

2014

Inland Fisheries Division Program Notes & Updates (Winter)



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CARE & Constituent Services



"Fishing with my family since I was a child has motivated me to carry out my passion into adulthood. When you put time and dedication into anything, in my case, fishing, it's bound to pay off. Luckily, anglers here don't have to travel far to experience great fishing. Connecticut offers some spectacular fishing with a wide variety of species year round."

Andrea Repko, the 2014 Angler's Guide Cover Photo Contest winner. Andrea's photo will be the cover image for the 2014 Connecticut Angler's Guide. Her 38 inch Northern Pike weighed 16 pounds and was caught and released in the Housatonic River, Kent.

SPECIAL REPORT – TROPHY FISH AWARD CEREMONY, ANGLER'S GUIDE PHOTO CONTEST

On Saturday, February 15, 2014, the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) hosted the "Sixth Annual Trophy Fish Award Ceremony" at the **Northeast Fishing and Hunting Show** in the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. A total of 74 inland and marine anglers, including youth, were recognized for their achievement of having caught or landed the largest fish in each species category or for earning awards for the greatest number of different fish species during the year. Thirty seven Inland awards were presented, twenty-nine awards of which were for the various categories which include male/female, adult/youth and harvest/catch & release. Two adults were awarded Angler of the Year status, four anglers received Fish of Merit status and one angler was given a Special Recognition award.



Luke Barstow (center) proudly displaying his award for a 22.25" rainbow trout in the youth male "Catch & Release" category, with Pete Aarrestad (left) and Commissioner Rob Klee (right).

Cover photo: DEEP Inland Fisheries Seasonal Resource Assistant Chris Finch stocking trout through the ice at Gardner Lake in early February 2014 (see page 7 for more information on this year's spring stockings).

This year's ceremony included several presentations associated with two new programs (Angler's Guide Photo contest, Youth Fishing Passport). Commissioner Rob Klee unveiled the grand prize winner of the 2014 Angler's Guide Photo Contest, Andrea Repko's (Norwalk) photo of her with a 16 lb, 38 inch northern pike that she caught-and-released in the Housatonic River (Kent). Andrea was one of five finalists chosen from the eighty submissions received. Andrea's photo will be on the cover for the 2014 CT Angler's Guide, and the images from other finalists in the contest will be published inside the Guide.

2014 Angler's Guide Photo Contest

finalists. (from left to right)

Commissioner Klee, three of the finalists, Andrea Repko (northern pike), Lauren Kusinski (black crappie) and Michaela Ruzbasan (tautog), Pete Aarrestad and Mike Beauchene. Not pictured are two finalists, Michael Klehm (Housatonic River anglers) and Al & Kate Tremblay (striped bass).



Finally, four Youth Fishing Passport "Fishing Challenge" Top angler awards were presented at the 6th annual trophy fish awards program to Braedon and Kienan Giller, Eric Hagglund, and Nicholas Bourdoulous. Each received a Shakespeare rod and reel and Berkley Tackle bag (complements of Pure Fishing), gift pack (complements of Connecticut Outfitters), and a gift certificate for a free trip and tackle rental on The Black Hawk II (complements of Black Hawk fishing charters).

Nicholas Bourdoulou, one of the 2014 Youth Fishing Passport Fishing challenge "Top Anglers" with his prizes, to his right are Mike Beauchene (holding Nicholas's framed award) and Commissioner Rob Klee.



ICE FISHING DERBY. A January warm spell lead to concerns about ice safety, but an arctic blast a few days prior helped generate the thick ice needed to conduct the CARE Family Ice Fishing Derby on Coventry Lake. This year's event attracted 265 participants. CARE staff and Certified Volunteer Instructors provided bait, tackle, jigging rods, tip-ups, and expert instruction. Our partners at Coventry Park and Recreation Department provided coffee, juice, hot chocolate, and snacks at the Patriots Park Community Center located on the lake. All children received prizes donated by members of CTFISHERMAN.COM. Special prizes were also awarded to lucky anglers who caught derby winning walleye, pickerel, largemouth bass and perch.

