



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Accomplishment Report

The Alpena Fishery Resources Office (Alpena FRO) is located in Alpena, Michigan and works to meet the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fishery and Ecosystem goals within Lake Huron, Western Lake Erie, and connecting waters of the St. Marys River, St. Clair River, and Detroit River. Activities include Aquatic Species Conservation and Management, Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management, Cooperation with Native Americans, Leadership in Science and Technology, Partnerships and Accountability, Public Use, and Workforce Management – all of which are conducted in alignment with the Service Fisheries Program's Vision for the Future. The station is one of many field offices located within Region 3, the Great Lakes and Big Rivers Region.

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Permit Applications, Surveying and 2007 Work Plans

*Submitted by Heather Rawlings
Fishery Biologist*

The beginning of the new year brought Northern Michigan a mild winter, and allowed Alpena FRO Partners for Fish and Wildlife Biologist Rawlings several more days to survey potential wetland restoration sites. Four potential wetland sites were surveyed on two private landowner properties in Alcona and Presque Isle Counties. Winter truly hit by the second week in January, which shut down the field season until April. Time then fell to drawing up projects and submitting permits for wetland restoration to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Nine permits were mailed to the landowners for submission during the month of January, and four additional sites that did not require a permit were drawn up and mailed out. On Friday, January 19th Rawlings met with Patrick Ertel from Huron Pines Resource, Conservation & Development (RC&D) to review river restoration work plans for the 2007 field season. Huron Pines RC&D and the Service work together on many river restoration projects throughout NE Michigan. 2007 projects include two road/stream crossing restoration projects in Otsego (AuSable River Watershed) and Montmorency Counties (Thunder Bay River Watershed), and stream bank erosion projects in the AuSable, Pine/VanEttan, Ocqueoc and Black River watersheds.

Planning of aquatic habitat restoration projects contributes toward the "Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management" component of the Service's Fisheries Program Vision for the Future.

Partnerships and Accountability

Alpena FRO participates in Michigan Project Leaders Meeting

*Submitted by Jerry McClain
Fishery Biologist*

On January 9 and 10, Project Leader McClain participated in a Michigan Project Leaders Meeting in East Lansing, MI. Although the principal objective of this annual meeting is to update and familiarize participants with activities of the other program offices in the state, this year's meeting focused on a central topic for a large portion of the first day.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) has developed their State Wildlife Action Plan and is in the early stages of implementation. Michigan Project Leaders participated in a discussion of ways the Service could assist Michigan with the implementation process. Mike Sweet, Twin Cities Federal Assistance Program and Amy Clark Eagle, MDNR were on hand to provide their perspectives and help the group develop a strategy for providing assistance. A number of action items were agreed upon as starting points and continued discussion between the Service and MDNR will help guide the collaborative effort. McClain will serve as the Service lead for communication with the MDNR as the implementation process is developed and local coordination between Service offices and local MDNR staff will continue.

Coordination meetings such as this are important for development and enhancement of cross programmatic partnerships necessary for effective delivery of Service programs to outside partners. This effort is consistent with and supportive of the Service's Fisheries Program Vision for the Future priorities of "Partnerships and Accountability" and "Workforce Management".

2007 Science Night at Defer Elementary

*Submitted by Jim McFee
Fishery Biologist*

On February 2, 2007 Alpena FRO biologist Jim McFee took part in the Defer Elementary School science night. The school is located in Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan on the shores of Lake St. Clair. Science night consisted of several rooms that more than 200 students and parents could visit. Most rooms were dealing with physics related topics. The Fish and Wildlife Service room dealt with educating the students and parents about invasive species and control measures.

The night was filled with questions and answers about aquatic nuisance species. A display board filled with information on nuisance species triggered the questions in addition to a DVD on Asian carp. The display board contained information on round goby, tubenose goby, Eurasian ruffe, sea lamprey, zebra mussels and Asian carp. The students also had a chance to look at real fish preserved in plastic or alcohol. These items gave the students a chance to see some of the species first hand, to help them identify them on their next fishing or lake trip. Plenty of literature was also available to take home. The big message of the night was to help stop the spread of these unwanted species by cleaning boats and not dumping bait.

As a follow-up to the program, students were involved in a project drawing pictures of their favorite Michigan lake experience. The collection of pictures will be sent to state and federal congressional representatives to encourage support for construction of a permanent fish barrier in the Chicago Sanitary Canal. This fish barrier is the last line of defense for the Great Lakes from Asian Carp. This event once again shows how education is the strongest tool the natural resource profession can use.

