

# PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

## Our Mission

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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

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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.

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## Visiting our Facilities

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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 schedule an appointment.

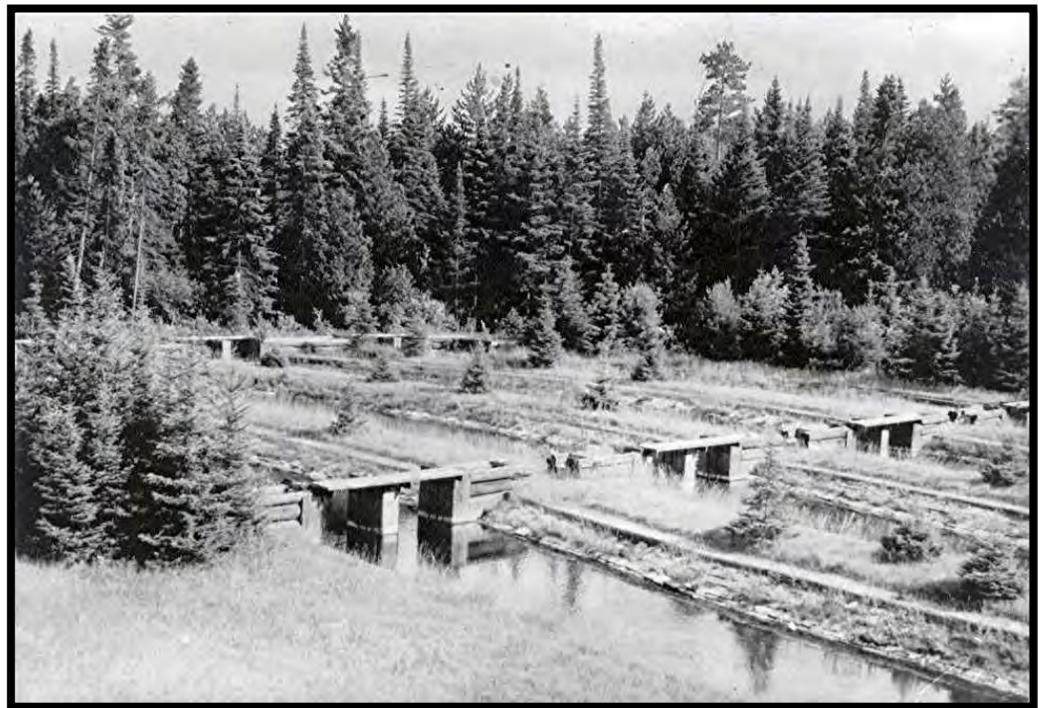
## Sullivan Creek NFH - Station Highlight Article for 2014

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Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery NFH, (formerly known as Hiawatha Forest NFH) is one of the Midwest Region's oldest fish hatcheries, has quite a historical past, and is poised to continue to support the lake trout rehabilitation program in the Great Lakes far into the future. Sullivan Creek is a sister-station of the Pendills Creek NFH located in the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan, 30 miles west of Sault Sainte Marie, in the Hiawatha National Forest.

Originally built in 1933 by the Civilian conservation Corps (CCC), the hatchery was used by the U.S. Forest Service to produce brook trout for nearby streams. The hatchery, then called

the Sullivan Rearing Ponds, was shut down in the 1940s because of a shortage of appropriations and manpower during World War II. In 1959, the site was transferred to the US Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and renamed Hiawatha Forest NFH. The rearing ponds were renovated and the facility became a substation of the



**Figure 1** A glimpse of Hiawatha National Fish Hatchery's raceways (now called Sullivan Creek NFH). Photo Credit: US FWS

newly built Pendills Creek NFH; producing lake trout for stocking into the Great Lakes. In 1994, the hatchery shifted to become a lake trout brood fish station, and has since distributed over 65 million disease-free eyed lake trout eggs to other federal, state, tribal, and academic agencies. In 2003, the hatchery was renamed the Sullivan Creek NFH instead of the Hiawatha Forest NFH, to more reflect its original historic name.

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Today, Sullivan Creek is home to two distinct strains of lake trout brood fish: Seneca Lake Wild and the Huron Parry Sound Wild. The Huron Parry Sound Wild are the only lake trout brood fish in the USFWS system originating from Lake Huron itself. The Seneca Lake Wild are a reliable strain that has been used for decades, originating in the Finger Lakes of New York.