Family Ice Fishing Derby: *CARE Family Ice Fishing students were able to put their new skills to the test on Coventry Lake! Certified CARE Instructors, like Judy Witzke (on left), showed families how to properly setup a tip-up and how to use a jigging rod.*



WINTER FESTIVAL. A new CARE record has been set as over 600 participants walked out onto Burr Pond in Torrington to learn how to ice fish on February 1st! The ice was thick, sun shining, and the wind calm for the 6th annual *No Child Left Inside*® **Winter Festival** organized by DEEP's State Parks Division. CARE provided bait, tackle, jigging rods and tip-ups for participants to borrow. Once on the ice, Certified CARE Instructors and Inland Fisheries Biologists provided lessons on drilling holes, jigging and setting up tip-ups! The "bite was on" as over 100 fish were caught by first time ice anglers. Some were released but most found their way to a special fish filleting and cooking booth set up by CARE Instructors. Succulent calico bass, yellow perch and bluegills were filleted, batter dipped and fried to the sampling delight of festival participants.

WINTER CLASSES. Hosted 11 Family Ice Fishing classes for over 200 students in the towns of Bristol, Canterbury, Coventry, Farmington, Glastonbury, Harwinton, Killingworth, Litchfield, Milford, New Haven, and Wethersfield. Certified CARE Instructors taught students about winter pond ecology, safety on the ice, ice fishing equipment, proper bait and how to rig it, and fish identification and ecology. Most ice fishing classes were sponsored by municipal park & recreation departments. In addition to traditional "families", some ice fishing classes were targeted for Disabled American Veterans and "at risk" youth.

SPRING CLASSES Scheduled 27 Family Fishing Courses for spring 2014 in Andover, Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bristol, Canterbury, Chester, Derby (4), East Hartford, Essex, Farmington(2), Glastonbury, Killingly, Killingworth, Litchfield, Milford, New Britain, Southington, Stamford, Stratford, Suffield, Tolland, Trumbull and Wethersfield. Several recent partnerships have formed connecting town recreation departments and CARE resulting in new location offerings for Family Fishing Courses this spring.

CARE CENTER PROGRAMS For the fourth straight year, staff has successfully expanded a program where 6th grade school teachers incorporate modules from the CARE curriculum into science lessons prior to a class field trip to the CARE Center on Forster Pond. This spring, every 6th grade student in Hamden will visit the CARE Center for a day of aquatic education and angling. A total of 14 class field trips have already been scheduled.

INSTRUCTOR TRAINING Recruited, trained, and certified 18 new CARE Instructors at Cabela's in East Hartford. The February 8th class graduates included experienced anglers, professional educators, and 9 members of Connecticut B.A.S.S. Nation. The next opportunity for CARE certification training will be June 14th. Instructor volunteer hours are documented and used as State match for federal funding, which allows CARE to function with little to no State funding. Readers who know good candidates interested in joining the program should have them contact Tom Bourret or Justin Wiggins at 860-663-1656 or thomas.bourret@ct.gov.

New Instructor Training: CARE staff recruited and trained 18 new instructors this past February at a certification course at Cabela's. A total of 682 volunteers have been certified by the CARE program since 1986!



MEDIA OUTREACH Staff appeared on WILI's Wayne Norman radio show to promote ice fishing activities and recruit CARE volunteers.

NORTHEAST FISHING & HUNTING SHOW Developed and staffed an Inland Fisheries display as part of a DEEP exhibit at the Northeast Fishing and hunting show at the Connecticut Convention Center. Other units participating in the DEEP exhibit included Marine Fisheries, Environmental Conservation Police, Forestry and Wildlife Divisions and the DEEP Bookstore. Nearly 7,000 people attended the 2014 show.

