

**U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

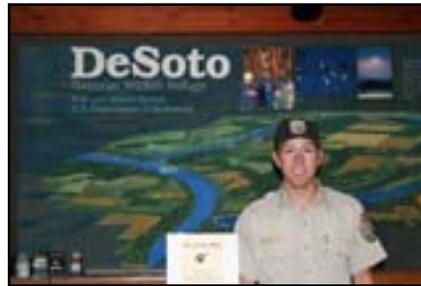
# Inside Region 3

*November 2011*



# what's inside

## Features



USFWS Photo



USFWS Photo by Louise Clemency



USFWS Photo



USFWS Photo by Ashley Danielson

On the Cover:

Fish biologist Jeff Stewart (Carterville FWCO) pulls in a net full of fish during a study on the Chicago Area Waterway System. USFWS Photo

### Inside Region 3 Guest Editor

While Inside Region 3 editor Val Redmond is on extended leave, we welcomed guest editor Peter Rea from DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge.

### International Coastal Cleanup Day/ 4

Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program coordinate cleanup of Chicago's Montrose Dunes.

By Mike Redmer

### Michigan Fish Hatcheries Celebrate/ 8

Pendills Creek and Jordan River NFHs hosted community open houses to celebrate new facilities.

By Ashley Spratt

### Flood of Change / 9

DeSoto and Boyer Chute NWR look at the changes brought on by the 2011 Missouri River flood.

By Peter Rea

Reflecting on the past few months, I am encouraged by the extremely effective partnerships that we have built in the Midwest Region. In times of competitive budgets, our ability to broaden our reach with partner support is a necessary conservation multiplier. Recently, I've seen several projects demonstrating those relationships up close and personal. In August, I went on a tour of Clough Island, located in the St. Louis River Estuary, between Duluth, Minn. and Superior, Wis. Along with some dedicated partners, including the Nature Conservancy and the Minnesota and Wisconsin DNR, this natural resource jewel was able to be permanently protected. Read more about this treasure in this issue of IR3.

In late October, at Shiawassee NWR, I was able to take part in another celebration, the dedication of the Shiawassee Flats Wetland Restoration Project, where again, strong partners like Ducks

Unlimited came together to restore a 141 acre wetland.

Partnerships also play a role in our battle against aquatic invasives. This month's IR3 features the use of innovative technology to fight a tenacious invader—Asian carp. Strong state, federal and local partnerships are critical in the fight to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, and advances in scientific research and technology are a big asset in stopping the spread of the carp throughout our waterways.

These, and all, partnerships provide a strong base for our programs to achieve mutually shared conservation goals. As we look to the future, it is important that we continue to work with and build upon our partnerships with fellow conservation



Minnesota Bass Federation Members and USFWS Regional Director Tom Melius at the tour of Clough Island in the St. Louis River. USFWS Photo

organizations.

Autumn brings on an exciting time of the year for the Service. With the trees changing colors and the migration in full progress, there is no better time to get out and enjoy the outdoors. Our refuges, waterfowl production areas, and several fish hatcheries offer the public ideal places to enjoy nature and the fall season through activities such as bird watching, wildlife photography, and fishing. Fall also marks the start of the hunting season and a chance to hear about some of the special hunt programs that take place on our land. With the activities bringing a host of outdoorsmen and women to our facilities and lands, it's a great time for us to display the results of our labors to the American public.

Thank you for all you do to build and nurture our important partnerships. As the field season nears its completion, I encourage everyone to take time and enjoy the remnants of autumn. Finally, and most importantly, enjoy this season safely.



USFWS Midwest Regional Director Tom Melius joined USFWS Biologist Ann Runstrom, NPS Biologist Byron Karns and University of MN Researcher Mark Hove during a recent dive to assess the health of native mussels on the St. Croix River. USFWS Photo by Katie Steiger-Meister.

---

# International Coastal Cleanup Day Marks the Beginning of Partners for Fish & Wildlife Project at Chicago's Montrose Dunes

With more than 1.3 million visitors per year, Chicago's Montrose Beach and Harbor rank among the most heavily used public areas along Illinois' Lake Michigan Coastal Area. Never the less, this park also includes two very important areas for migratory birds. The first and perhaps best known of these to Chicagoans

Located between the Magic Hedge and Lake Michigan, Montrose Beach Dune began to take shape as a natural area in the late 1990s.

On Saturday Sept. 17, 2011 hundreds of volunteers helped to celebrate International Coastal Cleanup Day by picking up debris at Montrose Beach. Project

The USFWS Chicago Illinois Field Office coordinates our activities with the Illinois Private Lands Office to deliver the Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program (PFW) to customers in northeast Illinois. In northeast Illinois, one major focus of the USFWS has been identifying remaining opportunities to work with partners in the coastal zone of Lake Michigan to benefit migratory birds including the federally endangered Great Lakes Piping Plover.

