



## Working to Increase Angling Opportunities and Community Environmental Awareness

**Fiscal Years  
2008 - 2009  
Biennial Summary**

*The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Section of Fisheries initiated the Fishing in the Neighborhood (FiN) program in 2001 to direct more management attention at resources that provide shorefishing opportunities in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. The FiN program has helped connect an increasingly urbanized society with the outdoors. Adding shorefishing sites provides a tangible connection to local resources and fosters environmental stewardship through partnerships with local park staff, teachers, clubs, anglers and others. The benefits are numerous and varied, and have gone a long way towards bringing fishing to where people live. This report details accomplishments of the FiN program in fiscal years 2008 and 2009 and sets the direction for the next biennium.*



### Objective 1

Add or enhance ten shorefishing sites by June 30, 2009.

### Accomplishment

FiN enhanced or created six new shorefishing opportunities in 2008 and 2009 (Table 1). This is the first time since 2001 that the FiN program has not exceeded this objective. The primary reason this objective was not met is that considerably more effort was spent on other objectives, particularly Objectives 4 and 5. This reflects a change in program direction to focus more on recruitment of participants and less on a “build it and they will come” strategy. This will continue to be the program direction in the next biennium, so this objective is accordingly reduced to five sites for the 2010/2011 biennium.

In addition to the biennial accomplishments listed in Table 1, FiN stocked over 79,000 fish into local lakes and ponds. FiN also expanded its partnership with recreation centers offering loaner tackle to the public and groups. A total of 27 centers were participating in the program at the end of the 2008/2009 biennium.

*Table 1: Improvements in Twin Cities shorefishing opportunities by the FiN program in fiscal years 2008 and 2009*

Improvement	FY 2008	FY 2009	Biennium Total
Fishing Pier		Jordan Mill Pond (Jordan)	2
		Wakefield (Maplewood)	
Shorefishing Structure	Casey (North St. Paul)	Simley (Inver Grove Heights)	2
New Pond	Casey (North St. Paul)	Westwood (St. Louis Park)	2

## Objective 2

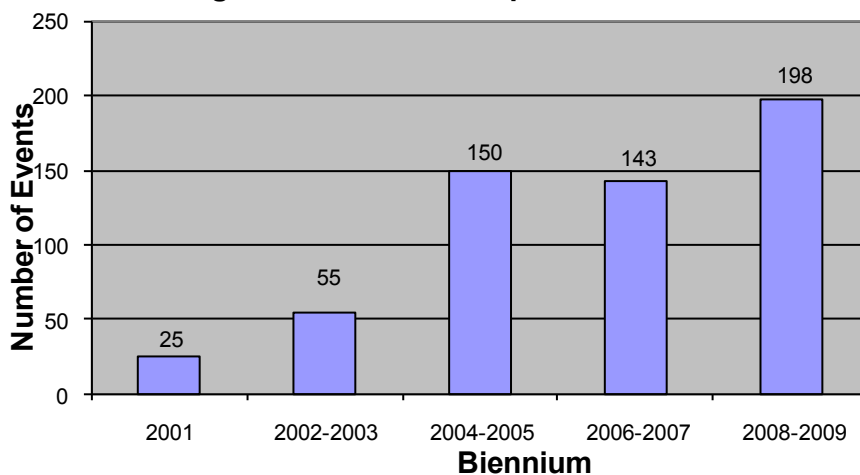
Meet with 60 schools groups, learning centers, or other environmental education organizations by June 30, 2009.

## Accomplishment

FiN staff participated in nearly 200 events during the 2008 and 2009 fiscal years (Figure 1). These events were typically organized by schools, nature centers, youth organizations, Park & Recreation agencies, underserved communities, or special needs groups. FiN participation generally focused on providing information on fish identification, places to fish in the metro area, angling instruction, and fish ecology. This objective is increased to 200 events for the 2010/2011 biennium.



