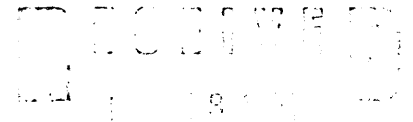


1832

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lansing Fisheries Building
other names/site number Lansing Fish Hatchery/Lansing Fish Rescue Station

2. Location

street & number bet. Co. Hwy. X-52 and Mississippi River, south Lansing
city, town Lansing
state Iowa code IA county Allamakee code 005 zip code 52151

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal, building(s), district, site, structure, object, and resource counts for contributing and noncontributing.

Name of related multiple property listing: The Conservation Movement in Iowa, 1857-1942
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: David [unclear]
Date: 10/31/91
State Historical Society of Iowa

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[checked] entered in the National Register.
[] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register. [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain:)
Entered in the National Register
Signature of the Keeper: Guy M. Lapsley
Date of Action: 12/23/91

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/fisheries station

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting
hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/utilitarian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls drop siding

roof asbestos shingle

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Section 7: Physical Description

The Lansing fisheries building is a large, wooden structure of utilitarian design. It is two stories high with an additional full-story attic. The main body is rectangular, measuring 64'8" x 20'3", with a one-story addition on the north measuring 13'8" x 16'4". Agency records and published accounts variously report an original construction date of either 1915 or 1917. Old photographs indicate that the addition was constructed sometime between 1926 and 1940; the documentary record does not provide a more precise date. The building has a north-south orientation, paralleling County Highway X-52. It is situated between the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific railroad tracks on the west and the Mississippi River on the east. Because it is built into a steep slope above the river, the building appears to be only one-story high from the highway, but the full height is revealed on the river (east) side.

The building is simple in its design and construction. The exterior walls are covered with drop siding. A medium pitch hipped roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and its shallow overhang has exposed rafters. Two dormers are centered along the roofline; one on the west side of the building, the other on the east side. Dormer windows provide some natural lighting for the attic story. A tall brick exterior chimney rises from the northeast corner of the main building; at one time the entire chimney stack was exposed, but the north addition now encloses the lower part of this feature. On the east side, a short flight of wooden steps leads to a wooden deck on the basement level; a longer flight of open wooden steps continues from the deck to a pass door at the main level. These features appear to be relatively recent replacements, but older photographs confirm the presence of open wooden steps and deck landings on this side of the building.

The major changes to the building exterior have been the windows and doors, and most of the windows replacements appear have been prior to 1940, thus the building retains a high degree of historical integrity. Present fenestration is a mixture of wood-sash window types, with horizontal three-light awning windows predominating, although there is one modern aluminum sliding window on the west side. A 1926 photograph indicates that the original fenestration consisted of mainly of small 2/2 light wood-sash windows, sometimes grouped into ribbons of four. It is unknown when the windows were changed, but since horizontal awning windows appear in the north addition, it is plausible that windows were altered as part of that construction. There are five pass doors in the building: two along the west side, two along the east, and one on the north end. Three of these openings have modern replacement doors with

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flush surfaces. The south passageway on the west side is hung with an older type five-panel wooden door. A flight of concrete steps on the north side of the building descends to a four-panel wooden door on the north addition.

The interior retains very little equipment to suggest its long-time use as a fisheries building. All of the tanks, jars, and other hatchery equipment were removed after the building was leased to the Lansing Veterans' of Foreign Wars in 1984. The only historic features of note that remain in the building are wooden map files and cabinets on the main level, which have been surfaced for use as a countertop, and a bank of wooden lockers in the basement.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Conservation

Period of Significance

c. 1915-1942

Significant Dates

c. 1915-1942

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Iowa State Fish and Game Warden

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Iowa Bureau of Historic Preservation

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .2 acres

UTM References

A

1	5	6	4	4	7	9	0	4	8	0	2	2	0	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Conard
organization PHR Associates date _____
street & number 275 Crescent Park Drive telephone 712/657-3347
city or town Lake View state IA zip code 51450

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*Section 8: Statement of Significance**Summary Statement*

The Lansing Fisheries Building is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the fish conservation work carried out under the direction of the State Fish and Game Warden (after 1931 the Iowa Fish and Game Commission, and after 1935 the State Conservation Commission.) From the turn of the century until about 1940, the fish conservation program in Iowa consisted of restrictive laws coupled with fish rescue, captive breeding, and restocking. All three of the latter operations were carried out at Lansing. In this regard, the structure reflects the earlier philosophy of wildlife conservation which placed greater emphasis on species propagation and relatively less emphasis on habitat protection and wildlife ecology, as discussed in subsection II of Section E, "Wildlife Conservation."

