy rains, strong winds and a lack of protection around the island resulted in all of the nests initiated on the "spit" to be destroyed. *Mary Stefanski, Rice Lake NWR*



- USFWS photo by Mary Stefanski

Rice Lake NWR STEP Student Cari Kramer holds a common tern that successfully hatched on Mille Lacs NWR. Mille Lacs NWR is the smallest refuge in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

American Bitterns Tracked With Satellite Technology - 2001 to 2002 Update

During 2001 and 2002 eight adult American bitterns were captured and tagged with satellite collars in the hopes of learning more about their migration routes. Among the eight birds captured, one was a bird that had been tracked for more than four years, two were captured on their wintering grounds (a first), one bird migrated to the Texas coast (another first) and one bird migrated south in mid-August.

The history of some of these birds follows:

Bird #01939: Originally captured in 1998 in Pool 8, Agassiz NWR. Spent the winter of 1998-99 south of Lafayette, La. Returned to Pool 8 in spring 1999. Captured in Pool 8 in spring 2000, spent the winter of 2000-01 in the same vicinity in Lafayette, La. Returned to Agassiz in spring 2001; captured July 20, 2001 in Madsen Pool. Our luck and his ran out in the fall. He initiated migration and went as far as southeastern



- USFWS photo

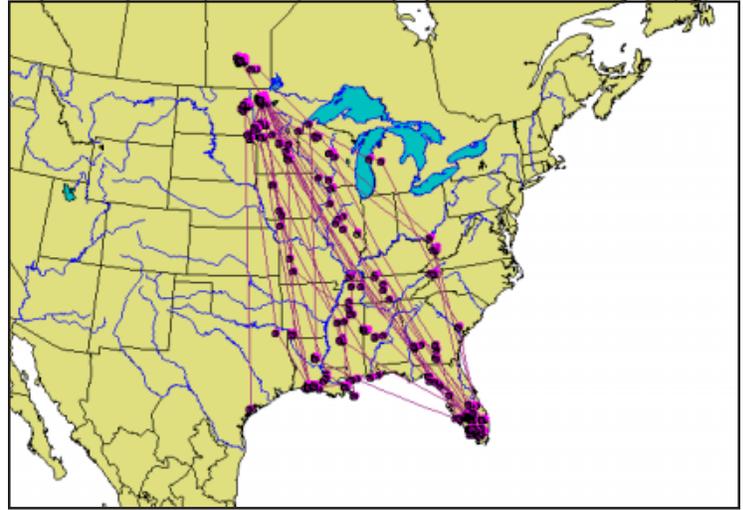
The American bittern is a secretive bird that prefers wetlands with tall emergent vegetation and adjacent grasslands.

North Dakota and was apparently killed by a predator north of Tewauckon NWR. The radio tag was recovered on Feb. 23, 2002. We learned a great deal from this bird. It was more than four years old and showed some breeding and wintering ground fidelity.

Bird#01936:

Captured in Wilken County, Minn., June 25, 2001, stayed in the area until September, then moved south to Big Stone NWR area. In early October migrated to southern Florida. As with other American bitterns that have gone to Florida he was south of Lake Okeechobee. Initiated his return trip in March moving to the Tallahassee, Fl., area and then to Mississippi in April. During late April he moved to the Backus, Minn., area. This prairie bird decided to check out the forest. He was in wetlands in the Bull Moose Impoundment area; however, in early June he returned to the prairie near Elbow Lake. A capture attempt on the Spink WPA on July 18, 2002 was not successful.

Bird# 29645: Captured in Grand Forks County, N.D., at Bry WMA on June 26, 2001. Stayed in the area until mid October. Migrated to the east coast of Texas north of Corpus Christi. The transmitter was not heard from after mid-December indicating possible predation. This was the first bird tagged that went to a wintering area west of Louisiana. Since it was captured in North Dakota it raises the possibility that birds west of the Red River may



- USFWS graphic

Spring and fall migration patterns for satellite-tracked bitterns (1998 - 2001). Fifteen birds have been tracked since the project began in 1998.

migrate to Texas like sand hill cranes from this area.

Bird# 29647: John Toepfer captured this bird February 2002 in the Florida Everglades with the aid of netgun and airboat. The bittern remained in the Everglades until late April 2002 and then moved to southern Georgia. During May he moved to north of Lake Ontario, southwest of Ottawa, Canada. The activity counter indicates that this bird is dead at this location.

Three birds were captured in the spring of 2002 in the Jamestown-Bismarck area of North Dakota to test the hypothesis that these birds will go to Texas for the winter and to look at post breeding movements in prairie pothole bitterns. A Bismarck bird moved to the St. Louis, Mo., area in mid August and arrived in Florida by the 25th! This is the earliest migration recorded from satellite collared birds, also disproved that all North Dakota birds will go to Texas. We will have to wait and see what the other North Dakota birds do. *Margaret Anderson, Agassiz NWR*

Grand Portage Creek Fish Passage Now Operational

For the first time in more than 50 years, anadromous coaster brook trout and steelhead from Lake Superior have access to more than three miles of prime spawning and nursery habitat in Grand Portage Creek at the Grand Portage Reservation.

This project will significantly increase the production of coaster brook trout and steelhead in Grand Portage Creek and improve quality and productivity of the recreational fisheries in the stream and in Lake Superior. The creek is the only Minnesota Lake Superior tributary stream not blocked by a waterfall near Lake Superior and its restoration is particularly important for the regional fishery.

On-site construction work has been completed and water is now flowing through a step pool/fish ladder system that allows fish to pass under Minnesota State Highway 61. Fish passage at the site has been effectively blocked since construction of a large, concrete box



- USFWS photo by Lee Newman

This newly completed fish passage project allows fish to move freely up the Grand Portage Creek in northeastern Minnesota for the first time in more than 50 years.

culvert in 1950. Tribal authorities are elated that fish access to the stream has been restored and that it will contribute significantly to production of coaster brook trout and steelhead, both in the stream and in Lake Superior.

