

Fisheries Management Section Newsletter

Presidents Message



If you have not heard, we had the largest AFS meeting of all time in Anchorage. People gathered from far and wide, to network, to exchange information, and just maybe to see the sights? If you want a list of people who caught coho salmon, let me know. I tried to make a thorough list of those folks. ☺ We'll scatter a few pictures of those coldwater fishes around the newsletter, just for educational purposes, of course.

Later in the newsletter, we printed the minutes of the business meeting at Anchorage. Please take a close look at those minutes for a complete overview of what transpired. Several items, such as the need for publication of case histories or the need for revision of standard weight equations, almost have us stumped. We could use some new blood and some new ideas. So, please contact me (DW) if you would like to volunteer for any of the efforts/concerns in the minutes. We would greatly appreciate any assistance.

Membership is declining for many of the sections within AFS, and certainly is declining for our Section, although we remain the largest section. There are plenty of opinions trying to explain these declines, and I'm sure the reasons are many. Someone suggested that by offering the web page "free" to all readers, and not requiring membership, people had no incentive to join. However, we certainly want to be an inclusive rather than exclusive Section! One of the ideas to come out of many discussions on membership issues was the concept of student memberships. If we can recruit Section members while they are still students, we might thus recruit long-term members who recognize the value and activities of the Section. So, at the FMS business meeting in Anchorage, we unanimously passed a motion allowing students to be members of our Section at no cost. Students will have to ask (request) to be members, but will not need to pay. Also, we want to make a clear point: we did not approve student memberships; we approved free memberships for students. Is the distinction clear? We want students to be Section members in full standing, with all the rights and all the responsibilities of other members. We don't want them to view themselves as "only" being student members, rather than true members. The 2006 membership application and renewal forms will have a check-off box for students to join the Section.

If you have not looked recently, go to the FMS web site (<http://www.sdafs.org/fmsafs/>). Webmaster Fred Janssen converted us to a new, user-friendly software. Fred has long served as our webmaster, and that's quite a task for someone who also is incoming President of the Computer User Section. With Fred at the helm of the web page, and Rob Colombo at the helm of the newsletter, we're getting pretty darn good at maintaining communication with Section members.

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Guest Comments from Past-President Bob Wiley (WY)

These ideas were generated in response to the Introduced Fish “perspective article” in *Fisheries* 30(9):10-19. Author Gordon A. Mueller presents interesting points of view and good information to which I add the following.

My four decades in Wyoming fisheries included significant time in Wyoming's Green River basin, beginning in 1962. Fisheries management there has always been interesting from several perspectives. A good way to keep the information manageable is through the use of bullet points.

** Fisheries biologists' stewardship responsibility is the fishery resource: the entire resource, not just the sport fish part. Were that not so, most aquatic biologists would pay attention only to sport fish.

** Ecological imperialism played a big role in early fisheries management with introduction of nonnative sport fish in Wyoming and elsewhere in North America. It seemed as though people desired to fish for species they had been familiar with before arriving in Wyoming or other states. For example, early records (1880-1900) show importation of nonnative bass, walleye, and several species of trout, stocked in Wyoming waters easily accessible from the relatively new transcontinental railroad.

** The community aspect of fisheries management developed slowly from the initial primary focus on creating/improving sport fishing or, as it was sometimes referenced - fishing for good food fish.

** As the nation (USA) expanded, development of water resources for commerce, flood control, agriculture, power generation, and so on, also increased. Often, impacts on native fish communities were dramatic as free flowing rivers were changed by dams, their impoundments, and tailwaters characterized by clear, often cool water that favored trout. As time passed the challenge of providing for native fishes in significantly changed environments became clear.

** A sensible way to determine how best to manage fish communities (including native nongame species) is (1) understand as much as possible the drainage (Green River, for example, or Colorado River on a much larger scale) as it was when native fishes thrived; (2) understand the system as it now is - the dams and their impoundments, tailwaters, free flowing reaches, tributaries, irrigation, municipal, and industrial diversions, habitat changes; water-based economic development, and; nonnative introduced fish; and (3) then determine where management for native fish can be best accomplished.

** I'm convinced that fisheries managers know what to do for native fish - the challenge lies in getting the interests together, reaching some hard-to-make decisions and then getting the job done. Can the varied interests agree how much recovery is enough? So far, agreement seems extraordinarily difficult.

