



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Stewardship

news

YOUR Thoughts

We are looking for contributors and ideas.

✱ If you have a topic, success story, lesson learned, or helpful suggestion, let us know.

Send to: Tara.J.Whitsel@usace.army.mil

Stewardship News is an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). This online publication is produced quarterly with the purpose of providing its readers information about the USACE Stewardship Program. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Mention of specific vendors does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army or any element thereof.

Volume 6, Issue 2: June 2023

Your Stewardship HQ Update

ENS 101 is now a Prospect course offered through the USACE Learning Center (ULC).
<https://ulc.usace.army.mil/>

- **Course Number:** 411
- **Course Date:** Feb. 5-8, 2024
- **Course Location:** Coldwater, MS (Arkabutla Lake)
- **Course Tuition:** \$2407 (revised from initial course schedule listing of \$3192)
- **Course Description:** ENS 101 provides an introduction to the concepts of natural resource management by providing background on the USACE approach to monitoring, managing, and sustaining USACE lands and waters.
- **Additional Classes:** An additional class has been identified for calendar year 2024 which is scheduled to be held Nov. 4-8, 2024, at the Lake Sonoma Visitors Center. The class will be available as part of the FY25 ULC schedule.



Click here for ULC link!

Environmental Stewardship Training Opportunities

Aug. 21-25, 2023: ENS 101 @ Raystown Lake (NAB). *Class full. Waitlist availability only.*

Sept. 12-13, 2023: Aquatic Invasive Training in partnership with the University of Florida @ Raystown Lake (NAB). *Class full. Waitlist availability only.*

To request additional information on any course or to register, please reach out to Tara.J.Whitsel@usace.army.mil

Future classes of ENS 102 and the Aquatic Invasive Training will be announced in near future. Standby for more information!

Fend Off Your Blues With This Good News

POC: Amber Tilton, Portland District, 541-645-0757

The Fender's blue butterfly, found only in Oregon's Willamette Valley, was believed to be extinct. It was rediscovered in 1989 and subsequently listed as endangered in 2000. Thanks to collaborative recovery efforts that USACE has participated in over the past 23 years, this butterfly was recently reclassified from "endangered" to "threatened!"

A combination of factors are credited for the species recovery:



Prairie habitat restoration and planting of Kincaid's lupine (the butterfly's larval host).



Control of invasive species.



Discovery of new populations.



Improved monitoring methods.

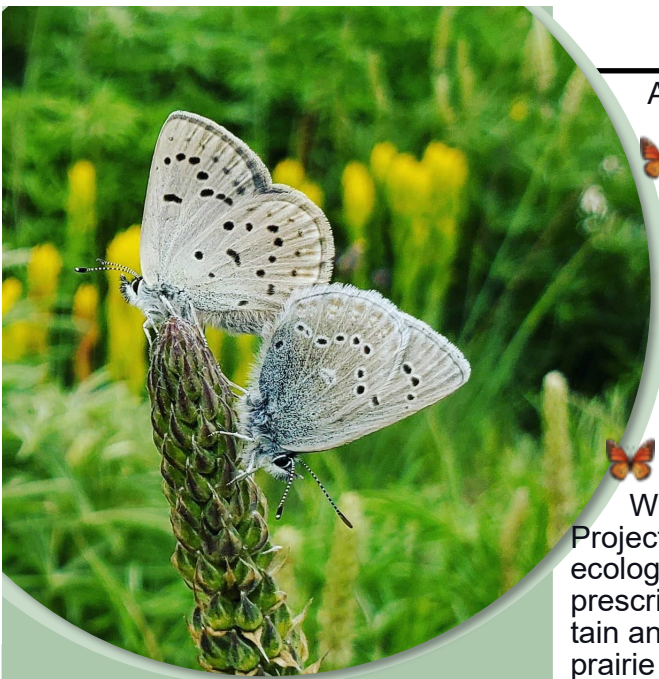
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Photo: USACE. Fender's blue butterfly



Fend Off Your Blues...Continued

A few Portland District facts related to Fender's Blue efforts:



