



Fisheries Management Section of the American Fisheries Society

SIUC Fisheries and
Illinois Aquaculture
Center

Spring 2007

3/21/2007

President's Message by Joe Larscheid

A hearty hello to all. Before I begin my inaugural presidential message I must apologize for the tardiness of this newsletter. It has been a hectic sampling season and it was difficult to devote time to developing our newsletter.

First I would like to thank all the efforts of the past officers of our section. Our immediate past president, Dave Willis (SD) left our section in great shape, with many successful ongoing and completed projects. Dave will continue on the executive committee for the next two years and his advice and counsel are always welcome (and greatly appreciated). Dirk Miller (WY) completed two full terms as our secretary/treasurer from 2003-2004 and 2005-2006. Thanks to Dirk our books are in great shape. Fred Janssen (TX) has long served as our web site manager. Fred does a great job up-dating our section activities and recently completed an overhaul of our website. Our website is top-notch with lots of current and past activities of our section (check it out at <http://www.sdafs.org/fmsafs/>). Finally, Rob Colombo (IL) continues as our newsletter editor. This is Rob's third term as newsletter editor and his efforts are greatly appreciated! Please consider submitting any article or updates on management activities in your area for our newsletter (send them to: rcolombo@siu.edu). Lots of other people have contributed significantly to our section this past year, and you will find updates of their activities later in the newsletter.



Throughout this newsletter are updates of our activities as a section, which are many. Also included is an essay by Don Bonneau (IA) regarding traditional and more holistic approaches to lake and reservoir management.

Last November I was honored to represent our section and the society at the 37th annual Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) conference at Minehead, England. The theme for this conference was "Fisheries & Conservation – success and failures. The theme for this conference was "Fisheries & Conservation – success and failures (for more information <http://www.ifm.org.uk/>)." I was invited to this conference as part of the officer exchange program with our society and the IFM. This was a great adventure and an excellent meeting. I gave the Keynote address at the start of the conference and was also given the honor of delivering the first toast at the formal dinner on the last night of the conference.

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Special points of interest:

- New Edition of Inland Fisheries Management in the works
- Carline and Hubert Honored
- Clean Water Act and Lake Management
- Survey of Fish Aging Procedures



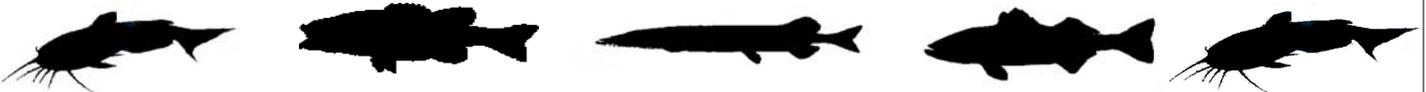
Presidents Message (cont.)

The IFM conference was typical of our fisheries conferences ... 2 ½ days of talks and lots of networking between the talks and at scheduled breaks. I made lots of contacts, and potentially some new friends. They were wonderful hosts. Most of the issues they dealt with at this conference were similar to the problems we confront on our shores. In fact, I could have taken the entire slate of talks from the IFM conference and included them at our annual AFS meeting and most folks not have noticed these were all issues from the United Kingdom (of course the study area slides would give it away).



Throughout this newsletter are updates of our activities as a section, which are many. Also included is an essay by Don Bonneau (IA) regarding traditional and more holistic approaches to lake and reservoir management. Don makes the point that traditional approaches (such as stocking, regulations, etc.) are not always sufficient to properly manage fisheries for the long-term. I agree. More efforts should be taken to fix problems, such as ailing watersheds, rather than mitigate around problems by stocking more fish or implementing more restrictive regulations. For this type of approach to work we need to motivate and foster new partnerships with all groups interested in water quality and healthy fisheries. Along these lines I would like to propose the idea of a joint symposium with the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) and AFS. The intent of this symposium will be to bring together lake and fisheries managers to discuss joint projects and ways we can work together on common problems. An example of a joint initiative that would benefit both groups would be the reauthorization of the Clean Lakes Program.

The Fisheries Management Section is also currently seeking nominations for its three awards. Please go to our website for more information on these awards (<http://www.sdafs.org/fmsafs/stuff/awards.htm>). The application deadline for these awards is 31 May (but this is usually extended). Send nominations (letter outlining the accomplishments of the individual/organization that meet the qualifications of each award) to Ron Essig, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035, ron_essig@fws.gov.



Inland Fisheries Management in North America,

The first and second editions of *Inland Fisheries Management in North America*, edited by Chris Kohler and Wayne Hubert, were widely adopted as texts for introductory fisheries management courses at universities and became "best sellers" among the books published by the American Fisheries Society. The second edition was published in 1999 and is quickly becoming outdated, so plans are being laid to produce a third edition in the near future. Wayne Hubert and Michael Quist have agreed to serve as editors of this edition. As with the first two editions, this will be a joint project by the Education and Fisheries

"The second edition was published in 1999 and is quickly becoming outdated, so plans are being laid to produce a third edition in the near future."

