

**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

For HCERS use only

received AUG 18 1981

date entered SEP 17 1981

## 1. Name

historic U.S. Fish Control Laboratory

and/or common La Crosse Area Convention and Visitor Bureau

## 2. Location

street &amp; number Riverside Park (P. O. Box 1895) \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private           | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                   | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both              | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress             | <input type="checkbox"/> educational               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                  | <b>Accessible</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process        | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted              | <input type="checkbox"/> government                |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial                |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> no                           | <input type="checkbox"/> military                  |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                    |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> park                      |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence         |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> religious                 |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation            |
|   |  |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Tourism |

## 4. Owner of Property

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

street &amp; 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 &amp; 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  nodate 1981 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 53706

## 7. Description

**Condition**  
 excellent     deteriorated  
 good     ruins  
 fair     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/<br>humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799        | <input type="checkbox"/> art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering             | <input type="checkbox"/> music                  | <input type="checkbox"/> theater                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899        | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement  | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy             | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> industry                | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government    | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)         |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> invention               |   |  |

Specific dates 1924<sup>1</sup> Builder/Architect ~~Unknown~~<sup>2</sup> Otto Merman

### 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

"...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."<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> The Fish control laboratory was replaced in 1978 by a new facility in La Crosse, the National Fishing Research Laboratory.<sup>7</sup>

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

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

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale: 62,500

UMT References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

A 

|      |   |   |   |         |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 5 | 6 | 4 | 0       | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4        | 8 | 5 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Zone |   |   |   | Easting |   |   |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

B 

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C 

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

D 

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

E 

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

F 

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

G 

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

H 

|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### 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 Merney

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  
Delores Byer Entered in the National Register date 9/17/81  
Keeper of the National Register  
Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief of Registration

**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.

4  
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



DUE after 9/16/81 dnr-3 10/2/81

Name U.S. Fish Control Laboratory  
 State, County WI, La Crosse Fed Nom/Request-Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
 Working Number 8.18.81.305 Federal Register Date 2.2.82

Nomination  
 Determination of Eligibility  
 On Nomination Form

Bldg(s)  
 Site  
 Object  
 Structure  
 District

Within:  
 Multiple Resource Area  
 Thematic Group

Maps 1  
 Photos 1

Nomination prepared by:  
 State Staff  
 Local  
 Other

Entered in the  
 Action: **National Register**  
 ACCEPT 9/17/81  
 RETURN \_\_\_\_\_  
 REJECT \_\_\_\_\_

Check if Appropriate:  
 State Request for Review  
 Keeper's Decision to Review  
 2nd Return

I. Evaluation of Resource (cont. on back if necessary)

II. Evaluation of Nomination

|  | Good | Adequate | Poor | Comments |
|--|------|----------|------|----------|
| 1. Descriptive Statement<br>Short Format <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  |      |          |      |          |
| 2. Significance Statement<br>Short Format <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |      |          |      |          |
| 3. Concepts/Integrity  |      |          |      |          |
| 4. Concepts/Criteria   |      |          |      |          |
| 5. Concepts/Boundaries   |      |          |      |          |
| 6. Contextual Evaluation   |      |          |      |          |

General Comments (cont. on back if necessary):