The event also marked the beginning of a Cooperative Agreement between the Chicago Park District and the USFWS to expand on the great volunteer stewardship. The cost-share arrangement will provide funding through PFW and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to contract a larger scale and more concerted effort to remove invasive species from Montrose Beach Dune in 2011 and 2012. The USFWS and stakeholders believe that, when the Montrose Beach Dune Enhancement project is completed, the stage will be set for this oasis to be effectively managed for benefit of wildlife and people for many years to come.

*--Mike Redmer, Private Lands Biologist/Habitat Restoration Coordinator at Chicago Illinois Field Office*



The Montrose Beach Dune Habitat (foreground) is a high-quality habitat nestled between Lake Michigan and the north side of the City of Chicago (buildings seen in the background). USFWS Photo by Louise Clemency

is the Montrose Point Bird Sanctuary, more popularly known as "The Magic Hedge."

This wooded area attracts numerous species and countless individuals of migratory perching birds that stopover while using the western shore of Lake Michigan as a flyway. No less important is the more recently formed and lesser known Montrose Beach Dune.

Leader Louise Clemency and Private Lands Biologist/Habitat Restoration Coordinator Mike Redmer at the Chicago Illinois Field Office also joined the ranks of the dedicated and more specialized group of volunteers who are stewards of the Montrose Dune. The volunteer stewards were rewarded with an impromptu visit and encouragement by Congressman Mike Quigley (IL-5).

# Professional Waterfowl Guide Jeff Foiles Receives Jail Time for Illegal Hunting and Guiding Activities

Professional duck hunter and guide Jeffrey B. Foiles was sentenced Sept. 21, 2011 by a federal judge in Springfield, Ill., to 13 months in prison and \$100,000 fine. Foiles, 54, of Pleasant Hill, Ill., pleaded guilty in June to one misdemeanor count of unlawful sale of wildlife in violation of the Lacey Act, as well as one misdemeanor count of unlawfully taking migratory game birds in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. At the same time, the company that operated Foiles' hunting club, the Fallin' Skies Strait Meat Duck Club LLC, located in Pike County, Ill., pleaded guilty to one felony count of unlawful sale of wildlife in violation of the Lacey Act and one felony count of making false writings in a matter within the jurisdiction of the USFWS.

According to the plea agreements, between 2003 and 2007, Foiles sold and guided waterfowl hunts at the club for the purpose of

illegally hunting ducks and geese in excess of hunters' individual daily bag limits. Guided hunters paid \$250 per day for hunts at the club. Foiles and others at the club also falsified hunting records in order to conceal the excess bag limits.

"Foiles showed little respect for the law or the resource through his actions," said USFWS Special Agent in Charge Gregory Jackson. "Illegal hunting on this scale not only has a huge impact on waterfowl populations, it significantly limits hunter opportunity in localized areas."



Canada goose, mallards, and canvasback decoys. USFWS Photo by Mary Stefanski

The case was investigated by USFWS Office of Law Enforcement, based in Des Moines, Iowa, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Alberta Division of Fish and Wildlife. The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of Illinois and the Justice Department's Environmental Crimes Section.

--Tina Shaw, External Affairs



Canada geese in flight. Photo by Keith Harper/Creative Commons.

# USFWS and Conservation Partners Celebrate Permanent Protection of Clough Island



Cathy Stepp, Wisconsin DNR Secretary, Lorna Gleason, Vice-Chair of the Nature Conservancy, Tom Melius, USFWS Midwest Regional Director, and Tom Landwehr, Minnesota DNR Commissioner, welcome the group to the tour of Clough Island. USFWS Photo

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy and the state natural resources agencies of Wisconsin and Minnesota, celebrated this August with the restoration and permanent protection of the largest island in the St. Louis River Estuary.

Clough Island (pronounced CLUFF) is situated where the St. Louis River meets Lake Superior, between Duluth, Minn. and Superior, Wis. This 358-acre haven for wildlife, including native fish and migratory and breeding birds, was recently transferred to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for public outdoor recreation and conservation efforts.

“Clough Island is a natural resources jewel in the St. Louis River Estuary,” said USFWS Midwest Regional Director Tom Melius. “The estuary boasts a natural beauty unlike any other in the upper Midwest. The unparalleled cooperation between Minnesota and Wisconsin natural resource agencies, The Nature Conservancy, and federal partners, exemplifies exceptional strategic

conservation. Together we are enhancing and restoring wildlife and wildlife habitat, and promoting the hunting, fishing, bird watching and wildlife-dependent activities of the area for future generations.”

