



Report of Activities Oct. 05 – September 06

October – December 2005:

The KATCH (Kids Are True Conservation Heroes) Grant Program Final Report was completed during this period of time. The document can be found at <http://www.projectfish.org/katch06.pdf> and highlights the efforts of youth and adults from all over the state who have completed “on the ground and in the water” stewardship projects. Through conception, application and community building, these 569 youth and 177 adults procured over \$50,000.00 of community support through in-kind and actual cash contributions, logged nearly 7000 volunteer hours to benefit Michigan’s natural resources.

In partnership with the Knight Center for Environmental Journalism and Michigan State University’s Fisheries and Wildlife Introduction classes, 32 and 28 students respectively learned about water quality through macroinvertebrate life in the Red Cedar River and the impact humans can have in a watershed. This is a program that Project FISH assists with each fall.

In partnership with Ypsilanti Public Schools, Washtenaw and Monroe County Extension and 4-H, Colton Bay Outfitters of Ann Arbor and other partners from the Southeastern Michigan Summit for Fishing Boating and Aquatic Stewardship, coordinated and promoted, unsuccessfully, a Project FISH/Hooked On Fishing, Not On Drugs (HOFNOD) workshop to be held in November. Only 5 participants registered in which 3 decided to attend other workshops offered later in the spring of 2006. It wasn’t a total loss as the partnerships created are still working together in the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti area.



Lakewood Community Schools applied successfully for a National PE Initiative Grant to start a fishing program in their school based on Project FISH. Ron Martin of Lakewood Community Assets developed a program to teach and then track 150 kids activities through coupons at local vendors, after consulting with Project FISH staff in the fall. The program was very successful and now moving into an ice fishing curriculum for the 06-07 school year for the entire school, 350 kids.

The Royal Rangers of Michigan asked for a speaker for their annual Fall Conference held in Burton, MI. Staff from Project FISH attended and spoke on youth development and natural stewardship through fishing programs. This program was very well received and 2 members of their group attended a Project FISH workshop in 2006.

Project FISH held 2 successful Project FISH workshops for 16 students in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife as well as pre-service teachers from the MSU Department of Education. Many of these students volunteered immediately at the DNR Pocket Park for the Catch a Meal Program that has been successful each fall since Project FISH created it in 1998.



The Clinton River Watershed Council asked Project FISH to present at their annual Student Congress. Youth from all over the watershed attend this conference to present their findings and to make recommendations on the conditions of the Clinton River near their schools. These groups utilize a number of testing methods but most consider macroinvertebrates to be the most fun. Project FISH then works with teachers, to take the next step, of continued contact through fishing programs. By offering access to low cost equipment, training and access to additional resources in their community, we are able to link these teachers with more.

Funding of Project FISH was a real issue at this point and much of the effort was writing proposals, and working on budget, to secure additional monies to continue with the program.

January – March 2006

Working through volunteers and organizations, Project FISH was represented at the new Ultimate Fishing Show at the new Rock Financial Showplace in Novi, MI, the Outdoorama Sport and Travel Show in Novi and at the Lansing Fishing and Boating Show in Lansing MI. At these events, nearly 60 volunteers (trained and non-trained) worked with nearly 2300 youth while making T-shirts (Fish Printing), tying flies, and making crawler harnesses or in-line spinner baits. These booths are donated to Project FISH through partnerships with MUCC and Showspan Inc.

Project FISH staff worked with a statewide planning team spearheaded by MDNR Forestry to implement a statewide training for teachers on Environmental Education. A series of meetings and phone calls in the planning process was established for this event to happen in early June at the Fort Custer Training Center in Augusta MI. Partners included MDNR Forestry, Projects Wet, Wild, Learning Tree, FISH and Leopold Education Project and Binder Park Zoo.

Per the request of Senator Michelle McManus, chair of the senate appropriations committee, presented Project FISH to her and her staff. This was a very well received meeting attended also by the senate policy office and the MSU Office of Governmental Affairs. Meetings of the Senator, MDNR Director and MSUE Director ensued as a result of this presentation.

In partnership with Macomb County 4H, Huron Clinton Metroparks, and the COYOTE Club from the Huron Pointe Sportsman Association, a Free Fishing Weekend was held as a culmination and beginning of fishing/stewardship related activities for 84 youth and 25 volunteers. This group is a club that holds monthly meetings, holds and attends events in their area and works on local watershed related habitat work. This group spun off of a Project FISH training and the SE Fishing Boating and Aquatic Stewardsship Summit.