** Certainly introduced, nonnative sport fish are an important part of the overall native fish management equation and at least equally important is twenty-first century river habitat - enormously changed by American pursuit of Manifest Destiny.

** My fisheries career began with participation in the rotenone treatment of 425 miles of the Green River from near Pinedale, WY to Brown's Park, UT - a fisheries management action that has been variously branded as the bane of native fish in the Green River system. The action was right for the time because it was clear that river habitat would be so changed by the two reservoirs (42,000 surface acre Flaming Gorge and upstream 8,058 surface acre Fontenelle) and their clear, cool tailwaters that native fish would be significantly disadvantaged. Disadvantages notwithstanding, recent work shows that native nongame fish remain, though much reduced from pre-development (including impoundment and introduction of nonnative game fish) times.

** Today all fisheries biologists must see themselves as stewards of the entire fishery resource, because they are responsible for all fish, not just the sport fish! Establishing separate sport fish and native fish management programs in state or any other agency invites the disaster of independent, separate, fisheries management ideals.

** Separate sport fish and native fish programs are unnecessary. Far-sighted fisheries management is needed, headed by decision makers who visualize the whole fishery resource and can sell, support, and make the crucial decisions needed for native and nonnative fishery management success.



**FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SECTION – BUSINESS MEETING****DRAFT MINUTES****Sunday, September 11, 2005, 3:00 PM, Alaska Room, Hilton, Anchorage, Alaska**

Following are the draft minutes from the 2005 annual business meeting. Please review this draft, and send any corrections or additions to D. Willis.

Welcome and Announcements (Dave Willis)

Call to order 3:10 p.m.

Dave Willis acknowledged current and previous officers present.

Jan Lubeck (AFS staff) provided an overview of the Hutton program, and also reviewed staff changes and who is responsible for the program. She reported plans for 2005 and had a nice testimonial from a previous Hutton participant. Jan finished with a pitch for more state agency involvement.

Approval of Minutes of 2004 Annual Meeting (Madison meeting; have been posted on web page since last September)

Joe Larscheid motion, Fred Janssen second, approved.

Review and Approval of Financial Report (Dirk Miller)

Quick overview, no questions.

Business Items**President's Remarks (Dave Willis)**

Acknowledged Gus Rassam

Dave thanked all officers, newsletter editor Colombo, Webmaster Janssen, and committee members for their efforts over the past year.

Fishery Management Section Awards (Joe Larscheid and Dave Willis)

A 2005 FMS Award of Excellence was presented to **Gene Gilliland** (OK) for his accomplishments in outreach, education, and research regarding black bass management. Gene has developed a national reputation as an authority on black bass management issues. He has been a leader on issues such as largemouth bass tournament-associated mortality, largemouth bass virus, and habitat enhancement for black bass fisheries.

Another 2005 FMS Award of Excellence was presented to an interdisciplinary team from the University of British Columbia: Drs. **Scott Hinch** (Department of Forest Sciences), **Anthony Farrell** (Department of Zoology), **Mike Healey** (Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability), and **Steven Cooke** (Centre for Applied Conservation Research). They used an interdisciplinary approach to tackle pressing issues in fisheries conservation and management by focusing on Pacific salmonids and detailed study of their ecology, physiology, biochemistry and molecular biology. Steve Cooke was present at the meeting and graciously accepted the award on behalf of the research group.

Hall of Excellence: 2005 inductee (Dave Willis)

Dr. Roy Heidinger, retired (not really) fisheries professor at Southern Illinois University, was the deserving recipient of the Section's highest honor. Chris Kohler provided an overview of Roy's career. Roy's plaque will hang in the FMS Hall of Excellence at the Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium in Gretna, Nebraska. Roy was not present to accept the award because his daughter was getting married in Idaho at the same time; Section members "grudgingly" agreed that Roy had a legitimate excuse. J Roy's copy of the plaque was presented to him at the departmental picnic at Southern Illinois University during October 2005.

Committee reports

Newsletter Committee (Rob Colombo)

Rob was not present, and Dave gave a summary of recent newsletters, thanking Rob for high continuing work. Many comments indicated that the quality and content of recent newsletters was greatly appreciated.

Tim Hess acknowledged SIU for their long-term dedication to newsletter production. The SIU student subunit of AFS received the FMS Award of Excellence in 2002 in recognition of their long-term service to the Section.