This effort provided a unique opportunity to create new partnerships with both governmental and non-governmental agencies to achieve common Great Lakes management objectives. Maintaining these collaborative relationships allows for the most efficient use of limited human and fiscal resources. This project is consistent with the “Partnerships and Accountability”, “Aquatic Species Conservation and Management”, “Public Use”, and “Leadership in Science and Technology” focus areas of the Fisheries Program’s Vision for the Future.

Public Use

Asian Carp Information provided during Inland Seas Education Association's 2007 Seminar Series

*Submitted by Anjanette Bowen
Fishery Biologist*

On January 9, 2007, Biologist Bowen presented information on Asian carp as part of the Inland Seas Education Association's 2007 Seminar Series. Asian carp refer to four species of non-native carp (bighead carp, silver carp, black carp, and grass carp) that have become established and are spreading within the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Some species have become very abundant in areas of the Mississippi River drainage. They may reduce the diversity of native species and be hazardous to water users. There is concern they may spread into the Great Lakes.

A PowerPoint presentation was used to relay information about Asian carp during the seminar. Topics included characteristics, identification, current distribution, and concerns associated with Asian Carp. Efforts to slow the spread of Asian carp into the Great Lakes via the Chicago Dispersal barrier project were also discussed. Information was provided on what the public can do to prevent the spread of Asian carp and other invasive species. At the end of the presentation, a short DVD detailing the jumping behaviors and problems associated with Asian carp was played. The DVD, titled "Nuisance Fish", is an outreach tool that was recorded in partnership with Bill Dance, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. There were a number of questions from those attending.

The Inland Seas Education Association's mission is “to use shipboard and onshore educational programs to inspire young people to pursue academic interests related to the Great Lakes, particularly the sciences and to enhance public understanding and stewardship of the Great Lakes

and global freshwater systems." The seminar was held at Inland Seas Education Center located in Suttons Bay, Michigan.

Public education about invasive species is an important means of preventing their spread and helps to promote healthy native species populations. This effort is consistent with the Fisheries Program Vision for the Future priorities of "Public Use" and "Aquatic Species Conservation and Management".

Implications of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) in Michigan Discussed

*Submitted by Jerry McClain
Fishery Biologist*

Project Leader McClain was interviewed by Shawn Dalton of the Southgate, Michigan Herald Press on January 31 to discuss Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) in Michigan waters of the Great Lakes and implications to the fisheries.

McClain discussed locations where fish kills have occurred and the virus has been detected, as well as how the Service is involved in sample collection and diagnostic work of the LaCrosse, Wisconsin Fish Health Center. Dalton was interested in documenting what recreational anglers might observe if a fish kill occurs, what risks are associated with the fish virus and precautions that should be taken. McClain noted that a primary concern is transfer of the virus to uninfected waters, particularly transfer from open Great Lakes waters to inland lakes and streams of the state and outlined precautions that can be taken to help prevent the spread.

Continue outreach with local and regional media outlets is an important tool for delivery and improved visibility of Service programs. This activity is consistent with and supportive of the Service's Fisheries Program Vision for the Future priority of "Public Use".

Workforce Management

James Boase Serves as Acting Project Leader for Ashland FRO during January and February

*Submitted by James Boase
Fishery Biologist*

Since Project Leader Mark Dryer's retirement back in June 2006, the Ashland field office has had a number of individuals step up to fill the vacancy until newly hired Project Leader Mark Brouder arrives in late February 2007. For most of the period the vacancy has been filled internally by Henry Quinlan and Ted Koehler, two biologists on staff here at Ashland. Three biologists from other offices have stepped up to fill the role as well starting with Wyatt Doyle from Columbia FRO, then Aaron Woldt from the Alpena FRO, and finally James Boase, also from Alpena FRO.

Boase filled in for the last four weeks before Brouder's arrival and was sent to Ashland to "assist in a smooth transition with the arrival of the new Project Leader." Most work during the period was to assist with a number of staffing changes and the day to day demands of an FRO Project Leader. Administrative Technician Joan Bratley retired during the period and a portion of the transition was to help acclimatize the Ashland staff to the new demands they would face without Joan's assistance, a situation the Alpena FRO faced two years ago.

Having an opportunity to temporarily fill these types of leadership vacancies allows for important interactions between the regional office and those individuals that are prospective upcoming leaders. Perhaps as important is that these longer term interactions also allow for the exchange of information and ideas which ultimately helps not only each respective office but also the Service to function more efficiently. This activity is consistent with and supportive of the Service's Fisheries Program Vision for the Future priority of "Workforce Management".

For more information about Alpena FRO programs and activities contact us at:

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