DEEP displays at the Northeast Fishing & Hunting show: DEEP staff from all participating units were on hand throughout the show to answer questions and provide additional information to attendees



COMMUNITY FISHING WATERS EXPANSION Invitations have been sent out to local political leaders, legislators, community civic groups, and municipal parks and recreation staff for the Community Fishing Waters Summit, being held March 18th at the Riverfront Recapture Boathouse. The goal of the conference is to identify education and outreach efforts needed to get citizens out into their local parks and increase stewardship using fishing as the hook.

2014 ANGLER'S GUIDE Has undergone a major facelift with the content organized into one of three major sections; general fish and fishing related information, inland fisheries information, and marine fisheries information. New content includes two pages of freshwater fish photos and descriptions. This new content will greatly enhance the ability of the novice angler to identify a fish they have caught. Some programmatic pages have been re-tooled to be more visually attractive; youth fishing passport, Angler's Guide photo contest, CT fish hatcheries, catfish lakes and community fishing waters.

YOUTH FISHING PASSPORT Over 250 youth have registered so far in 2014, bringing the total number of participants to 1,919.

FISH-ON! ON-LINE SURVEY 3,168 people have completed a short survey providing feedback on questions to assist IFD in the continual effort to improve fishing in CT. Analysis to begin shortly.

FACEBOOK PAGE now has 3,839 followers.

OUTREACH – SCIENCE FAIRS On February 7, Mike Beauchene was a judge (10th year in a row) at the East Granby Science Fair/Invention Convention. Mike's role was to interview the students responsible for each of the top 30 projects as determined by the East Granby teaching staff.

Happy anglers at Winterfest 2014.



Inland Fish Management & Fish Culture

COLDWATER FISHERIES

2014 SPRING TROUT STOCKING. For the first time, created a combined, statewide, preseason trout stocking schedule and began early spring stocking. Prior to this year, each district utilized separate stocking schedules. This year, district schedules were combined into one to expedite stocking and improve communication between the three state trout hatcheries and fish management staff. All stocked areas are scheduled to receive fish by Opening Day, but the unrelenting winter is certain to hamper stocking efforts. Early February of this year, 12,500 Rainbow Trout were stocked into 15 lakes statewide (*see cover photo*) to take advantage of the exceptional, ice conditions and facilitate required maintenance at Quinebaug hatchery. This year's harsh winter conditions have stymied trout stocking of late, but due to the yeoman efforts of state fish hatchery staff and help from support services, more than 28,000 Brown and Rainbow Trout were stocked into lakes (through the ice) since February 3rd.



One of the 12,500 rainbow trout stocked in early February.

Approximately **659,000 catchable size trout**

were produced for preseason, in-season, and fall season stocking. In addition, 17,700 yearling (7-9") and 7,000 juvenile (4-6") trout have been produced for special programs such as TMA enhancement or sea-run trout fisheries, respectively. Approximately 389,000 trout are scheduled to be released prior to Opening Day (April 19th). The following have been produced for stocking this year:

<i>Catchable size trout/salmon</i>		<i>Juvenile/yearling trout</i>	
Rainbow Trout (10-12")	133,165		
Rainbow Trout (≥ 12 ")	51,500		
Brook Trout (10-12")	101,800		
Brown Trout (10-12")	347,000		
brown trout (≥ 12 ")	15,000		
"Seeforellen" Brown Trout (10-12")	4,000		
Large "Survivor" Brown Trout (12-16")	1,000	Brown Trout yearlings (7-9")	2,500
Tiger Trout (10-12")	4,000	"Survivor" Brown Trout yearlings (7-9")	15,200
Surplus Broodstock (1-3 lb fish)	2,000	"Sea-run" Brown Trout (4-6")	7,000
totals	659,465		24,700