Management sections. Hubert and Quist recently assessed two options for funding the project. One option involved the sections paying for the production costs and sharing equally in half of the net revenue from the book. The second option is the current standard for production of books in which the AFS covers production costs. After publication, the supporting section(s) receive 7% of total sales minus fulfillment costs until production and development costs are recovered, then the section(s) receive 10% of total sales minus fulfillment costs. The assessment indicated that it was financially advantageous to the sections to adopt the second option. The editors have asked that each section support the project with a \$5,000 contribution for a graphic artist to prepare figures in a common format among all

chapters. This contribution will be discussed and voted upon at the 2007 annual meeting of the sections. In the meantime, the editors are proceeding with the establishment of a steering committee to assist in the development of the book structure and identify potential chapter authors. They anticipate that the writing process by authors will be initiated in the spring 2007 and hope for publication in 2009.





FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SECTION- BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Sunday September 10, 2006, 3:00 PM, Olympic 2 Room, Crowne Plaza, Lake Placid, NY
48 members in attendance (documented)

Welcome and Announcements (Dave Willis)

- Call to Order 3:10 p.m.
- “Welcome to Lake Placid” (Doug Stang)
- Summary of governing board meeting (Chris Kohler)
 - Announcement of new journal for marine and estuary science
 - Estimated meeting attendance ~ 2,000
 - Encouraged members to attend the plenary session

Acknowledgement of current and previous officers (several in attendance)

Approval of minutes from 2005 Annual Meeting (Anchorage)

- Posted on website

No discussion, minutes approved

Review and Approval of Financial Report (Dave Willis for Dirk Miller)

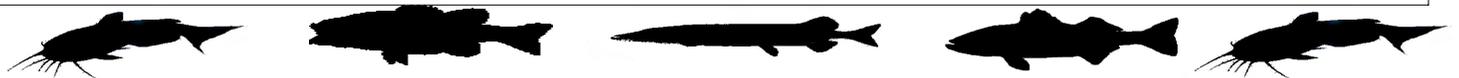
- Jack Wingate- Motion, Brad Parsons- Second
- No discussion

Motion Passed

OLD BUSINESS

President’s remarks

- Very appreciative and thankful for the many volunteers in FMS
- Wayne Hubert, Inland Fisheries Management
- Fred Janssen, FMS Webmaster
- Rob Colombo, Newsletter Editor
- Many others





Business Meeting (cont.)—FMS Awards

FMS Awards

- Hall of Excellence inductees (plaques will hang in the FMS Hall of Excellence at the Ak-sar-ben Aquarium in Gretna, NE)
- **Dr. Robert Carline** received the sections highest honor. Dr. Carline has an extensive record of research activities in fisheries management, a wide breadth of fisheries experience, has received many awards, and has given extensive service to AFS at all levels. Dr. Carline was present to receive the award and graciously thanked the many colleagues and students that worked with him during his career.
- **Dr. Wayne Hubert** was also inducted into the FMS Hall of Excellence. Dr. Hubert also has very broad experience in fisheries management and ecology, native species conservation, salmonid ecology, habitat, and fisheries assessment. Dr. Hubert also has many editorial accomplishments and has greatly advanced fisheries management and education. Dr. Hubert graciously accepted the award and also thanked many previous colleagues and 84 (WOW!) previous graduate students.
- Conservation Achievement Awards.
 - Great Lakes Fish Commission received an award for significant contribution to fisheries management in the Great Lakes. The GLFC was formed in 1955 under a binational treaty. The GLFC strives to facilitate basin-wide management and research activities and control sea lampreys in the great lakes basin. Gerry Barnhart graciously accepted the award and thanked the many cooperators and partners in the GLFC.
 - The Missouri River Natural Resources Committee also received a Conservation Achievement Award for significant contribution to fisheries conservation along the Missouri River. The MRNRC consists of multiple partners with the common goal of bringing science to management issues surrounding the Missouri River. The award will be presented at the annual MRNRC meeting.
- Award of Excellence
 - Jerry Rasmussen received the FMS Award of Excellence for his work in the science and management of large rivers. Jerry has served as the Coordinator/Executive Secretary of the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association (MICRA) since 1991 and worked to coordinate management efforts among the diverse MICRA group. Jerry graciously accepted the award and thanked the many cooperators.
- Award of Merit
 - Fred Janssen received the Award of Merit for his 10 years of service as web-site developer and webmaster for the FMS. Fred has made great strides to make the FMS website a user-friendly tool for FMS.
- Recognition of outgoing officers (Willis)
 - Randy Jackson, NE Division Representative; Robert Limbird, Southern Division Representative; Mark Poth, NC Division Representative; Dave Zafft, Western Division Representative; Dirk Miller, Secretary-Treasurer.

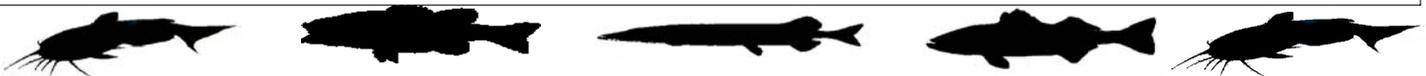


Dr. Robert Carline—2006 Hall of Excellence Inductee



Dr. Wayne Hubert—2006 Hall of Excellence Inductee

Dr. Carline's and Dr. Hubert's received the sections highest honor. Their Plaques will be on display in the Ak-sar-ben Aquarium in Gretna, NE.





