



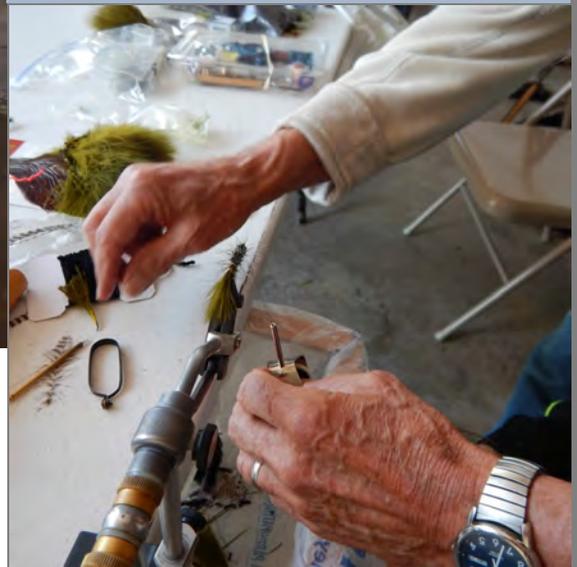
IRON RIVER NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY



JULY-AUGUST NEWSLETTER



Fish, Food and Fun at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery Open House by Carey Edwards



The Iron River National Fish Hatchery (IRNFH) hosted its 12th annual open house on September 27, 2014. Approximately 170 visitors toured the facility. Children were offered gift bags with personalized IRNFH goodies. Guided tours from knowledgeable hatchery staff awaited groups on the half hour. Two popular activities, again a hit this year, were the fish printing and casting games. Children were able to decorate in an array of colors for a one of a kind shirt with fish molds, paints and markers. Plastic lawn bass were spread out in the lawn for children to practice their casting skills and each child received a prize (donated by the Friends of the Iron River National Fish Hatchery) for catching the wily bass.

Back for the sixth year at IRNFH was the Wild Rivers Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) with their fly tying booth. All materials used were donated by TU and children were able to take their homemade fly home. The Friends of the Iron River National Fish Hatchery also manned the ever popular "minnow" racing station and showcased sale items such as hats and tee shirts sporting the group logo. This was a big sensation and generated more interest and questions about becoming a Friend. Making an appearance this year was Jordan River National Fish Hatchery with regional hatchery information, beautiful fish mounts and furs for event goers to handle. A youth archery range debuted this year thanks to Genoa National Fish Hatchery staff and volunteers. After seeing the sites and participating in the days event, visitors could help themselves to a cook out lunch donated by the Brule River Sportsman's Club. Members cooked and served approximately 200 hot dogs to hungry guests.

Partnerships are the cornerstone to any successful operation and the Iron River National Fish Hatchery is no exception. Thanks to these new collaborations, the hatchery was able to host a very successful event. Stay tuned to see what new events and collaborations take place next year.

The success of the open house is dependent upon collaborations between local sportsman's clubs, the Hatchery's Friends Group and other supportive National Fish Hatcheries. THANKS!!



Marking Complete at Iron River National Fish Hatchery *by Shawn Sanders*



The Iron River National Fish Hatchery (IRNFH) raises approximately 1.5 million lake trout and coaster brook trout each year. Lake trout stocked from the hatchery are destined for Lake Michigan and Lake Huron and are distributed as fall fingerlings and spring yearlings. Coaster brook trout are stocked as spring fingerlings in tribal waters of Lake Superior. All fish stocked in the Great Lakes must be marked in some manner so researchers can easily tell the difference between a hatchery and native fish during assessments.

In the fall of 2009, the first automatic clipping and tagging trailer purchased by the USFWS arrived at IRNFH to mark lake trout. Since then, several more trailers have been added to the operation, streamlining the marking process in Region 3. From start to finish, nearly 1.4 million lake trout were marked in a little less than 14 days. A total of 110,000 fish were marked for fall fingerling stocking in Lake Michigan. Another 1.3M fish were marked for spring yearling distribution in Lakes Michigan and Huron.

Here's how it works: Fish are netted from the raceway into the trailer, sorted by size with electronic sensors and sent down tubes to holding reservoirs to await marking. As fish pass through the machines, foam grippers hold the fish firmly while a tag is inserted into its nose/nostrum and the adipose fin is cut off. The fish are then sent down another tube with a scanner. If correctly marked, the fish continue down the tube into a raceway to continue to grow and await stocking later this fall or spring. Occasionally fish aren't marked properly and are rejected to a holding chamber where veteran fin clippers will tag or clip the fish correctly. The staff at the hatchery was pleased with the quality and speed with which the job was completed and enjoyed working with the trailer staff. Stay tuned with the results from the next phase...fall fingerling distribution.