This project was the result of a multi-year partnership between the Grand Portage Natural Resources Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. *Lee Newman, Ashland FRO*

Chance to View Endangered Bird Attracts Bird Watchers From Across the Country and World



- Photo courtesy of Larry Lyons

A chance to see a Kirtland's warbler in the wild drew more than 750 people from 40 states and seven foreign countries to northern Michigan.

For many, the opportunity to see an endangered animal in its natural environment is a rare and celebrated event. That is why hundreds of people travel to the northern lower peninsula of Michigan every year for a chance to see one of the nation's most endangered songbirds, the Kirtland's warbler. In order to minimize habitat disturbance and enhance viewing opportunities, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's East Lansing Field Office offers guided tours to selected Kirtland's warbler breeding areas twice daily between May 15 and July 4. The Michigan Audubon Society provides financial assistance for the tours.

In 2002, 777 people from 40 states,

the District of Columbia, and seven foreign countries participated in a Service's Kirtland's warbler tour.

A Kirtland's warbler was successfully observed on 92 of 95 tours for a 97 percent success rate. Results of a short questionnaire showed that over 30 percent of participants had previously gone on a Kirtland's warbler tour and 86 percent of tour participants were visiting the Grayling area primarily to view a Kirtland's warbler.

The U.S. Forest Service also conducts similar tours out of the Mio Ranger District in Mio, Mich. A total of 548 people representing 33 states and five countries participated in those tours. *Christopher Mensing, East Lansing FO*

Tumbling Creek Cavesnail Listed as Endangered

The Tumbling Creek cavesnail, found only in one southwestern Missouri county, was added to the Federal list of threatened and endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Service's action, designating the species as endangered, extends the formal protection of the Endangered Species Act to the cavesnail.

The cavesnail was listed under the emergency provisions of the Act in December 2001 after biologists noted a sharp drop in the cavesnail population. The emergency listing remained in effect for 240 days while the Service reviewed public comments and made a final decision about listing the cavesnail. The final rule formally listing the species as endangered appeared in the August 14 Federal Register.

"The plight of the Tumbling Creek cavesnail is, unfortunately, typical of many cave species," said William Hartwig, regional director for the Service's Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region. "They are

seldom seen and often forgotten. But they can be barometers of the health of our natural systems, especially when we understand their dependence on clean water, something that is vital to all life."

Tumbling Creek cavesnails live only in an underground stream that flows through Tumbling Creek Cave in southwestern Missouri's Taney County. These cavesnails measure

about one tenth of an inch in length, with a white body and pale yellow shell. The species lives beneath rocks in portions of the stream where there is usually little or no silt, and feeds on microscopic organisms in the creek.

The Tumbling Creek cavesnail's population has been monitored for the last six years to get a clear picture of the species' population trends. Surveys conducted over the past one and one-half years have found no snails in the survey area, although a few individuals were discovered upstream from the survey site.

Biologists believe the cavesnail's drastic downturn in population may be due to deteriorating water quality

in Tumbling Creek. Water that feeds into Tumbling Creek can be affected by erosion and other activities that occur on the land above -- especially those that increase silt and sediments in the creek, such as removal of streamside vegetation and overgrazing by livestock. Other threats include pollution from

accidental chemical spills or dumping trash into sinkholes that are directly connected to underground waterways.

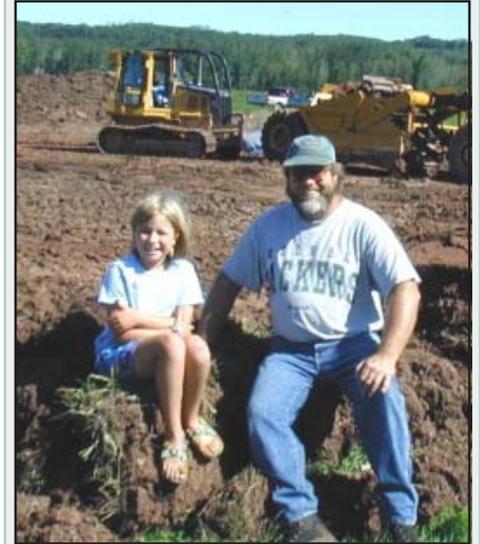
The Service will now focus on protecting the snail and its habitat, while working with partners in other state, federal, and local agencies, universities, and other organizations to develop a recovery strategy. *Georgia Parham, External Affairs*



- Photo courtesy of David Ashley

The Tumbling Creek cavesnail is only found in an underground stream in southwestern Missouri.

Partners Project Restores Four Wetlands



- USFWS photo

Tom and daughter Kayla Fratt are avid wildlife enthusiasts and were happy to work with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program to restore drained wetlands on their property.

Construction has finished on the Fratt Wetland Partners for Fish and Wildlife Project. The project restored four wetland sites and a total of two wetland acres.

The project took place on previously drained wetland sites that were converted to agricultural production. The newly restored wetlands will also enhance wildlife habitat on the adjacent uplands. Shorebirds and other waterfowl utilize the adjacent farm ground and wetland areas during the spring and fall migrations. The landowners are avid wildlife enthusiasts, and thanks to recent thunderstorms, have already observed shorebirds, bluewing teal and mallards utilizing the project area.

A wetland habitat development agreement was signed protecting a total of 10 acres of wildlife habitat within and around the wetlands for at least 10 years. In addition to the wetland acres, eight acres of upland nesting wildlife habitat is included in the agreement. *Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO*

Union Slough Hosts Wood Duck Banding and Shorebird Field Trip



- USFWS photo

Visitors to Union Slough NWR had the chance to learn about shorebirds and view wood ducks up-close.

The public was invited to participate in two programs, wood duck banding and a shorebird field trip, and breakfast at Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, on August 3. Both events took place on areas of the refuge normally closed to the general public.

Wood duck banding began at 7:30 a.m. Wood ducks were

removed from live traps, banded with a leg band and released. Participants had the opportunity to handle live wood ducks and learn about waterfowl biology and the importance of banding studies.

Breakfast was then held at the refuge headquarters from 9 to 10 a.m., compliments of Friends of Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge.