The Nature Conservancy, in partnership with the Wisconsin DNR, acquired the landmark island in November 2010 with the assistance of a \$1 million grant from the USFWS National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program.

Largely undeveloped with a mix of grassy, brushy and forested habitats, Clough Island is an important haven for more than 200 species of birds during migration and breeding season.

“Clough Island is the centerpiece of the St. Louis River Estuary and provides excellent habitat for migratory birds and native fish,” said Mary Jean Huston, director of The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin. “Thanks to grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Wisconsin’s Stewardship Fund, we were able to conserve Clough Island for future generations. We’re thrilled that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will now own and manage the property.”

Professional staffs from both state agencies, the USFWS and The Nature Conservancy have long worked together to protect critical shoreline and aquatic habitats in the St. Louis Estuary.

“The success of this project reflects an extraordinary partnership

that persisted over many years. No one agency could have done this alone,” said Minnesota DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr.

The Wisconsin DNR provided \$750,000 in matching funds for the acquisition through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund. Additional matching funds were pledged by the McCabe Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America, Duluth Chapter of the Audubon Society, Western Skyline Preservation Alliance, Save Lake Superior Association, Twin Ports Bass Masters, Lake Superior Chapter of Muskie’s Inc., and Friends of Superior Municipal Forest.

“Placing Clough Island into public ownership protects a large amount of critical habitat for fish and wildlife on the St Louis River, which is one of the key issues that concerned citizens and government agencies from both states have been working together to address,” said Julene Boe, Executive Director of the St. Louis River Alliance. “This is huge step toward that achieving the goal of delisting the river as an Area of Concern on the Great Lakes.”

Due to its ecological significance, natural resource partners have tirelessly worked to protect, conserve and restore the St. Louis River estuary. Natural resource agencies in Wisconsin and Minnesota have worked together, in partnership with federal environmental and wildlife agencies to protect this important property from commercial development and contamination.

*--Ashley Spratt, External Affairs*

# Whooping Cranes Wing Their Way South with the Help of Service and WCEP Partners

Eighteen young whooping cranes are winging their way south on their first fall migration. This is the eleventh group of birds to take part in the project led by the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership (WCEP), a coalition of public and private groups that is reintroducing this highly imperiled species in eastern North America, part of its historic range.

Eight of the 18 cranes were released at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Dodge County, Wis., this October. The cranes were hatched and raised by biologists with project partner International Crane Foundation. The eight birds were released in the company of older cranes from whom the young birds will learn the migration route south. This is the seventh year WCEP has used this Direct Autumn Release (DAR) method.

“We are thrilled about being part of this historic effort to re-establish an eastern migratory population of this beautiful bird,” said Diane Kitchen, Acting Refuge Manager of Horicon NWR.

The other 10 whooping cranes are being led south by WCEP partner Operation Migration’s ultralight aircraft. The cranes left the White River Marsh State Wildlife Area in Green Lake and Marquette Counties, Wis. on October 9. Three ultralight aircrafts and the juvenile cranes will travel through Wisconsin, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia to reach the birds’ wintering habitats at Chassahowitzka and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuges along Florida’s Gulf Coast.



Eight whooping cranes were released this October at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge in the company of older cranes. These birds will learn the migration route south from the older, experienced birds. Photo credit: ICF

For the past 10 years the DAR and ultralight-led whooping cranes have been released on Necedah NWR. Many of these cranes have reached breeding age and have hatched chicks on the refuge. To date, three wild-hatched Whooping Crane chicks have fledged and successfully migrated in this population. This level of nest success is, however, not yet enough to sustain the population. As part of WCEP’s experimentation with improving reproduction in this flock, Horicon NWR and White River Marsh State Wildlife Area were chosen as new locations for releasing birds in 2011. These sites are based on what biologists have learned about cranes released at Necedah NWR and their habitat and nesting requirements.

--Ashley Spratt, *External Affairs*

In light of a recent increase in the number of shooting deaths of whooping cranes, WCEP has also developed a short public service announcement to spread the word that disturbing, harassing or killing whooping cranes is a crime. For more information about WCEP efforts and to view the PSA visit <http://www.bringbackthecranes.org>.



A WCEP public service announcement spreads the word that disturbing, harassing or killing whooping cranes is a crime.

# Federal Fish Hatcheries in Michigan Celebrate Improved Efficiency in Hatchery Operations

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service this August hosted dedication ceremonies and community open houses to celebrate completed construction of new facilities at the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery in Brimley, Mich. and the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery near Elmira, Mich. Both federal hatcheries support the rehabilitation of lake trout in the Great Lakes.