Business Meeting (cont.)— Updates

FMS Web Page (Janssen)

Continues with Changes and Updates.

FMS Newsletter (Willis for Colombo)

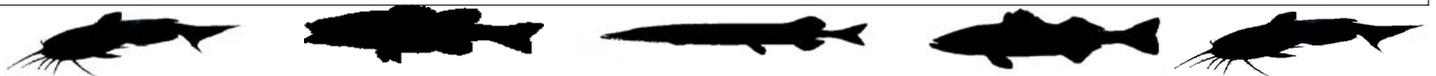
No reports, all seems well.

Committee Reports

- Fisheries Techniques Standardization Committee (Scott Bonar)
 - 48 authors involved, 9 agencies, international representation.
 - Working on 3rd draft of outlines.
 - Under review by many.
 - Request for data coming soon (relative weights, length-frequencies, etc.).
 - In cooperation with data request from Mike Quist.
- Growth Standards (Bonar for Quist)
 - Bonar discussed data needs and cooperation.
- Assessment of Fish Aging Techniques (Willis for Maceina)
 - Willis provided overview and background.
 - Reported that the literature review and surveys are complete.
 - Project progressing well.
- Revision of Standard Weights (Hubert)
 - Gave history and development of problem, including cooperation with Ken Gerow (U of Wyoming Statistician).
 - Wayne is the Chair of an *Ad hoc* committee to proactively revise the equations based on appropriate statistical methods.
 - Requested volunteers to assist with work
 - Question was asked regarding overlap with the Fisheries Techniques Standardization Book.
 - Authors responded that there was no perceived overlap/conflict between the two endeavors.
- Inland Fisheries Management in North America, 3rd addition update (Hubert).
 - 2nd edition was published in 1999. Time for update.
 - Chris Kohler declined to edit 3rd edition.
 - Wayne will manage editorial duties and announced that Mike Quist will serve as co-editor (pending approval by Education Section).



3rd edition of Inland Fisheries Management in North America is in the initial stages with Dr. Hubert and Dr. Quist as editors.



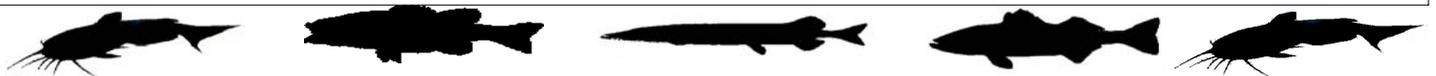


Business Meeting (cont.)—New Officers

- Burbot Symposium II (Vaughn Paragamian)
 - 13 Authors
 - Should be ready next summer/fall.
 - Still trying to sell copies of Burbot Symposium I.
- Student Participation in FMS (Willis)
 - Originally wanted to know if student participation has increased since changes to dues structure.
 - Currently have 706 total members, of which 105 are students.
 - Can not compare with historical numbers because member data was lost during the infamous server crash.
 - Will continue to monitor and report.
- Nominating Committee Report/Election Results (Willis)
 - President-Elect — Ron Essig
 - Secretary-Treasurer — Brian Graeb
 - Regional Representatives:
 - NCD — Patrick Hanchin
 - NED — Catherine Martin
 - SD — Brian Van Zee
 - WD — Carter Cruse
- Willis graciously thanked folks for volunteering to be officers.
- FMS/FAS exchange program with the Institute of Fisheries Management (United Kingdom) (Larscheid)
 - Gary Saul (FAS) participated in the IFM meeting in Manchester during 2005.
 - Joe Larscheid will participate during in the IFM during 2006.
 - Iam Winfield was present from IFM and expressed gratitude for the exchange program.

“Thanks to Dr. Willis and the many other volunteers for their support and many accomplishments for the FMS.”

