Monthly Report
October 2007

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Althea Owens, Administrative Officer
Noelle Rayman, Biological Technician
Betsy Trometer, Fishery Biologist
Bryan Young, Biological Technician

Buffalo River Fish Collection
Betsy, with the help of various staff and volunteers, collected fish from the Buffalo River for contaminant analysis (9/25 – 10/2). Fish samples were forwarded to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for analysis. Levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), organochlorine pesticides, mercury, cadmium and lead will be examined. The data will provide a more thorough and up-to-date assessment of the fish consumption impairment for the Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan. This collaborative project lead by the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper includes NYSDEC, USEPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

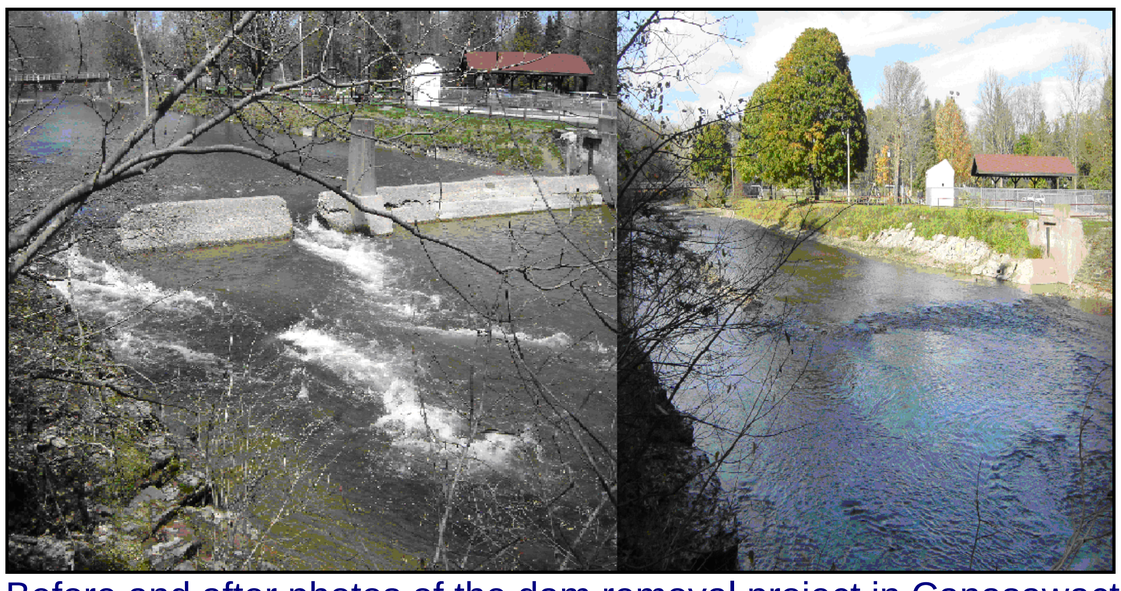
Brown Bullhead with external lesions collected for contaminant analysis. Credit: Betsy Trometer (USFWS)

Thank You Volunteers!
With your help we logged over 1000 hours of service this field season!

Grindstone Creek Fish Community Assessment
Raymond and Mike worked with New York Rivers United (NYRU) staff to conduct a fish community inventory of Grindstone Creek. Grindstone Creek is a Lake Ontario tributary located in Oswego County that supports significant native and recreational fisheries. This assessment was conducted in support of a larger effort by NYRU, NYSDEC, USACE, and USFWS to identify habitat restoration opportunities in the Grindstone Creek watershed.

2007 Ruffe Surveillance
LGLFRO staff completed fall ruffe surveillance this month (10/18). Ruffe were not detected during the September surveys at the seven Lake Erie sites or the October survey at Rochester. Data is being summarized and will be reported to the Ashland Fishery Resources Office later this fall. The LGLFRO is also currently putting together a summary of all 14 years of ruffe data to highlight the incidental catches of near shore species captured during this surveillance.

American Legion Dam Removal
Raymond worked with project partners to remove the American Legion Dam located on Canasawacta Creek in Norwich, NY (Chenango County). Originally constructed in 1933, the dam had breached and was no longer serving its original purpose. Removal of the American Legion Dam re-established free-flowing conditions in Canasawacta Creek to restore fish access to over 3 miles of quality habitat and reduce thermal loading in downstream waters. Project partners include the City of Norwich, NYSDEC, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and USFWS – New York Field Office.



