



PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

Our Mission

The mission of the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

A vision of Fisheries Program that hatcheries directly address is to conserve aquatic species through recovery programs for threatened and endangered fish and mussel species, maintenance of fish health, restoration of native inter-jurisdictional species and management of aquatic nuisance species.

Our Facilities

Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) is located along Lake Superior, approximately 17 minutes west from Brimley, Michigan. Pendills Creek NFH is a lake trout production facility and was established in 1951 to stock the Great Lakes. Lake trout are raised from eggs, and are reared for approximately 14 months, then are released into Lake Michigan. Currently, Pendills Creek is able to raise approximately 1 million lake trout each year.

Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) is 15 miles west of Brimley, located south of M-28, on US Forest Service Road 3134, which is branched off of US Forest Service Road 3131. Sullivan Creek NFH was established in 1934 and is a lake trout brood stock facility. The brood stock at Sullivan Creek are from wild parents, and are maintained to provide approximately 5-7 million eggs each year for hatcheries to continue the restoration efforts.

Our complex is located in the Midwest Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS) within the Department of Interior. There are 6 hatcheries within our Region that play a valuable role in restoration/rehabilitation of native fish, mussels and other aquatic species around the Great Lakes.

Visiting our Facilities

Pendills Creek NFH is open for tours during business hours (7 am to 3 pm). For group tours, please call for an appointment, by calling (906) 437-5231 to schedule an appointment.

Sullivan Creek NFH provides tours by appointment only. Please call Pendills Creek to

PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

schedule an appointment.

And Then There Were Five

On October 24, 2013, Tim Falconer and his wife Debbie were joined by a fifth member of the household. James Thomas Truth Falconer was born at 10:01 pm to his proud parents and joins the family as the third child, behind Fisher, Brittany puppy, 1 year old, and Earl, the cat, 9 years old.



- *Tim Falconer*
Fish Biologist

Friends of Pendills Creek Hatchery -2013 Year in Review

The Friends of Pendills Creek Hatchery (FPCH) had another busy year working to support Pendills and Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatcheries. The past and present Executive Committee members were and are very active in conducting activities over the past year. Their main project continues to be supporting the Annual Children's Fishing Event by co-sponsoring the event. In truth, the event has evolved into a FPCH event. The Friends Group continues to do all of the event solicitation, coordinating, including supplying the man power. Our hatchery complex is very grateful for this annual accomplishment.

The Friends group conducted two raffle events this past year, and both were very successful. The first raffle was for a brand new canoe, and the second for a hand crafted jewelry box and a patch work quilt. The group also held a rummage sale; several bake sales, a craft and merchandise sale at the 4th of July and a sale at the Christmas Bazaar. All of these events will aid in raising funds to one day provide an accessible pedestrian foot bridge for the fishing pond at Pendills Creek.



PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

The relationship between the hatchery staff and the volunteers of the Friends group continues to grow. We thank all of the FPCH members for their commitment in supporting our facilities and the Service's mission.

- *Curt Friez*
Hatchery Manager

Sullivan Creek NFH Ships Lake Trout Eggs

Sullivan Creek NFH ships eyed lake trout eggs to other federal, state, tribal, and educational facilities every November through January; this year Sullivan Creek will be shipping over 5.9 million eggs in total. Most of the eyed eggs are going to Jordan River NFH, Iron River NFH, and Marquette State Fish Hatchery (MDNR) for the purpose of lake trout restoration of the Great Lakes. Sullivan Creek NFH is one of only three lake trout brood fish stations in the USFWS for the entire country.

The whole egg process begins with spawning season, which usually starts by the middle of September and runs until the middle of November each year. The adult lake trout are anesthetized so the eggs and milt can be collected and mixed together for fertilization. This allows the staff to handle the adults without harming them, and the fish will come out of the anesthetic and "wake up" in about twenty minutes.

