

# PRESERVING *The* RESOURCE *For the Seventh Generation*

"Gchi miin-giizis," Big Huckleberry Moon • Bimonthly Journal of the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority • September 2005 Vol. 9 No. 5

## LITTLE RIVER BAND RELEASES LAKE STURGEON FINGERLINGS

By Jennifer Dale

MANISTEE — Over 100 people from all walks of life came together on the banks of the Manistee River Aug. 27 with a common desire to see the Manistee River's lake sturgeon make a comeback. The group circled the streamside home of 50 baby sturgeon to celebrate the release of the youngsters into the river.

"There are children here today," said Jimmy Mitchell. "When they see the sturgeon coming back as adults, they'll remember this day."

Anishinabe call the lake sturgeon "Nmé," and have an ancient relationship with it that has been treasured throughout the centuries. Every spring Anishinabe would reunite on the banks of the Manistee to await the spring run of Nmé. But no longer. The Manistee River lake sturgeon population has dwindled near extinction.

The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians decided to do something about it by developing a Nmé Stewardship Plan for the Manistee River lake sturgeon. The plan, developed by tribal biologists and a cultural taskforce, aims for a population 750 lake sturgeon in the Manistee in 25 years. It takes the wholistic approach toward the seventh generation, working a healthy habitat for Nmé and Anishinabe alike.

Little River Band's rehabilitation strategy shifts management philosophy by putting the resource's needs first, instead of putting human needs first.

Little River Band biologists captured the six-inch sturgeon as naturally-produced larvae. Collection of larvae was conducted on the Manistee River between 10 pm and 1am with drift nets. The sturgeon were raised in a 20-foot by 8-foot cargo trailer with skylights and side panel windows providing ambient light. The 189-gallon water capacity brings through



Photo by Jennifer Dale

**People from all walks of life joined together as a community to celebrate the release of lake sturgeon fingerling into the Manistee River where they were hatched. In 10 to 20 years, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians youth Joseph Garaza and Jessie James Cabarrubia (in Garaza's arms) may see these same fish return to spawn. Little River Band aims to build the sturgeon population from just a few to 750 strong over the next 25 years.**

stream water with continuous water quality monitoring. The trailer also houses a brine shrimp fishery to feed the fingerlings.

All released fish will be tagged with a "Passive Integrated Transponder" (PIT) for future identification. Reared fish will be released at locations within the river where wild juvenile lake sturgeon have been captured or observed previously.

The reason fingerlings were raised in the same water as wild sturgeon was to imprint the baby sturgeon by providing the chemical signals that would later guide them home to spawn in 15 or 20 years.

"The sturgeon is an individualistic fish," said Inland

Fisheries Biologist Marty Holtgrenz. "Tissue samples show a sturgeon's origin. The sturgeon returns to the river it spawned in. We want to preserve the fish genetically unique to the Manistee River."

This method is one of many

Holtgrenz. "It carries unique chemical signals. We collect the larvae from this river and rear them in an extension of this river, and return them to this river."

Devastated by habitat loss, pollution and overfishing,

sturgeons' population fell from thousands to just a few individuals. For a fish with a very long lifespan that matures slowly it is a very dangerous situation. Losing all of them is conceivable.

The lake sturgeon is considered a cultural indicator species. To lose these par-

ticular sturgeon would be to lose a significant element of the Anishinabe community's heritage and cultural identity.

"Hope flames anew in the Nmé's annual spring spawn.

*This is a rare fish, rare clan. Decline of the sturgeon has corresponded with decline in sturgeon clan families. Only a few sturgeon clan families are known around here.*

— Kenny Pheasant, Ottawa

efforts to imprint hatchery-raised fish on their species' historic spawning sites to get them reproducing in the wild. "Our streamside facility is like an extension of the river," said

*Others work to restore Sturgeon*

**Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa:** The tribe was funded with \$134,234 from the USFWS this year for Lake Sturgeon Restoration on the Lac Du Flambeau Chain of Lakes and Bear River.

**White Earth Band of Ojibwe:** White Earth's Lake Sturgeon Restoration Plan was also funded by the Fish & Wildlife Service, for \$155,000 this year.