FMS Web Page (Fred Janssen)

Fred mentioned Dave's attention to the web site and acknowledged Rob Colombo for his newsletter work. The web site will evolve because Fred has new software. Fred also is web-enabling the report that Don Gabelhouse produced (Fish Sampling and Data Analysis Techniques used by Conservation Agencies in the U.S. and Canada; 1992). The report was a result of work by the Section's Fisheries Techniques Standardization Committee.

Special Committee Reports

Fisheries Techniques Standardization Committee (Scott Bonar)

Scott reported that the "Standard Sampling Methods for North American Freshwater Fishes" project is well underway, and that many respected biologists have agreed to author the chapters on various habitat/environment types. In addition, Scott reported tremendous financial support from most of the federal natural resource agencies. The final product should represent a great partnership. The editors hope to have the project updated periodically as are other AFS publications.

Inland Fisheries Management in North America revision, third edition (Wayne Hubert and Chris Kohler)

Wayne Hubert gave update on next revision. Acknowledged Roy Heidinger. This book originally was envisioned in 1989. Two editions are out now, with the second being 7 years old. The Society has about a 2 year supply on hand, so it is time to get started with 3rd edition and hopefully have it available by 2008. The editors are in the initial planning stages; there is a guidance committee in place, who will work on approach and solicit authors.

Sauger Symposium at AFS 2006 (Brian Graeb)

The Section will sponsor the symposium at the 2006 meeting in Lake Placid. Many authors are interested in presenting, but anyone still interested should get people in touch with Brian (brian.graeb@sdstate.edu). No proceedings will be published because various speakers already have their work in various stages of publication.

Review of Requests for Funding

Burbot Symposium II, Vaughn Paragamian: \$4,000

The first burbot symposium was supported by the Section at \$2,000, and Vaughn has returned approximately \$4,000 to our coffers from sales of that book (Fisheries Management Section Publication Number 1). Officers reviewed this request, which was correctly submitted via the formal process on the FMS web page. Officers were supportive of the project but some thought the request was high. This request will not return money to the Section because it will be a block of papers in a journal instead of a book. Kevin Pope moved to approve, Andy Loftus seconded.

Mike Hansen wondered why not a book? Discussion ensued.

Most of the budget will cover page charges. Questions were asked whether such support was necessary. Vaughn had previously indicated that unused funds would be returned to the Section.

A friendly amendment was made and accepted to scale back funding to \$2,000.

Funding was passed at \$2,000.

Equal Opportunity Section Student Travel Support (line item): \$500

FMS members decided last year (2004 annual business meeting) to make this annual support a line item in our budget.

Stream Habitat Restoration Workshop (create line item?) \$1,000

Don Duff (former FMS President, and recipient of our Award of Excellence) requested this funding just prior to the Anchorage meeting, being unaware of our new funding procedure. Dave Willis recognized the long-standing support of this workshop by our Section and wondered if we should make it a budget line item. We have sponsored the workshop on Stream/Salmonid Habitat Restoration every other year since 1978. The 2006 meeting will probably be in England, and will also be our second international meeting; the first international meetings was in Ireland in 2002 and was a big success. The 2004 workshop was in California at UC-Davis. The 2006 workshop will probably be in late summer/fall in northern United Kingdom.

Kevin Pope made a motion to include it as biannual line item. Steve Lochmann seconded. Motion passed. Officers will need to make a special effort to get this every-other-year item into the budget (i.e., into “corporate” memory).

Approval of Revised Section By-laws (Dirk Miller; were posted in last Section newsletter); please note Section VI, Item 6.

Brian Murphy moved approval, with Mike Hansen providing the second. While most issues were “clean-up” details provided by Dirk, Section VI, Item 6 required special notice. This item reads as follows: “The Executive Committee can approve individual funding requests up to \$500 without a vote of the membership up to a maximum of \$2,000 each fiscal year. All requests larger than \$500 must be electronically submitted via the Section web page by 1 July each year. The Section Executive Committee will conduct a preliminary review of all requests. Applications clearing the preliminary review will be posted on the Section web page for member comment and then presented to the membership for final approval at the annual Section business meeting.” The question was then asked: how often are there \$500 requests? This question was difficult to answer, but past officers indicated that a request or two each year was common.

Motion was unanimously approved.

FMS Involvement in Development of New Standard Weight Equations (Wayne Hubert, Ken Gerow)

Wayne reviewed history of standard weight equations and recent developments, acknowledging Richard Anderson and then Brian Murphy. He described the problem and the work that Dr. Gerow currently is doing, and made a pitch for use of the modified approach for computing standards. He made a call for AFS action, and suggested that FMS should provide oversight.