There was also a short presentation on shorebird identification, habitat needs and migratory patterns. A field trip to view visiting shorebirds followed. Species observed included least sandpiper, pectoral sandpiper, spotted sandpiper, solitary sandpiper, lesser yellowlegs, short-billed dowitcher, and killdeer. *Michelle McDowell, Union Slough NWR*

Genoa National Fish Hatchery Continues to Restore Native Mussel Populations

The Genoa National Fish Hatchery continues to work with local, state and federal partners to help improve populations of native mussels.

Recently, hatchery staff worked in partnership with Minnesota biologists to complete initial work on a



- USFWS photo

Service biologists harvest glochidia from mussels as part of a project to increase populations.

cooperative restoration project for the black sandshell mussel (*Ligimia recta*) in the upper Mississippi River. This project, primarily funded through a state grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, is part of an overall effort to boost mussel populations in areas of the upper Mississippi River affected by invasive species and habitat changes.

The hatchery's contribution to the project involved supplying equipment, larval black sandshell mussels and technical assistance. Host fish were infested with larval mussels from stocks being held on the hatchery and later placed in holding cages constructed by hatchery personnel at selected sites in the upper Mississippi River. Hatchery personnel monitored transformation rates on control hosts held in the hatchery to estimate the number of juvenile mussels produced in the project.

The hatchery also recently sent five personnel and one volunteer to

assist the Higgins' eye Pearlymussel Coordination Team complete population surveys at two known mussel beds in Illinois and Wisconsin.

Higgins' eye pearlymussels were located, counted and cleaned of any attached zebra mussels; then marked and returned to a central location. This will allow biologists to monitor survival and use the mussels for broodstock in future propagation efforts. Service and state biologist hope to utilize mussels collected in this operation as soon as the fall of 2002 for restoration efforts in Iowa.

In addition to the hundreds of Higgins' eye mussels located, several other species of mussels were found and cleaned of zebra mussels at the Illinois site on the Mississippi River.

This effort is part of a multi-agency recovery effort involving four state natural resource agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. *Doug Aloisi and Roger Gordon, Genoa NFH*

Team Effort Continues a 22 Year Wildcelery Survey on the Upper Mississippi

Volunteers and cooperators joined together once again to help biologists on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge complete the annual Lake Onalaska wildcelery survey.

This survey provides invaluable canvasback habitat trend information on wildcelery, a critical food source for migrating canvasback ducks, and other waterfowl. Volunteers and personnel from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service all convened on the river for a day of diving and measur-

ing wildcelery plant densities.

During the early 1980s, lakeside Onalaska residents considered the robust wildcelery population a nuisance that hampered boating and recreational activities. However, following a severe drought

in 1988, wildcelery population densities steadily dropped from an average high of 174 plants per square meter down to six plants in 1991. These conditions persisted through 1996 with plant densities never exceeding 10 plants per square meter. Conditions gradually began to improve and this



- USFWS photo

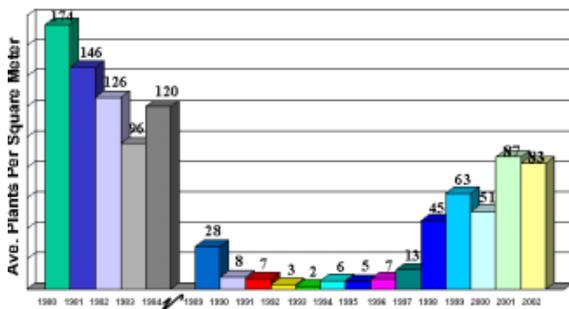
Volunteer Andrea Stupi and STEP Student Matt Paulson count wildcelery plants on Lake Onalaska of the Upper Mississippi River NWR.

August divers measured 81 plants per square meter.

The exact causes for the fluctuation in population densities is unknown, but for now canvasback ducks and other waterfowl will find an abundance of wildcelery on the upper Mississippi River during their migration south. *Lara Hill, Upper Mississippi NWR - LaCrosse*

Wildcelery in Lake Onalaska, 1980-2002

Data collected along 12 transects which were heavily populated with wildcelery when the transects were established in 1980.



Kids Improve Their Casting Skills in Downtown Saginaw, Michigan



- USFWS photo by Becky Goche

Kids had a special night all to themselves at “Friday Night Live - Kids’ Night Out” in downtown Saginaw, Mich., on August 9. “Friday Night Live” is a free six-week program featuring different musical entertainment, kids activities and food vendors, sponsored by many area businesses and organizations. The Saginaw News was the main sponsor of this year’s event.

Three staff and one volunteer from the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge hosted a booth where kids could practice casting a fishing pole on a course that contained hula hoops and frisbees. If the kids landed their plastic plug inside any of these, they won their choice of a prize including fishing line, a frisbee or a bubble pen.

Several thousand people attended the event and 175 children tried casting, some for the very first time. Each child received a Michigan Fishing Fun booklet and a fish tattoo just for trying. *Becky Goche, Saginaw NWR*

Shiawassee NWR Volunteer Dale Adams shows a young boy how to reel in his line after casting a practice plug on a course of hula hoops and frisbees in an attempt to win a prize. One hundred seventy-five children practiced casting, some for the very first time.

Endangered Species Discovered at National Park in Ohio

The National Park Service and the Cleveland Metroparks are conducting a two-year study to inventory bats within the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and Cleveland Metroparks in northeast Ohio. So far, one male adult Indiana bat, a Federally-listed endangered species, has been netted within the Brecksville Reservation. This is the first record of the species within Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the second recorded for Cleveland Metroparks.

The primary objective of the two-year study is to document the occurrence and distribution of Indiana bats within the national park and several park reservations of Cleveland Metroparks. Female Indiana bats, if captured, will be outfitted with radio transmitters and released, allowing park staff to locate summer roosting sites. The Service's Reynoldsburg Ohio Ecological Services Field Office has provided the radio transmitters for this study.

This cooperative effort of the National Park Service, Cleveland Metroparks and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing important information that will facilitate

effective protection and management for bats in northeast Ohio. Other species of bats, including the big brown bat, northern long-eared bat, little brown bat, red bat, hoary bat and eastern pipistrelle have also been captured and released during this first year of study.