Figure 1. Number of Aquatic Education Events

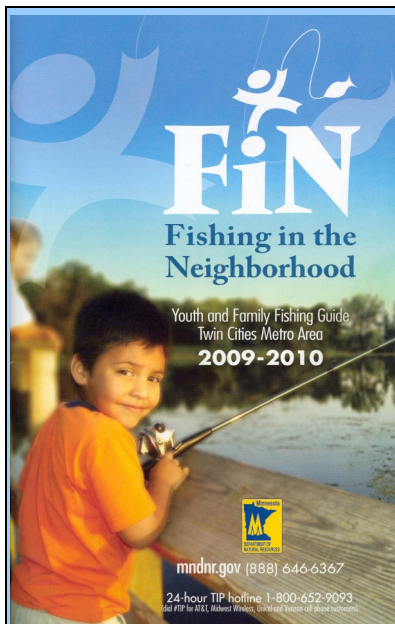


## Objective 3

Enhance habitat at four sites by June 30, 2009.

## Accomplishment

The FiN Program conducted two shoreline restoration projects in fiscal years 2008 and 2009. As was the case for Objective 1, this is the first time this objective was not met since the FiN program began in 2001. Shoreline habitat projects are time intensive and were cut back to make time for work on objectives that better serve current program direction. This objective is reduced to two sites for the 2010/2011 biennium.



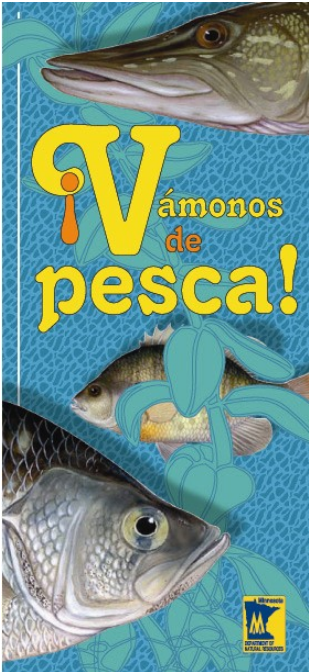
## FiN Highlight

The FiN program released a new full-color Youth and Family Fishing Guide in 2009. The 52-page booklet gives anglers full details on 62 lakes managed by the FiN program. It is a vast improvement over the two-page listing of lakes that had previously been available. The booklet provides a half-page of information on each lake - including a map with directions, photos, fish species, lake depth, park amenities, and a brief description of the lake.

The booklets have been distributed through the DNR Info Center, the Minnesota State Fair, and dozens of local events—including the 2009 Governor's Fishing Opener. Over 9,000 were distributed in the first year. This is up from the previous annual high (see Figure 2). This excellent new product will help get even more people out enjoying our outdoors!

**Objective 4**

Demographics of anglers in the seven-county metro region will approximate overall regional demographics by 2011. This is an ongoing objective.



**Accomplishment**

During the 2008/2009 fiscal year much of the work was focused on the Minnesota Latino community. Meetings were held with a number of organizations active in the Latino community to help refine key messages. Using the information gathered from those meetings, as well as the results of focus groups conducted in 2006, a two-page brochure titled ¡Vámonos de pesca! The brochure gives basic information on license requirements, places to fish, and fish consumption. Distribution began in 2009 (most successful distribution point was the Minnesota State Fair) and will be expanded in 2010. Also to be held in 2010 are three fishing events with the Twin Cities Latino community.