Criterion A

The Lansing area was associated with fish rescue work long before a permanent facility was erected on the shores of the Mississippi River. Iowa's first Fish Commissioner, B.F. Shaw, is credited with originating the idea of "rescuing" fish trapped in Mississippi River backwaters, where, in the natural course of events, they either suffocated as the ponds evaporated or froze to death in shallow waters during the winter. Rescued fish were transported inland to stock streams and lakes or redeposited in the Mississippi River. Fish rescue work reportedly began in about 1876 and continued until about 1940. The extensive Mississippi River civil works program carried out by the Army Corps of Engineers during the late 1930s and early 1940s, which included a nine-foot navigation channel and a series of locks and dams, prevented the annual spring floods which trapped fish in backwaters and therefore eliminated the opportunity for fish rescue on the big river. Until then, however, fish rescue formed a major component of the state's fish conservation program, and Lansing was a principal work site. Even after the state abandoned fish rescue work on the Mississippi River, such efforts continued on inland rivers.

One of the reasons that Lansing was selected as a fish rescue site appears to have been easy access to both the river and to a railroad line. Topographically, the land is relatively flat next to the river in this area, and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad Line tracks run within 100 feet of the shoreline. Railroads were an important component of fish rescue work

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because they provided the only feasible means of transporting fragile cargo safely and quickly throughout the state. Special fish cars were equipped with aquarium tanks, and the various railroad companies operating in Iowa agreed to haul these cars to designated stops for a nominal fee. During stocking operations, generally carried out between April and November, a game warden would meet the train at the fish car stop along the line. Fish were transferred from the aquariums to stock tanks loaded on farm wagons. Wagon drivers then transported the fish to the stocking point of some lake or stream.

The most famous of these fish cars was Hawkeye No. 2, acquired in 1913 and outfitted with 20 steel tanks, eight berths, an office, and a galley. Hawkeye No. 2 remained in service until 1933, when the Fish and Game Department switched to motorized stock trucks. Lansing was one of two major state facilities along the Mississippi River associated with fish rescue work, the other being the fisheries building at Sabula. Typically, the fish train originated at one of these two locations, and facilities erected at both were located adjacent to railroad tracks.

When the Lansing facility was constructed, its primary functions were to serve as a base for fish rescue work and as a fish hatchery. The Mississippi River provided much of the brood fish, and an artesian well provided even-temperature water for egg incubation. During the 1917-1918 biennial reporting period, approximately 800,000 buffalo fish and 100,000 black suckers were stocked in the Mississippi River from Lansing. In addition, about 125,000 trout from the hatchery were stocked in the trout streams of northeastern Allamakee, Clayton, and Winneshiek counties – streams which also supplied the brood fish. In the mid-1920s, trout hatching was transferred entirely to the Backbone Trout Hatchery near Strawberry Point, a larger facility erected expressly for this purpose (see NRHP registration form for Backbone State Park).

During the same biennial period, over 50 million fish were rescued from the Mississippi River by personnel stationed at Lansing, which gives some idea of the importance of fish rescue work in the context of overall operations at that time. A 1920 description of rescue operations carried out by the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, which by then had been conducting them along the Mississippi River for at least a decade, provides some insight into the nature of this work. Rescue crews generally numbered about six individuals, who traveled to and from the "field" in a launch. Fish were trapped and taken from ponds and backwaters using large seines, then transferred to galvanized iron tubs with dipnets. In ponds too deep for wading, crews worked from flat-bottomed boats. After a haul had been made, fish were sorted in tubs by species and

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size. Then they were taken to a holding station where they were "hardened" for several days in cool running water before being loaded on train cars for distribution to stocking points.