FISH PRODUCTION “LEAN” EVENT. The “LEAN” process is a highly acclaimed, international method in the business and manufacturing realm , for eliminating waste and improving efficiencies. The principles of “LEAN” thinking are also applicable to government services and programs. DEEP was the first state agency in CT to incorporate the “LEAN” process for evaluating program waste and developing greater efficiencies in services and programs. For one week during the month of January staff from the Fish Hatchery and Management programs met to review the current fish production capabilities of the three state fish hatcheries; Quinebaug, Burlington and Kensington. Budgetary constraints, along with key staff retirements and debilitating staffing changes within the state hatchery system, have forced the IFD to re-think how we are currently “doing business” and ways to improve efficiencies now and in the future. Unlike many other state services, the fish hatchery system is more closely aligned to a “manufacturing process” i.e. raw materials (fish fry and food) come in, and finished products are produced (stockable size trout) and shipped “out the door”. Besides producing catchable size trout for anglers, the state hatchery system support over 150 schools with trout and salmon fry for the *Trout in the Classroom* and *Salmon in the Schools* programs.

With guidance and oversight from Mr. Fred Shamburg, *Leanovations* consultant, the IFD staff worked resolutely throughout the week to develop a host of cost-savings, and quality control measures, such as 1) developing SOP and business plans for each of the hatcheries; 2) reducing avian predation on trout at Burlington hatchery (with a minimum cost savings of ~\$10,000/year); 3) developing and implementing a fin quality assessment index to provide a tool for evaluating and improving the physical appearance of fish produced in the hatcheries; 4) initiating efficiencies in feed deliveries at the hatcheries; 4) infrastructure and capital improvements at all three facilities; 5) purchasing new trucks with modernized fish transport equipment (i.e. insulated tanks and bottled oxygen) and some with greater transport capabilities (2X, thereby reducing fuel costs and staff costs). Former Commissioner Dan Esty and newly appointed Commissioner Rob Klee enthusiastically embraced the work done by the Fish Production “LEAN” Team, so much so that they brought the results directly to the attention of Governor Dannel Malloy. Work is now underway to institute the recommendations from the LEAN event and Gov. Malloy is committed to attend a forthcoming IFD trout stocking media event this spring.

The Fish Production Lean Team.

From left to right, Bill Hyatt, Pete Aarrestad, Chris McDowell, Tim Barry, Brian Eltz, Jamie Hays, Colleen Giannini, Rick Van Nostrand, Doug Beaulieu, Al Sonski, Bryan Decker and Joe Ravita.



ANGLER SURVEYS - STREAMS. Completed the **Housatonic River Angler Survey** for the upper 44 miles of the Housatonic River from the Massachusetts/Connecticut state line downstream to the head of Lake Lillinonah in New Milford. Surveys began on March 1 and ran through mid-December. This stretch of river was last surveyed in the mid-1980's. This survey assessed current management on thirteen distinct sections of the river, including two year-round Trout Management Areas, two Smallmouth Bass Management Areas, and several sections managed under standard state wide regulation, and about which little was known. The survey, which quantified and characterized angler usage, attitudes, and catch rates, ran concurrently with the third and final year of the Enhanced Law Enforcement Initiative on this same section of the Housatonic. Data entry and preliminary analysis are complete, showing an estimated total angling effort of 40,700 hours of fishing, with 29,000 trout and 17,900 smallmouth bass caught. The atypical flood level flows during the summer of 2013 likely resulted in less fishing and lower catch rates than usual during a typically popular time of year, while fall stocking in the upper Cornwall TMA generated a lot of angling and relatively high catch rates of trout.

STREAM MONITORING. During this winter work was directed toward expanding previous efforts in developing a comprehensive, statewide stream culvert/road crossing inventory. This work was begun in earnest by IFD several years ago in eastern, CT and has been completed in 33 towns with an additional 3 towns partially complete. Plans are being made to expand the collection of data into western, CT. Several non-governmental organizations (NGO's) such as the Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA), Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) and the University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension Service have agreed to work collaboratively with IFD on this project.

RAINBOW SMELT. Preliminary work was initiated to explore the potential for restoring an historic smelt population into West Hill Pond in (New Hartford-Barkhamsted). This once popular recreational fishery, and important forage base for trout, was lost some time back in the early 1990's. Recent communications were initiated with a private water company where self-sustaining smelt populations are known to exist. The feasibility of restoring the West Hill Pond's smelt population will be investigated this spring through experimental egg collections at the donor site.