More on the Fender's Blue Butterfly

Icaricia icarioides fenderi

The Fender's Blue is considered a smaller butterfly with an average wingspan of just 1 inch. The upper wings of males are brilliant blue, and they have a wing margin that is black with white fringe scales. The upper wings of females are brown with white fringe scales. For both sexes, the under wings are a cream-tan color with black spots that are encircled with a white border or halo. The life cycle of a Fender's blue butterfly begins in late spring or early summer when an adult female deposits an egg on the underside of a Kincaid's lupine leaflet. When the egg hatches, the larva feeds on lupine leaflets. (USFWS)



The Willamette Valley Project Environmental Stewardship section maintains a greenhouse program at Fern Ridge Reservoir specifically designed to restore the native prairie plants that caterpillars and butterflies crave. In the greenhouses, staff grow local, native plants that are difficult to source commercially and emphasize production of nectar species to feed the adult butterflies.



The Willamette Valley Project also employs ecologically controlled prescribed fire to maintain and improve rare prairie habitats. Burning reduces thatch, prepares seedbeds, and complements other management methods.

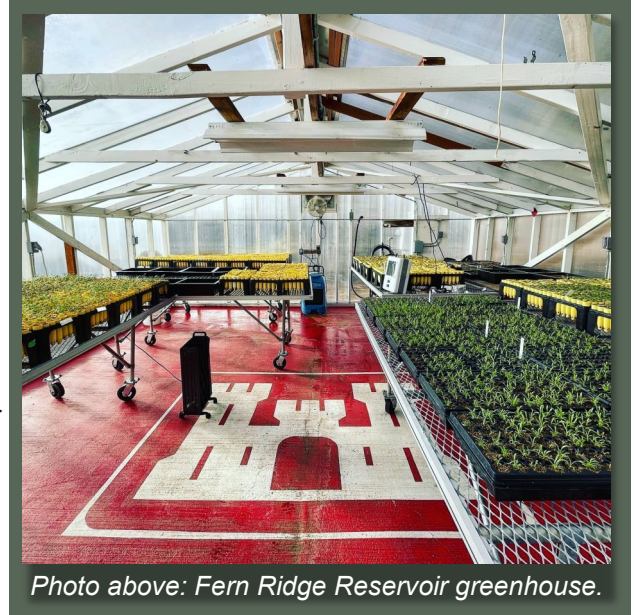


Photo above: Fern Ridge Reservoir greenhouse.

Want to read more about Fender's Blue efforts? Check out the Special Edition of USA Today at <https://usatodayspecial-va.newsmemory.com/?special=Army+Corps+of+Engineers&date=20230610>

In Case You Missed It: Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program (WCPP). The program helps carry out projects by certain Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, including municipalities, counties, and others, that reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs) and improve habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species.

The WCPP provides funding for construction and non-construction projects. *Construction Projects* include engineering, design, permitting, right-of-way acquisition, and other activities related to the construction of infrastructure improvements, (i.e., building a wildlife crossing overpass or underpass). *Non-Construction* projects include planning, research, and educational activities that are not directly related to construction of infrastructure improvements (i.e., a hot spot analysis of WVCs).

All projects should seek to protect motorists and wildlife by reducing the number of WVCs and improve habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species. Federal Land Management Agencies, such as USACE are eligible applicants.

The deadline for applications is 11:59 PM EST on Aug. 1, 2023. Grant applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov).

Additional information is posted here: <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/programs/wildlife-crossings>. USACE POC is Allison Walker, Federal Lands Transportation Program Manager, 202-975-8499



Artificial Structures for Wildlife Conservation

POC: Steve Ecrement, Muskingum Region (LRH), Stephen.M.Ecrement@usace.army.mil

Natural Resource Specialists in the Muskingum Region of the Huntington District are creating artificial structures throughout projects in the region. These practices are used to supplement natural habitat features in altered environments to improve survival, growth, reproduction, and abundance of wildlife. Man-made or artificial structures that provide water, food, and shelter resources become more and more important as natural areas around us decrease. Efforts have or could include:

