

Press release from: *The Friends of the Norfolk National Fish Hatchery*

Good News on the Funding for the Mitigation Hatcheries!!!!

Congress has approved the FY2012 Budget and it includes a total of \$7.2 million for the nine mitigation hatcheries which were defunded by the USFWS in their original budget request. According to the information submitted by Congressman Rick Crawford's office, "this funding is \$3.8 by Corps of Engineers (which they will in turn use to reimburse USFWS) and \$3.38 from USFWS. The ask was \$6.9m so this amount covers full funding plus the remainder and any additional funds from peripheral reimbursements will be for deferred maintenance."

This is really good news for the hatchery employees and all of those that depend on the Trout Hatcheries for their source of income. This is particularly good news for Baxter County and their economy which relies heavily on the trout fishing as a primary source of sales tax income. This took a tremendous effort on the part of the Arkansas Congressional Staffs to accomplish this change in funding given the current efforts to reduce all federal budgets. Congressman Rick Crawford, Senator Mark Pryor and Senator John Bozeman were tireless in their efforts to secure this funding for the Norfolk and Greers Ferry NFH. Unfortunately, this is not the end of the task. The funding that has been approved is for the year 2012 only and does not include any provisions for future funding for the coming years. There is still a lot of work to be done to secure future funds which will allow these important resources to exist without the annual threat of closure.

I have included the following parts of the HR 2055 funding bill. I hope that this announcement is received with the same excitement that I have. It has been a long and complicated struggle but the results were well worth the effort. I would like to thank everyone for the contributions each of you made to accomplish this outcome.

Best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season,

Leon Alexander – President



From the actual bill, Energy & Water:

DIVISION B

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012 SEC. 107. The Secretary of the Army may transfer to the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service may accept and expend, up to \$3,800,000 of funds provided in this title under the heading "Operation and Maintenance" to mitigate for fisheries lost due to Corps of Engineers projects.

From the conference report on Interior:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) – The FWS is funded at \$1.5 billion in the bill, a cut of \$28 million below last year's level. Funding for mitigation fish hatcheries is restored, which returns \$28 to the economy for every federal taxpayer dollar invested. Wolf monitoring and livestock loss programs are continued.

The Committee has restored the proposed \$3,388,000 shortfall in the budget for mitigation hatchery operations and critical supplies, with the understanding that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will reimburse the Service an amount of \$3,800,000 during fiscal year 2012, subject to appropriations. The Committee directs the Service to continue to seek reimbursement from the remaining agencies for mitigation hatchery operations, and to redirect any additional reimbursed funding to deferred maintenance.

The following links were provided for additional information regarding the FY2012 Budget.

In regards to the FY 2012 Final Consolidated Appropriations Bill, the House report is now available at

http://appropriations.house.gov/UploadedFiles/12_14_11_FY_12_Final_Bill_Detailed_Summary.pdf