Installation of New Officers



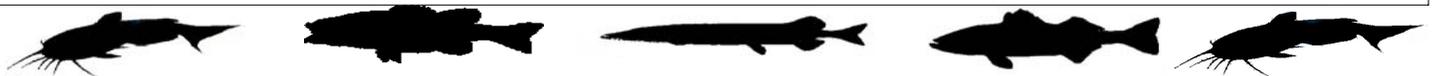


Buisness Meeting (Cont) — New Business

New Business

- Incoming presidents remarks (Larscheid)
 - Very excited about upcoming year.
 - Lots of activism and lots to do.
- Review of Funding Requests (Willis Update)
 - Generally positive response from members via email discussion,
- 4th National Reservoir Symposium (Fred Hietman)
 - Overview of symposium
 - Requested \$5,000 for publication costs
 - Motion- Wayne Hubert, 2nd- Brian Murphy
 - No Discussion
 - Motion Passed
- 2007 Urban Fishing Symposium
 - Overview of Symposium, requested \$2,000
 - Book published 2008
 - Motion-Dan Gablehouse, 2nd- Steve Eder (????))
 - No discussion, motion passed
- Other funding requests were handled by the Excom as per FMS operating procedures regarding requests of \$500 or less.
 - Equal opportunity section travel award is now a line item in FMS annual budget. (\$500)
 - National Fish Habitat Action Plan Workshop (\$500)
 - Fisheries Database Summit II (Supports NFHI; \$500)
- Coordination with North American Lake Management Association (Larscheid)
 - Joe forwarded the idea of the FMS co-sponsoring a symposium at an upcoming NALMS meeting. The intent of the symposium will be to bring together lake and fisheries managers to discuss joint projects and ways we can work together on common problems. An example of a joint initiative that would benefit both groups would be the reauthorization of the Clean Lakes Program.
 - Discussion
 - Tie in with NFHAP
 - Perhaps we should establish reps between societies
 - Efforts to bridge gaps between FMS and NALMS should be pursued
 - FMS should set up a booth at the Annual NALMS meeting
 - Generally positive response regarding the FMS/NALMS symposia

Motion to adjourn made by Mark Porath, Brian Van Zee 2nd, Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.





Lake and Reservoir Fishing – An Opportunity for Improvement

By Don Bonneau

Fisheries Research Supervisor

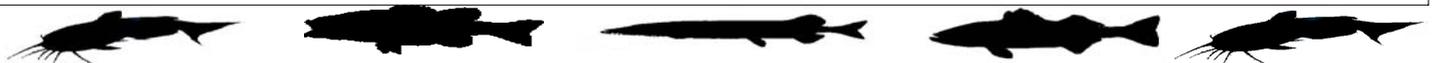
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

The new buzz among those involved in sport fishing, including those of us in state fish and wildlife agencies is concern about trends in angler participation and the need to introduce new individuals to the sport. Data collected as a result of computerized license sales generated these concerns and have greatly benefited our understanding of those purchasing fishing licenses. This same information has resulted in a greater emphasis on casual anglers and what can be done to motivate this very large group to spend more time fishing.

Critical to our efforts to expand the sport is recognition of those water bodies important to people. The latest National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation highlighted the value of lakes and reservoirs to the angling public. Excluding the Great Lakes, freshwater anglers fished a total of 443 million days during 2001 and over 70% of those days were spent fishing lakes and reservoirs. Obviously these habitats are very important to people and a preferred place of fish. This, and the fact that the vast majority of fishing trips occur within 25 miles of home, demonstrates the critical value of each lake and reservoir to our efforts to expand fishing opportunity and days spent fishing.

Excluding the Great Lakes, freshwater anglers fished a total of 443 million days during 2001 and over 70% of those days were spent fishing lakes and reservoirs.

Our own angler surveys also documented the importance of lakes and reservoirs to the public but we found fishing quality enjoyed by anglers was often below expectations and responded very little to our efforts to make needed improvements. This problem was solved with a more complete assessment of environmental factors important to fish. These assessments took a holistic approach that included the watershed, water quality and the fish community.





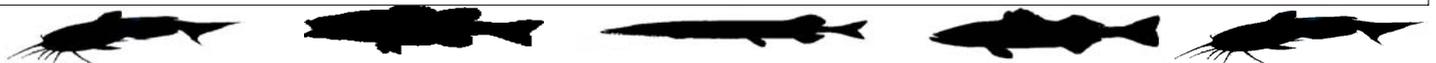
Lakes and Reservoir Fishing (cont.)

As a result, we learned much about natural resource management, people and critical issues impacting fish and fishing in our Iowa landscape. We also learned factors critical to quality fish communities and lake and reservoir fishing are often not under our control. In these cases, traditional approaches to fish management such as stocking and regulation of angler harvest did not produce the desired fishery. The end result was continuation of poor fishing and a decrease in overall lake use. Our reputation as the fish experts suffered and, worse yet, we spent a great deal of time and money with little benefit to either fish or fishing.

So what was the problem? Why did some lakes and reservoirs not respond to traditional approaches common to fish management and what was done to improve these fisheries? We found our failure to improve fish communities in these lakes and reservoirs was in our approach to the problem of poor fishing. It concentrated management on the fish and fishermen and gave little thought to the system as a whole and how the parts of that system function as a working unit. As a result, we changed our approach and developed a more comprehensive database and now accept the fact that lakes and reservoirs, along with their watersheds, are living, breathing systems, subject to many influences beyond the control of fish managers. The learning curve was slow but the new approach has built needed partnerships and greatly benefited the landscape, water quality and fishing. And due to the development of success stories, the approach now enjoys strong support from both the public and anglers.

“Factors critical to quality fish communities are often not under our control, and traditional approaches such as stocking and regulation of angler harvest may not improve these fisheries.”

This comprehensive approach to lake and reservoir management started in the late 1970's as the result of a partnership with EPA and funding made available through Section 314 of the Clean Water Act. This section of the Act is referred to as The Clean Lakes Program and is the only program that specifically targets the special needs of lakes and reservoirs.