Valuable Training Attended By Iron River National Fish Hatchery Staff *by Carey Edwards*

Late July found three hatchery biologists from Iron River National Fish Hatchery attending the Biologist's Meeting in LaCrosse, WI, hosted by Genoa National Fish Hatchery (NFH) and the LaCrosse Fish Health Lab. This is a meeting in which Region 3 hatchery biologists new and old, can come together and share information and new technology in an informal setting. Attendees must present information on their hatchery, a special project or study they have been working on. In addition to a full day of presentations, biologists were able to tour the eDNA lab, Genoa NFH and the USGS-Upper Mississippi Environmental Science Center aquaculture facility. Biologists were treated to a fish fry hosted by the Friends of the Upper Mississippi. Three days of chainsaw safety training followed the conclusion of the Biologist's Meeting, also hosted by Genoa NFH and the LaCrosse Fish Health Lab. Individuals working for the Fish and Wildlife Service must attend a federally certified chainsaw safety training course before operating a chainsaw during work hours. All in all, it was a rewarding week catching up with old friends and meeting new ones, listening to the exciting new studies and projects that are going on in the Region and attending much needed safety training.

Summer Youth Conservation Corp Program by Carey Edwards

The Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) is a summer employment program for young men and women aged 15 through 18 that allow America's youth to further the development and maintenance of the natural resource on federally managed lands. The program is 8-10 weeks in duration and is available to any appropriately aged youth regardless of social, economic, ethnic, racial and disabled status. Members are selected in a random method. YCC was authorized in 1970 and opportunities for employment are found within the National Park Service, US Forest Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. YCC members are provided the opportunity to increase self-esteem, learn self-discipline and work ethics, relate with peers and supervisors and develop knowledge and understanding of the nation's natural environment and heritage. It also prepares them for the responsibility of maintaining and managing these resources for the American people.

Lexus Gary is this year's YCC participant at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery. She was given a wide spectrum of tasks from natural resource management to hand labor projects as well as the opportunity to work with other agencies. She was instrumental in maintaining hatchery grounds and trails and participating in fish culture.

In the spring, all interested and qualifying applicants should submit an application to the Iron River National Fish Hatchery. Applications can be picked up at the hatchery or downloaded at http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ycc/ycc_appl.pdf. We hope to see your application next spring!



Working Together is More Than Just an Annual Event by Shawn Sanders

The Iron River National Fish Hatchery (IRNFH) raises approximately 1.5 million lake trout and coaster brook trout each year. Lake trout stocked from the hatchery are destined for Lake Michigan and Lake Huron and are distributed as fall fingerlings and spring yearlings. Coaster brook trout are stocked as spring fingerlings in tribal waters of Lake Superior.

Working in an agency that protects fish and wildlife for future generations is part of the public trust portion of our job that is MORE than just fun. A fish hatchery must stay healthy both to produce a quality fish, but also as to not spread pathogens to wild populations. And the opposite is also true, wild fish can be vectors to transmit viruses, bacteria and parasites to hatchery fish.

To cover both of these scenarios, a team of biologists from Lacrosse Fish Health Center (Lacrosse, WI), travels to Iron River NFH twice a year, to test for a variety of fish pathogens. Hatchery fish, both brood and production fish as well as any wild fish that are caught within the Schacte Creek watershed (the main hatchery water source), directly above and below the hatchery are sampled for pathogens. The actual collection of wild fish is completed cooperatively with the Ashland FWCO, who lends their expertise to collect wild fish. Once all the tests are completed, a "report card" is given to each facility stating if they are pathogen-free or not. A pathogen free status allows us to easily complete our mission of Great Lakes Restoration of fish species.



Vaccinations Complete *by Carey Edwards*



Fish are anesthetized and injected with a vaccine to help protect them from the disease furunculosis.



Furunculosis (pronounced fur-unc-you-low-sis) is a bacterial disease primarily found in cultured salmonid and warm water species. It is found widespread in natural waters. Diseased fish appear lethargic, go off feed and display clinical signs such as exophthalmia (bulging eyes), hemorrhagic fins, and furuncles (open boil-like sores). The pathogen is usually transmitted as the result of contact with diseased or carrier fish but can also occur via water passed from one contaminated water supply to another (tank to tank). Fish may be carriers of the disease without showing any clinical signs, which is why hatchery fish are biannually tested by the La Crosse Fish Health Lab.