Staff attended the Hooked On Fishing, Not On Drugs Coordinators Conference in Nevada. Staff participated in a task force to promote the findings of a study on the impact of longer term, continued contact, fishing programs, to state directors of natural resource agencies. This force compiled a letter to state Fish and Wildlife Directors to encourage the use of these types of programs in their agency.

Staff coordinated and held a very successful Project FISH workshop during Ag and Natural Resources Days on the campus of MSU. Fourteen (14) participants attended this workshop and included MDNR Staff, MSUE staff, school teachers, volunteers from the Issac Walton League, Huron Clinton Metroparks, local parks and recreation departments, and a grandmother and professional fisherman. Since this workshop, a number of these volunteers have helped out at events, started their own youth fishing club (38 youth reported), worked with DNR park visitors for “fishing in the parks” and held park day camp programs (85 youth reported) and were encouraged to fish personally.

Project FISH worked with a group from Northeast Michigan which included Sea Grant, MSUE 4-H, Educational Service Districts sportsman groups and private business to establish communication of a NE Michigan Fisheries Education Summit modeled after the SE Michigan Fishing Boating and Aquatic Stewardship Summit. Through this model Project FISH co-facilitated conference calls to plan this conference for Sept. of 2006.

Project FISH participated in local school program activities on fish fisheries and aquatic organisms. Nearly 350 youth and 120 parents/teachers from the Haslett and Ovid School system participated in these events. The teachers were encouraged to attend a Project FISH workshop or at least take advantage of the resources available to them provided by Project FISH.

April – June 2006

Project FISH Staff was invited to attend “The Great Outdoors Grant Initiative” Celebration Luncheon because of the training and support given to many of the successful grant recipients. This grant program was offered to organizations to get youth outdoors and nearly 2 million dollars was appropriated. Project FISH was utilized by 6 of the 13 awards for some aspect of their programs. (80 participants)

Project FISH was integral in encouraging the Future Fisherman Foundation to bring the National PE (Physical Education) Teachers Initiative to Michigan and attended preliminary meetings Travers City with; Northwestern Michigan College, Great Lakes Water Studies Institute, Michigan Sea Grant, The Michigan Charter Boat Association and local business. This meeting was enough for the decision to be made for Michigan to host this workshop. (10 participants)



Project FISH held a very successful statewide training workshop at the Kettunen Center near Tustin, MI. Sixteen participants from 9 counties represented MSUE 4-H, school teachers, sportsman clubs, Boy Scouts, Royal Rangers. Three intense days of education culminated in a commitment by these individuals to continue with this workshop in their county with youth and each of them went home with their personally hand carved fish decoy.

Project FISH planned and coordinated a Project FISH/HOFNOD workshop with Monroe Public Schools Math and Science Center located at Bolles Harbor Marina near Monroe MI. Working with the director Tom Green, an

agreement was reached for the center to host this workshop and become a Mentor Center for Youth and Adults in the Southeast Region of Michigan. This unique site offers many amenities that will be available for Project FISH instructors and program participants, including private fishing ponds loaded with fish. This workshop has 12 attendees from the MDNR Fish Division, Huron Clinton Metroparks, The Detroit Zoo, Belle Isle, Oakland and Washtenaw County MSUE 4-H, Monroe public school teachers and a student. The

workshop had immediate impact on a local program as they focused on Project FISH activities for their camp (40 youth), and a local Sunday school program (20 youth) The partners included all of the above organizations and the Monroe County 4-H program and a local bait shop, bank and sandwich shop. Fish were collected and supplied to the workshop by the MDNR Fisheries Division.

Project FISH presented the history and conceptual future of “Salmon in the Classroom” (SIC) to the Hatchery Section meeting at the Oden Fish Hatchery and Visitors Center in Oden MI. MSU and Project FISH has been involved in the support of this program through research and promotion of the “draft” curriculum. Many Project FISH volunteer teachers utilize this program as a way to continually contact youth with the aquatic stewardship/fishing participation message. We were asked to present a brief history and a few personal recommendations for forwarding this program in Michigan. Project FISH staff spoke that they are willing to participate in any direction that the DNR chooses to take with SIC, and will support their efforts in anyway needed and that done properly could benefit many youth and fisheries management education into the future.