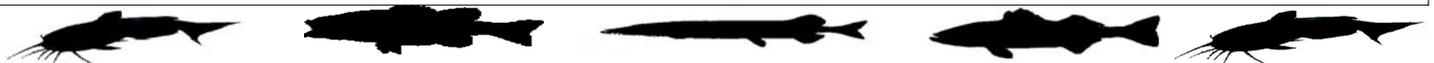
Lakes and Reservoir Fishing (cont.)

The importance of the Clean Lakes Program is supported by the results of U.S. EPA's national assessment report on water quality published in 2000. Data was reported on 43% of the total lake and reservoir acreage in the U.S. and 55% of those acres were assessed as "impaired for designated uses", uses such as swimming and fishing. The results of lake assessments in Iowa are consistent with those reported for the U.S., with about half of our lakes assessed as impaired. These "impairments" gain even greater significance when we factor in lake and reservoir location relative to population centers. Our degraded lakes and reservoirs are often associated with the higher densities of people and potential anglers.

Why is the Clean Lakes Program a successful model for the management of lakes and reservoirs? The answer is in its comprehensive approach, an approach that fosters local involvement in problem identification and solution – the philosophy that local problems require local solutions. The program provides guidance and financial support to assess the status of significant publicly-owned lakes and reservoirs. It also supports identification of the causes of impairments and assists in the identification of innovative and cost effective ways to repair damage done to lakes and reservoirs, including their watersheds. The program also provides cost share funds to protect and repair these systems and monitor the results of costly construction projects.

"The Clean Lakes Program was a successful model for the management of lakes and reservoirs, but has not received separate funding since 1994."

Iowa's lake and reservoir protection and restoration efforts are modeled after EPA's Clean Lakes Program. Efforts address in-lake, as well as, watershed issues and success is measured in terms of improved lake water quality, improvements to the fishery and increase in lake use. Federal funding for this program ended in 1994; however, Iowa continued the program and even increased dollars spent to protect and restore of lakes and reservoirs. In the most recent funding cycle, the legislature appropriated \$8.5 million of general revenue funds with intention to increase funding in succeeding years.





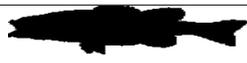
Lakes and Reservoir Fishing (cont.)

In addition, the program helps leverage local funds, Farm Bill Conservation Title funds and other funds needed to improve lake and reservoir fishing. The goal of all this work and expenditure of money is better water quality, more fish, more fishing, and greater public use of lakes and reservoirs.

The Clean Lakes Program has been very popular and successful because of the public's interest in lakes and reservoirs and local involvement in protection and restoration efforts. It is this local interest and concern that generates the federal, state and local partnerships needed to plan, fund and complete this costly work. The most recently completed and assessed lake restoration project in Iowa resulted in quadrupling lake and park use to over 1/2 million visitors per year. Likewise, the fish community and fishing increased by several orders of magnitude with little cost to anglers. Similar local grass-root partnerships have greatly benefited water quality and recreation at 12 other lakes, work is underway to protect or restore 6 lakes and plans are being made to restore 9 additional lakes and reservoirs.

Of interest to those of us charged with the care and management of lakes and reservoirs is the fact that the Clean Lakes Program has not received separate funding since 1994. Instead of separate funding, EPA directed states to use at least 5% of the Section 319 Nonpoint Program funding for Clean Lakes Program Activities. As a result, the needs of lakes beyond watershed remediation are not receiving adequate program attention and funding.

The Clean Lakes Program was specifically designed to help states and local communities address special problems facing public lakes and reservoirs, problems such as degraded in-lake and shoreline habitat; degraded fisheries; nuisance exotic species; eutrophication; in-lake nutrient recycling; and contamination from such things as bacteria. In addition, the program provided financial assistance to protect more pristine lakes.



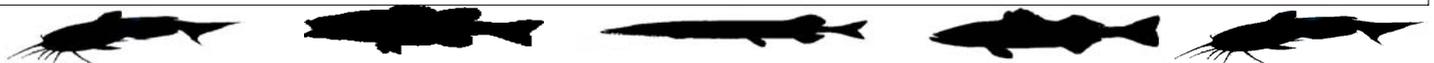


Lakes and Reservoir Fishing (cont.)

These issues, and many others critical to the protection and improvement of lakes and reservoirs, are not traditionally covered under 319 Nonpoint Program guidelines and have not competed well for 319 funding. Watersheds, the target of 319 funding, are a critical element of any lake improvement plan, but they are not the entire answer, and without attention to in-lake issues, we cannot attain the “fishable and swimmable” goals of the Clean Water Act.

The Clean Lakes Program is a fantastic model specifically designed to solve complicated and expensive problems impacting lakes and reservoirs, solutions that result in better fishing. It is a program that gives lakes and reservoirs the special focus they deserve, a focus similar to that afforded wetland, estuary, and coastal zone habitats. Anglers and other lake lovers could even argue lakes and reservoirs deserve a greater focus because of their importance to people and because many are in trouble and don't meet the goals of the Clean Water Act. We, as representatives of fish and fishing, can help paint a brighter future for lakes and reservoirs but success will hinge on our ability to partner with others interested in the well-being of lakes and reservoirs. This partnership would likely be based on more holistic view of lake and reservoir management and would include those interested in lake water quality and other uses of lakes and reservoirs. The approach is a bit intimidating but the fact is our valuable lakes and reservoirs deserve a better shake. This will likely happen if those of us in the sport fish industry become more involved and help our partners address the well-being of fish and fishing as related to goals and programs of the Clean Water Act!