Todd Turner, Deputy ARD Fisheries helps out with the kids fishing clinic at the hatcheries' community open house. USFWS Photo

Pendill's Creek NFH received \$890,000 in appropriations from the Service's Fisheries Program to construct a 222' x 134' free span building to cover the new raceways. The new building provides growing lake trout protection from sunlight, predators and the harsh weather conditions of Michigan's upper peninsula. Fish have shown marked improvement with the reduction of cataracts previously caused by sun exposure, and a reduction in mortality caused by predation.

The Pendills Creek NFH open house on August 13 provided an

opportunity for the public and media to tour the new hatchery facilities and participate in a dedication ceremony by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Coast Guard, the State of Michigan, Friends of Pendills Creek Hatchery, conservation partners and members of the Great Lakes community.

Pendills Creek NFH, founded in 1951, rears lake trout as part of the Great Lakes Restoration Program. The hatchery complex produces more than 6 million eggs annually and more than 900,000 yearling and 200,000 fall fingerling lake trout for stocking into Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. With the new rearing facilities, yearling lake trout production is expected to reach 1.2 million in 2012.

The Jordan River National Fish Hatchery celebrated with Great Lakes partners and local community members on August 18, to mark the completion of two fish rearing facilities, a geothermal heating system, and improvement of the fish hatchery effluent treatment system. The hatchery improvements were funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Jordan River Hatchery Friends Group offered kids fishing and a BBQ luncheon at the event.



New effluent treatment facility at Jordan River NFH. USFWS Photo.

The effluent project will allow the hatchery to minimize discharges of phosphorous into the Jordan River, which has been designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. Recovery funding also supported construction of a pre-engineered building to cover thirty-two of the hatchery's raceways. The unheated, metal building is approximately 140 feet wide by 400 feet long, and is placed over raceway series 1 through 8, for a total square footage of approximately 56,000.

Installation of an energy efficient geothermal heating will also help offset the energy demands of the federal fish hatchery and save annual operational costs.

Jordan River NFH supports native species rehabilitation through production and stocking of lake trout for the Great Lakes, with a long-term goal of establishing self-sustaining lake trout populations. The hatchery annually propagates approximately three million lake trout, which are released into Lakes Michigan and Huron by the Service's Great Lakes stocking vessel, the M/V Spencer F. Baird.

--Ashley Spratt, External Affairs

# Flood Brings Changes to DeSoto and Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuges

From the end of June to mid-September, DeSoto and Boyer Chute NWR sat almost completely inundated with water. Areas that once consisted of tall-grass prairies and old-growth cottonwood forests lay covered with more than five feet of water. Refuge roads were submerged and the DeSoto Visitor Center, which housed the Bertrand Steamboat Museum, became an island in the Missouri River floodplain.

This dramatic scene at DeSoto and Boyer Chute was brought about by a record setting flood of the Missouri River that hadn't been experienced since the 1940's. Above normal precipitation and record snow melt in the northern drainage basin of the Missouri River lead to this extreme amount of runoff entering the river. Gavins Point Dam, the dam on the South Dakota – Nebraska border nearest to the refuges, reached a peak output of 160,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water, more than double the previous record release of 1997.

To prepare for this record release, staff members, along with countless volunteers from local organizations and the community, worked tirelessly to protect the resources of the refuge. A two mile long levee was built to protect the western edge of DeSoto. This levee provided time for the over 200,000 artifacts from the Bertrand Steamboat Museum to be evacuated and transported to a nearby warehouse. Shortly after this evacuation process, levees were topped by the rising Missouri River. This caused levees to break and allow the water to flow into the refuge. For most of the summer, both DeSoto and Boyer Chute remained flooded.

Now, as the flood waters recede and the river gets back in the



Sand deposit at DeSoto NWR. US FWS Photo by Ken Block

main channel, DeSoto and Boyer Chute NWR can begin to see the astonishing alterations the river has left behind. The rush of water carved new channels through the refuges and ripped through sections of the paved roads. The damage to roadways, the visitor center, and other structures is extraordinary, but not all of the change brought upon by the flood

*Continued on next page.*



Aerial photographs showing Boyer Chute NWR prior to and during the 2011 Missouri River flood. USGS Photos

# Flood Brings Changes to DeSoto and Boyer Chute NWR

*Continued.*

is a negative. The flood provided the refuges a glimpse of what the Missouri River floodplain historically resembled. Before the channelization and damming of the river, the Missouri River floodplain was constantly changing and a number of the plants, animals, and habitats depended on this ever-shifting river.