**Black Lake Chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow:** A new sturgeon hatchery near Onaway released about 8,000 fingerlings this July and August into the Black River, with staff assessing artificial spawning, egg collection and larvae collection methods. The facility was built this year with Great Lakes Fishery Trust and state funds after years of planning by the Black Lake chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow.

As they continue to return, they bring hope to each succeeding generation. The Creator put the Nmé here; he put us here. We are obliged to stay here and protect this place. Without Nmé, we would lose an important cultural indicator," wrote Jimmie Mitchell, chairman of the Natural Resource Commission.

Lake sturgeon can live to be 100 years old, so the six-inch fingerlings of today could still be swimming the river's when today's people have all walked  
*See, "Reclamation," page 3*

# 1836 TRIBAL ACCESS SITES 2005

Current access sites that may be used by tribal commercial and subsistence fishers

## LAKE SUPERIOR

- 1 Grand Marais (Tribal)
- 2 Deer Park (State)
- 3 Little Lake (State)
- 4 North Beach (State)
- 5 Whitefish Point Harbor (State)
- 6 Tahquamenon Rivermonth (State)
- 7 Bark Dock (Forest Service)
- 8 Jacks Bay (Forest Service)
- 9 Big Abe Landing (Forest Service)
- 10 Indian Landing (Forest Service)
- 11 Waiska Bay (State)

## LAKE MICHIGAN

- 12 Seul Choix Point (State)
- 13 King's Naubinway (Tribal)
- 14 Hog Island Point (State)
- 15 Big Stone Bay Wilderness State Park
- 16 Lakeview Rd., Sturgeon Bay (State)
- 17 Cross Village (Township)
- 18 Grand Traverse Band (Tribal)

## LAKE HURON

- 19 Pilot Pier\*
  - 20 DeTour Public Access (State)
  - 21 Huron Point (State)
  - 22 Prentiss Bay (State)
  - 23 Search Bay (Forest Service)
  - 24 Carp River (State Forest Service)
  - 25 St. Ignace Marina (State)\*
  - 26 Highbanks Rd. (Private/tribal)
  - 27 Hammond Bay (State)
  - 28 McKay Bay (CORA)
- \* Can be used by tribal commercial fishers Sept. 15 through May 15 only.



# CORA TRIBES WIN \$.67 MILLION IN USFWS GRANTS

WASHINGTON — Three Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority member tribes were awarded four highly coveted U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service grants last month. Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians was granted \$17,800 for inventory and protection of white ash and black ash; and \$250,000 to conduct an engineering and feasibility study of the potential removal of the Boardman River Dams. Little River Band of Ottawa Indians was granted \$149,805 to develop a comprehensive management plan for white-tailed deer, and Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians was granted \$250,000 to develop a gray wolf management plan.

The maximum grant amount was \$250,000.

Interior Secretary Gale Nor-

ton announced the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awards of \$8.1 million to help 45 federally recognized Indian tribes manage, conserve and protect fish and wildlife resources on tribal lands in 18 states.

In the Service's Midwest Region, seven tribes will receive grants totaling \$1.3 million for eight projects. The tribes — in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin — and their non-federal partners contributed an additional \$483,000 toward the projects.

"Native American tribes are excellent stewards and partners in fish and wildlife conservation," said the USFS Midwest

**Native American tribes are excellent stewards and partners in fish and wildlife conservation.**

— Robyn Thorson,  
USFWS Midwest Regional Director

Regional Director Robyn Thorson. "By matching these grants with other funds, tribes leverage greater dollars for wildlife and habitat projects."

The Service awards the grants under two programs. The Tribal Landowner Incentive Program assists federally

recognized Indian tribes to protect, restore and manage habitat for species at-risk, including federally listed endangered or threatened species, as well as proposed or candidate species on tribal lands. The Tribal Wildlife Grant program helps tribes to benefit fish, wildlife and their habitat including species that are not hunted or fished.

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians won an award under each program. Under the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program Little River Band of Ottawa Indians was granted \$149,805. Under the Tribal Wildlife Grant Program, Little

Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians was granted \$250,000.