“The Clean Lakes Program is a fantastic model specifically designed to solve complicated and expensive problems impacting lakes and reservoirs”





Current Status and a Review of Freshwater Fish Aging Procedures Used by State and Provincial Fish Conservation Agencies with Recommendations for Future Directions

American Fisheries Society Fish Management Section Committee on

Assessment of Fish Aging Techniques

Michael J. Maceina, (Chair), Jeff Boxrucker, David Buckmeier, Scott Gangl, David Lucchesi, Dan Isermann, Randy Jackson, and Pat Martinez



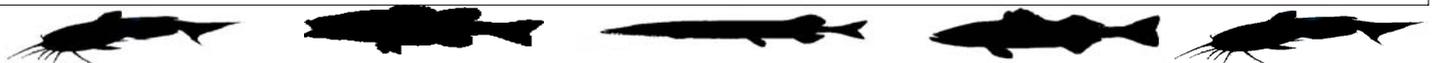
Fishery biologists have commonly collected and processed structures from freshwater fish to estimate age. Since the early 1980s when opaque zones on otoliths were validated as annuli on large-mouth bass and walleye, we perceived that the use of otoliths to age freshwater fish has increased in the USA and Canada compared to scales. The current use of various structures and the methods used to assess the accuracy and precision of fish age estimates for North American freshwater fish has not been summarized, but certainly seems warranted given the importance of fish aging in our profession and the increase in papers regarding species-specific age estimation over the past two decades.



To fulfill this need, the Fisheries Management Section with support of the Fishery Administrator Section of the American Fisheries Society formed the Assessment of Fish Aging Techniques Committee (*ad hoc*) in 2006. The tasks of the Committee were to 1) survey state and provincial fish conservation agencies on structures used and procedures to age freshwater fish; 2) conduct a literature review on fish aging techniques that primarily examined precision, accuracy (validation), and back-calculation of lengths from presumed annuli; 3) provide recommendations for proper fish aging techniques that will improve accuracy and directions of future research.

In February 2006, a eight question survey was sent to all state and provincial USA and Canada freshwater fishery administrators. A total of 45 USA state and 6 Canadian provincial fish conservation agencies responded to the survey. Scales were more commonly used to age black bass, crappie/sunfish, and moronids than otoliths, but scale and otolith use to age salmonids and percids was nearly equal. The use of pectoral spines to age catfish was about twice as great compared to otoliths. Scales, followed by cleithra, were the predominant structures used to age esocids.

“ In February 2006, a eight question survey was sent to all state and provincial USA and Canada freshwater fishery administrators. A total of 45 USA state and 6 Canadian provincial fish conservation agencies responded to the survey.”





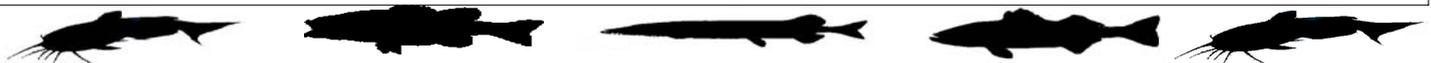
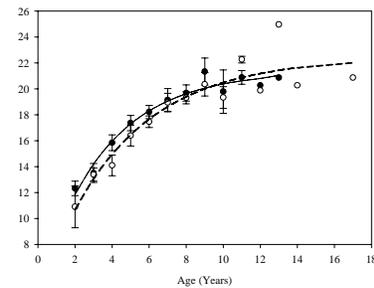
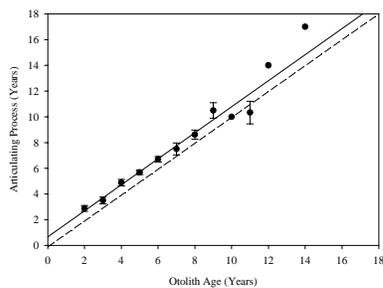
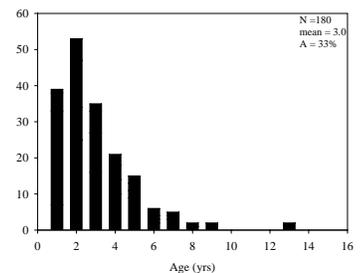
Freshwater Fish Aging Procedures (Cont)

Strong latitudinal clines in the percent use of scales and otoliths to age black bass, crappie/sunfish, moronids, and catfish existed as otoliths were more commonly examined in southern USA states and scales (spines for catfish) were used in more northern states and provinces. For those agencies that used scales, many respondents felt that a “true” maximum age could not be estimate, but the opinion on the maximum age of accuracy was about 5-6 years (range 3 - 9 years old).



