

SUBJECT: Request naming an 1897 building at the Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery the "R.D. Pike Building"

FOR: APRIL 2011 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY / TITLE: Michael Staggs, Bureau of Fisheries Management Director

SUMMARY:

The Department requests that the building at the entrance of the Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery in Bayfield be named the "R.D. Pike Building."

Robinson Derling (R.D.) Pike and his family owned and operated a private fish hatchery in Bayfield in the late 1800's. In 1895, R.D. Pike offered the land and facilities to the Wisconsin Fisheries Commission with a contingency that if the State stopped rearing fish for the public the land would revert back to the family, showing his commitment to conservation and fishing in Wisconsin.

The first structure seen upon arrival at the Les Voigt Hatchery is the brownstone building that was built in 1897. It is currently listed as a National Historic Building and has thousands of onlookers every year. Still in use today, it provides supplemental fish rearing space. There is great interest in restoring and maintaining this building. With the R.D. Pike name dedication, many local groups, including the Bayfield County Historical Society and the Bayfield Heritage Association, Inc., have expressed an interest in a "friends group" that would assist in obtaining funds to restore and maintain the building and grounds.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve naming an 1897 building at the Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery the "R.D. Pike Building"

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- No Fiscal Estimate Required
- No Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required
- No Background Memo

- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached

APPROVED:

Michael Staggs
Bureau Director

[Signature]
Administrator

[Signature]
Secretary, Cathy Stepp

2-23-2011
Date

3/7/11
Date

4/11/11
Date

cc: NRB Liaison
DNR Rules Coordinator

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 23, 2011

TO: Natural Resources Board

FROM: Secretary Stepp

SUBJECT: Naming an 1897 building at the Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery as the "R.D. Pike Building"

The Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery in Bayfield raises lake trout, splake trout, and brown trout for stocking in Lake Superior and many inland lakes and streams throughout Wisconsin. Restoration of the native lake trout in Lake Superior and the enhancement of sport fishing opportunities, including production of splake and browns for Lake Superior and lake trout from a captive brood for inland waters, are priorities for the hatchery. Production numbers vary from year to year. Hatchery operations were updated with the construction of modern buildings in 1974. The newer building holds 34 fish-rearing tanks and an educational exhibit area. Visitors to Les Voigt Hatchery can stop at the large and elaborate visitor's center that contains a 3,500 gallon aquarium and also watch hatchery operations firsthand from a viewing area. During the spring, visitors may witness spawning steelhead jumping at Red Dam on Pike's Creek. This spectacular site is within walking distance from the hatchery.

The Department's Operations Supervisor at the Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery, Darren Miller, is a member of the Bayfield County Historical Society. He found during research that a private fish hatchery was owned and operated at the state hatchery location by Elisha Pike and his son Robinson Derling (R.D.) Pike from the mid-1860's until 1895. The Pike family operated the hatchery facility in order to rehabilitate the fish population in Lake Superior, which some thought was being overharvested. In 1895, R.D. Pike offered the land and facilities to the Wisconsin Fisheries Commission with a contingency that if the State stopped rearing fish for the public the land would revert back to the family, showing his commitment to conservation and fishing in Wisconsin.

The Pike family was also instrumental in the establishment and growth of the City of Bayfield. In addition to the hatchery, Mr. Pike developed quarries and a logging operation, set up the first telephone service and bank in Bayfield, and led a local militia. He also assisted in mapping the road system in the Bayfield area.

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The Department wishes to recognize R.D. Pike because without the donation of the land and facilities from the Pike family, the Les Voigt Hatchery would not be operating in Bayfield today. Dedication of the 1897 brownstone building at the entrance of the hatchery will commemorate R.D. Pike's significant contribution to the Department. Members of R.D. Pike's family, including his great-great-grandson Robinson Drake Pike, will be returning to Bayfield in July, 2011, to participate in the dedication of the

Pike Research Center at the Bayfield Heritage Center, a museum that offers interpretive exhibits, tours, educational programming, and informational services. At that time, they could also help to commemorate the naming of the hatchery building.

Attached to this memo are photos of the building and letters from the Bayfield Heritage Association, Inc., and a representative of the R.D. Pike family, Robinson Drake Pike, in support of this proposal to name the brownstone building at the Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery the "R.D. Pike Building."



Bayfield Heritage Association, Inc.

30 North Broad Street P.O. Box 137 Bayfield, Wisconsin 54814



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Website: www.bayfieldheritage.org

1/18/2011

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bureau Director Fishery Management
Mr. Michael Staggs
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI—53707-7921

Dear Mr. Staggs,

On behalf of Bayfield Heritage Association (BHA) and our two-hundred fifty members, we support the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources effort to designate the name *R.D. Pike Building* to the former Superintendent's and rearing building located at Les Voight Hatchery. BHA commends the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), yourself, and Hatchery Superintendent- Mr. Darren Miller for initiation of this process.