- Building brush piles and/or leaving piles of decomposing logs. These resources are used for hibernation and nesting by amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, and beneficial insects that pollinate our flowers and crops. They also provide escape from predators and protection from harsh weather conditions.
- Creating rock, sand, and wood chip piles that provide nest sites for turtles, bees, and beetles. They also create moisture for amphibians and various sized crevices used for shelter. Rocks also “hold” heat and cold longer than the air around them allowing cold-blooded wildlife, like dragonflies and fence lizards, to regulate their body temperature (thermoregulation).
- Installing platforms, perch sites, and nest boxes that are used to supplement the loss of large trees used by bald eagles, osprey, bluebirds, wrens, kestrels, wood ducks, flying squirrels, and other species.
- Felling trees or placing large woody debris into water resources to create structure, shade, and protection for fish, basking opportunities for turtles, shelter for thousands of species, and hunting perches for green herons, kingfishers, and other wildlife.
- Creating small fishless pools with gradual slopes and plant cover to provide a breeding and food resource for amphibians like small-mouth salamanders, spotted salamanders, and wood frogs.

Prior to implementing such practices, NRM staff:

- Coordinated within the Chain of Command, Planning, and District office POC's before starting any project to make sure all internal (USACE) and external (SHPO, USFWS, EPA) laws, rules, and regulations were followed.
- Carefully considered the behavior and life history of any target species (e.g., platform for Osprey nesting) before choosing the location of an artificial structure.
- Placed structures in areas that did not conflict with Operations or dam safety. Staff also coordinated structure placement with maintenance staff so they will not be disturbed in the future.



Photos by Ben Renalli, USACE

Stewardship Around USACE

1 Prescribed Fire (SWD) -

In March, Natural Resource Specialists at Beaver Lake, Oologah Lake, and Tenkiller Lake conducted prescribed fires to remove built up leaf litter, burn grasses, and encourage new growth. All burn team members are trained and experienced to conduct prescribed fires on USACE project



Photo Above: Oologah Lake prescribed fire.

Forester Matthew Voskamp starting fire along the fire line.



Leaf litter beginning to burn as the fire was started on Slate Gap Peninsula.



Smoke rising through the tree canopy on Slate Gap Peninsula.



View of Slate Gap Peninsula from the water as leaf litter continued to burn.



Rangers Emily Phillips and Jonathan Runsik after being picked up by boat from their burn areas.

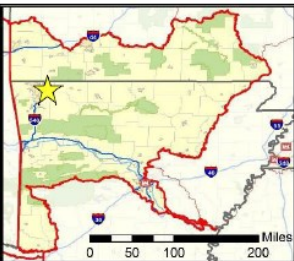
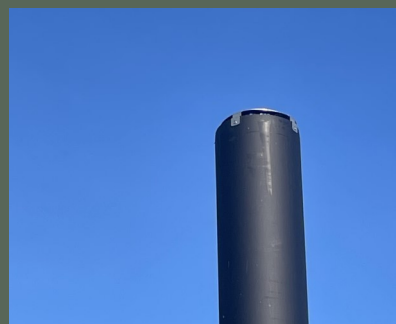


Photo Circle: Tenkiller Lake prescribed fire. Photos Above: Beaver Lake prescribed fire storyboard.

2 Kanopolis Lake (NWK) - The Kanopolis Lake Project has joined in on the "fun" with the Teton Raptor Center's "Poo-Poo Project." Open vertical ventilation pipes associated with vault style restrooms pose a risk to both birds and bats.

According to the Raptor Center, "each year thousands of animals that prefer dark, narrow spaces for nesting and roosting become entrapped and die in vertical open pipes. Vault toilets feature vertical ventilation pipes that mimic natural nesting cavities. Birds enter the ventilation pipe and get stuck in the basement of the vault toilet." The Teton Raptor Center has developed a cost effective and easy to install cover solution. For the Kanopolis Lake Project, the cost was roughly 1/5th of the cost of similar commercial solutions. For more information on this Teton Raptor Center's project, visit <https://tetonraptorcenter.org/poo-poo-project/>



Did You Know!
On USACE lands (both USACE managed and outgranted) there are over 2,700 vault style restroom facilities!

Stewardship Advisory Team—Spring Meeting Summary

The Stewardship Advisory Team (SAT) met in Memphis, TN, Apr. 11-13, 2023, in conjunction with the Recreation Leadership Advisory Team (RLAT). The SAT is an 18-member team comprised of representatives from USACE Headquarters, Divisions, Districts, Projects, and Research elements. The SAT assists with natural resource issues and initiatives that are of national significance. The team provides input to strategic planning and makes recommendations on national priorities for the Environmental Stewardship business program. The team accomplishes this through recommendation of, and assistance in, the development of management actions, policy, research, and information exchange. During the spring meeting, some of the topics covered were S3 implementation, ES priority initiatives, ES and asset management, and reinvigorating the ES CATT. The presentations and meeting minutes can be found on the NRM Gateway.