This flood provides DeSoto and Boyer Chute NWR a chance to see how some of these floodplain habitats respond. For example, many of the old growth cottonwood forests were dying off with little regeneration due to the suppression of periodic flooding. The refuges hope that the freshly deposited silt left behind by the flood waters will benefit the cottonwoods by providing conditions that the trees thrive on for regeneration. The flood waters also dropped a huge amount of sand throughout the refuge creating sandbars that are prime habitat for nesting piping plovers and least terns, both endangered species. Finally, with the increased water, a lot of the upland grasses and wildflowers died off, being replaced by plants more tolerant of



Above: Aerial photographs showing the visitor center at DeSoto NWR before and during the flood. Below: Aerial photograph of DeSoto NWR during the flood. USGS Photos.



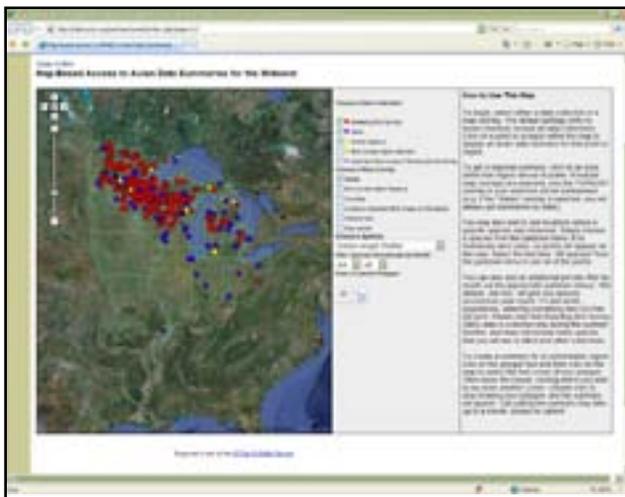
wet conditions. This could lead to a shift from tall-grass prairies to wet prairies and sedge meadows.

Overall, there will be a lot of change at DeSoto and Boyer Chute NWR. In many areas it provides a clean slate for the refuges to see how nature responds. There is much work ahead for the staffs of DeSoto and Boyer Chute NWR, but they are excited to get back out on the refuges and use this experience as a learning tool for how best to manage habitat in the Missouri River floodplain.

--Peter Rea, DeSoto NWR

# USFWS Introduces the Midwest Avian Data Center

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Program recently launched the Midwest Avian Data Center (<http://data.prbo.org/partners/mwadc>), a cutting edge data management and decision support system to provide readily accessible avian monitoring data to the Midwest bird conservation community. The Midwest Avian Data Center was developed through a partnership between the Service's Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership and PRBO Conservation Science and is made possible by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Avian Knowledge Network (AKN). The Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership has served as a regional network committed to informed bird conservation decisions through enhanced coordination and exchange of monitoring information since 2009.



Map-based Avian Summary showing Golden-winged Warbler occurrence from three different avian monitoring programs from June-July, for all years.  
FWS Photo by Katie Koch

The Midwest Avian Data Center allows Midwest bird conservation partners to compare bird population trends from several large datasets at multiple scales (e.g., Landscape Conservation Cooperative, Joint Venture, Bird Conservation Region, State, National Wildlife Refuge, County, and between months/years).

The Midwest Avian Data Center provides access to recommended, standardized monitoring protocols, downloadable field data entry forms, customized data entry pages, online training resources, and other important considerations for a successful monitoring program. The data center also directs users to relevant conservation planning documents (i.e., Bird Habitat Joint Venture Plans) and best management practices. Citizen scientists can learn about new ways to get involved in bird conservation and monitoring from their own backyards or in a nearby wildlife area in the region.

Providing immediate access to real-time datasets from multiple sources will allow individual land managers to understand local bird population trends and assist with management decisions in relation to Birds of Conservation Concern and impacts of climate change. The Midwest Avian Data Center can also be used to facilitate wildlife-friendly wind power development planning, analyze changes in phenology of bird migration and nesting, and project impacts of climate change on bird species' distributions.

--Katie Koch, Midwest Bird Monitoring Coordinator

## For more information:

Contact Katie Koch, Midwest Bird Monitoring Coordinator, at [Katie\\_koch@fws.gov](mailto:Katie_koch@fws.gov) or visit:

USFWS Midwest Region  
Migratory Birds Surveys and Monitoring  
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/midwestbird/surveys.htm>

Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership:  
<http://midwestbirdmonitoring.ning.com/>



Homepage for the newly released Midwest Avian Data Center. Check it out today at <http://data.prbo.org/partners/mwadc>. USFWS Photo by Katie Koch

# Use of New Technology in the Fight Against Asian Carp

A component of the 2011 Asian Carp Monitoring and Rapid Response Plan, the DIDSON (Dual frequency Identification SONAR) is a primary example of how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working in conjunction with the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee to explore new technologies in the fight against Asian carp. The DIDSON was purchased by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with the use of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding under the 2011 Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework.

