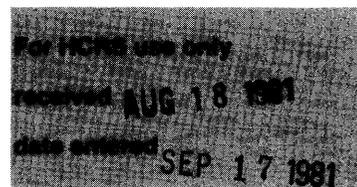


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic U.S. Fish Control Laboratory

and/or common La Crosse Area Convention and Visitor Bureau

2. Location

street & number Riverside Park (P. O. Box 1895) _____ not for publication

city, town La Crosse _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district Third

state Wisconsin code 55 county La Crosse code 063

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Tourism

4. Owner of Property

name City of La Crosse; Patrick T. Zielke, Mayor

street & number City Hall

city, town La Crosse _____ vicinity of _____ state Wisconsin 54601

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. La Crosse County Courthouse

street & number 400 North Fourth Street

city, town La Crosse _____ state Wisconsin 54601

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison _____ state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The former U.S. Fish Control Lab is located in Riverside Park in the city of La Crosse, Wisconsin, just south of the juncture of the Mississippi, La Crosse, and Black Rivers. The west side of a long elliptical drive serving the park and facility follows the shore of the Mississippi; the lab is situated at the north end, facing south. The park is formally landscaped, with drives and walks defining flower beds, trees, and shrubs. The site includes an associated one-story brick garage (1924) with double overhead doors, to the northeast of the lab building; a newer garage and holding house southeast of the lab is not included in the nomination. Fish ponds and a large holding pond, filled in when a larger lab was constructed elsewhere in the city in 1978, are no longer evident.

The fish lab building is a rectangular, two-story structure of reinforced concrete with brown-red brick veneer. A hipped, red pantile roof covers the central portion of the building, differentiated from short wings at the east and west ends by a shallow projection. Stories are defined by projecting brick courses. Fenestration is regular; windows are composed of large rectangular areas of glass brick with small square operable vents (first story) or larger rectangular hoppers (second story). A formal entry, centered on the front facade, is composed of glazed double doors with large glass brick transom enclosed by wood Doric columns supporting a full entablature. Two chimney pots on the roof are centered at the ends of the short ridge.

Inside, the plan of both floors is symmetrical. Presently, the La Crosse Area Visitors and Convention Bureau office occupies the one large room in the short east wing. The large center portion of the plan still holds the original fish tanks. Service rooms (boiler room, restrooms, and storage) line the north and west walls. Rooms to the south of the central east-west hall on the second story are former offices. A bedroom, kitchen and restroom, and equipment room lie to the north. The director's office in the east wing is panelled in knotty pine; otherwise, walls are plaster over concrete. Floors are covered in tile or carpet.

The La Crosse Area Visitors and Convention Center, who took over the building after a newer fish lab was constructed, plans to use the lab spaces for displays depicting the history of the city and its commerce with the Mississippi.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
Specific dates	1924 ¹	Builder/Architect	Unknown ²	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fish Control Laboratory is eligible for listing in the National Register because of its critical role in the conservation of food fish populations as the nation's center of research for control of the lamprey eel as well as its longer term role in the maintenance of fish and mussel populations in certain inland waters of the United States.

The Fish Control Laboratory at La Crosse is historically significant as the only facility of its kind in the United States. In its earlier years, beginning when it was activated in 1907 as a sub-station of the Manchester, Iowa station, and continuing until the construction of the nominated building in 1924, its principal function was the rescue of fish from overflowed lands along the Mississippi River and distribution of those fish to other areas to provide increased fishing opportunities. This was a seasonal operation. About 1916 it became operational on a year round basis and the station started culturing both warmwater and coldwater fishes in addition to the rescue operations.³ In 1924 and after, the building housed the additional important function of "infecting" rescued fish with the glochidia (parasitic larval forms) of commercial species of mussels before distributing the fish, in order to maintain valuable mussel populations in certain waters.⁴

"...the station was transferred to Fishery Research in June 1959 and officially became known as the Fish Control Laboratory at La Crosse in October 1962."⁵ In its new capacity it undertook the critical responsibility of conducting studies for the development of a safe means of control of the lamprey eel which, beginning in the 1950s, threatened to destroy both the food fish populations and the commercial fishing industry on the western Great Lakes. In this connection it was responsible for all environmental and mammalian safety studies needed to control the sea lamprey problem in the United States.⁶ The Fish control laboratory was replaced in 1978 by a new facility in La Crosse, the National Fishing Research Laboratory.⁷

Although the building lacks sufficient distinction for nomination on architectural grounds, the effort to incorporate character into the design of the facility deserves mention. With the warm texture of its brick walls, columned entry, regular fenestration, and pantile hipped roof, the Fish Lab has the pleasant character of NeoGeorgian Period style common in the 1920s through the 1940s.

1. Propagation and Distribution of Fisheries, US Bureau of Fisheries, Washington, D. C., 1925, 1927, 1930.
2. At time of nomination preparation in spring, 1981, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service records pertaining to construction of the building could not be located for consultation. It is likely that the Service's Region 3 Engineering Office and/or the City of La Crosse have copies of records, but neither could locate the material.
3. Memorandum, Stevens to Pulliam, March 12, 1981
4. Propagation and Distribution of Food Fishes, 1924, 1927 (1?)
5. Stevens to Pulliam, March 12, 1981
6. Meyer to Waldsmith
7. Stevens to Pulliam, March 12, 1981

9. Major Bibliographical References

Memorandum, Robert E. Stevens to James W. Pulliam, Jr., U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington, March 12, 1981
 U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, Propagation and Distribution of Food Fishes, Washington, 1924, 1927, 1930
 Information related to Mary Waldsmith by Fred P. Meyer, Director, National Fishing Research Laboratory, La Crosse, Wisconsin

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one
 Quadrangle name La Crescent, Minn.,-Wis.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale: 62,500

UMT References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

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 Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property shall consist of a square one hundred fifty feet by one hundred fifty feet, centered on the midpoint of the building.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Donald N. Anderson, Historian & Registrar
Diane H. Filipowicz, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date May 1981

street & number 816 State Street telephone 608/262-0746 (DNA)
608/262-1339 (DHF)

city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Richard Mery

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 7/30/81

For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register <u>Shelvia Byers</u> Keeper of the National Register	Entered in the National Register date <u>9/17/81</u>
Attest: Chief of Registration	date

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

U. S. FISH LAB, La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisc.

For HCRS use only
received AUG 18 1981
date entered SEP 17 1981

Continuation sheet

Item number 11.

Page 1.

FORM PREPARED BY

Research Assistance By: Mary Wildsmith, Project Coordinator
La Crosse Area Convention and Visitor Bureau
P. O. Box 1895, Riverside Park
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601

May, 1981
608/782-2366