Under the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program Grand Portage Band of Chippewa Indians was given \$141,616 for identification of suitable habitat for Canada lynx. Under the Tribal Wildlife Grant Program, Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians was granted \$241,788 for the Red Lake Wildlife Habitat Maintenance, Enhancement and Evaluation Project (Phase 2); White Earth Band of Ojibwe's Lake Sturgeon Restoration Plan was funded \$155,000, and Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa's Lake Sturgeon Restoration on the Lac Du Flambeau Chain of Lakes and Bear River was funded with \$134,234.



# Reclamation —

**From page 1**  
 on. Holtgrenz remarked that he hopes to come back when he is gray and old, and see the same sturgeon there in the river. "In 50 to 60 years, we might see the sturgeon come back," he said. Today we are releasing 11. We hope to give the means totally back to the sturgeon in 10 to 15 years."

Warm feelings circled as participants shared the story of how the project progressed from a drawing on a napkin to that day's release.

Elders and children were asked to step forward and volunteer to release the baby sturgeon, after a viewing

of the babies. Anishinabe Artist Pat Wilson designed commemorative T-shirts, explaining his use of the four directions to show the long-term commitment made to the sturgeon.

Mitchell and Wilson served as pipe carriers for the ceremony. Mitchell saw the community coming together for the sturgeon sharing their energies, abilities, and their stories. "It makes it easier to get things done," he noted. "Seeing a lot of people from different places is comforting."

Those attending were offered free commemorative T-shirts and invited to a celebratory tribal feast.