Most agencies (76%) assessed the precision of reader assignment of ages among the structures examined and commonly used two blind (independent) readers. More than half of the agencies (59%) conducted some annuli validation from the structures of primarily stocked fish (known age) that generally were either chemically or physically batched marked, then subsequently recaptured where these studies were being conducted. About 80% of all agencies provided training to personnel to age fish and of the training offered, 74% was individual or experienced personnel providing one-on-one training to a single individual. Among 49 states and provinces that aged fish, 79% conducted back-calculation of lengths from presumed annuli in at least some of the fish populations where age estimates were made.

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Freshwater Fish Aging Procedures (cont.)

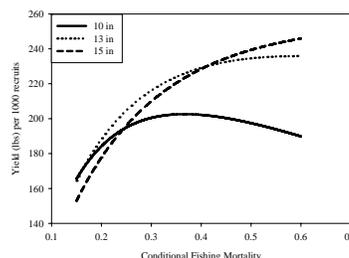
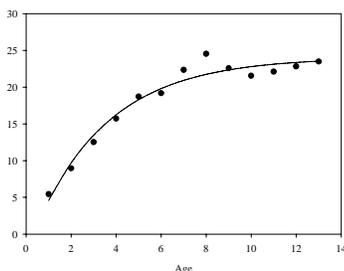
Nearly every agency that aged fish used this information to assess growth (100%), mortality (86%), recruitment (82%), and the analyses of fish age data assisted in the regulation decision-making process (92%) and in research (82%). Finally, for scales, fin rays, and spines, 83% of the agency respondents felt the non-lethality of collection was a strong consideration for using these structures. However, of these respondents, only 38% felt that these non-lethal structures were accurate at for some ages (primarily young fish).

The Committee on Assessment of Fish Aging Techniques has completed a draft paper that summarizes the analysis and results of the state and provincial fish agencies responses to current fish aging techniques, and has completed a literature review on validation, precision, and back-calculation techniques for major recreational and commercial freshwater fish groups.

The survey showed that the availability of known age fish from stocking or from marking wild fish and their subsequent recapture was quite high and offers the opportunity to validate annuli on structures for a variety of species. Recommendations from the Committee are being drafted to improve aging procedures and protocols. Randy Jackson (Committee member) has completed a draft paper on the history of aging fish. The Committee plans to submit both papers to *Fisheries* for publication by the end of 2006.



“The survey showed that the availability of known age fish from stocking or from marking wild fish and their subsequent recapture was quite high and offers the opportunity to validate annuli on structures for a variety of species.”



NATIONAL FISHERIES DATA SUMMIT II

Focusing on Applications to the National Fish Habitat initiative

Hosted by the American Fisheries Society Computer User Section

Professionals from across the country who are responsible for the management, integration, and distribution of fisheries and related data for natural resources agencies and organizations (marine and freshwater) will come together October 31-November 2, 2006 in Salt Lake City, Utah to participate in National Fisheries Data Summit II - *Focusing on Applications to the National Fish Habitat initiative*. The products of the Summit will directly impact the progress of the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI).



The NFHI is a nationwide effort to address common problems that afflict the condition of fish habitat throughout the United States. Measuring the condition of habitat and its impact on fish populations across wide geographic areas will require greater use of shared information across agencies. The widely acclaimed *1998 Freshwater Fisheries Database Summit* established groundwork that assisted agencies in developing information systems. The 2006 Summit will build upon that work and focus attention on cutting edge issues that impact our ability to share information more effectively.

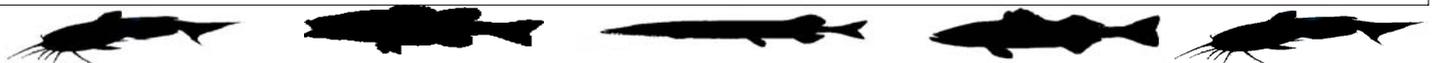


Participants of the Summit will review the National Fish Habitat assessment process and define the availability of indicator data at national, landscape, and local scales. The objectives of the Summit are to assess the availability of data at state, regional, and national scales necessary to fulfill the needs of the NFHI data system; identify specific sources of the data to meet the needs of the NFHI data systems; outline mechanisms and processes for assembling and transferring data, and identify mechanisms to integrate regional joint partnership information systems.

In addition to providing products to support the NFHI, the participants and the organizations they represent will benefit in many ways. They will have the opportunity to assist in the implementation of this national initiative, which has been endorsed by state fish and wildlife agency directors, federal agencies, and leading nongovernmental organizations, interact with and learn from colleagues facing similar information management challenges, and demonstrate their information systems and gain hands-on experience with systems used by other agencies.

"The NFHI is a nationwide effort to address common problems that afflict the condition of fish habitat throughout the United States."

For more information, visit www.fisheries.org/cus



Update: The National Fish Habitat Initiative

Patrick Hanchin

If for some reason you've been hiding under a rock for the past few years and haven't heard of the National Fish Habitat Initiative, here's a quick primer. The initiative started in 2001 when a group supported by the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council investigated the development of a piscine counterpart to the successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Following years of diligent effort, the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) was born as a nation-wide plan to address aquatic habitat degradation at various scales, ranging from local grassroots efforts to broad-scale, regionally-coordinated projects. Support for a national fisheries conservation effort was confirmed in 2004 when the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) voted to lead the plan, which was approved for implementation on March 24, 2006. Most recently, on April 24, 2006 the plan was launched to the public, and on July 31, 2006 the National Fish Habitat Board was created to oversee and coordinate the progress of the action plan.