Ken then made a pitch for archiving databases used for developing the equations. He suggested that the Section establish a committee to deal with standard weight issues. Substantial discussion ensued.

The Section is in need of a volunteer to provide oversight to this committee. Dr. Gerow, at statistician at the University of Wyoming is willing to provide technical assistance on the work, but wanted a fisheries professional to take the lead on the project. No volunteers were readily apparent at the meeting, and Section officers will continue the search for a volunteer.

Need for a Case History Journal? (Hal Schramm)

Dr. Schramm led this discussion, intended to review the need for documentation of case histories, both for management biologists and for teaching purposes. He was not suggesting that another journal be de-

veloped. He primarily suggested that case histories should be available to readers/colleagues. Case histories are not being submitted and consequently not published in outlets such as the *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*. He cited the benefit to teaching fishery management based on case histories. Hal was not sure where to go with this idea. Great work is being done, with many applications. Case histories could potentially be posted on the FMS web page.

Mike Hansen suggested online publishing. He thought the Section could provide a guide for authors and let people upload cases.

Doug Stang indicated that many case histories are available in agency reports. With the upcoming addition of agency reports to the Fisheries InfoBase, a new source of readily accessible information will be available.

Scott Bonar indicated that there are no rewards for agency biologists to publish. What could AFS do to encourage this work? The Section officers will try to continue shepherding this idea.

How Can We Get People to Nominate Individuals for Section Awards? (Willis / Larscheid)

Dave Willis made strong pitch to get people to nominate people for awards. One suggestion was to integrate the past presidents of the Section into the process. We'll give that a try for 2006. Meanwhile, remember the standard old line: every one of us knows someone who is deserving of Section recognition. So, please consider making a nomination!

Other Business

Student memberships: Craig Paukert moved and Fred Janssen seconded that Section memberships for students will be free, but only if they ask. George Spangler suggested that students be "full" members, rather than "student" members of the Section. All agreed that was the intent of the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Julie Meka accepted a \$400 check for travel support that the section approved at the 2004 business meeting for speakers to travel to the 2005 AFS symposium on "Catch-and-Release Science and its Application to Conservation and Management."

Michael Fraidenburg provided an update on his "Lessons Learned" book project. He will be meeting with students, and has most of interviews completed and some commitment from publishers.

Motion to adjourn made by Stuart Shipman and seconded by Mike Staggs. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.





NOAA ACTS TO RESTORE GULF OF MEXICO GROUPERS

NOAA Fisheries Service has reduced the recreational red grouper catch limit in the Gulf of Mexico from two fish per person per day to one fish per person per day and closed the recreational grouper fishery in November and December of this year. The federal agency took this action today to reduce overfishing and get the species back on track with its 10-year rebuilding program. The new regulations take effect August 9. In addition, NOAA temporarily has reduced the aggregate grouper retention limit for recreational fishermen to three groupers per person per day to prevent overfishing of the whole grouper complex.

NOAA is implementing these measures at the request of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, which is responsible for developing management strategies for fish stocks in federal waters off the Gulf coast. Groupers in the Gulf are rebuilding under a strict 10-year time-frame, which began in January 2003. In order for the rebuilding plan to be successful, total recreational and commercial fishing had to be reduced by 9.4 percent, based on average landings from 1999 through 2001.

The initial red grouper total allowable catch (TAC) for commercial and recreational harvest is 6.56 million pounds annually during the first three years (2003-2005) of the rebuilding plan. The TAC is allocated among the commercial and recreational sector based on historical landings during 1999-2001. The allowable commercial harvest is 5.31 million pounds (81 percent of the TAC) and the allowable recreational harvest is 1.25 million pounds (19 percent of TAC).

Catch estimates for the recreational fishing sector show that anglers exceeded their harvest limit last year by 1.8 million pounds, prompting scientists to call for cuts in catches to reduce overfishing. "The Gulf Council was right in requesting an interim rule for this action. I know fishing cuts are difficult, but we have to take the measures necessary to ensure a long-term, sustainable recreational grouper fishery in the Gulf of Mexico," said Bill Hogarth, director of NOAA Fisheries Service. "The fishery will be worth more to everyone once it is rebuilt. We cannot keep exceeding our allowable catch levels or we will never reach our rebuilding goal."

Hogarth noted that the historic, cultural and economic importance of red grouper to coastal communities in the Gulf of Mexico makes this action necessary, and that these important temporary restraints on fishing will lead to a more sustainable future for all Gulf grouper fishermen.

