

The Francis W. Palmer Research Center for Aquatic Resources

College of Agriculture, Purdue University

The Hatching of a Hatchery

- 1912 Bass Lake Business Men's Association wanted some fish ponds for Bass Lake
 - Frank Bay, Henry Behn, Tom Cleave, and P.J. Lavery solicit \$725 from locals
 - Buy 3 acres and dig 2 ponds
- 1913 P. J. Lavery leads the group to dig 2 more ponds.
- 1914 Fish & Game Dept. took over
 - P. J. Lavery appointed game warden and hatchery foremen
- 1919 1 ½ acres purchased and 4 more ponds built
- 1928
 - 2 ¼ acres donated by Robert J. Virtue
 - \$100 donated by Samuel B. Roberts
 - 5 acres were purchased
 - 6 more ponds built
 - Manager's residence and hatchery buildings built
 - Total acreage = 11.75 acres Total value = \$40,959
 - **Today: 14 acres**



Early 1940's (??)

Change is in the 'Water'

- Early 1960's
 - The Bass Lake Fish Hatchery becomes the Northwest Indiana District Headquarters for Fish Management.
 - A shift to management of public waters within 16 counties and less fish production
- 1986
 - Final production year (Conclude with short term research projects concentrating on Chinook Salmon and Lake Trout)
 - House unoccupied while the overall facility falls into state of neglect
- 1999 DNR ceased operating the hatchery as a District Headquarters

A Breath of Life

- 2005
 - ~10 acres of the Hatchery are transferred to Purdue University from the state of Indiana
 - The remaining 4 acres gifted by the Francis Palmer family.
 - The Palmer family and Purdue University share a vision of restoration
- 2005-2009
 - Property improvement and beautification
- 2010
 - Restoration of the house
 - Purdue staff on site
- 2013-2015
 - Hatchery building stabilization and "clean out"
 - Office space available
- 2017
 - Renovation of Ponds 3 & 4
- 2018....
 - Renovation of the hatchery building into a useful research and extension facility with office space, classroom, equipment storage,
 - Renovation of additional degraded ponds into replicated wetland sites and/or aquaculture ponds
 - Increased use for extension education programming
 - Renewed public appreciation for the "hatchery" site and a greater understanding of the value of aquatic resources.