



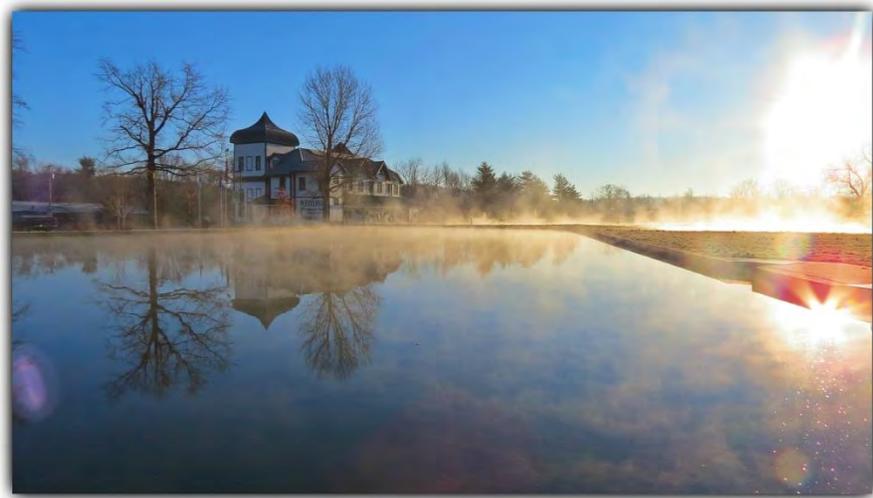
Neosho National Fish Hatchery

NEWSLETTER

March and April 2014



Cool and snowy mornings were common in March, but they made for uncommonly beautiful settings!



March kicked off with a tour of the facility by service and state biologists to assess the suitability of our facility for raising endangered (listed Dec. 1998) Topeka shiner fish. The consensus: things look quite favorable!

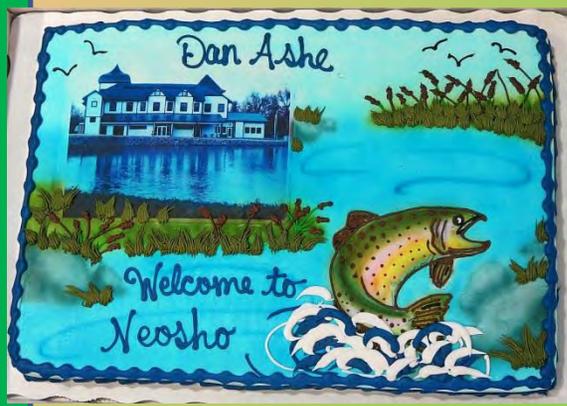




Neosho National Fish Hatchery NEWSLETTER

Also in the first week of March, we were privileged to host the Director of the entire US Fish & Wildlife Service, Dan Ashe. Our fine Friends Group catered a tasty lunch of barbeque brisket sandwiches, and afterwards, Mr. Ashe fielded questions from the crowd. From there, he was

given a tour of the place – it was his first time here. Neosho Walmart also partnered with us to donate this beautiful cake for the event. They are always so supportive of the hatchery and all we do!



Far left: Regional Director Tom Melius with Ashe and hatchery manager David Hendrix.

Left: greeting at the entry of the visitor center.

Below: Dan Ashe looking around in our aquarium viewing bubble.





Neosho National Fish Hatchery

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The spring semester for two Missouri Southern State University students, Erica and Candice, involved spending hours interning at the hatchery. Because of their biology studies, they were able to help out and see all aspects of our different operations. They got hands on with the pallid sturgeon and rainbow trout, as well as helped out with more mundane day-to-day chores. We were thankful for their contributions, and they were both happy helpers with all we threw at them!





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Speaking of sturgeon, spring is a very busy time. These endangered fish are spawned in May, so the months leading up contain many preparatory details, such as ultrasound sex determination, genetic survey, ovary inspection, and egg readiness inspection. Of the thirteen adult wild-caught pallid sturgeon we had at this time, the genetics showed that 7 were hybrids with the similar shovelnose sturgeon, and therefore unsuitable for our breeding program. Of the others, two females were separated as being candidates for the upcoming spawn.



Janice Albers from the USGS came here to do ultrasound and endoscopic examinations.



Hybrid sturgeon were shipped back to the Missouri River.





Neosho National Fish Hatchery

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Springtime at the hatchery is a time of beauty, and also increased visitation. For a nearby town, the hatchery was able to represent an important historical resource for that school's Missouri Day rotations.



One of the favorite activities by visitors is feeding the trout in the ponds. We get many pallets of food delivered a couple times a year, and this time we had to be creative with our storage space!



