

Promoting Youth Understanding of Habitats and Conservation through Project F.I.S.H.

A Final Report
For the

Hal & Jean Glassen Memorial Foundation

October 2000 through December 2001

Submitted by:

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Project Overview

Project Goals:

- promote better understanding of
 - Michigan's diverse habitats, Great Lakes fisheries biology, ecology, and history;
 - conservation and stewardship needed to sustain our vital natural resources.
- help youth and families become aware of
 - the values of the Michigan fisheries to all stakeholders,
 - the opportunities Great Lakes fisheries resources provide, and
 - the history and current complexities of fisheries issues and management.

Project Methods:

- provide materials (enrichment modules), training and support for teachers and volunteer mentors who work with youth through schools, clubs, and locally sponsored events.
- involve youth in habitat projects within their local communities through a small grants program called KATCH (Kids are True Conservation Heroes).

SPECIFIC PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

November, December 2000, January February 2001

- Conducted Project FISH workshop for 29 participants at the Potter Park Zoo. Participants included teachers from, Lansing, Grand Ledge, Palo, Chalottee and Ovid Elsie, Lansing Police Officers (PAL), local naturalists, US Coast Guard Volunteer, and a number of local sportsman club members. This workshop partnered MUCC, Gander Mountain, Potter Park Zoo and Capitol Area Science and Math Center.
General comments about the program are as follows:
 - "I came to this class to learn for myself, now I can't wait to teach others".
 - "Thanks to all of the staff and volunteers for the insight and instruction. It is nice to be reminded of our heritage and values instilled by fishing".
- Worked specifically with GVSU Outreach and Education through the Annis Water Resources Institute, the Wege Whittenbach Agriscience Center in Lowell, Michigan 4-H Foundation through the Kettunen Center in Tustin toward early spring programming.
- Conducted a Project FISH workshop at the Keweenaw Acedemy in Mohawk MI. Twenty-two (22) staff from the school and local 4-H volunteers and staff attended a two day intensive training targeted at developing a school-wide curriculum focused on fishing and natural resources. This school is a correctional/alternative education facility with the students being from Michigan Cities as an alternative to incarceration.
General comments about the program are as follows:
 - "These kids will get more out of this kind of education that in the classroom."
 - "I'm a fisherman and a teacher but I learned a lot about both."

- Contacted a variety of target audiences including: MUCC's sportsmen's clubs located within the watershed, Muskegon Public Schools and Intermediate School District, MDNR District Biologists, and 4-H/Extension agents of counties within the watershed.
- Video/audio and print media press releases were prepared for marketing these teacher-training workshops.
- Brought the "Wet and Wild World of F.I.S.H." to the Outdoorama Sport and Travel Show- This 10 day cooperative educational exhibit between the MDNR, MUCC, MDEQ, and MSU Extension educated an estimated 8000 visitors about fish, fisheries management, human influences on our water ecosystems and fishing. Statewide audience and promotion.

March 2001

- Conducted educator training workshop for 29 participants in Lowell in cooperation with the Wege Whittenbach Agriscience Center and Muskegon Schools. Participants included teachers, curriculum superintendents, 4-H agents, boys and girl clubs, religious leaders, sportsmen, nature center staff and others. Those trained from the Muskegon River watershed area were charged with conducting a workshop in Muskegon for May 2001.
- Participants implemented materials in Muskegon Schools immediately following the workshop.
- Participants made Project FISH presentations to the Muskegon Public and Private school boards to promote the use of the materials in classrooms and the May workshop.
- All media type press releases were sent for future workshops.
- Evaluated workshop.

General comments about the program are as follows:

- This program is a "Diamond in the Rough." I wasn't sure about doing this but I'm glad I did.
- Great indoor activities and still cover fishing. Sometimes indoors is all we have.
- Lots of fun. Keep up the great work.
- I'm going to get involved in local groups to help teach more kids.
- I will use this programming for our camp program.
- I loved connecting with the people who are willing to share their expertise with me.



April 2001

- Conducted training workshop for 17 participants (all 4-H leaders, 1 DNR parks staff) at the Kettunen Center in Tustin. (Oceola County) This 4-H group from Saginaw went back and started a Fishing Club with 49 kids and parents joining and then held a Project FISH camp at the Kettunen Center in June.
- Worked with the MDNR Cadillac field office who provided fish for filleting.
- Special presentation by Childrens Charters about his fishing program with in the watershed.
- All media type press releases were sent for future workshops.
- Evaluation was conducted.

