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Western Fisheries Research Center (WFRC)

Western Fisheries Science News

Jill Rolland became Center Director of Western Fisheries Research Center in September, 2012. Photo by Anson Eaglin, USDA

Western Fisheries Has a New Center Director

Last fall a new face joined Western Fisheries Research Center (WFRC). Or rather, a familiar face returned in a new role. On September 10th, 2012 Jill Rolland, formally a student at WRFC, returned as Center Director, bringing with her familiarity with the center and also a decade of experience in Washington D.C. with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Rolland identifies the strengths of WFRC as its people and its high caliber science. "Since the early part of the last century" she says, "this center has been respected as a source of unbiased science in support of fisheries, ecology and natural resources." As a result the center today enjoys an international reputation for cutting edge science, particularly in fish health. She adds that it would be naïve of her not to recognize the challenges that she faces as director, but notes that her experience at USDA gives her insights into the headquarters environment and the perspective of the current administration that she can draw on to solve problems in her new role.

Rolland admits that budget is at the top of her list of challenges. Even without sequestration, WFRC's budget would

Events

USGS Participates in STEM Program: On February 27th WFRC scientist, Dr. Jim Winton, gave an invited presentation to students in the Seattle Central Community College Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Program. Dr. Winton provided an overview of WFRC research, focusing on the fish health program, as part of a year-long series aimed to provide an opportunity to learn about careers in the STEM fields. For more information, contact Jim Winton at jwinton@usgs.gov; 206-526-6282 x 328.

USGS Hosts Visiting Scientists from Washington State University: On February 28th WFRC hosted visiting scientists from the Paul G. Allen School for Global Animal Health and the College of Veterinary Medicine at Washington State University. The researchers discussed future collaborative projects aimed at developing control strategies for emerging aquatic animal viruses. For more information, contact Maureen Purcell; mpurcell@usgs.gov; 206-526-6282 x 252.

USGS Hosts Students from the Multicultural Initiative in the Marine Sciences: On February 28th WFRC hosted undergraduate research students participating in the National Science Foundation funded "Multi-cultural Initiative in the Marine Sciences" undergraduate program at Western Washington University. The program is designed to increase diversity within the next generation of marine scientists. For more information, contact Jim Winton at jwinton@usgs.gov; 206-526-6282 x 328.

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prove tricky. Although many of WFRC's facilities are state of the art, some aging field stations, particularly in Cook, WA and on Marrowstone Island, WA are subjected to corrosion from salt water and require investments for renovation and maintenance. Another challenge is the center's need for succession planning. WFRC must attract and hire young scientists to carry on the tradition of excellence established by a large number of WRFC scientists who will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Rolland points out that along with challenges come opportunities for WFRC. Her five year plan for the center includes ensuring that WFRC's science is recognized outside of a close circle of partners and stakeholders. This will involve improving outreach regionally and nationally. It will also involve highlighting the fact that the Center's science encompasses more than fish health alone. Through strategic planning Rolland and others recently categorized the Center's science in three broad categories: 1. Aquatic animal health; 2. Restoration ecology; and 3. Drivers of ecosystem change.

In order to relax constraints imposed by the budget it will be important for the center to develop new partnerships. A first step will be communicating the Center's science and capacity. Rolland's time in D.C. taught her the value of public affairs. "We don't want to be shy, retiring scientists", she says, "we want to be on the forefront of people's minds". Distance from D.C. brings benefits and disadvantages for WFRC. The Center may not feel the burden of requests for rapid response from headquarters as often as centers closer to Reston. However, it may be easier for WFRC's excellent science to be overlooked.

Another component of Rolland's five year plan is to ensure that the six laboratories of WFRC bridge their geographic separation to act as a unified team. WRFC field stations are located in WA (Seattle, Marrowstone Island and Cook); OR (Newport and Klamath Falls); and NV (Reno). Rolland hopes that the Western Fisheries Science News monthly newsletter, of which this is the first issue, will be one mechanism to bridge the distance among field stations, headquarters, partners and stakeholder by sharing WFRC's current science developments. More details on Jill Rolland's professional background and appointment as Center Director and can be found here: http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3407 or contact Lisa Hayward at lhayward@usgs.gov; 206-526-6596.

New Publications

New Publications on Ballast Water: In a suite of invited publications just released in the latest issue of *Ecological Applications*, WFRC scientists and colleagues evaluated six existing approaches for treating ballast water discharge to avoid spreading invasive species. For more information, visit http://goo.gl/wfp5n or contact Debbie Reusser at 541-867-4045.

USGS Research Published on Juvenile Pacific Lamprey: WFRC scientists published a paper in *North American Journal of Fisheries Management* in which they identified MS-222 and BENZOAK as effective anesthetics for anesthetizing juvenile lampreys. Exposure to other drugs irritated juvenile lampreys excessively or anesthetized them too slowly and incompletely. For more information, visit http://goo.gl/swsEk or contact Helena Christiansen or Matt Mesa at 509-538-2299.

USGS Scientists Define Rainbow Trout Sex Chromosomes: In the latest issue of the *International Journal of Genomics*, researchers from WFRC and colleagues published their findings on the genomic regions of rainbow trout that control sex determination. For more information, visit http://goo.gl/UXHON or contact John Hansen at jhansen@usgs.gov; 206-526-6588.

Effectiveness of an Integrated Hatchery Program: In a recent publication of *The Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*, WFRC biologists and colleagues presented an evaluation of the performance of wild and hatchery crosses of Chinook salmon in hatchery and natural environments. For more information visit http://goo.gl/kgKRs or contact Mike Hayes at *mhayes@usgs.gov*; 206-526-6282.

Columbia River Food Webs and Nonnative American Shad: WFRC biologists report in *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society* that nonnative Shad eat a large portion of the available zooplankton and disrupt the native food web. For more information, visit http://goo.gl/lrSzs or contact Craig Haskell at chaskell@usgs.gov; 509-538-2299.

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