A generous land donation and primitive rearing facility offered to the old Wisconsin Conservation Commission by the Robinson Derling Pike family for the purpose of establishing a fish hatchery in Northern Wisconsin was consummated in 1895-96. For these contributions, BHA feels it is appropriate that this pioneer Bayfielder's name be commemorated.

From Bayfield Historian-Eleanor Knight who states the following in an article in the Bayfield County Press devoted to Capt. R.D. Pike circa 1956, "*although Currie Bell got a lot of the credit for getting the fish hatchery to Bayfield, and rightly so, Capt. R.D. Pike's generosity played a role behind the scenes. He and his father had a private fish hatchery on Pikes Creek. You might have thought that Capt. Pike would enjoy his hatchery and private trout stream but when Currie Bell saw a chance to get a state fish hatchery here if the proper land could be found, Capt. Pike was all for it. He immediately donated between two and three hundred acres of his valuable meadowlands at Pikes Bay, including part of Pike's Creek. Col. Isaac Wing and William Knight donated land adjoining it, and some land was purchased from Wright & Ketchum, C.P. Rudd, and the Moore estate. Capt. Pike helped to entertain the State Fish Commissioners when they came to inspect the site. Then, with the rest of Bayfield, Pike settled down to wait for their decision, as Eau Claire, La Crosse, Superior and other towns were offering every inducement for the prize. When words came that the fish hatchery was to be built at the fine site at Pike's Creek, Capt. Pike was so thrilled that not trusting the news services of the Ashland Press, he just had to call them and ask, "Have you heard the good news? They had, and they printed it".*

Please note that BHA is a non-profit organization established in 1977 dedicated to the broad mission of promoting the preservation, enhancement and appreciation of the rich historic and cultural resources and peoples within the greater Bayfield, Wisconsin and Chequamegon Bay area. We are an affiliate of the State of Wisconsin Historical Society and charter member of the Bayfield County Historical Society.

Should BHA assistance be of value to further this cause, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jerry Philips
President- Bayfield Historical Association

Cc: Superintendent Les Voight Hatchery- Mr. Darren Miller

*Robinson Drake Pike
Flat E5, Pine Court
5 Old Peak Road
Hong Kong
drakepike@yahoo.com*

February 14, 2011

Mr. Darren Miller, Operations Supervisor
Les Voigt and Brule Hatcheries
c/o Les Voigt Hatchery
141 South Third Street, Bayfield, WI 54814
USA

Dear Darren:

As a representative of the Pike family, I write this letter in firm support of your excellent proposal to re-name the 1897 brownstone building at the Les Voigt Hatchery in honor of my great-grandfather, Robinson Derling Pike, who originally donated it to the State of Wisconsin. R. D. Pike was present at the founding of Bayfield. He was 17 at the time, and his father, Elisha—my great-great-grandfather—was one of Bayfield's founders.

The Pike family has always had a warm attachment both to Bayfield and particularly to the old brownstone hatchery. My grandfather, Robinson Drake Pike for whom I am named, was born there and, in his later years, sent congratulatory telegrams to the town upon the occasion of its 100th anniversary printed in the newspaper and arranged for the magnificent family plot in the local cemetery. My father, Robert Spaulding Pike, visited frequently in the 1970's. I came to Bayfield in 2006 to speak as family representative upon the occasion of Bayfield's sesquicentennial celebration and have visited since then, together with numerous family members. Every time we visit, my family and I always admire the brownstone hatchery, built along lines similar to the old Pike mansion (now the Pinehurst Inn) on the hill which overlooks the hatchery.

I will be returning to Bayfield this July together with nine other family members to participate in the dedication of the Pike Research Center at the Bayfield Heritage Association, now being constructed with the help of a \$75,000 donation I made to the BHA. I retain R.D. Pike's civil war sword, the gold-topped can he gave to his father, and a copy of his illustrious civil war record with the 1st Michigan Cavalry including being present at Vicksburg, the Battle of the Wilderness, and Appomattox.

R.D. was a great benefactor of Bayfield. He employed hundreds. In addition to his hatchery, i.e. the brownstone building, he developed quarries, had a large logging

operation, set up the first telephone service as well as Bayfield's first bank, and led a local militia. To this day R. D. Pike is well known in Bayfield. He is a major part of Bayfield's history.

I very much hope that the State of Wisconsin will agree to name the brownstone hatchery in honor of my great-grandfather. It would mean much to my family. And, since it was R.D who donated the hatchery to the State in the first place, it seems right and proper to name it after him. I also hope that the name change can occur by the time I visit Bayfield this July 9th with my family for the Pike Research Center dedication.

Please feel free to pass this letter along to the appropriate Wisconsin authorities and do kindly contact me if I can be of any further assistance. On behalf of the Pike family I sincerely thank you for all the support, time and effort you have put into this excellent proposal.

With my warm personal regards,



R. Drake Pike