Click here!

If you would like to learn more about the SAT, reach out to the current team chair, Chris DeSmit, at chris.j.desmit@usace.army.mil. Current members are listed below.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| • NAD—Mike Vissichelli | • NWD—Daniel Feil |
| • NAE—Tia Mercer | • NWK—Samantha Jones |
| • SAD—Amy Cobb | • SWD—David White |
| • SAM—Angie Huebner | • SWT—Stacy Dunkin |
| • LRD—Jeff Defosse | • SPD—Tom Ehrke |
| • LRL—Chris DeSmit (Chair) | • SPA—Michael Bullock |
| • MVD—Amanda Kruse | • POD—Gayle Rich |
| • MVK—Jacob Huey | • POA—Dalton Silvis |



Friends of Reservoirs Selects Two USACE Lakes

Friends of Reservoirs announced the approval of six grant applications by the National Fish Habitat Partnership! Among the six, two USACE reservoirs were selected to receive funding in 2023! Lake Shelbyville will receive \$30,000 and Rend Lake will receive \$40,000. Requests for nominations are sent out each year in November with deadlines in February. Be on the lookout for FY 25 requests later this year. USACE lakes have been very successful in competing for funding from this program for the past 8 years.

Congratulations to the applicants of the funded projects:

- Pymatuning Shoreline Stabilization and Fish Habitat, Pennsylvania (\$75,000)
- **Lake Shelbyville Fish Habitat Development and Restoration Project, Illinois (\$30,000)**
- **Rend Lake Fish Habitat Development and Shoreline Protection/Restoration Project, Illinois (\$40,000)**
- Three Mile Lake Restoration Project, Iowa (\$40,000)
- Farms and Fish: Utilizing Water-Saving Technology at Island Park Reservoir and the Henry's Fork of the Snake River, Idaho (\$50,000)
- McFarland Lake, Iowa (Partial funding, \$75,000 requested)

The Partnership has administered 55 projects in 19 states since its inception in 2009.

Did You Know

MiTICK is a free service for all DoD personnel (including civilians). Dependents, including spouses, parents, or children for USACE civilians are eligible as well.

Formerly known as the "DoD Human Tick Test Kit Program", this service is provided by the Laboratory Sciences Directorate at the Army Public Health Center, located at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.

If a tick is found biting an enrollee, healthcare providers can submit the tick to MiTICK via tick kits available at DoD healthcare facilities. Individuals may submit ticks through a simple mail-in process. Ticks will be identified to species, assessed for how long they have been attached, and tested for human pathogens. The results will be reported back to the point of contact provided on the MiTICK form, and will be used to assess the risk of tick-borne disease to Military personnel (visit our data dashboard to learn more!)

For additional information, or to request tick kits or services, contact the Tick-borne Disease Laboratory:

By phone: (410) 436-5421 or (410) 436-5425

By email: dha.apg.pub-health-a.mbx.tickcom@health.mil

Or online: <https://carepoint.health.mil/sites/ENTO/mitick> (CAC required)



MiTICK

Military Tick Identification/Infection Confirmation Kit



Fish Habitat Improvement Projects

Full article by Brian Whipkey, Erie Times-News can be found at: <https://www.goerie.com/story/sports/outdoors/2023/05/18/glendale-fj-sayers-lake-improvement-projects-underway-raystown-pymatuning-blue-marsh-fish-and-boat/70223803007/>

Several lakes across Pennsylvania received enhancements for fishing and erosion control through the efforts of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PAF&BC) along with other partners and volunteers.

Blue Marsh Lake (NAP) - The Berks County Conservation District received \$135,000 from Bass Pro Shops U.S. Open Grant to stabilize eroding shorelines and add

offshore wood habitat structures to Blue Marsh Lake. The PAF&BC and USACE partnered to work on the shoreline at three different access points. Additionally, coordination is occurring to place 300 wooden structures on the lake bed to increase fish habitat.