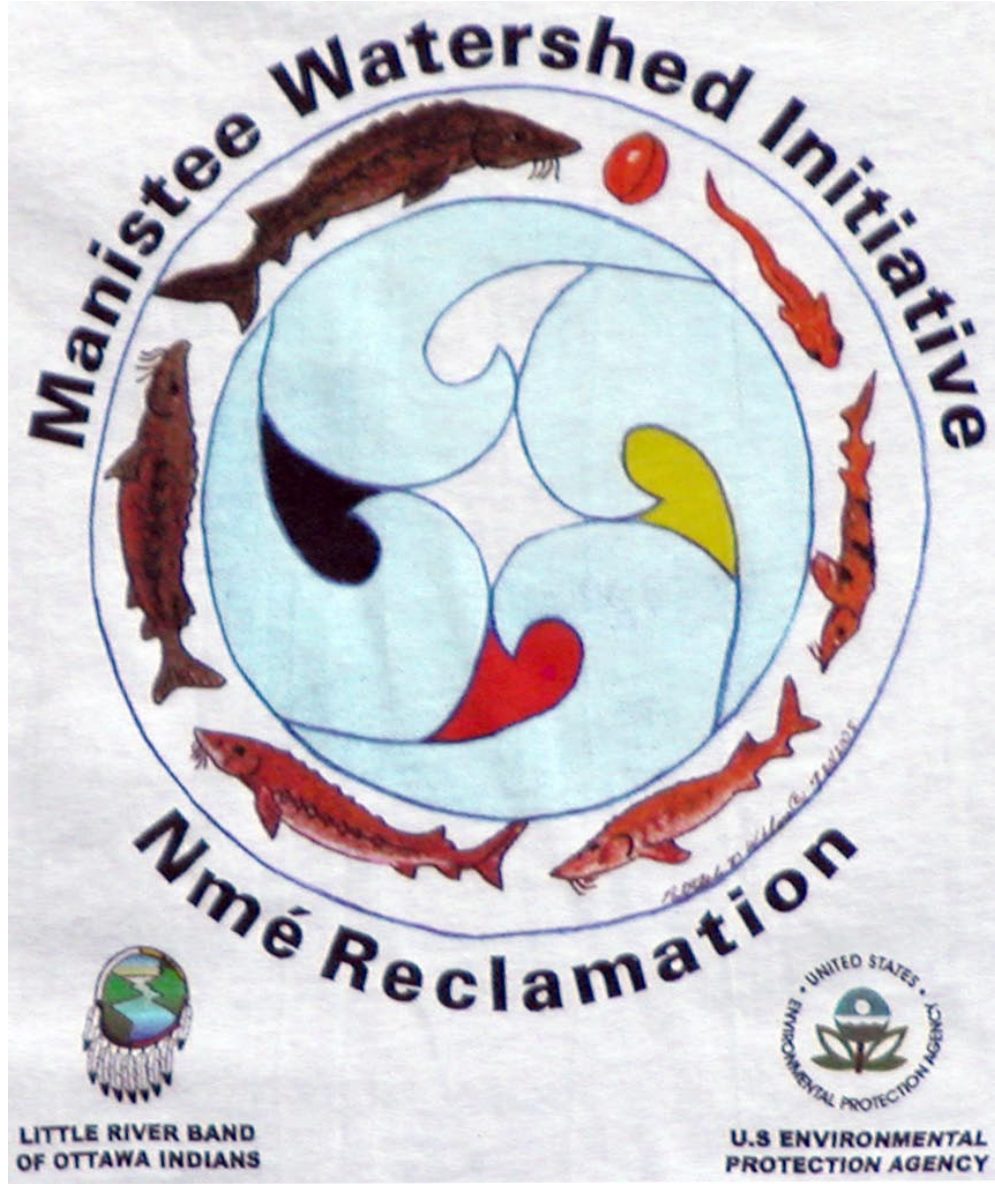


Photo by Jennifer Dale

Healthy 6-inch fingerlings swim placidly in their raceways.



Photo by Jennifer Dale

LRB biologists demonstrate the drift nets set out to capture sturgeon larvae from the river this spring. The optimum time is between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m.

## Emerald Ash Borer pest in U.P.

**BRIMLEY** — The emerald ash borer has been found in Brimley State Park, confirmed the USDA Sept. 12. The state park is just west of Bay Mills Indian Community, which has protected stands of black ash trees on its reservation.

This is the first known presence of EAB in the Upper Peninsula.

"This is a significant find underscoring the importance of not moving hardwood firewood in Michigan," said Mitch Irwin, director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA). "Based upon extensive visual survey conducted this summer in state, national and private campgrounds across the U.P., this appears to be an isolated infestation, and we are responding quickly and aggressively to eradicate it."

Michigan Department of Agriculture survey staff are conducting additional surveys to deter-

mine the extent of the infestation. Survey activities involve climbing trees to inspect the tree canopies, felling and peeling the tree bark to look for EAB larva.

Based on the presence of adult emergence holes, it was determined that the pest population has been in the state park area for at least one year, meaning it was established prior to the implementation of the Mackinac Bridge inspection station and the issuance of the MDNR Land Use Order prohibiting the movement of any ash firewood onto DNR-managed lands.

"The eradication strategy for areas like Brimley includes removal of all ash trees within a half-mile from any known site of infestation," said DNR Director Rebecca Humphries. "We must protect our forests from the immediate threat that EAB presents while managing these resources long-term."



Photo by Jennifer Dale

Biologist Stephanie Olgren (R) introduces the project logo on T-shirts made up for the occasion. The logo was designed by Anishinabe Artist Pat Wilson (L).



# Notice to Boaters: possible salmon nets on northern lakes Huron, Michigan

SAULT STE. MARIE — From the beginning of August through the end of October, boaters in northern Lake Michigan and Lake Huron should be aware of the possible presence of tribal commercial salmon fishing nets. During their recreational boating and fishing activities, boaters should exercise extreme caution during low-light or bad weather conditions when navigating this area. Posters depicting what the nets look like, the general areas they could be set, and contact numbers for help, have been displayed at nearby launch sites.

Each net has large orange floats that are 6 inches by 14 inches spaced at intervals of 300 feet or less. The license number of the tribal fisher is on the net. Net ends are marked with staffs 5-foot in length above the water surface, colored

with at least 50 percent reflective orange coloring and a 12-inch by 12-inch orange flag on top.

CORA strongly recommends that boaters navigate around the nets they encounter, rather than between the staff buoys set at net ends. These salmon nets may be set at the surface and are composed of thick twine.

Fishers from the Bay Mills Indian Community, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians and the Little Traverse Bay Band are all required to uniformly mark their nets in the above manner.