The DIDSON is an acoustic camera that can be used in turbid water to observe fish behavior and location in real time with minimal disturbance. Observations of fish behavior at the electric barriers in the Chicago Area Waterway



A field biologist from the Carterville Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office examines images from the DIDSON. USFWS Photo

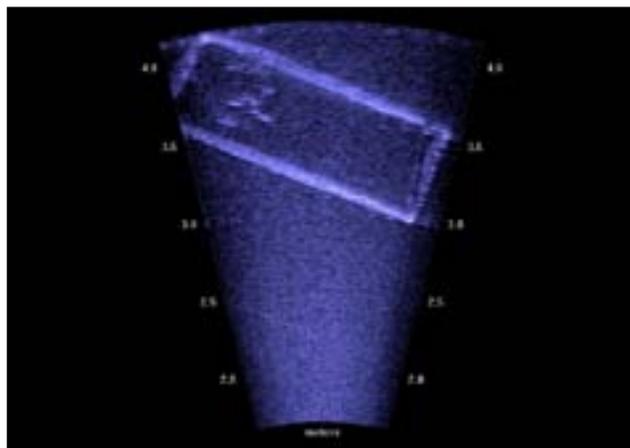
System will provide valuable information about the efficacy of the barriers for most fish sizes. Over the long term, this will be important for ongoing monitoring and risk reduction efforts at the electric barriers,

which are operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, the DIDSON will help with early detection efforts by allowing the Service to observe fish in netting locations and evaluate the effectiveness of sampling gear.

--Katie Steiger-Meister, External Affairs and Nate Caswell, Carterville FWCO



View of the DIDSON cage in the water. USFWS Photo



DIDSON image of gizzard shad in the cage. USFWS Photo

# DOI Assistant Secretary Gives Keynote at U.S. Area of Concerns Annual Meeting

Rachel Jacobson, Department of the Interior's Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, gave the keynote address at the 2011 U.S. Areas of Concern Program Annual Meeting in Detroit, Mich. hosted by the Great Lakes Commission. Her speech highlighted DOI's involvement in habitat restoration in Areas of Concern throughout the Great Lakes. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was recognized for its integral role in the removal of habitat related beneficial use impairments and its cross-cutting work in the chemicals of emerging concern arena. Jacobson commended field staff and project partners for infusing their AOC



Rachel Jacobson, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. DOI Photo

restoration work with the spirit of collaboration.

Prior to being named as Acting Assistant Secretary, Jacobson served as DOI's Principal Deputy Solicitor. Notably, Jacobson was the lead negotiator for the recent \$1 billion "early restoration" settlement with British Petroleum in response to the environmental damage caused by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

To watch the complete keynote address, please visit: [www.GreatLakesNow.org](http://www.GreatLakesNow.org)

--Katie Steiger-Meister, *External Affairs*

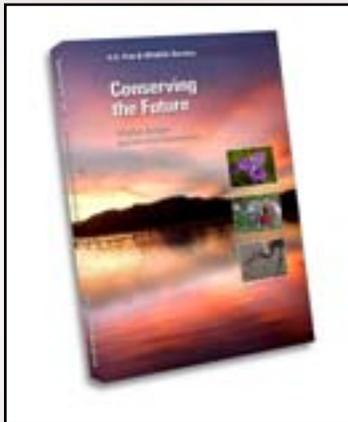
## Vision Document

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System are pleased to present:

*Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation*

This vision document is a culmination of 18 months of study and public conversation about conservation and the strategy for the Refuge System over the next decade.

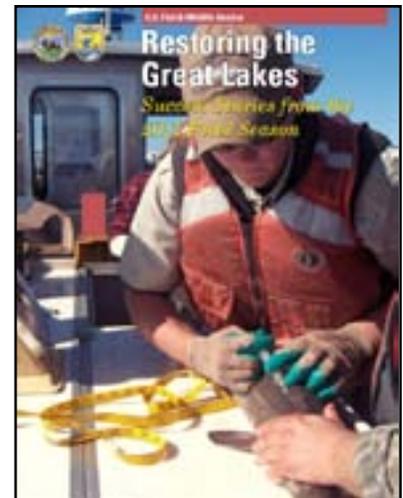
This 21st-century strategic vision for the Refuge System acknowledges the broad social, political, and economic changes that have made habitat conservation more challenging since the agency last set comprehensive goals in 1999. In the intervening 12 years, the



new vision states the nation's population has grown "larger and more diverse ... and the landscape for conservation has changed—there is less undeveloped land, more invasive species, and we are experiencing the impacts of a changing climate."

