

Hatchery Highlights

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Warm Springs NFH News and Updates



Fall 2007



WHO SAYS A HATCHERY MANAGER DOESN'T GET DIRTY??

Hatchery Manager, Carlos Echevarria, takes his lake sturgeon responsibilities very seriously. On a recent stocking trip in Tennessee, Carlos misjudged the water depth while standing by the boat ramp. His hip waders filled up "a little bit" with cold water. Never to let a small obstacle like that to stand in his way, Carlos managed to finish the day. A total of 518 lake sturgeon were stocked in the French Broad River, TN. Ed Scott, Tennessee Valley Authority, assisted in this effort. Ed was also there to give Carlos encouragement and make sure the day was captured for prosperity.

PHASE II STRIPED BASS HARVEST

Over 10,600 Phase II gulf striped bass were harvested from six ponds during November. An improved method of harvesting (articulated boom with an attached aluminum fish bucket) was used this year to harvest fish from the ponds. This method reduces the handling stress on the fish and they seemed to experience less trauma (including minimal eye injuries normally caused by rubbing against nets and seines). Using the bucket made it easier on the fish and the staff. We no longer have to carry heavy buckets up and down the kettle steps. All striped bass were marked with OTC for 6 hours prior to distribution. The fish were stocked into West Point Lake.



A harvest tank with a quick-release lever is attached to an articulated boom which is also attached to a backhoe.

AMERICAN ALLIGATOR INTERPRETATIVE DISPLAY PANEL INSTALLED



A new display panel was installed along our reptile enclosure area by the Hatchery's electrician, Chad Shirey. The sign explains the importance of vital habitat to the long-term survival of American alligators. The outreach message in the panel is "by a combined effort of species protection between the Service and State partners, the species rebounded and in 1987, the American alligator was declared fully recovered and removed from the Endangered Species List." This area holds two American alligators, alligator snapping turtles, bluegill, bass, and other fish. The alligator enclosure is one the most visited sites on our hatchery.

GEOCACHING, A WORLD-WIDE OUTDOOR TREASURE HUNT, COMES TO THE HATCHERY

Geocaching, an outdoor treasure hunt, was started in 2000 when a GPS enthusiast wanted to test the accuracy of new upgrades to 24 satellites around the globe by searching for a navigational target in the woods. The idea was called "Great American GPS Stash Hunt" and the coordinates of the first cache were posted online. The "treasure-hunt" caught on with GPS experts and eventually more and more of the general public. Today there are over 491,000 active caches worldwide. The Hatchery has home to one of them since 2005. The location of this cache and of this new sport was unknown to hatchery workers until recently. Jaci Zelko, fish biologist, first became aware of this activity when questioned by a family visiting the hatchery. "The father asked me if I knew where the cache was located. I had no idea what he was talking about. So I went and researched this new game." Hatchery staff are thrilled that a cache is located on the grounds, because it has the potential to bring in more visitors. As the say, X marks the spot!!



The geocache is located somewhere around the public use area.



NEW REASON TO VISIT - CARNIVOROUS PLANT DISPLAY

The newest addition to our public boardwalk area is a boat full of native carnivorous plants. This fascinating and beautiful group of plants was placed inside a recycled stationary boat in the wetland area. The boat sits in the water to mimic bog conditions perfect for these plants that love acidic and humid soil. The donated plants were transplanted by our Friends of Warm Springs Hatchery members. Chad Shirey, electrician, completed the labor to retrofit the boat and anchor it in the wetland area.



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