Large rock wave deflectors were placed in Blue Marsh Lake. This photo reveals what the structures looked like during the winter drawdown. The improvements will reduce shoreline erosion. Photo by the PAF&BC.

Raystown Lake (NAB) - The PAF&BC, USACE, and partners built and placed 50 fish habitat structures in April in Raystown Lake. Local anglers, the Friends of Raystown Lake, and students from Juniata College volunteered to help build the structures that are designed to attract and protect small fish. Additionally, the PAF&BC will operate its rock barge in July and September to continue remote shoreline stabilization efforts. The Friends of Raystown Lake received a grant from the Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership for \$70,000 to stabilize eroding lake shoreline.

Rocks are unloaded along the shoreline of Raystown Lake to create better fishing habitat and reduce shoreline erosion. Photo by the PAF&BC.

F.J. Sayers Reservoir (NAB) - The PAF&BC partnered with the PA Department of Conservation of Natural Resources at Bald Eagle State Park (a USACE lease of 5,900 acres) in February of 2023 to improve shorelines at two different access points. The project improved shoreline fish habitat and added rock rubble piles offshore to enhance shoreline angling.

F.J. Sayers Reservoir had rock rubble piles placed to attract and hold fish to improve angling opportunities. Photo by the PAF&BC.



Some Interesting Reading & Viewing

- 1** Below are links to press releases and other information regarding opportunities on federal and private lands as shared through the Plant Conservation Alliance.
- **Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies: EO 14072** - Apr. 22, 2022. Focuses on conserving forests, wildlife mitigation, increasing federal cone/seed collection, increasing nursery capacity, and reducing international deforestation. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2022/04/22/executive-order-on-strengthening-the-nations-forests-communities-and-local-economies/>
 - **USFS Reforestation Strategy** - July 2022. This strategy outlines goals for reforestation on national forests and to meet the needs of the REPLANT Act (Public Law 117-58). <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/reforestation-strategy.pdf>
 - **White House Press Release** - Apr. 20, 2023. <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/04/20/biden-harris-administration-announces-new-steps-climate-resilience>
 - **Old-Growth Forest Report** - April 2023. This report provides estimates and inventory of old-growth forests across USFS and BLM on a national scale. This is part of an overarching strategy to enhance carbon sequestration and address related impacts. Inventory results will be used to assess these threats. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/mature-and-old-growth-forests-tech.pdf>

2 **2023 Invasive Carp Action Plan.** The Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee is pleased to announce the release of the 2023 Invasive Carp Action Plan, a comprehensive portfolio of more than 50 projects focused on Great Lakes protection. The action plan serves as a foundation for the work of the Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee partnership, a collaboration of 26 U.S. and Canadian federal, state, provincial, tribal, regional and local agencies

The 2023 Invasive Carp Action Plan, funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and annual agency appropriations, includes an array of invasive carp detection, prevention and control projects focused within key geographic areas of risk. Additionally, the action plan incorporates projects centered on the development and testing of new technologies, support for partnership coordination and comprehensive stakeholder communication. Activities include aggressive efforts to reduce populations of bighead and silver carp along established fronts, large-scale field trials of potential invasive carp deterrent technologies and actions to address black and grass carp threats. <https://invasivecarp.us/News/2023-Action-Plan.html>

From DoD PARC

- 3** Two announcements below from DoD PARC for information and awareness:
- The next DoD PARC species profile video: **Episode 17 - Common Gartersnake**. The Common Gartersnake is one of the most widely distributed snake species in the U.S. and is confirmed present on 185 military installations. Available on YouTube at https://youtu.be/Lz1zV70_7RY
 - Check out this updated **Field Equipment Disinfection Protocol** developed by the Northeast Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation network: http://northeastparc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/NEPARC_Pub_2022-02_Disinfection_Protocol.pdf



Click here!

- Visit the link below to view the completed tri-fold pamphlet *Snakes of Fort Knox*. DoD PARC develops pamphlets, in addition to fact sheets and posters, in-house for installation personnel at no cost. DoD PARC has developed educational outreach materials for over 25 military sites (<https://www.denix.osd.mil/dodparc/resources/education-and-outreach/>).

June 19 - 25, 2023

**Pollinator
WEEK**

www.pollinator.org