For more information contact CORA Executive Director Jane TenEyck at 906-632-0043.



# McDowell fights trash



Photo by Mike Ripley

**WWW.TRASH-O-METER.COM** — Shown above, back, State Rep. Gary McDowell, D-Rudyard, recently enlisted the 7-foot-tall trash measuring Trash-O-Meter as a new weapon to urge the state Legislature to act on anti-trash legislation. The Trash-O-Meter showed about 4 million tons of trash had entered Michigan since Jan. 1, 2005. The Upper Peninsula received 72,974 tons of Canadian and out-of-state trash in 2004, up a staggering 61 percent from the previous year.

The anti-trash legislation will raise Michigan's dumping charge to \$7.50 per ton, up from the paltry 21 cents. The bill will also return money to local communities and ban new landfills until 2010.

To track the amount of garbage from Canada and other states entering Michigan, go to: [www.trash-o-meter.com](http://www.trash-o-meter.com).

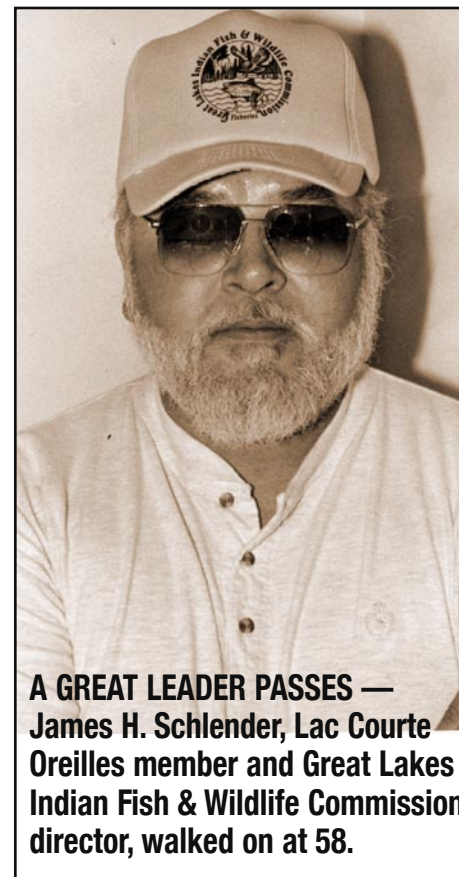
# Longtime GLIFWC director walks on

ODANAH, Wis. — The long-serving executive administrator of the region's largest intertribal natural resource agency died unexpectedly August 30. James H. Schlender, Lac Courte Oreilles member and Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission director, walked on at 58 following complications from surgery. Known in the Ojibwe language as Zaagajiwe, he was a member of the Lynx clan and belonged to the Three Fires Midewiwin Lodge.

A graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School, Schlender devoted his career in support of American Indian tribal issues, notably treaty rights reserved by Ojibwe tribes in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan.

From 1978 through the mid-'80s he worked at his home reservation as tribal attorney and served three consecutive terms on the tribal governing board. In 1983 his service expanded to chairman of the newly established Voigt Intertribal Task Force.

Beginning in 1986 as relations between the state of Wisconsin and its six Ojibwe tribes became increasingly strained over the implementation of court-approved treaty harvests, Schlender ascended to director of the Commission. He held the position for the next 19



**A GREAT LEADER PASSES — James H. Schlender, Lac Courte Oreilles member and Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission director, walked on at 58.**

years, utilizing with great effect his oratory skills, legal know-how, wit and sometimes irreverent humor for the betterment Indian people and their homelands.

While Schlender's legal and negotiating proficiency were hallmarks of his early career, he became increasingly active in infusing Ojibwe traditions into the Commission's daily work. Helping organize the 1998 Waabanong Run to Washington D.C. and spearheading the Ojibwe memorial at Sandy Lake, Minn., were among his foremost recent accomplishments.

## Deadline

The next deadline for the CORA newsletter "Preserving the Resource" (formerly "Tribal Fishing") is Nov. 4th. Call or write Jennifer Dale at the CORA Public Information & Education Program 906-632-0043, or [jmdale@chippewaottawa.org](mailto:jmdale@chippewaottawa.org).