Reviewer/Date \_\_\_\_\_

See Attached \_\_\_\_\_

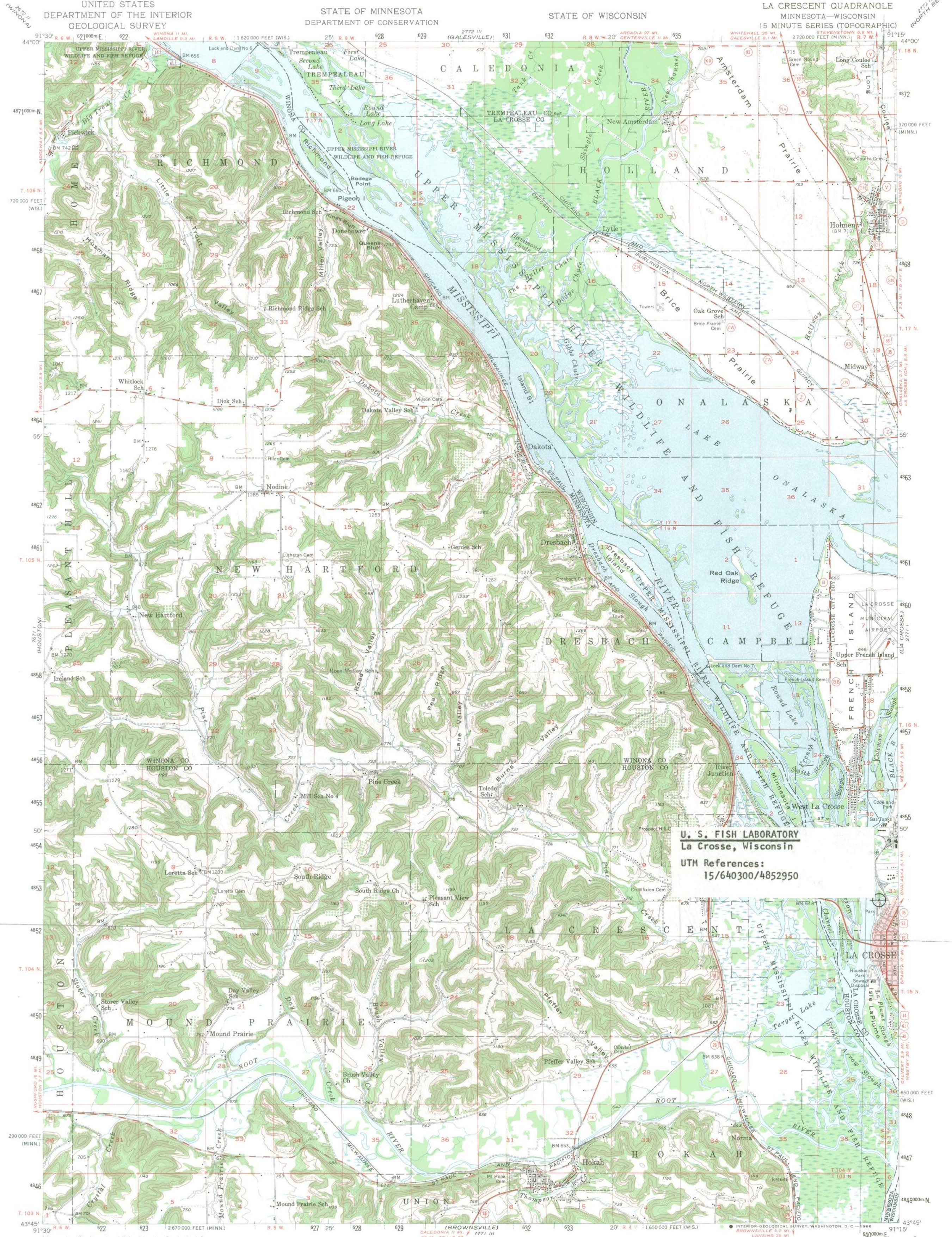


U. S. Fish Control Laboratory,  
Riverside Park, La Crosse, La  
Crosse County, Wis. Photo by Wm.  
Green, June 1981. Neg. at State  
Historical Society of Wis. South  
elevation. Photo #1 of 1

AUG 18 1981



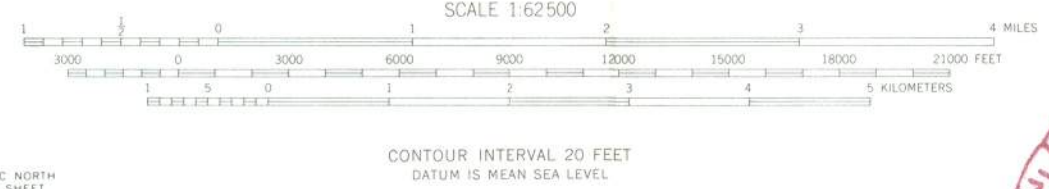
La Crosse



**U. S. FISH LABORATORY**  
La Crosse, Wisconsin

UTM References:  
15/640300/4852950

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with State agencies of Wisconsin and Minnesota  
Control by USGS and USC&GS, and USCE  
Topography of Wisconsin area by planetable surveys 1926-1927  
Revised 1956  
Topography of Minnesota area from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods. Aerial photographs taken 1952  
Field check 1956  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grids based on Minnesota coordinate system, south zone and Wisconsin coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -  
U. S. Route ——— State Route ———

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
AND BY THE WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY, MADISON 6, WISCONSIN  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



LA CRESCENT, MINN.—WIS.  
N4345—W9115/15  
1956  
AMS 7771 IV—SERIES V772

SEP 17 1981



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      WISCONSIN

Date Entered      SEP 17 1981

| <u>Name</u>                   | <u>Location</u>                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| U. S. Fish Control Laboratory | La Crosse<br>La Crosse County    |
| Round Lake Logging Dam        | Fifield vicinity<br>Price County |

Also Notified

Honorable William Proxmire

Honorable Robert W. Kasten, Jr.  
Honorable Steven Gunderson  
Honorable David R. Obey  
Dr. Janet Friedman,  
U. S. Forest Service  
Midwest Region, NPS

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Richard A. Erney  
Director, State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
816 State Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

NR      Eady/ts/9-23-81

For further information, please call the National Register at (202) ~~243-6401~~.

272-3504