In July, Service biologists Angela Boyer and Megan Seymour from the Reynoldsburg Ohio Field Office assisted the park staff with their mist-netting efforts. The Service biologists also met with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park staff to discuss methods for protecting Indiana bats and their habitat on the park property. *Angela Boyer, Reynoldsburg FO*



In addition to the Indiana bat, Service biologist from the Reynoldsburg Field Office assisted park staff in capturing other bat species, such as the little brown bat (left) and hoary bat (right).



- USFWS photo by Andy King

An endangered Indiana bat was discovered at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. This is the first record of the bat being found in the park.



- USFWS photos by Angela Boyer

Volunteers Collect Seeds for Restoration at Whittlesey Creek Refuge



- USFWS photo

Volunteers collected seeds that will be used to restore native marsh habitat.

The Chequamegon Chapter of the Audubon Society sponsored a volunteer work day at Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge on August 3, 2002. Seven volunteers spent the morning collecting native sedge and rush seeds from selected locations on the refuge. Pam Dryer, refuge manager, directed the volunteers to locations that had good sedge and rush plant populations that were ripe for seed collection.

Approximately one bushel of seeds were collected by the volunteers. These seeds will be dried, processed and planted in newly restored wetland

sites on the refuge and lands of the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center this fall and next summer.

Experimental sedge meadow restoration has been done on the refuge over the past couple years. The wet meadow zones of restored shallow marshes are planted to native sedge and rush seeds collected in the area before reed canary grass, an aggressive, introduced species, becomes dominant. Students from nearby Northland College have provided significant help with these restoration efforts. *Pam Dryer, Whittlesey Creek NWR*

Ashland Fisheries Office Assists Chippewa Band With Zebra Mussel Surveys

During the week of August 5, the Ashland Fisheries Resources Office assisted the Sokaogon Chippewa Community in determining the distribution and density of zebra mussels near its reservation boundaries. Fisheries biologist and Region 3 diver Glenn Miller, along with Mike Preul, aquatic biologist for the Mole Lake Band, surveyed three lakes that are utilized by the tribe for tribal subsistence harvest in the 1837 and 1842 ceded territories of Wisconsin.

Lakes surveyed were Pelican Lake in Oneida County, and Lake Lucerne and Lake Metonga in Forest County. Pelican Lake and Lake Lucerne had no zebra mussels found during the surveys. Areas around the boat landings and rock bars where fishermen are known to fish were surveyed, with each area receiving approximately 20 minutes per diver spent in these areas. A total of three areas for Lake Lucerne and four areas for Pelican Lake were surveyed.

Zebra mussels were reported in Lake Metonga during the summer of 2001. Further investigations during 2001 found several recruitment classes in the northern part of the lake by a public boat landing. During the fall of 2001 and winter of 2002, Mike Preul, along with assistance

from the Ashland FRO, put together a long term monitoring program for Lake Metonga. The program includes SCUBA surveys and collections of zebra mussels, veliger samplers placed throughout the lake and outlet streams, veliger tows and fish sampling of all life stages.

This is the first year of the sampling program, and, unfortunately, it looks like the zebra mussels are rapidly increasing their numbers in Lake Metonga. All sizes, from 2 mm up to 20 mm were found during the SCUBA survey and over two-thirds of the veliger samplers showed settling of juvenile zebra mussels.

Lake Metonga is used heavily for recreation, both for fishing and boating in general. Because of the volume of boats using this lake, the

potential for further infestations into surrounding lakes is very high.

The Mole Lake Band, in conjunction with the lake association, is in the process of placing large signs at boat landings warning boaters of the zebra mussels in Lake Metonga. These signs will inform boaters of ways to help prevent the spread of zebra mussels into neighboring lakes. *Glenn Miller, Ashland FRO*



- USFWS photo

Mike Preul, aquatic biologist for the Mole Lake Band, inspects a veliger sampler from Lake Metonga in Forest County, Wis. The survey found that zebra mussels populations are rapidly increasing in the lake.

Service Partners with Ohio and Livestock Coalition to Protect Riparian Habitat



- Photo courtesy Alberta RHMP

Cattle can negatively impact habitat and water quality in riparian areas. By controlling access, managers can limit these impacts.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with the Ohio Division of Wildlife, Soil and Water; Division of Natural Areas and Preserves; several Soil and Water Conservation Districts; and, the Ohio Livestock Coalition banded together to offer fencing to livestock producers that would exclude their animals from riparian areas in eight counties of Ohio.

The agreement, which was initiated and developed by the Service early in 2002, has resulted in overwhelming

interest from more than 70 landowners. Once completed, more than 60 miles of fencing will be utilized to protect nearly 500 acres of habitat.

The program requires landowners to maintain a minimum setback of 15 feet for at least 10 years. The majority of applicants have agreed to establish setbacks of 35 feet or greater. This program will benefit creeks, waterways and scenic rivers. *William Hegge, Reynoldsburg FO*

Mingo Refuge and Friends Reach into the Community with Oral History Project

The Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, along with the Mingo Swamp Friends, developed an oral history project for the refuge and local area. The project revolved around two major goals: 1) to establish multiple accounts of what the refuge habitat and natural resources were like approximately 60 years ago, in the 1940s, prior to establishment of the refuge; and, 2) to bridge a gap with older community members and generate improved community relations.

The project involved multiple steps and a steep learning curve. The Friends Group and the refuge discussed the purpose and possibilities of the project for many months before deciding to commit the necessary time and funds. It was decided that the project should peak at the local summer festival, Homecoming, when the little town of Puxico grows from 800 people to 5,000. Past residents are in town during Homecoming and the carnival atmosphere encourages story telling and sharing. With Homecoming as our goal, we arranged our plans backwards over the summer; we planted the seeds of ideas in May and spent Homecoming harvesting interviews.

Hard work and ingenuity lead to renting a building, posting displays,

contacting possible interviewees, printing historical pictures in local papers several weeks in advance, ordering cameras, writing press releases and conducting research all before the week of Homecoming.