WARMWATER FISHERIES

ANGLER SURVEYS. Conducted ice-fishing **angler surveys** at five lakes: Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (Mansfield), Gardner Lake (Salem), Mashapaug Lake (Union), Mount Tom Pond (Litchfield) and Bantam Lake (Litchfield). Not surprisingly given the record cold, the winter of 2013-14 is shaping up to be one of the best ice seasons in a while. Safe ice was recorded at most of these lakes as early as mid-December and continued well into March. These surveys assess angler catch, effort and attitudes/opinions and provide vital information to help DEEP fisheries biologists make informed management decisions.

John Pringal Jr. with his 10.83 lb walleye caught at Gardner Lake this winter.



NORTHERN PIKE. Water levels are in the process of being raised for the 2014 season in the northern pike managed spawning marshes. Broodstock collection will begin soon at Bantam Lake and at Haddam Meadows on the Connecticut River.

A fry stocking experiment in the managed spawning marshes at Wyantenock State Forest will continue in 2014. Approximately 40,000 pike fry will be obtained free of cost from the State of New Jersey during early April and raised to fingerling size in one of the marshes. Production at this marsh will be compared to that resulting from our normal procedure of allowing adult broodstock pike to naturally spawn in the managed marshes.

The second year of an experimental stocking of northern pike yearlings into Mansfield Hollow Reservoir will be continued in the spring of 2014. IFD will purchase 120 yearling-size pike (mean length = 13 inches) from Zetts Fish Farm in Pennsylvania. This experiment is designed to assess whether stocking relatively few large fish might be more cost effective than our normal procedure of stocking many small fingerlings.

At Bantam Lake, many anglers have reported catching pike through the ice this winter with the largest fish being 40 inches. At Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, the majority of pike caught through the ice have ranged in size from 18 to 25 inches, which is the size that the pike stocked last summer from Zetts Fish Farm should be by now.

CATFISH. An agreement was reached with Farmcat Inc. of Lonoke, Arkansas, to supply approximately 10,000 yearling catfish (8-12 inch) for our Put-&-Grow Management Lakes and 5,800 adult catfish (14-18 inch) for our Put-&-Take fishing program. This includes fish for the expansion of stocking to five new Community Fishing Ponds.

Although not commonly thought of as an ice fishing species, there have been numerous reports of catfish being taken through the ice at locations across the state including: Quinebaug Pond, Moosup Pond, Stillwater Pond and Wintergreen Lake. Anecdotal information from anglers indicates that the catfish are schooled up and you have to find that sweet spot on the lake to be most successful.

2013 FIELD SEASON. Data collected during last spring, summer and fall sampling seasons have been analyzed and annual progress reports are being prepared.

2014 FIELD SEASON. Planning for this year's warmwater fisheries sampling is in the works; however, due to a further reduction in the number of available seasonal employee positions allotted to Fish Management programs, less work will be accomplished in 2014 than in previous years. Due to budget constraints, available spring-through-fall seasonal positions (for Coldwater and Warmwater Fish Management Programs combined) have been cut from a full work force of 20 positions in 2012, to 10 in 2013, and further to 7 or 8 positions in 2014.

OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION. Pete Aarrestad participated, along with over 30 state fish and game agency fishery administrators and managers, Conservation Directors from 29 B.A.S.S. Nation states, and 11 NGO, university and industry partners in the B.A.S.S. Conservation Summit, held on February 22 and 23 in conjunction with the 2014 Bassmaster Classic, in Birmingham, Alabama.

The summit focused on ways to help refine and strengthen the B.A.S.S. Conservation Agenda by building better partnerships with agencies and industries, all aimed at improving recreational fishing and enhancing conservation of warmwater fisheries resources.