To implement the new vision, nine Implementation Teams have been established: Urban Wildlife Refuges;

Strategic Growth; the Leadership Development Council; Planning; Science; Community Partnerships; Communications; Hunting, Fishing, and Outdoor Recreation; and Interpretation and Education.



An electronic version of *Restoring the Great Lakes: Success Stories from the 2011 Field Season* is now available at <http://www.fws.gov/glri/>. Download a copy today to learn more about some of the Service's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative projects!

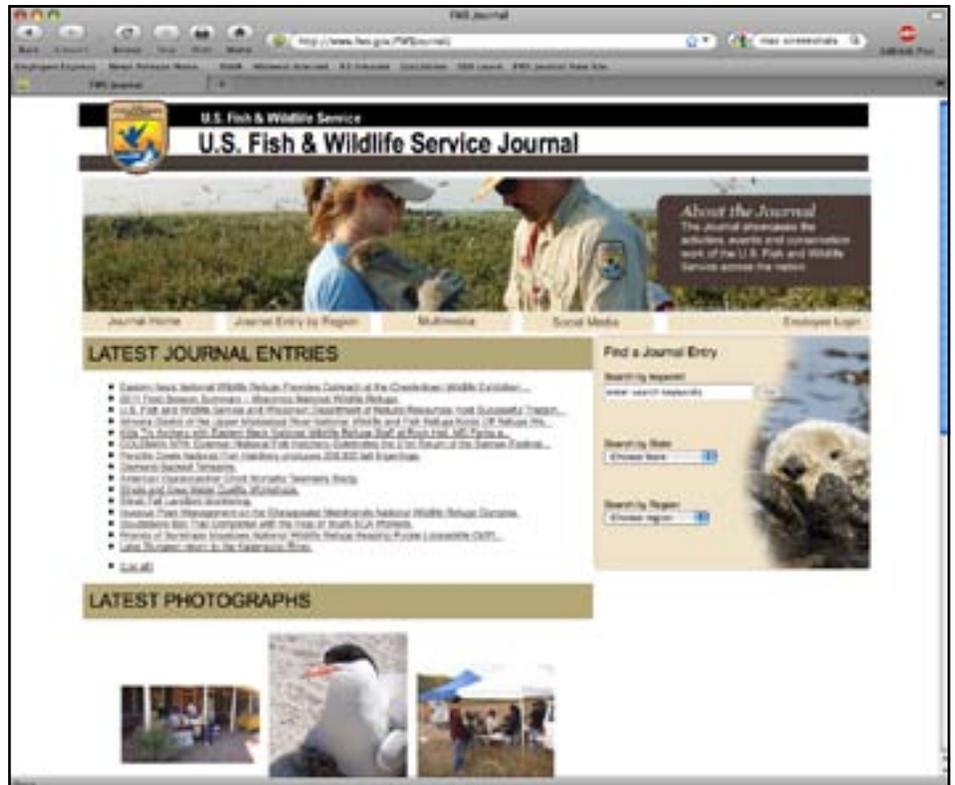
# FWS Journal Brings Reporting Service Success Stories into Modern Era of Social Media

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) recently unveiled a reporting tool that offers staff a new way to quickly share information with a broad audience about the great work they are doing to benefit people and resources.

This new tool, the FWS Journal, allows staff to enter text narrative descriptions; upload video footage, slide shows, podcasts, and still images; and then share them via a number of Service web sites and social networks including Facebook and Twitter.

With broader audiences seeking information on the activities of the Service, the FWS Journal replaces a more cumbersome reporting system with a state-of-the-art alternative that takes mere minutes to complete. It also allows for “internal only” reporting use so managers can continually gather accomplishments of their staff for briefings, performance review periods and a host of other internal functions.

The FWS Journal also offers an RSS feed option allowing individual field office web managers to add the most recent Journal headlines for their office, with those headlines taking people directly to the completed and approved Journal reports with a simple click of the hyperlink. In addition to the field office specific headlines, RSS Feed options include adding the 10 most recent regional or national headlines to a web site by simply copying and pasting the appropriate embed code the FWS Journal site provides.



The FWS Journal web site offers quick access to the most recent activities reported by Service staff. USFWS Photo.

Staff who have multimedia materials to share with their reports can use embed codes similar to those used on most social networking sites and quickly embed slide shows, video or podcasts directly into their completed reports, then Tweet or Facebook update the headline and link to their social media audiences from around the world.

Other exciting additions to the new FWS Journal include:

- A single page report form, compared to the 14-page reporting system it replaces.
- The ability to include the correct Congressional District utilizing a mapping tool to pinpoint the location.
- An employee template form

allowing users to make reporting even faster by pre-filling data that will be used in some or all of their entries.

- An automatic look-up tool that allows staff to send a courtesy copy email of their report to other FWS staff.
- Help text icons throughout the site at each step to further explain what is being asked in each point of the report form.