During the week of Homecoming, Aug 12 - 17, the Mingo Oral History Project conducted 12 interviews, lasting one to two hours each. Volunteers and contracted employees interviewed people who shared stories and information about the refuge. Over 200 people stopped in the history headquarters to look at old photographs, ask questions and talk about the refuge.

Volunteers and interns from Southeast Missouri State University, in Cape Girardeau, assisted with the set-up and coordination of the Oral History Project throughout the



- USFWS photos

Historian Wil Shapton (left) interviews a brother and sister who grew up on what is now the Mingo NWR. By documenting these historical accounts, present and future generations will have a better understanding of the refuge's, and the community's, past.

summer. Intern Monica Bishop volunteered over 450 hours. Her participation was crucial to the success of the project. Monica made the initial contacts, wrote the press releases, submitted historic photos to the local paper, cataloged the historical pictures and filed land acquisition reports from the 1940s. Monica also researched and ordered archival supplies, camera equipment and recording equipment. Her final duty was to manage the cameras and recording equipment during the interview process during the week of Homecoming.

Special thanks are also in order to the Ozark Border Electric Cooperative for donating the electricity at the rental building, to John Dobrovoly for giving guidance from the Regional Office, to Dr. Bonnie Stepenoff for encouraging students from Southeast Missouri State University to participate in the project, and to all those for willingly sitting in front of a camera and sharing their stories with us. *Molly Mehl, Mingo NWR*



A collection of historical photos was a big attraction at the event. Local residents were able to help staff identify some previously unknown individuals and possible time frames of photographs.

Frog Deformities Decrease by Nearly 10 Percent in Fergus Falls District Survey

Staff from the Fergus Falls Wetland Management District and Twin Cities Field Office conducted surveys for malformed frogs in two wetlands on the Julsrud Waterfowl Production Area in July 2002. All frogs were measured (snout to vent length) and examined; frog abnormalities were recorded and photographed.

Four frogs with gross abnormalities were anesthetized, mounted on plastic, preserved in ethyl alcohol and sent to the National Wildlife Health Center for radiographs.



- USFWS photo

Abnormalities, such as missing legs, were down by nearly 10 percent from last year.

Thirty-five frogs were sent live to the University of Wisconsin for necropsies to determine parasite loads.

On July 22, 2002, 229 northern leopard frogs were collected from the boundary wetland on Julsrud WPA. Thirteen (5.7 percent) frogs had abnormalities that included: extra digits, limb rotation and bone bridges on front limbs; partial or missing hind limbs; limb rotation and bone bridges on hind limbs; missing, fused, shortened or misplaced digits on hind limbs; and, a misplaced eye (out of the socket, below where the eye would normally be). The boundary wetland is a co-owned (part owned by the Service and part in private ownership) wetland on the edge of the WPA. Some agricultural land and a building site are adjacent to the wetland. This basin had an abnormality rate of nearly 15 percent in 2001.



- USFWS photo

Staff from the Fergus Falls WMD and Twin Cities Field Office surveyed frog populations as part of a Department of Interior study.

On July 23, 2002, 141 northern leopard frogs and two mink frogs were collected from the over-the-road wetland on Julsrud WPA. No abnormalities were found. The over-the-road wetland is surrounded by seeded native prairie and WPA land on all sides.

Funding for the malformed frog surveys comes from the Department of the Interior's Amphibian Initiative that is designed to examine amphibian declines and abnormalities. The surveys help determine the prevalence of frog abnormalities on Service lands. *Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD*

Upper Mississippi River Refuge Teaches "Leaves No Trace" Recreation

Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (MN, WI, IA, IL) conducted its third "Leave No Trace" Trainer Course in mid-August, bringing the total number of trainers on the refuge and in the area to 24.

Leave No Trace is a national education program designed to minimize impacts to cultural and natural resources that are directly related to recreational use. With 3.5 million visitors reported annually,

the refuge has its share of these types of impacts. Wildlife disturbance, trash, human waste, invasive species and trampled and destroyed vegetation are just some of the impacts found.

Partnering with Wenonah Canoe as a course sponsor, participants spent two days in the field, paddling to and camping on an island in Pool 5 of the Mississippi River. While on the island, participants learned and practiced minimum impact tech-

niques that they will later share with the public.

Participants in this year's course included staff from Upper Mississippi River and Trempealeau refuges, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, as well as boy scout leaders from both the Rochester and Twin Cities area. *Joya Szalwinski, Upper Miss NWFR - HQ*

Red Lake Walleye Continue to Improve

In cooperation with the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Ashland Fisheries Resources Office continued bottom trawling for the fifth year to assess the abundance of juvenile walleye and forage fish in Minnesota's Upper and Lower Red Lakes. Although complete analysis of the data is not finished, preliminary data indicates the walleye fishery is continuing to improve.

In 2000, trawling was expanded to include the eastern half of the Upper Red Lake under the jurisdiction of the DNR. In accordance with the Red Lake Walleye Restoration Plan, this survey is used by the tribe and DNR to determine the status of walleye recruitment, the success of stocking efforts in the wake of a declining walleye fishery and the status of forage fish stocks for supporting walleyes. A total of 81 million walleye fry were stocked in 1999 and 2001 combined.



- USFWS photo

Adult walleye were captured during the August survey of Red Lake, indicating increased abundance of larger fish.

A total of 60 tows of five-minute duration were completed during the week of August 12. An analysis of the data has not been completed, but preliminary observation indicated an average of 1.5 to 2.0 juvenile walleye per tow, similar to 2001.

However, unlike

2001 several adult walleyes were captured this year. Adult walleyes are usually successful in evading the bottom trawl unless they are abundant. The fact that several adult as well as age two specimens were captured is an indicator that walleye abundance has improved. It was assumed that these specimens were likely representative of the 1999 and 2001 stockings, and all were captured in the same tow. The most common species captured were yellow perch, freshwater drum, spottail shiner, black crappie and walleye. Year class strength for yellow perch and freshwater drum is strong, while year class strength for spottail shiner and black crappie could be described as fair.