General comments about the program are as follows:

- Outstanding program! Everything was great.
- I'm an avid fisherman and I didn't know a lot of the stuff we learned.
- I'm going to love my new 4-H project.
- We'll need future training on this subject. There is so much to learn. Awesome!

May 2001

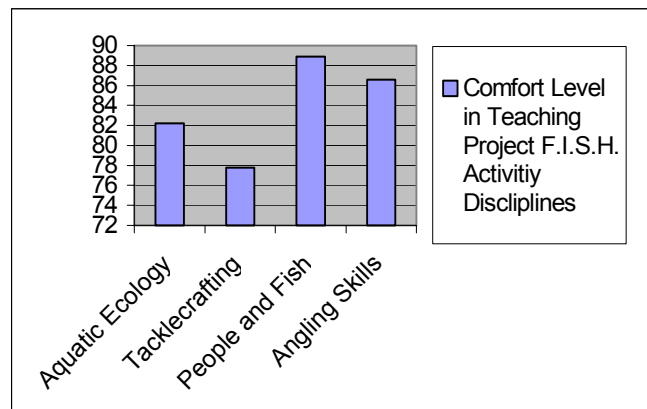
- Conducted training workshop for 23 participants that included GVSU staff teachers, 4-H leaders, sportsman club members, community organizations, school principals and others. This workshop was conducted by those trained at the March workshop.
- Held at the Annis Water Research Center, P.J. Hoffmaster State Park, Muskegon Area Math and Science Center, and Muskegon Conservation Club.
- Video news story went out immediately following the workshop.
- Evaluation was conducted.

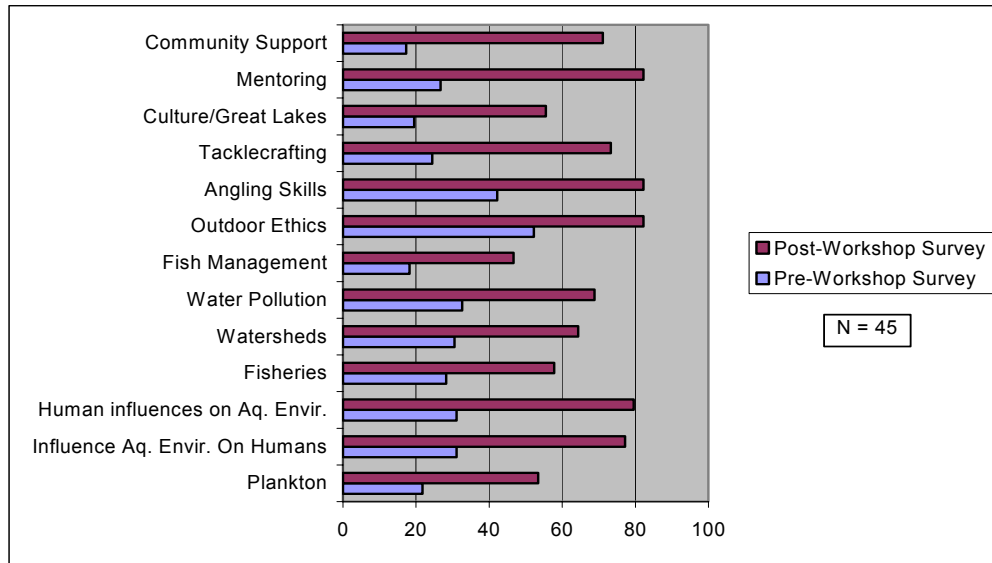
General comments about the program are as follows:

- One of the few available means of passing on sportfishing to the next generation.
 - Now I can teach my husband to fish!
 - I'll set up an entire year of programming in the fall!
 - I hope you get continued funding for this great program.
 - I'll use this next fall and plan a fishing trip for both fall and spring 2002.
 - I'm going to start a Project FISH club for the kids at school.
- Third annual Gander Mountain Project FISH camp was held at the Cedar Lake Camp in Chelsea MI. 57 kids from Warren School attend the three days natural resource based camp.

June 2001

- Youth participants and their families fished during Free Fishing Weekend at many events held by Project FISH mentors from around the state.
- Conducted a workshop at the Wolf Lake Visitors Center in Mattawan for 9 participants from the center, Grand Rapids, Hartford and Kalamazoo schools, Boy Scouts and Gander Mountain. Evaluation was conducted.
- Muskegon schools fishing outings to culminate the newly started program. 180 elementary kids participated at a local fishing pond.
- Intergenerational Elherhostl at the Kettenun Center in Tustin. 32 grandchildren and their grandparents participated in this 3 day training course.
- Participated in Outdoor Expo with a collaborative "Fishing Village" that included MDNR Fisheries, MDEQ, MUCC and MSU Extension. This three-day event provided hands-on experiences related to aquatic resources and fishing to nearly 7000 visitors. 560 kids fished after a basic casting lesson.