*FiN at the 2009 Cinco de Mayo Festival in St. Paul.*

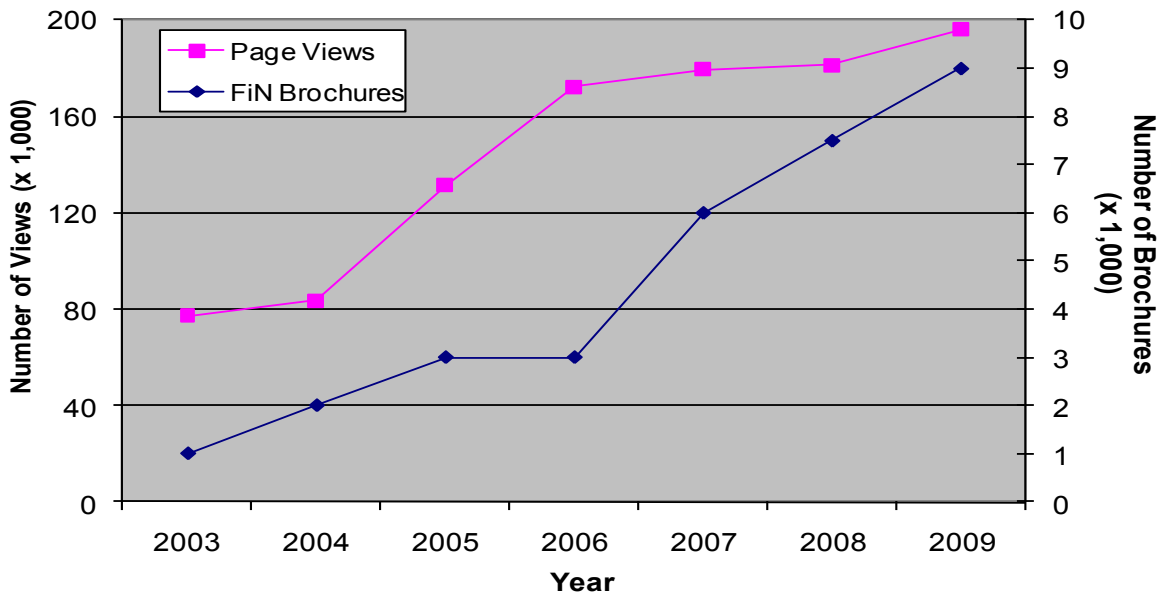
**Objective 5**

Promote the FiN Program to increase awareness and participation by utilizing 15 community-based communication channels by June 30, 2009.

**Accomplishment**

The FiN program made over 50 communication efforts during fiscal years 2008 and 2009. Two primary examples are FiN webpage views and FiN brochure distribution. FiN webpages received 181,280 views in 2008 and 196,825 views in 2009. The number of FiN brochures given away also increased (Figure 2). This objective will remain the same for the 2010/2011 biennium.

**Figure 2. Annual Number of FiN Brochures Distributed and Number of FiN Webpage Views**



*"My name is Mary. I'm calling on behalf of my son. He caught one of those bluegills from the lake on 65<sup>th</sup> Street. It was a big one. Boy, it was beautiful. It was one of the biggest bluegills I've ever seen. If you could call us back we'd love to learn more about the program and what was specific about that fish. Thanks so much. What a cool program. It really gets kids into it. My son is beside himself."*

**Objective 6**

Evaluate the FiN Program by June 2009 and revise objectives for the fiscal year 2010 and 2011. Program evaluation is ongoing.

**Accomplishment**

Specific evaluation tools used during the biennium were surveys, angler tag returns, and tracking monthly web activity. The results of the angler tag return project showed that large bluegill management efforts are generally successful and well received by anglers. The comments of one angler provide an excellent caption to the photo below. FiN is also conducting an ongoing evaluation of channel catfish stocking.



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For more information, please contact one of the FiN program coordinators:

West Metro  
Mark Nemeth  
9925 Valley View Rd.  
Eden Prairie, MN  
55344  
(952) 826-6764  
mark.nemeth@state.mn.us

Counties  
Carver  
Hennepin  
Scott

East Metro  
Rick Walsh  
1200 Warner Rd.  
St. Paul, MN 55106  
(651) 259-5819  
rick.walsh@state.mn.us

Counties  
Anoka  
Dakota  
Ramsey  
Washington

Department of  
Natural Resource  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040  
(651) 296-6157 (Metro Area)  
1-888-MINNDNR (646-6367)  
M(MN Toll Free)  
[www.mndnr.gov](http://www.mndnr.gov)  
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**THE FiN PROGRAM:** is funded by the Heritage Enhancement Account and receives approximately \$100,000 per biennium to cover costs beyond salaries. Through partnerships with communities, FiN leveraged an additional \$45,000. This combined with \$55,000 from other DNR sources, resulted in over \$200,000 of project spending in the 2008/2009 biennium.

**Summary:** The FiN program focused on outreach, promotion, and responding to demographic changes during this biennium. Focusing on these objectives however, resulted in failure to meet habitat restoration and shorefishing improvement objectives for the first time in program existence. This is an intentional shift in program priority and future objectives reflect this shift. **Plans for the next biennium** focus on continued efforts to develop angling interest and environmental stewardship among underserved communities in the metro region. Specific objectives are detailed throughout this report. FiN is also working on extensive website enhancements to help promote the program and meet peoples' expectations for ready access to information when planning outdoor activities.



*A happy angler at Powers Lake*