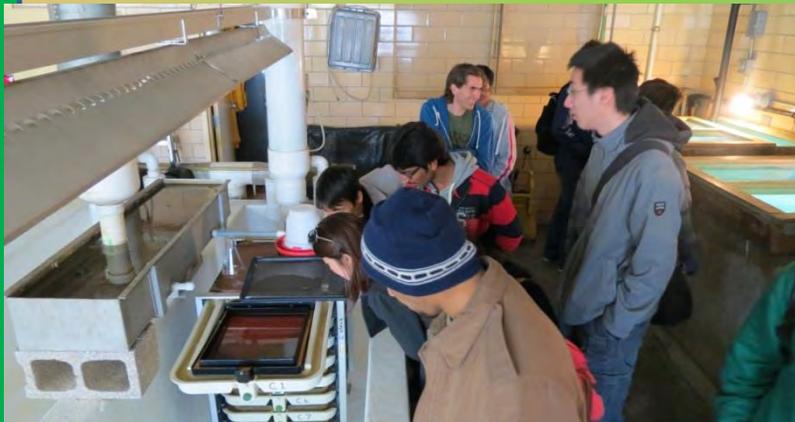
Big school groups LOVE to see our dinosaur fish!





Neosho National Fish Hatchery NEWSLETTER

The local community college has a foreign student program to help them assimilate into the American culture. The English Learner department brings a dozen or so students to visit the hatchery as one of their excursions for some public interactions. They always are so curious and happy to visit. And the countries they come from are so diverse: Malaysia, Brazil, South Korea, Japan, Spain, Mexico, and Zambia just for this group. We are always glad to have them come by!



Local artist Jeffrey Jones has been commissioned to paint a mural that will be hung in four panels on the wall of our gift shop. He was working on the painting in the visitor center during our April Open House.



Here he is a few years back presenting another beautiful hatchery painting.





Neosho National Fish Hatchery

NEWSLETTER



Veterans Derby

This March we celebrated our third annual fishing derby for service men and women. Despite the cold, drizzly conditions this year, we had over 150 brave soldiers stop in to have a joyful time at the hatchery.



So many thankful folks participated – one with tears welling up told us how this was the perfect way to say THANK YOU for their service. We are pleased as punch to oblige!





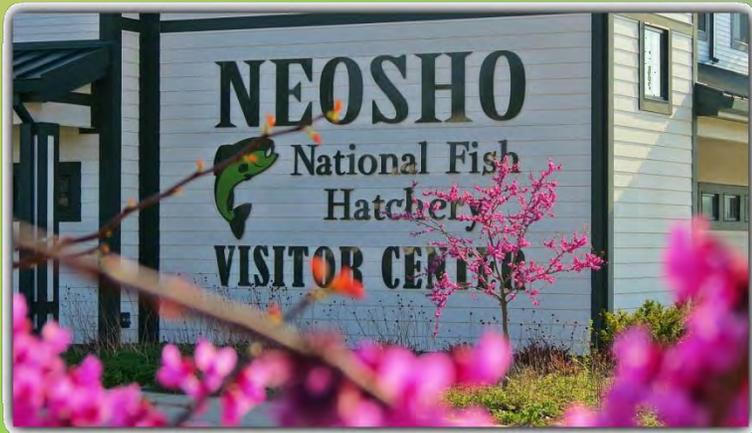
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Our old 70s era fish hauling trailer got a facelift thanks to a local vinyl wrapping company. We think it looks fantastic and it will greatly enhance our message as it rolls on down the highway!



April flowers in time for our annual Open House!



We get all sorts of feathered visitors...some are quite welcome, others no so much.

Oprey



American coots



Mallards



More beautiful flowers - spring is on its way!





Neosho National Fish Hatchery NEWSLETTER

Open House pictures



The Final Word, from hatchery manager David Hendrix.



Hello Everyone ☺,

We are participating in some great activities here at the Neosho National Fish Hatchery. We have just successfully completed our tagging program for the Endangered Pallid Sturgeon. Scutes were removed and PIT tags implanted for future references. Missouri Department of Conservation staff; Columbia Fisheries Conservation Office staff; and Missouri Department of Transportation Endangered Species Biologist all assisted with the process. All tagged fish will be stocked into the Lower Basin of the Missouri River this coming week. It was indeed a wonderful team effort with our partners.

We are also readying up Kid's Fishing Day (June 6th); Senior/Disabled Fishing Day (June 13th); and Topeka Shiner Recovery coming this fall. Please stop by and visit our Nation's Oldest Operating Federal Fish Hatchery soon. Until Next Time, Take Care :-)!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Newsletter and photos by Bruce Hallman,
Environmental Education Specialist