Before and after photos of the dam removal project in Canasawacta Creek. Credit: Raymond Li (USFWS)

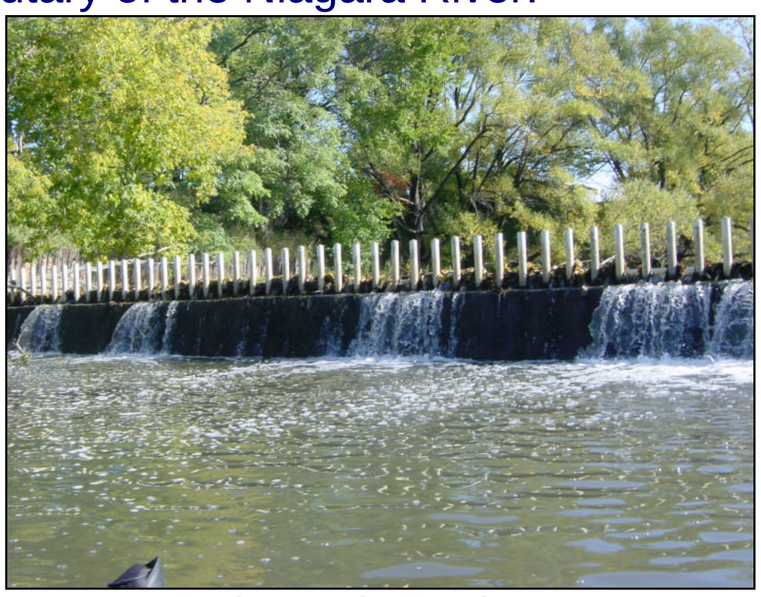
Outreach Field Trip

High school students from the Enterprise Charter School in Buffalo learned how to conduct stream sampling during a field trip hosted by Betsy, Denise and Margaret. Fifteen students learned about fish sampling and identification, benthic macro invertebrate sampling and identification and stream habitat sampling during the 2-hour field trip to Ellicott Creek in Amherst, NY (10/30).

Two students examining the contents of a kick sample from Ellicott Creek. Credit: Betsy Trometer (USFWS)

Scajaquada Creek Site Visit

Raymond and Betsy participated in a site visit with Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper and NYSDOT staff to identify dam removal and other community-based habitat restoration opportunities in the lower Scajaquada Creek. Scajaquada Creek is a highly urbanized stream flowing through Buffalo, NY and is a major tributary of the Niagara River.



Scajacquada Creek Dam
Credit: Raymond Li (USFWS)

Lake Ontario Biomonitoring

Betsy Trometer assisted NYSDEC Biologist Mike Wilkinson with Lake Ontario Biomonitoring Program collections at the Niaga ra River sites (10/22). Samples were collected for analysis of phosphorus, chlorophyll a, and zooplankton levels. This program monitors key lower food web and nutrient variables around Lake Ontario that characterize overall ecosystem change.

HACCP Training

Mike conducted Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) training in collaboration with the Lake Champlain Basin Program and Lake Champlain Sea Grant, (10/23-24). HACCP provides a consistent framework to help identify points in a process, such as hatchery operations, where non-target species can be identified and controlled. A full day workshop on 10/23 was used to teach HACCP methodology and how to write and implement effective plans. Mike along with Mark Malchoff (Lake Champlain Sea Grant) led the workshop using HACCP worksheets and materials from both the USFWS and Sea Grant. Guest presenters included Shawn Good and Ken Cox (Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife) and Bill Schoch NYSDEC. Shawn and Bill discussed viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) emergency regulations in Vermont and New York while Ken discussed the “green list” of approved baitfish species in Vermont. To conclude the workshop, Kristie Roche (Ed Weed Fish Hatchery), led a tour of their advanced facility. Kristie showed how their HACCP-like biosecurity plan is used to disinfect trucks, filter water, and help prevent the inadvertent movement of non-target organisms like zebra mussels.

Westfield Water Works Dams Site Visit

Raymond and USFWS New York Field Office staff conducted a site visit to Westfield Water Works Dams located along Chautauqua Creek in Westfield, NY (Chautauqua County). Fish passage for steelhead and other beneficial species has been proposed for the site. The USFWS is working with project partners to ensure impacts to fish and wildlife resources are avoided or minimized, and enhancement opportunities identified. Project partners include USACE, NYSDEC, NYRU, Town of Westfield, Western New York Trout Unlimited, and USFWS.

Lower Westfield Water Works Dam
Credit: Chris Stephens (NYRU)

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