Once the eggs are fertilized, disinfected with iodine, and water harden, or pull enough water inside their shells for the eggs to become "hard"; they are measured and counted into vertical stack incubators. The eggs will slowly



Figure 1 Lake Trout Eggs being placed into specialized trays within a cooler for shipment. Photo credit: USFWS

PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

develop inside the incubators for one to two months depending on how cold the water temperatures are, and will become “eyed eggs” - you can see the little fish eyes thru the outer shells of the eggs. At this point, the eggs are “shocked” - or bounced fairly hard to get the “bad” eggs - ones that didn’t fertilize - to turn opaque white when the yolk is broken inside the egg; this process does not harm the good eggs at all.

The next step is to run all the eyed eggs through mechanical egg pickers which have a light sensitive photo-eye. The pickers shoot a ray of light through each egg, and if the light goes through the egg, it is a good egg and goes in one bucket; if the light cannot go through the egg, it is a bad egg and goes into a different bucket. We run all our eggs through two mechanical pickers, and hand pick them with tweezers or suction bulbs at least once. The good eyed eggs are again measured and put back in their incubators until shipments can be set up.

Eyed eggs are carefully packed into Styrofoam coolers and either shipped via FedEx, UPS, or transferred between facilities by hatchery staff. The little fish inside the eggs are looking at you the entire time, 5.9 million sets of eyes!

- *Crystal LeGault-Anderson*
Assistant Hatchery Manager

Sullivan Creek NFH Stocks Brood During Fall 2013

Sullivan Creek NFH stocks its excess and retired lake trout into land-locked inland lakes as designated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Every year, Sullivan Creek must stock adult and immature lake trout broods to decrease the overall number of fish being held on the facility in order to maintain quality, healthy broodfish. The older fish must be retired as the younger broodfish are incoming to create enough rearing space at the facility, to keep from overproducing eyed eggs, and to help maintain a pathogen free environment. These fish provide excellent recreational angling opportunities to Michigan residents. A combination of Seneca Lake Wild (SLW) and Huron Parry Sound Wild (HPW) strains of lake trout equaling 575 brood fish weighing just short of 5,000 pounds total were stocked during the fall of 2013 into: Sporley Lake in Marquette County; plus Chicagon Lake and Lake Ottawa, both in Iron County.

- *Crystal LeGault-Anderson*
Assistant Hatchery Manager

Pendills Creek NFH Produces 103,000 Fall Fingerlings

Pendills Creek NFH raised 103,000 fall fingerling lake trout for stocking into Lake Michigan during the fall of 2013. The lake trout were of the Seneca Lake Wild strain, and when stocked, weighed more than 3000 pounds. All the fingerlings had coded wire tags (CWT) inserted into their snouts and adipose fin clips. The CWT contains information such as which

PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

hatchery the fish were stocked from, which agency stocked them, and what strain of lake trout they were. The adipose fin clip alerts fishers and researchers that the fish contains the CWT.

The fall fingerlings were shore stocked on October 24, 2013 at South Haven, Michigan for Saugatuck Reek. Drivers of the fish trucks for the journey were John Shuman and James Anderson.

- *Crystal LeGault-Anderson*
Assistant Hatchery Manager

Pendills Creek NFH Receives Seneca Lake Wild Eggs

Pendills Creek NFH received 232,000 eyed Seneca Lake Wild (SLW) eggs from Sullivan Creek NFH on December 22, 2013. The eyed eggs will be incubated on well water, and will hopefully be hatched and transferred to our four small rearing tanks by the end of February 2014. These little guys mark the beginning of our 2014 fish production cycle - if all goes according to plan - they will be stocked as yearlings in the spring of 2015 into the Great Lakes.



- *Crystal LeGault-Anderson*
Assistant Hatchery
Manager

Figure 2 Seneca Lake Wild Eggs incubating. Photo Credit: Julie Timmer/USFWS

PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

Views from Our Complex



Figure 3 A view of Lake Superior mid-December from bench at Public Beach Access Site, near Pendills Creek NFH. Photo Credit: Julie Timmer/USFWS



Figure 4 Pendills Creek. Photo Credit: Julie Timmer/USFWS

PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

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