These are just some of the many highlights and potential benefits of the fast and easy-to-use FWS Journal.

--Larry Dean, External Affairs

## Restoring America's Great Outdoors at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

Ducks Unlimited and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partners from around the region celebrated the Shiawassee Flats Wetland Restoration project in Michigan on Friday, Oct. 2011. Regional Director Tom Melius and Deputy Regional Director were on hand to mark the special occasion.

The project involved the reclaiming 141-acres of farmlands and reconnecting hydrologic systems to the Flint River. This effort was an important piece in the conservation mosaic that is happening in the Shiawassee Flats Wetland and was a collaboration between many partners, with Ducks Unlimited the principle.

--Tina Shaw, External Affairs

## Youth Hunt at Upper Mississippi NWR Brings Big Smiles and Big Deer

The special youth deer hunt at the Lost Mound Unit of Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge was held October 8-9, 2011 and, based on the smiles on their faces, it was obvious which hunters harvested deer. Twenty-one youth harvested two deer that included one buck and one doe. The largest, a 9-point buck with a field dressed weight of 165 pounds, was harvested by 13 year old Caleb Poffenberger from Forreston, Ill.

--Russell Engelke



Ducks Unlimited and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners at the Shiawassee Flats Wetland Restoration Project. USFWS Photo



Hunter Collachia of Fulton, Ill., shows off his nice doe taken during the Lost Mound Youth deer hunt on October 9, 2011. USFWS Photo Credit by Russell Engelke



Group photo of hunters participating in the 2011 disabled access deer hunt at Rice Lake NWR. USFWS Photo Credit by Walt Ford

## Rice Lake NWR Showcases Partnerships to Congressional Staff Member

Sheldon Anderson, District Director to Congressman Chip Cravaack, from Minnesota's 8th Congressional District, visited Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge on Oct. 6, 2011 to observe the many partnerships at work that make the disabled access deer hunt successful. Anderson attended the hunter orientation in the morning and after a short refuge tour he spent nearly four hours in a deer stand with one of the disabled hunters. While no deer were seen during his time in the stand, he thoroughly enjoyed himself and promised to bring the Congressman for a visit at a later date.

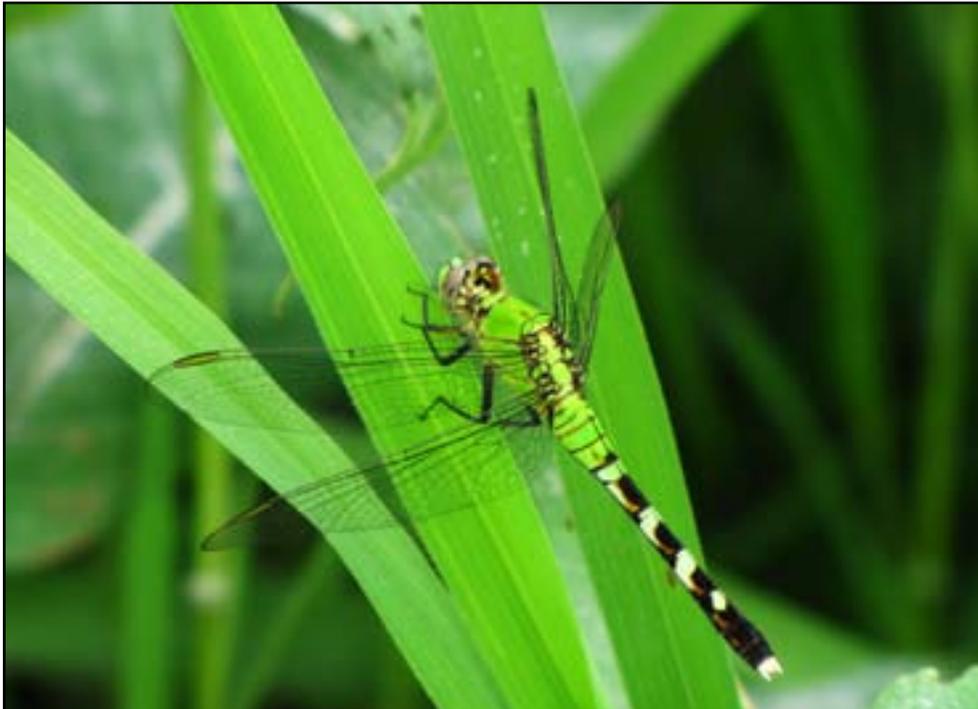
--Walt Ford



## U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/>

November 2011



Eastern Pondhawk at Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Alex Galt/USFWS.

Thank you for entering your journal reports and photographs in the Fish and Wildlife Journal.