During the 1930s, the Lansing fisheries building took on a new function as headquarters for all fish management activities in eastern Iowa. Fish and Game Warden W.E. Albert, Jr. established an office at Lansing from which he supervised fisheries projects assigned to WPA and CCC crews. Later, Tom Moen supervised the management of cold-water streams in northeast Iowa from the Lansing station. These activities are related to the gradual shift toward a more scientific conservation program which included research and habitat protection while maintaining fish hatching and restocking programs. Official reports issued during the 1930s indicate that many species were distributed from Lansing, including large-mouth bass, small-mouth bass, Warmouth bass, silver bass, yellow bullheads, black bullheads, catfish, black crappie, white crappie, bluegill, pike, perch, pickerel, shiners, and sturgeon.

The Lansing fisheries building is one of few remaining structures associated with state fisheries conservation work in Iowa. Fish hatcheries erected at Anamosa, Spirit Lake, and Backbone State Park have been razed. Another older fisheries building at Clear Lake has been substantially remodeled. Fish rearing ponds and trout raceways can still be found in the state, but most of them are abandoned structures with little integrity. The fisheries station at Sabula is also extant, but of the two the Lansing building retains much better historical integrity on the exterior. The interiors of both buildings have been stripped of equipment, such as tanks and hatching jars. In addition, the boats, houseboats, nets, distribution trucks, and other outdoor equipment associated with the Lansing building have been reallocated to other facilities or disposed of in some other fashion. Hawkeye No. 2, the fish car which took on cargo at Lansing, as well as Sabula, from 1913 to 1933, was sold for scrap metal during World War II.

At one time, the facilities at Lansing also included a cabin and fish rearing ponds located on an island in the Mississippi River. Presumably, these were constructed at or about the same time as the fisheries building, although no documentation has yet been discovered to verify this assumption. In any case, the cabin first served as staff housing until the Army Corps of Engineers' work on the river submerged the rearing ponds; after that the cabin was used as an informal retreat for departmental officials. In 1946, the State Conservation Commission sold the island, and the cabin is no longer standing.

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Although the activities which followed 1942 are not cited for inclusion in the statement of significance under this context, they nonetheless warrant mention. Rescue work ended sometime in the early 1940s, but Lansing continued to function as an important hatchery and fisheries management station. Northern pike were hatched at Lansing from 1946 until 1974, when the program was transferred to Guttenberg. During this 28-year period, all northern stocked in Iowa waters originated from Lansing. In 1967, muskellunge eggs were incubated successfully for the first time in Iowa at Lansing. In addition to hatchery and restocking activities, personnel stationed at Lansing also assisted with stream improvements work and maintenance of fishing access areas in northeastern Iowa.

During the early 1970s, the State Conservation Commission initiated major changes in its fisheries program. Operations were consolidated at three facilities acquired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, located at Fairport, Manchester, and Guttenberg. Lansing functioned as a satellite office for Guttenberg for a few years, but was finally closed in the late 1970s. The building was leased in 1981 to Luther College in Decorah for use as an onsite laboratory; then in 1984, it was leased to the Lansing chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. All of the equipment was removed when the building was converted for use as a meeting hall.

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Section 9: Bibliography

John Spinner, "Lansing Hatchery ...a passing era," *Iowa Conservationist* 34:6 (June 1975).

"A Pioneer Passes," *Iowa Conservationist* 3:9 (September 15, 1944): 72.

"Lansing Hatchery," undated (prior to 1974) information sheet prepared by the Iowa State Conservation Commission.

B.F. Culler, "Fish Rescue Operations," *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society* 50 (September 20-22, 1920): 247-50.

Minutes, State Conservation Commission, 1932-1985.

Published reports of the State Conservation Commission for the biennium periods ending June 30, 1936 and June 30, 1938.

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Section 10: Geographical Data

Boundary Description: The Lansing Fisheries Building sits on a parcel .2 acres bounded by the Mississippi River on the east and County Highway X-52 and the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad on the west as shown on the map below. A privately owned parcel is located north of the fisheries site, and the railroad right-of-way continues south of the property.

Boundary Justification: The boundaries follow the legal property boundaries.