* This graph is a comparison of self-rated knowledge levels of the participants prior to and after the Project F.I.S.H. workshop. Dramatic increases were found in all categories but especially so in Human impact on the environment, Fisheries Management and community support for sportfishing programs.

Mid June, July, August 2001

- 120 youth from across the state participated in Project FISH activities on the MSU Campus through 4H Exploration Days. Activities included 2-day training classes in aquatic ecology, fishing, fly tying and fish decoy carving.
 - This class was a lot different than the usual stuff at Exploration Days
 - I made something that I can use for fishing
 - My instructor was fun and kept us interested
- Intergenerational Elherhostl at the Kettenun Center in Tustin. 32 grandchildren and their grandparents participated in this 3 day training course.
- Project FISH activities were highlighted at 4-H Great Lakes Natural Resources Camp

September, October, November, December 2001

- Outdoor Consumer Science Class was approved by the school board, and established at Hartford High School.
 - Our hope is that this class might steer our students toward a career along with a lifetime hobby.
- Conducted an Project FISH Workshop in Sault Ste. Marie MI. Nine participants from the local sportsman groups, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and school teachers attended a two day workshop at the local tribal recreation center, Chi Mukwa.
- Attempted to conduct a Newaygo/Mecosta (mid-watershed) county workshop but had to cancel due to very low registration. Reschedule for fall of 2002 or spring of 2003.
- Cancelled an additional workshop in Oceola County, the northern area of the Muskegon Watershed due to lack of registration. Reschedule for fall of 2002 or spring of 2003

- Met with Muskegon Public Schools, MSU 4H Youth Programs and the City of Muskegon to plan summer, after school programming, and family neighborhood fishing clubs. Community partnerships were established with these and Muskegon Sportfishing Association, Muskegon Conservation Club, and Grand Valley State University.
 - Muskegon County 4-H has partnered with the City of Muskegon and has started 21st Century after school programs. These programs are targeted at inner city youth in the area of outdoor education.
 - Michigan Anglers Association is setting up continued contact programs with the church community, scouts and 4-H.
- 567 kids participate in continuous contact programming in Muskegon, through school and after school fishing clubs.
- Conducted a Project FISH workshop in cooperation with Oakland/ Genesee County 4-H in North Oakland County MI. Twenty six (26) participants from Wayne Oakland and Genesee Counties attended this 4 night workshop. These included retired/active engineers wanting to learn fishing for their grandchildren, lawyers who were dads, 4-H volunteers, sportsmen club members, biologists and teachers.

General comments about the program are as follows:

- I've never fished before, now I look forward to it.
 - A great program presented in a fun and informative manner. The enthusiasm was infectious. One problem....my three kids went to U of M –am I out of the club?
 - Thinking about how helpful this will be with my grandchildren, I wish I knew this when I was younger.
- Began the process of youth evaluation by meeting with Gander Mountain Stores and national database/information management firm, Ancor, to discuss data tracking system throughout the state.
 - KATCH Grants were offered to local youth groups for on the ground habitat projects done by youth with partnership dollars from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Michigan 4H Foundation and Harold and Jean Glassen Foundation. Seven of the fifteen applications received are from Project FISH trained volunteers.
 - Over 40% of the Fishing Tackle Grants received from the Fisheries Division of the MDNR are Project FISH volunteers.
 - Project FISH Trainers were invited to the state of Missouri to teach 18 staff and volunteers from Missouri Extension 4-H, Missouri Fish and Game, Bass Pro staff members and local community volunteers. This workshop was a three-day event designed to rekindle their 4-H program. Feedback was extremely positive. This is an example of the success and reputation this program has encountered.



Nothing you do for a child is ever wastedGarrison Keeler



“Kids Are True Conservation Heroes!”



“Kids Are True Conservation Heroes!” by planning and accomplishing land and water related community service projects. The Michigan State University Department of Fisheries & Wildlife and the Michigan 4-H Foundation are sponsors of new grant opportunities starting fall 2001, called “Kids Are True Conservation Heroes,” K.A.T.C.H. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Harold and Jean Glassen Memorial Foundation and other donors to the Michigan 4-H Foundation are the funding sources for the K.A.T.C.H. grants. K.A.T.C.H. will give county 4-H clubs and other youth groups a boost by making available small grants to support fish and wildlife conservation projects in their local area.