These annual bottom trawling assessments are being used in conjunction with other sampling techniques to monitor the effectiveness of the Red Lake Walleye Restoration Plan consisting of restocking and more restrictive catch regulations. *Gary Czypinski, Ashland FRO*

Mitigation Banks Performing Well in the Chicago Region



- USFWS photo by Jeffrey Mengler

This wetland restoration project at Otter Creek is an example of a successful wetland mitigation banking site.

The Mitigation Banking Review Team of the Chicago District recently completed field inspections of seven wetland mitigation banks in the Chicago region. The inspections revealed that where the bankers put in the necessary effort to restore fully functioning wetlands, success is being achieved. Five of these banks have all or a major portion of their wetland restoration at full-performance as determined through review of their monitoring data and the on-site inspections.

These restorations bring wetlands back to areas that were drained farm fields or drained fallow ground and provide wildlife habitat and native plant diversity to compensate for small individual impacts to lower quality wetlands authorized under the Clean Water Act within the Chicago District.

Most of these areas have been restored to wetlands from row-cropped farm fields or areas previously dominated entirely by aggressive weedy species. In many places, the vegetation now resembles that of a natural wetland.

These determinations resulted in release of additional mitigation credits by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for most sites. *Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO*

Special Assistant to the Director Tours Region 3 Stations

Special Assistant to the Director Clint Riley spent several days touring Region 3 to gain a better understanding of issues facing the region. Riley spent August 2 at the Regional Office and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge listening to presentations covering activities across the region. Riley then boarded the Region 3 airplane and spent the next three days visiting field stations in the Great Lakes, upper Mississippi River and tallgrass prairie ecosystems of the region.

His first field location was the Great Lakes area including the Iron River National Fish Hatchery and Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge.

On August 4, Riley was given a grand welcome to the Upper Mississippi River. An aerial view of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, compliments of former Regional Pilot Bob Foster, was included in the tour. The tour was organized by Pam Thiel, project leader at the La Crosse Fishery Resources Office and included opportunities for the Special Assistant to gain an overview of

activities conducted by the Service and other partners to protect important natural resources on the upper Mississippi River. During the morning Mr. Riley met with personnel from the LaCrosse Fish Health Lab, National Wetlands Inventory, Law Enforcement and U.S. Geological Survey.

During the afternoon, he toured habitat management activities on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and habitat restoration projects constructed under the Environmental Management Program, as well as observing the ecological benefits of the Pool 8 drawdown and mussel recovery efforts at the Genoa National Fish Hatchery.



- USFWS photo

Special Assistant Clint Riley (center) took a tour of Genoa National Fish Hatchery's "Clam Palace" during his visit to the region. Twin Cities Field Office Biologist Gary Wege and LaCrosse Fishery Resources Office Project Leader Pam Thiel are pictured with Riley.

Riley flew to the tallgrass prairie area of northwestern Minnesota and spent a day touring waterfowl production areas in the Fergus Falls Wetland Management District. Included in the tour was a visit to the HAPET office and a hands-on demonstration of waterfowl banding techniques. *Teresa Woods, Regional Office; Dan Stinnett, Twin Cities FO and Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH*

On August 5,



- USFWS photos

(Above) Riley (right) talks with Wege and McGregor District Manager John Lindell (center) about issues effecting the upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

(Right) Riley had the opportunity to band ducks while visiting the Fergus Falls Wetland Management District.



Horicon Refuge Hosts Successful Volunteer Training Week

With the busy fall tourist and school field trip season just around the corner, Horicon National Wildlife Refuge hosted a volunteer training week, August 26-29. Each half-day of training centered on a different volunteer job: school field trip assistants, rolling readers, visitor center staff and rangers. More than 25 volunteers attended in total, including seven brand new volunteers.

The newest fall training session, for school field trip assistants, was the best attended and will provide extra support for the refuge ranger who typically handles one to three groups per week day in the fall. These volunteers will be eased into the job by first observing programs, then assisting and ultimately leading. Their support will be especially critical for two newly planned school field trips scheduled to take place during National Wildlife Refuge Week in October.

For the fifth year, volunteer rolling readers will roll into school classrooms in communities around the refuge to read nature stories to children and conduct simple related activities. This position is offered in partnership with Rolling Readers USA, a private, non-profit children's literacy organization. Rolling readers provide essential outreach into schools and excellent public relations throughout the school year.



- USFWS photo by Molly Stoddard

Volunteer rolling readers from Horicon NWR read nature stories to children and conduct simple, hands-on activities at schools and community centers.

Visitor center volunteers greet the public at the visitor center seven days per week, September through early November. Because of their tireless dedication, the refuge doors stay open daily to serve up to 1,100 visitors per day on peak weekends.

Volunteer rangers hike refuge trails or station themselves at viewing areas, parking lots or trail heads to welcome the public. Like all visitor services volunteers, they are uniformed and identifiable as someone who can help. They distribute maps and brochures, answer questions and provide extra visibility

on the refuge. Since only about 17,000 of the refuge's estimated 500,000 visitors drive to the visitor center, the presence of volunteer rangers provides needed outreach services to those who otherwise most likely would not have any interaction with refuge staff.

These volunteer positions are essential to making Horicon's fall tourist and school season successful and fun. Besides that, their involvement builds community support of the refuge for which we are grateful. *Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR*

Partnership Helps Lake Sturgeon Recovery on Wisconsin Tribal Lands

Four thousand juvenile lake sturgeon were propagated and stocked as part of an ongoing restoration program involving the LaCrosse Fishery Resource Office, Genoa National Fish Hatchery and the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin.

Historically, lake sturgeon abounded on the reservation until hydroelectric projects cut fish off from their traditional spawning

grounds. To help remediate the loss, sturgeon are captured in the spring, spawned and then released back into the Wolf River. The eggs are hatched and reared to six inches at the Genoa National Fish Hatchery and released in the fall.

Many hatchery produced sturgeon are now found in these stocked waters, indicating good post stocking success. *Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH*



- USFWS photo

Four thousand lake sturgeon were stocked in the Wolf River this fall. The LaCrosse FRO monitors sturgeon populations to determine success and future stocking requirements.