Figure 3 New Egg Incubation/Future Brood Rearing Building; View of the incubating trays. Photo Credit: US FWS



Figure 3 New Egg Incubation/Future Brood Rearing Building; View of the future brood rearing tanks. Photo Credit: US FWS

This spawning year, just short of 6 million lake trout eggs were shipped to Pendills Creek NFH (MI), Jordan River NFH (MI), Iron River NFH (WI), Allegheny NFH (PA), Dale Hollow NFH (TN), State of Michigan, State of Wisconsin, USGS Hammond Bay Biological Station (MI), and the Upper Midwest Environmental Science Center (WI).

During 2013, and into 2014, Sullivan Creek NFH has had ongoing construction occurring to build a new egg incubation/future brood rearing building to replace the “temporary” egg incubation which was originally set up during 1996 in a cement block garage. The new incubation building was used for the first time during the 2013 spawning season, and has so far been very successful. The future brood rearing portion will be tested as soon as our new group of Huron Parry Sound Wild brood eggs hatch and develop enough to move into rearing tanks.

*- Crystal LeGault-Anderson  
Assistant Hatchery Manager*

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## Passing of a Legend

It is with a heavy heart that Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery announces the passing of Bertha the Lake Trout, 26 years of age, of raceway 5B.

Bertha's story begins back in the fall of 1987 during a wild egg collection for future lake trout brood on Seneca Lake. Seneca Lake is located in the Finger Lakes region of New York State. Bertha and her siblings were transferred to Allegheny NFH. Bertha, along with half of her siblings spent 2.5 years at Allegheny before being trucked to Pendills Creek in the summer of 1990. Bertha's group spent 4 years at Pendills Creek before being transferred to Sullivan Creek in the summer of 1994. It is here, at Sullivan Creek, where Bertha would make her home and achieve her legendary status.

During Bertha's 14 year spawning career, began in the fall of 1992 at Pendills Creek and ended in the fall of 2005 at Sullivan Creek. She won numerous awards which include, "most prolific spawner of the year" and "fish most likely to get spawned last". The last few years of her spawning career would require 3 to 4 personnel due to her enormous size. At her peak, she had reached a length of 33 inches, a weight of 28 pounds and produced an



Figure 4 John Shuman, Maintenance Mechanic, spawning a 2002 year class Seneca Lake Wild Lake Trout photo Credit: US FWS

average of 4 quarts of eggs to her sibling's average of 2 quarts of eggs. She produced at least 120,000 plus green eggs and 100,000 plus eyed eggs, which were shipped to Jordan River NFH, Iron River NFH, Pendills Creek NFH and Michigan Department of Natural Resource's Marquette State Fish Hatchery. After the eggs arrived at the various facilities they

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were hatched out and raised up to yearling size and then stocked into Lake Huron and Lake Michigan.

After the 2005 spawning season, many of Bertha's siblings were retired to various inland lakes, but Bertha was placed in a "pet pen" where she was then used to help educate visitors on lake trout. Bertha was joined in the pet pen with other enormous lake trout over the past few years, most notably "Big" Hoss. With a brood stock facility there can be great variations in the size of fish from different year classes of brood. Bertha became a favorite of recurring visitors always asking, "Do you still have the big fish?" Even in retirement, Bertha would get spawned every fall, but her eggs were not kept. After this fall, Bertha just never recovered from being spawned, and slowly diminished into a shadow of her once glorious self. Over the years a few brood fish have rivaled the size and robustness of Bertha, but not many have left such a lasting impression.

- *James L Anderson*  
*Fish Biologist*

## Introduction to Fish Health

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From February 3 - 7, 2014 Tim Falconer attended classes in Onalaska, Wisconsin to learn about fish health and the diseases that are common in our Great Lakes region. As a fish biologist at the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery, it comes in very handy to know the signs and symptoms of sick fish before they become dead fish. With that in mind, I joined the nationwide assembly of 16 other students to attend the training class put on through the National Conservation Training Center, to learn not only what bad things are out there, but also what they look like in the fish in our care.

The course was taught beginning with a basic fish anatomy refresher, followed by the bacterial diseases, parasites, and fungi that infect our fish. Once we learned what was out there, we learned how to identify exactly what is ailing our beloved fish using molecular techniques. The course then changed gears back to the viruses our fish may come into contact with and then the environmental and nutritional diseases afflicting fish in a hatchery setting. The last thing we learned was how to do treatments. The calculations vary for each system but the general concept of subjecting the fish to a chemical treatment designed for a specific purpose for a specific time was the main idea we were able to come away with from the section.



- *Tim Falconer*  
*Fish Biologist*

Figure 5 A type of fish parasite. Photo Credit: <http://fishparasite.fs.a.u-tokyo.ac.jp/Argulus%20coregoni/Argulus%20coregoni2.jpg>

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