As land use and suburban sprawl intensify, many youth today lack direct connections to land, water, fish and wildlife resources. Research has shown that knowledge of these resources, positive conservation attitudes, and stewardship practices will not grow unless individuals develop a strong, direct connection to these natural resources, especially during childhood. K.A.T.C.H. is a hands-on education and community service opportunity for youth. It will foster fisheries and wildlife stewardship and help kids develop into “True Conservation Heroes,” preparing them to be involved community members and future landowners.

4-H Clubs and other youth groups can plan local fisheries and wildlife conservation projects and apply through the MSU Department of Fisheries & Wildlife to receive a K.A.T.C.H. small grant, (\$300-\$1500). The KATCH coordinators are available to provide direction in the planning of the projects. The service project goals must be identified and explain how the project will positively impact land, water, fish or wildlife resources. The youth group may choose a conservation project to improve public lands, parks, school grounds, county 4-H fairgrounds, private lands, etc. The project must have community involvement from (i.e., professional staff of local offices and agencies, sportsman’s groups, service clubs, businesses or retailers). In addition, the project must include local donors for supplies and services and a plan of how the project will be publicized. Projects must be completed before October 1, 2002. The youth groups that participate in K.A.T.C.H. will receive recognition from the sponsors of K.A.T.C.H. for their community accomplishments.

K.A.T.C.H. small grant applications can be submitted beginning September 1, 2001 and ending May 1, 2002, on a revolving first-come, first-serve basis. The grant proposals will be quickly reviewed and a response provided shortly after the date the proposal is submitted. For application information contact Mark Stephens, MSU Department of Fisheries & Wildlife, 517-432-2700, steph143@msu.edu or Andrea Grix, Michigan 4-H Foundation/Kettunen Center, 231-829-3421, agrix@kettunencenter.org.

INTRODUCE KIDS TO REEL FUN WITH PROJECT FISH

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Educators and volunteers, even parents and grandparents, interested in teaching children how to fish and care for our water resources can attend a Project FISH (Friends Involved in Sportfishing Heritage) Workshop, Feb.12, 14, 19 and 21 at the Montcalm Community College Ionia Center in Ionia, Mich.

The workshop is designed to provide the participants with hands-on activities and lessons to get kids interested in fishing. You may even want to start a neighborhood family fishing club after attending this class.

Workshop participants learn about Michigan aquatic ecology, people and fish, tackle crafting and building angling skills. They will leave with curriculum activities, equipment, and access to supplies and resources to begin a successful fishing program with children.

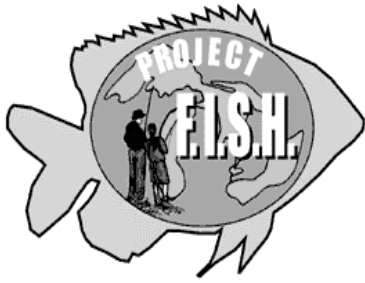
The program runs from 6 to 9 p.m. each day and costs \$50 to attend.

Project FISH is coordinated by Michigan State University's department of fisheries and wildlife, along with Ionia County MSU Extension, the Orleans Township board, Michigan United Conservation Clubs and Montcalm Community College. The workshop is also partially funded through the Great Lakes Fishery Trust and the Hal & Jean Glassen Memorial Foundation.

For information, contact Mark Stephens at 517-432-2700, or download registration material at www.projectfish.org. The registration deadline is Feb 8.

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Project F.I.S.H. Workshop



Springfield Oaks Activity Center
Oakland County 4H Fairgrounds
12451 Andersonville Rd. Davisburg MI

August 21st, 22nd , 23rd, 2001
5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. each night

Project FISH (Friends Involved in Sportfishing Heritage) invites teachers, educators and volunteers to three evenings of:

“Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education.”

Coordinated by Michigan State University’s, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Project FISH has partnered Oakland and Genessee County 4-H, Pontiac Neighborhood Initiatives – United Way, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, schools and community service organizations, to educate young people about our natural resources through “FISHING.”

This workshop will offer activities in Aquatic Ecology, Tackle Crafting, People and Fish Management and actual Angling Skills. ***“All activities are designed to the Michigan MEAP & DOE Frameworks.”*** Participants will come away with curriculum activities, equipment, even a fishing rod & reel, and access to supplies and resources to begin a successful fishing program/club with children. Workshop is partially funded through a grant from the **Great Lakes Fishery Trust and The Hal & Jean Glassen Memorial Foundation.**

Cost for the Workshop is only \$50.00

For registration information contact Mark Stephens at 517-432-2700. Registration Deadline is August 17th, 2001. Early registration will insure your participation, as space is limited.

Registration Material can be downloaded at www.projectfish.org