The disease positive classification can impact the U.S. Fish & Wildlife's ability to meet stocking goals with its many partners including state and tribal agencies because some states have regulations regarding the transport of eggs and fish from positive facilities. A priority for Iron River National Fish Hatchery has been to maintain a disease free status. Small brood fish (approximately 2g in weight) are immersed in a dip while larger brood fish receive an injectable version of the vaccine. This is the fourth year that the vaccine has been implemented with adults being injected in mid July and the final immersion of juveniles in early September. It is hoped that the early vaccination process will be part of a successful biosecurity plan at the Iron River NFH to help maintain a disease free status.

The Hatchery, out and about...*by Carey Edwards*

The Iron River National Fish Hatchery hosts many events for all ages and is open to the public every day from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. for viewing and self-guided tours. We also participate in many outreach events throughout the year that are off station. These events forge new ties with partners and make old ones even stronger. They also allow us to advertise the hatchery's mission to a huge audience that we can't reach normally. We'll see you around!

Bayfield County Fair: This long standing event made its debut in 1894. An informational booth with pictures, brochures and fish mounts was set up in the 4H building and our big distribution truck was on display in the heavy equipment lot. This was our twelfth year of participation.

Blueberry Festival Parade: Our 3,000 gallon distribution truck was driven and exhibited in the 50th anniversary of the Blueberry Festival.

Lake Superior Day: Originating in Canada in the early 1990's, this event has spread to communities surrounding Lake Superior including Port Wing, WI. A hatchery display with fish replicas and informational handouts were available to event goers

Great Lakes Aquarium: Occasionally we get the opportunity to showcase our brood fish in other ways. Our fish can also be found in the 85,000 gallon Isle Royale display at the Great Lakes Aquarium in Duluth, MN.



Check out our brood fish at the Great Lakes Aquarium. Our travelling display can be seen at many events around the region.



Staff Updates and Hatchery Happenings...



Nicholas Starzl has been selected as the Project Leader at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery, effective August 24, 2014. Nick completed his formal education at the University of South Dakota and has been doing outstanding work in the National Fish Hatchery System since 1995. Nick brings a wealth of experience from a number of national fish hatcheries (NFH), across many types of species. Nick began as a volunteer

and later a Bio-Technician in his hometown of Yankton, SD in 1996, where he assisted in paddlefish and endangered pallid sturgeon culture at the Gavins Point NFH. He made his first Region 3 appearance at the Neosho NFH (MO) in 2000, learning the tricks of the trade for 2 years rearing rainbow trout and lake sturgeon. At Genoa NFH (WI), he was responsible for creating an efficient record-keeping system for the operation of culturing many cold, cool, and warm water species while assisting in mussel culture propagation. He was eventually promoted to Lead Biologist. Nick became the Assistant Project Leader at Iron River NFH in 2010 and has been serving as the Acting Project Leader there since May, 2014. In his spare time, Nick enjoys spending most of his time with his family, woodworking, and deer hunting in the fall. Please join us in congratulating Nick in his new official role.



Staff Photo: Pictured from left to right (and out of uniform!!), Hatchery Manager Nick Starzl, biologist Paul Larson, administrative assistant Mallory Mackey, biotech Brandon Kessler, biologist Carey Edwards, animal caretaker Deb Frostman, biologist Shawn Sanders.

★ The 3 mile trail system is open year round for visitors to enjoy. It is groomed for classic cross country skiing and snowshoeing all winter long. Check out our **Facebook page** for the latest updates on trail conditions.

December 2014

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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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January 2015

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February 2015

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28

★ Look for the Candlelight Trek in February

Friends of the Iron River National Fish Hatchery

This could be you!! Join the Friends of the Iron River National Fish Hatchery today. Come share your ideas and thoughts and help promote the hatchery and its resource.

The Friend's of the Iron River National Fish Hatchery rallied at the open house in September by manning all the favorite activities such as the minnow race and lawn bass fishing. Friends members worked with local graphics designer to develop a new kid logo for youth tee shirts which debuted at the open house. Sales earned from Friends merchandise go to support the hatchery and its resource. Check out the Friends merchandise at the hatchery.

Not a member? Membership information can be found at the Friend's website: <http://ironriverhatcheryfriends.org>, through Facebook, by emailing the Friends at something-fishy@ironriverhatcheryfriends.org or by contacting the hatchery office 715-372-8510. New members are always welcome. Come join of the fun.