Region 3 Promotes Centennial and Jr. Duck Stamp at National Conference

More than 800 environmental educators as well as representatives from various state, federal and nonprofit environmental agencies and organizations participated in the National American Association for Environmental Education Conference held in Boston this August.

Attendees participated in a multitude of workshops, sessions, field trips, networking groups and focus groups, all of which addressed the latest development, direction, trends and issues in environmental education. Region 3 was proactive in recommending, organizing and providing outreach for the Federal Junior Duck Program and the Refuge System Centennial at this conference.

In conjunction with the National Conservation and Training Center, which was one of the conference sponsors, Region 3 representatives staffed a double booth in the exhibit hall and experienced tremendous results in their Centennial and environmental education outreach efforts.

Environmental educators as well as various representative from environmental agencies were exceptionally eager to talk with U.S. Fish and Wildlife personnel at the booth about Service resources available to enhance their environmental education programs. On an average, each visitor to the booth spent 20-30 minutes.

This was the first time that many of the educators heard of the Junior Duck Stamp Program and were very excited to learn that their students could "Learn Art through Conservation."

While many of the conference participants were aware of the



- USFWS photo

Hundreds of environmental educators learned about the Junior Duck Stamp Program and the Refuge System Centennial during the meeting.

upcoming Refuge Centennial in 2003, they were pleased to be reminded of it.

Additional information about other Service programs and where participants could get more information regarding the Service was also distributed. *Anne Shea, External Affairs*

Lake Trout Broodstock Retired to Bluer Pastures

So, where do old broodstock lake trout go to die? Well, they get stocked in Johnson Lake near Gwinn in the central Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Biologists Crystal LeGault and Tracy Walters loaded the retiring broodstock from Hiawatha Forest National Fish Hatchery onto a fish truck for their three-hour trip to Johnson Lake. All broods are certified pathogen free and are being released after many years of contributing eggs and milt towards the restoration of lake trout populations in the Great Lakes.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources - Gladstone Office worked closely with the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service to determine the right lake in which to stock the retiring lake trout. A deep enough lake with an optimal environment must be considered carefully because of the size of the fish.

Sixty-seven Superior

Marquette domestic lake trout were retired – 42 males from the 1988-year class weighing about 12.15 lbs each; and 25 females from the 1987-year class weighing about 13.68 lbs each. *Donald Wiley, Pencil Creek NWR*



- USFWS photo

These lake trout have done their part to help restore the species to the Great Lakes. Now they are spending their retirement years in a deep lake in Michigan's upper peninsula.

Accomplishment Reports Received

The following reports were processed by the Region 3 Accomplishment Reporting System for accomplishments completed between July 31 and August 31, 2002. Employees can search reports using the Report Manager utility in the ARS.

Rice Lake Refuge Participates in Wild Rice Days

Mary Stefanski, Rice Lake NWR

August 2002 Diversity Report

*Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/
PWLC*

Service Partners with Ohio and Livestock Coalition to Protect Riparian Habitat

william hegge, Reynoldsburg FO

Kirtland's Warbler Tours Continue to Attract Wildlife Lovers

Christopher Mensing, East Lansing FO

Chicago Field Office Assists State of Illinois with Federal Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest

cyndi duda, Chicago FO

Chicago Field Office Provides Guest Speakers for 14 Metro Area Schools

cyndi duda, Chicago FO

Fratt Wetland Project Restores Four Wetlands

Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO

Chicago Field Office Assists Students with Environmental Field Studies

cyndi duda, Chicago FO

Chicago Field Office Provides Teacher Training Regarding Wetlands, Watersheds and Water Quality

cyndi duda, Chicago FO

Alpena FRO Participates in Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Scoping Meeting

Jerry McClain, Alpena FRO

Horicon Refuge Hosts Successful Volunteer Training Week

Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR

Ashland Fisheries Office Presents Award To Tribal Cooperator

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

Muscatatuck Refuge Holds Butterfly Count

Donna Stanley, Muscatatuck NWR

Mississippi Headwaters and Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem Team Converges on Neal Smith Refuge

*Tim Yager, Mississippi Headwaters
EcoTm*

Muscatatuck Refuge Holds Volunteer Recognition Dinner

Donna Stanley, Muscatatuck NWR

Media Contact re: Dioxins in Tittabawasee and Saginaw Rivers

Lisa Williams, East Lansing FO

Missouri Couple Sentenced For Brokering Illegal Sale of Federally-Endangered Tigers

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

Secretive American Bitterns Tracked With Satellite Technology - 2001 to 2002 Update

Margaret Anderson, Agassiz NWR

Sea Lampreys a Fair Hit

*john heinrich, Marquette Biological
Statio*

Detroit Lakes WMD Hosts Annual Waterfowl Expo

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

Detroit Lakes Wetland District Hosts 4th Annual Waterfowl Expo

Les Peterson, Detroit Lakes WMD

Chicago Office Holds Calumet Area Bio-Blitz™

Michael Redmer, Chicago FO

Motorboat Operation Instructor Certification

Adam Kowalski, Alpena FRO

Fergus Falls Holds Public Meetings for CCP Comments

*Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/
PWLC*

Sampling of Fish Communities on Little Muddy Creek

susan wells, Ottawa NWR

DCR Staff Provides Overview of Civil Rights Review Process to Federal Aid Coordinators

Peggy Nelson, ABA (DCR)

DCR and Federal Aid Staff Conduct Civil Rights Compliance Review of the Wisconsin DNR

Peggy Nelson, ABA (DCR)

Muscatatuck Refuge Volunteer/Interns Donate More Than 1,600 Hours of Summer Field Help

Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

New Lotus Notes Project Tracking System Make Information Access Easier

*Rodney Hartleib, ABA
(Engineering)*

Grand Portage Creek Fish Passage Now Operational

Lee Newman, Ashland FRO

Environmental Educators Workshop Held at Minnesota Valley Refuge

Scott Ford, Minnesota Valley NWR

Times are a Changin' at the Becker County Fair

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

Media Learns About Changes in Hunting Regs at Waterfowl Primer

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

Service Biologist Attends North American Lake Trout Symposium

Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO

Implementation of 2000 Consent Decree

Henry Quinlan, Ashland FRO

Mingo Refuge and Mingo Swamp Friends Reach into the Community via an Oral History Project