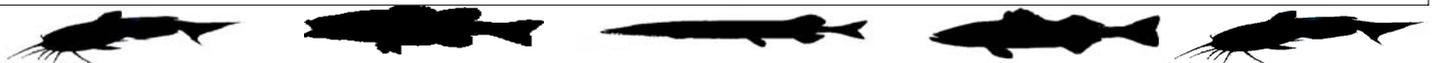
The NFHAP is a voluntary program designed to better leverage resources and effort for the protection, restoration, and enhancement of fish habitats across North America. There has already been tremendous success in uniting fisheries professionals and partners with a common interest in protecting, restoring and enhancing aquatic habitat. Currently, nearly 500 partner organizations have lent their input in the effort. The diverse group of partners ranges from small local watershed groups and fishing clubs to international conservation organizations, federal agencies, angling industries and academia. This diversity and broad geographic coverage of partnerships should ensure that the plan reaches all corners of the country.

The plan insures that state fish and wildlife agencies, along with local partners, will be able to establish Fish Habitat Partnerships - the primary work unit of the NFHAP. Fish Habitat Partnerships will develop plans that will: establish scientifically credible goals and objectives, identify the resources and technical capacity to successfully implement priority projects, and measure progress consistent with the NFHAP. Partnerships can be based on important aquatic habitats or geographic areas (e.g., Alaska Inland and Coastal Initiatives- Mat Su Watershed Project), 'keystone' fish species (e.g., Eastern brook trout) or system types (e.g. large lakes, impoundments, estuaries.) Examples of the plan in action are detailed on the website (<http://www.fishhabitat.org/>) for projects such as: the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, and the Western Native Trout Initiative.

In fiscal year 2006, \$1.0 million was appropriated by Congress and \$1.2 million was matched by partners to be invested in 24 fisheries projects. These numbers are expected to grow for 2007. The NFHAP is also supported by the 'More Fish' campaign administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). In conjunction with the Bass Angler's Sportsman Society (BASS), the NFWF will award small grants of between \$10,000 and \$30,000, and leadership grants of up to \$100,000. Priority will be given to projects that directly implement the recommendations of the NFHAP and/or state wildlife action plans, and matching funds will be required on a 1:1 basis or higher.



"The NFHAP is a voluntary program designed to better leverage resources and effort for the protection, restoration, and enhancement of fish habitats across North America."



Awards Nominations Sought

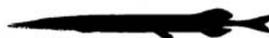
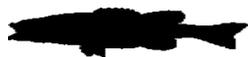
The Fisheries Management Section is currently seeking nominations for inductees in the Fisheries Management Hall of Excellence (HOE) and for its three awards. The application deadline for these nominations is May 31, 2007. Send nominations in the form of a letter outlining the accomplishments of the individual/organization to Ron Essig, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Assistance Division, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035 (413) 253-8504 ron_essig@fws.gov. Information on qualifications for HOE induction and each award, plus lists of past recipients is on the FMS website.

The Fisheries Management Hall of Excellence is located at the AK-SAR-BEN Aquarium in Gretna, Nebraska. It was established in 1992 with the stated objectives: 1) to recognize fisheries management professionals who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of fisheries management; 2) to provide a site where the contributions of those honored can be displayed and viewed by the public and other fisheries professionals; 3) to emphasize the accomplishment, dedication and principles of those honored in the HOE; and 4) to describe the fisheries management profession. Selection to the HOE is the highest honor given by the Fisheries Management Section.

The Conservation Achievement Award recognizes any significant action, program, or initiative by a nonmember individual, non-governmental organization, or state (provincial), local, or federal agency that contributes substantially to fishery conservation or fishery science.

The Award of Merit recognizes a singular accomplishment or an individual or group acting as a team or committee for contributions in fisheries management and research. The award can be given for outstanding leadership, administration, or project-related accomplishment in any aspect of the fisheries profession.

The Award of Excellence is given for inspirational leadership in the fishery profession and substantial achievements for AFS and the fisheries resource. The recipients must have effectively communicated their work at the national and/or international level. . This award is given for cumulative accomplishments rather than a singular effort as recognized by the Award of Merit.





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<p>Web Site Manager: Fred Janssen Texas Parks & Wildlife Department 4200 Smith School Road Austin, TX 78744-3292 (512) 389-4655 - phone (512) 389-4405- fax fred.janssen@tpwd.state.tx.us</p>	<p>Newsletter Editor: Rob Colombo Fisheries and Illinois Aquaculture Center Life Science II, Room 173, Mailcode 6511 Carbondale, IL 62901-6511 (618) 453-2608 - phone (618) 453-6095 - fax rcolombo@siu.edu</p>
<p>Curator, National Fisheries Hall of Excellence: Tony Korth Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium Outdoor Ed Center 21502 West Hwy 31 Gretna, NE 68028 (402) 332-3901 - phone (402) 332-5853 - fax tkorth@ngpc.state.ne.us</p>	