Inland Fisheries Division Director Pete Aarrestad (left), Forrest L. Wood (center), and CT B.A.S.S. Nation Conservation Director Dean Rustic (right) at the trade show at 2014 Bassmaster Classic. Mr. Wood is a living legend in the sportfishing industry. He founded Ranger Boats in 1968, was heavily involved in developing organized tournament fishing, has been inducted in numerous fishing halls of fame, and also served as a Commissioner on the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.



Habitat Conservation and Enhancement

HOP BROOK MANCHESTER, STREAM RESTORATION

Reviewed final plans for a stream restoration project within Hop Brook (Manchester) proposed by Northeast Utilities Service Co. Channel migration and streambank erosion has exposed transmission tower line footings at two separate locations threatening structural integrity of the power lines. Restoration design involves channel relocation and bank stabilization utilizing a bioengineering approach and restoring myriad in-stream fish habitat features with the installation of treatments such as boulder cross vanes.

Streambank erosion exposing transmission tower footings along Hop Brook (Manchester).



TANKERHOOPEN RIVER, STREAMBANK RESTORATION

Unauthorized installation of rock riprap and removal of mature riparian vegetation along several hundred feet of the Tankerhoosen River adjacent to the abandoned Talcott Mill in Vernon, CT resulted in multiple impacts to stream and riparian habitats. To mitigate for habitat loss, Staff recommended intermittent placement of small boulder clusters along the streambank edge to restore fish cover, and increasing the width of the riparian zone to restore riparian function and integrity.

View of rock riprap placement and tree removal along Tankerhoosen River.



COOPERATION AND OUTREACH

- Several staff attended the 15th Annual Northeast Aquatic Plant Management Society (NEAPMS) Meeting in Westbrook, CT. The NEAPMS is a diverse group of professionals representing private industry, state and federal agencies, and academia dedicated to understanding the unique needs of aquatic plant management in the Northeast and communicating that knowledge to both the public and private sectors. Each year the NEAPMS meet to further the understanding of aquatic plant management, share research and plan management needs for the coming year.

- HCE Staff attended the Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLfT) Professional Development Workshop in Casscoe, AR at no direct cost to the state. This professional development workshop was an intensive 5-day program with other agency professionals from across the country on the role and value of recreational hunting, fishing, trapping and other consumptive uses of wildlife and their application to history and future of wildlife conservation and natural resource management in North America.

IFD Technician Mindy M. Barnett (with CLfT Instructor Richard McCabe) during the fishing exercise that was part of the hands-on training portion of the CLfT workshop.



- Staff attended Stream Crossing Assessment Training for the River and Stream Continuity Project that began with UMass and is now becoming a New England wide project. This training is intended to provide a rapid assessment methodology to inventory and evaluate culverts and other stream crossing structures for fish and wildlife passage requirements, culvert design standards, and for evaluating barriers to fish and wildlife passage. All of this information and an inventory of culverts is being incorporated into a New England wide single database that can be easily searched and the information readily available to be incorporated into GIS applications. This information would then be used to prioritize crossing structures for upgrade or replacement.

Below are a few of the steps involved in surveying and assessing stream crossings through culverts.



Photographic documentation of the culvert upstream and downstream is required for a thorough assessment. (Left) The use of the whiteboard is to have the crossing number in each picture to ensure accuracy when performing multiple assessments. (right) Walking through the culvert to evaluate the internal structure and to get accurate measurements of structure size.

Diadromous Fisheries Restoration

SPECIAL NOTE - RETURNING SEA-RUN ATLANTIC SALMON AT FISHWAYS IN THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SYSTEM WILL NOT BE HELD IN 2014, JUST TAGGED AND RELEASED