Molly Mehl, Mingo NWR

Upper Mississippi River Refuge Teaches Leaves No Trace™

Joya Szalwinski, UMRNW&FR-Complex HQ

Horicon Refuge Hosts Successful and Safe Youth Conservation Corps Program

Diane Kitchen, Horicon NWR

Red Lake Walleye Fishery Continues to Improve

Gary Czypinski, Ashland FRO

Watershed Protection Technical Assistance Round Robin Held by Service, Partners

Bob Kavetsky, East Lansing FO

Minnesota Waterfowl Association Woodie Camp Participants Enjoy Making Mallard Nest Cylinders

Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

Stream Restoration Techniques Course

Ted Koehler, Ashland FRO

Wetland District Managers Descend on Detroit Lakes

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

Media Outreach—Marketing Region 3 Initiatives and Accomplishments to Television

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

Tumbling Creek Cavesnail Listed Under Endangered Species Act

Georgia Parham, External Affairs

Outreach - Listing for Tumbling Creek Cavesnail

Georgia Parham, External Affairs

Team Effort Continues a 22 Year Wildcelery Survey on the Upper Mississippi

Lara Hill, UMRNW&FR-LaCrosse

Muscatatuck Refuge and Ducks Unlimited Promote Refuge Centennial to 6,500 people

Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

Volunteer Program Strong at Jordan River National Fish Hatchery

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

Hocking College Students Gain Valuable Experience

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

Endangered Species Discovered at National Park in Ohio

Angela Boyer, Reynoldsburg FO

Florida Animal Park Owner Pleads Guilty to Illegally Selling Federally Protected Leopards

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

Chicago Field Office Helps Nominate Candidates for City of Chicago's Official Fish

Michael Redmer, Chicago FO

Mississippi River Commission Tours Genoa National Fish Hatchery

Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH

Rydell Visitor Center Addition Dedication and Open House Well Attended

rick julian, Rydell NWR

Friends of Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District Take Flight

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

Minnesota Celebrates Prairie Day

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

Return to the Prairie Day At the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center

Kenneth Garrahan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

Genoa National Fish Hatchery Aids Minnesota Mussel Recovery Project

Roger Gordon, Genoa NFH

Ashland Fisheries Office Assists Mole Lake Chippewa Band With Zebra Mussel Surveys

Glenn Miller, Ashland FRO

Alpena and Ashland Fisheries Offices Assist Bay Mills Community with Lake Superior Whitefish Survey

Aaron Woldt, Alpena FRO

Region 3 MOCC instructors attend advanced training for the Open Water Module.

Stewart Cogswell, Green Bay FRO

Horicon Refuge Staff Attends Mentor Training Workshop

Diane Kitchen, Horicon NWR

Kids Practice Casting in Downtown Saginaw

Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR

Congresswoman Betty McCollum Visits Minnesota Valley

Scott Ford, Minnesota Valley NWR

Service Proposes to Maintain Duck Hunting Opportunities With Added Restrictions For Some Species

Chuck Traxler, External Affairs

Pre-season Waterfowl Meeting Held for Minnesota Outdoor Writers

Steve Wilds, Migratory Birds & State Pgm

Pilot Program for Budget Tracking System

Clarice Beckner, Jordan River NFH

Worst to First: Region 3 Gets Federal Aid Accomplishments On The Street

Michael Vanderford, Federal Aid

Safety Office Initiates New Automated External Defibrillator Pilot Program

Patrick McDermott, ABA (Engineering)

La Crosse Fishery Offices Partner to Complete Wild Fish Health Survey

Scott Yess, LaCrosse FRO

National American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Conference August 6-10, 2002

Anne Shea, External Affairs

Another Edition of the MTAN Goes to Print

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

Girls Scouts Fun Fishing Day at Ottawa Refuge

susan wells, Ottawa NWR

Service Seeks Public Comment on Draft Recovery Plan for Great Lakes' Piping Plover

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

Public Input Sought on Draft Recovery Plan for Illinois Cave Amphipod

Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

300 Cub Scouts Get Wet in Stream Exploration Experience

Jeffrey Mengler, Chicago FO

Detroit Lakes Staff Work with Partners to Help Landowners and Habitat

Mark Chase, Detroit Lakes WMD

Mississippi Headwaters Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem Debut's "Partners" Web Page

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

Special Assistant to Director Visits the Genoa National Fish Hatchery

Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH

Genoa National Fish Hatchery Participates in Lake Sturgeon Recovery

Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH

Parades Promote Service Fire Program and Centennial

Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR

Volunteers Collect Seeds for Sedge Meadow Restoration at Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge

Pam Dryer, Whittlesey Creek NWR

Wood Duck Banding and Shorebird Events at Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge

Michelle McDowell, Union Slough NWR

Successful Fish Collection at Shacte Creek

Frank Stone, Ashland FRO

Rice Lake Refuge Participates in Aitkin County Fair

Mary Stefanski, Rice Lake NWR

Public Interest in Minnesota Valley Educational and Interpretive Programs Increasing

Scott Ford, Minnesota Valley NWR

Chicago Field Office Participates in Stewardship Days

cyndi duda, Chicago FO

First Large Scale Collection of Sturgeon From Green Bay Successful

Robert Elliott, Green Bay FRO

Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee Visits Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge

Michelle McDowell, Union Slough NWR

Lake Superior Technical Committee Meeting

Henry Quinlan, Ashland FRO

Results from Green Bay Workshops Will Help Improve Yellow Perch Populations

Mark Holeý, Green Bay FRO

Minnow Effects Study Continues During 2002

Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

Genoa National Fish Hatchery Assists in Endangered Mussel Surveys

Doug Aloisi, Genoa NFH

Environmental Assessments Completed for Three Highway Projects

Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC

Enhancements to Charge Card Program

William Andersen, ABA (Budget & Finance)

Chicago Field Office Coordinates Service's Sikes Act Review of Joliet Training Center Mgt. Plan

Michael Redmer, Chicago FO



**Inside Region 3
September 2002**

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