Volunteers across the state held, attended and supported Free Fishing Days programs as part of their “Big Picture” long term programming. Each participant did what they could to support this weekend and many took advantage to invite parents of youth involved in their programs to attend fishing events for free but then encouraged them to purchase licenses anyway as a way to support the DNR in managing our fishery.

Project FISH trained 30 staff of the Salvation Army’s Echo Grove Camp to prepare them for work with youth during the summer programs. This is part of the DNR/RBFF/Salvation Army Outdoor initiative that will utilize Project FISH curriculum at the camp and in local Cores where the youth can have access to when they leave camp. This abbreviated training was sufficient for what they had scheduled for the summer.

Project FISH participated in the First Annual Statewide EE Teachers conference at Fort Custer in Augusta MI. Fourteen participants (all school teachers) attended a 2 day Project FISH Workshop to kick off this week of training. Immediately following this workshop 4 of the teachers ordered equipment to work with youth in their summer programs. (Approximately 100 youth)

4-H Explorations Days was held on the MSU Campus during this period and Project FISH volunteers offered four different courses. From the Lake to the Pan and Everything in Between” (3 adults, 20 youth), 2 sessions of Carving Fish Decoys (2 adults, 15 youth each), Building Your Own Fishing Rod (2 adults, 20 youth) and The Watery World of Fish (2 adults, 10 youth). These 11 adults and 80 youth were able to experience the MSU Campus and attend some wonderful activities that showcase Project FISH volunteer talents. A total of 2700 youth attend 4-H Exploration Days each June.

For the 8th year, Project FISH has offered three days of intense, fun, training for Grandparents and their Grandchildren at an intergenerational Elderhostel held at the Kettunen Center in Tustin MI. These Grandparents learn right along with the youth and many continue to fish with their grandkids after the workshop and many attend each year with a different grandkid. This is a wonderful experience and has an unbelievable impact on everyone involved, from volunteer instructors to the families attending. This year 24 Grandparents and 28 youth attended.

July-September 2006

Project FISH played an integral part in hosting the National PE Teachers Workshop in Traverse City MI. Through facility and equipment coordination and the teaching of the Angling Skills (Spincasting) and conservation, Project FISH was able to assist these 40 teachers in getting comfortable in teaching fishing in the classroom and providing them a resource for equipment and additional materials. A list serve was created to establish a vehicle to communicate with all of the participants and it has been used by the Executive Director of the Future Fisherman Foundation, and the Education Director of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. Sixteen teachers have taken advantage of Project FISH equipment discounts to date.



Project FISH staff participated in the 4-H Great Lakes Natural Resources Leadership Camp in Presque Isle MI. Sixty-two youth were able to attend this camp and take advantage of instructors from Michigan State University while learning about natural resource management. Project FISH supplies many of the teaching materials for the fisheries portions of this camp and many of the instructors are Project FISH volunteers/graduates.

Project FISH assists, promotes, collects donations (prizes) for the Sporting Clays Fundraising Shoot coordinated by a team of volunteers lead by Bob Mitchell of Campbell Ewald. This team has held 10 events that have raised well over \$100,000.00 for the MSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife's, Youth Education and Aquatic Stewardship Legacy Endowment. Project FISH has assisted with this event since it began and benefits from the relationships and finances associate with this event. This years 57 people participated with connections top GM, ESPN Outdoor, Newsweek, Guns and Ammo and Gun Dog Magazines, National Geographic Explorer, Orvis and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Project FISH volunteers have spearheaded discussions with Ypsilanti Schools COPE program for at risk youth. They will be meeting to discuss bringing the Project FISH program as a curriculum they can work out of for the 2006-07 school year. One of the programs that they are interested in is Salmon in the Classroom. This prompted a meeting with the Director of Education and Outreach for the DNR, Kevin Frailey, to discuss a partnership and future plan for SIC., aquatic education and Project FISH.

Project FISH co-facilitated the NE Regional Fisheries Networking Conference in Alpena MI. Thirty 30 participants listened to presentations on programs that are available to them through a variety of organizations and spent the day, discussing, prioritizing and charting the future direction of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Education in the Northeast Region. Many of the participants were Project FISH graduate or had some networked connection and continued their commitment to our natural resources and youth.