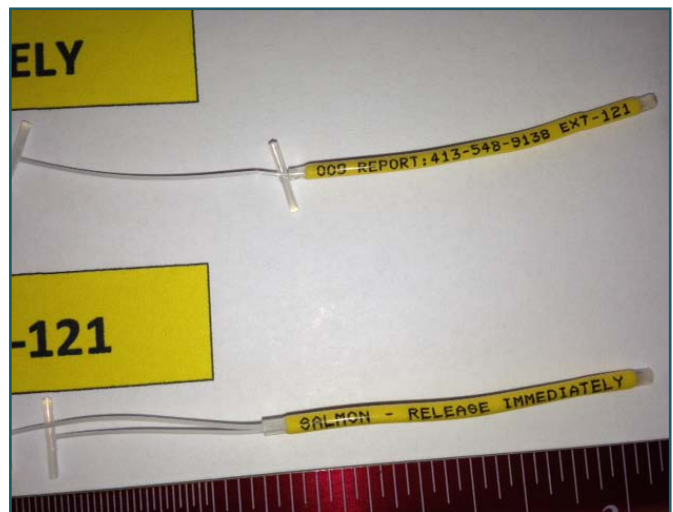
In order to spawn adult sea-run salmon and obtain eggs for future use, a facility is needed to hold them in captivity between the times of spring capture and fall spawning. For the past 30 years, the main such facility has been the Richard Cronin National Salmon Station (RCNSS) in Sunderland, MA, operated by the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). Once our Department closed the Whittemore Salmon Station in Barkhamsted in 2003, the RCNSS has been the only facility available to hold wild adult salmon. The USFWS officially pulled out of the salmon restoration program in 2012 but agreed to make the RCNSS available to hold salmon in 2013 to support the DEEP's Legacy Salmon Program, which maintains a small salmon population in Connecticut. After the 2013 season, the USFWS decided to close the facility and not make it available for the 2014 season. The Inland Fisheries Division attempted to locate an alternative site to hold salmon but due to the special needs of such a facility and funding constraints, it was unable to do so.

Therefore, all adult salmon returning to Connecticut River basin fishways in 2014 will be released after certain biological data are collected and a colored tag applied to their dorsal fin. The tag will identify the fish as a salmon, will advise that the fish must be released immediately, provide an individual identification number, and list a Massachusetts phone number (USFWS) to call to report the observation. It will still be illegal to possess an Atlantic salmon anywhere in the Connecticut River basin. Anglers who catch a salmon will be encouraged to carefully retain the fish in the water, read the tag number, release the fish, then report the catch.

Operators of all other fishways, upstream of where the salmon were released, will be instructed to allow all salmon to pass upstream and to report all such observations. Most fishways have windows where



An employee of the USFWS at the Cronin Salmon Station transfers a sedated salmon (trapped on the Salmon River) to a larger holding tank.



Samples of the tag that will be applied to returning adult salmon. It identifies the fish as an Atlantic salmon, provides an ID number, information on reporting the fish, and a note to release the fish.

cameras record images of migrating fishes. The salmon will be free to migrate toward the stream in which they hatched four years earlier. Some may not be able to reach the exact location due to the presence of dams without fishways and may seek alternative streams downstream of such dams. Typically, salmon reach their destination by July and spend the summer in a deep pool. They would be expected to spawn in October or early November. Atlantic salmon do not necessarily die after spawning like Pacific salmon do and some may head downstream to the sea immediately after spawning while others may spend the winter in the upstream habitat and move downstream with the next spring freshet.

In 2013, 90 salmon returned to the Connecticut River basin. It is impossible to predict how many will return in 2014 but based on stocking figures and recent trends, it is likely that the number may not be too different from that 2013 figure. Widespread stocking of young salmon ended in 2013 but fish that were stocked between 2010 and 2013 are still 'at large' and will continue to return as adults until 2017.

In Connecticut, adult salmon are expected to return to the Leesville Fishway on the Salmon River in East Haddam and the Rainbow Fishway on the Farmington River in Windsor. It is possible that one or two salmon could be seen in the Eightmile River in Lyme, East Haddam, and Salem. On the Salmon River, salmon could move as far upstream on the Blackledge River as two or three miles upstream of Rt. 66 in

Marlborough and on the Jeremy River as far as the dam near Rt. 149 in North Westchester (Colchester). Fish will be able to ascend Dickinson Creek as far as Flood Road in Marlborough and could be seen in Fawn Brook in Marlborough and Hebron. On the Farmington River, salmon could move up as far as the lower Collinsville Dam in Avon and these fish may be seen leaping at the dam. Salmon will also be able to ascend both the East Branch and West Branch of Salmon Brook as far as the gorges in West Granby and North Granby. The Division is discouraging anyone from fishing for these salmon but welcomes reports. Any observations of salmon, even if no one handles the fish to read the tag number, should be reported to the Inland Fisheries Division at 860-447-4316 or 860-424-3474. Division staff will attempt to locate many of the fish that move upstream and determine whether or not there was successful spawning in the fall.



Adult Atlantic salmon 'stack up' in deep holding pools over the summer while they await fall spawning. Salmon like these are bright silver when they come into the river from the sea but after being in freshwater for a while they turn dark and mottled like the male salmon at the top of the photo.

SEA-RUN TROUT

- Began a feasibility study to assess a strain (Lijoki) of sea-run brown trout from Finland for use in Connecticut. After the final logistical hurdles and administrative steps were resolved, 50,000 eyed Sea-Run Brown Trout eggs were imported from Finland in January. The process was permitted through the Inland Fisheries Division, the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, and the USFWS. The departing flight from Oulu was cancelled, subjecting the eggs to an additional 30 hours of transit time. Despite this delay, the eggs looked great as they were loaded into incubation trays (Heath Trays) at the Burlington State fish Hatchery. Since then, the eggs have hatched and the sac fry have been transferred into small aluminum raceways (troughs). To this point, mortality has been negligible.



(left) Maintainer Joe Ravita loads a Heath Tray at the Burlington State Trout Hatchery with approximately 10,000 eyed sea-run brown trout eggs.



(right) An underwater view of approximately 7,000 sea-run brown trout sac fry. After the egg sac is absorbed by the trout (sometime in March), they will begin to feed.

ATLANTIC SALMON

- The Salmon-in-the-Classroom program began another season in December with the Connecticut River Salmon Association picking up 20,000 Atlantic salmon eggs from the Kensington State Fish Hatchery for distribution to 61 schools across the state. This program is expected to introduce nearly 6,000 students to salmon and aquatic resource education.
- Transferred approximately 50,000 sea-run origin Atlantic salmon sac-fry from the USFWS Richard Cronin National Salmon Station in Sunderland, MA to the Burlington State Fish Hatchery. These fry will complete their incubation at the Burlington Hatchery and will be stocked in Connecticut streams later in the spring.
- Staff also transferred approximately 114,000 'eyed' Atlantic salmon eggs from the Kensington State Fish Hatchery to streamside incubators operated by the Tributary Mill Conservancy in Old Lyme. This is a privately-run volunteer hatchery in an old mill that uses brook water to incubate salmon eggs. When these eggs hatch, the fry will be stocked into the Salmon River watershed.

FISHWAYS & DAMS

- Construction continued on the Tingue Dam Fish Bypass on the Naugatuck River in Seymour. Weather has slowed the progress but work continues. The contractor is now stating that the work will be done by May. IFD staff attend monthly progress meetings and advise on fish passage related issues.

The lower part of the future Tingue Fish Bypass Channel was hammered out of solid bedrock.



- The U.S. Department of Interior is making available \$100 million dollars to improve coastal (and natural resource) resiliency in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. This is round two of “Hurricane Sandy grants” and DEEP was awarded two grants in round one for the removal of the Flock Process (Norwalk) and Norton (Colchester) dams. Staff spent considerable time developing a grant application for a project to remove the State-owned Springborn Dam, the first barrier to fish on the Scantic River in Enfield and assisting partners with applications for other dam removals and fishway projects across the state. The application deadline was January 31. Awards will be announced in May.

The Springborn Dam is in poor condition, blocks runs of diadromous fish and segments wild brook trout populations. There is no value to repairing it. Local groups support the DEEP’s efforts to remove it.



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