These measures are part of an overall reduction in grouper fishing implemented by NOAA Fisheries Service. The commercial grouper fishery is regulated with trip limits and the shallow-water grouper fishery is closed once the red grouper quota is reached. In 2004, the shallow-water grouper fishery was closed on November 15.

NOAA obtains annual recreational fishing effort and catch estimates through telephone, shore-side, and dockside surveys that are based on randomized sampling designs. These surveys provide reliable information on fishing trends. Though the data collection methods have been reviewed by scientists and deemed appropriate for producing statistically valid results, some in the recreational fishing sector have expressed distrust in the data.

In response, last year Hogarth asked the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a thorough review of the current regional state-federal cooperative recreational fishery monitoring programs supported by the Agency. The National Research Council will evaluate the current program and recommend possible improvements that may better support the needs of fishery managers. The review will be completed in April 2006.





Trends in Private Pond Management

Bob Lusk is the owner of a private consulting company in Texas and editor of *Pond Boss* magazine. I (DW) asked him to describe current trends in private pond management and he responded with the following information (August 2005). Bob's comments were quite interesting, and he gave me permission to reproduce his answer in the FMS newsletter. Thank you, Bob!

"There are definitely trends in the practice of private pond management. I started in business in January, 1980, in Texas. That same year, the state stopped giving away free fish for stocking. We drank water from the tap, not bottled water from a store. People started buying fish to stock cattle tanks or ponds. By 1984, trends began shifting from renovating a pond and restocking with "free" fish, to learning techniques to care for fish, bought with hard earned money. Then, bottled water became a necessity for us to drink. At the same time, pond management was being born, across the nation. Regionally, techniques were refined by a small number of entrepreneurial types...all of us thinking we were inventing our own wheels. By the early 90's fish combinations began to change and goals came more sharply into focus. Now, people are buying property exclusively because of lake sites or availability of that precious commodity we imbibe via plastic bottles...that wet stuff which costs more than gasoline. The trends I see are as much societal as biological. With ESPN tracking bass fishing trends and their audiences and comparing them to NASCAR five years ago, I am fascinated to unearth the future of private waters. With Ray Scott trying to figure out how to divine light line tournaments on private waters, I suspect trends in management to continue to unfold, right in front of the eyes of everyone who frequents this site (www.pondboss.com; address added by DW). Biology, mixed with theory, and one-upmanship will surely create a mixed bag well beyond the tried and true balance of bass/bluegill research by the legendary H.S. Swingle of Auburn University Fisheries Biology fame. Trends? Yep. Talked with a man yesterday, one who lurks on this site daily. He bought a place in Oklahoma, about 60 miles north of stately Lusk Lodge, near the shores of Lake Texoma. He is renovating a small pond, expanding and deepening it. In the beginning, his basic goals were to rehabilitate an old pond, slap dab in the middle of his hundred acre forest, nestled in the midst of farm and rangeland...property heretofore managed by landowners seeking income from the dirt. Not this man. Recreation, and investment. As the project has come together, he had done his due diligence. Due diligence? I can't tell you how many people, over the years, didn't understand the concept, much less do anything about it. Trends? Yep. Not only is this man becoming the norm, the norm is expanding. He has thought about his pond, re-thought it, surveyed, analyzed and dreamed about it. Now, on the threshold of dozer work, he knows what he wants. He wants a bass/bluegill pond which can grow hybrid striped bass and channel catfish, where his young boys and daughter (and himself) can grow up gliding across and dropping into clear water via a zip-line, then tie on a tube worm and catch a healthy bass. Trends? I see them, and it's exciting. Water. Ponds. Lakes. Renewable, ownable, beckoning. People are seeing which fish can thrive together in a community. They see the logical progression of a lake or pond. Simply, here's what they see, and use this formula to create their own trends. Habitat, food chain, genetics, harvest...in that order.

Update on Magnuson-Stevens Act

Several bills pending in Congress relate to reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA). Below are links to current legislation related to MSA.

In September 2005 the President presented his bill:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/msa2005>

Rep. Rahall also released a bill in March 2005 amending MSA:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c109:H.R.1431>:

Additionally, the Senate will have a hearing on MSA amendments November 16, and a Senate bill is expected to be released shortly.



Dr. Roy C. Heidinger

Roy Heidinger studied under Dr. William Lewis and received his Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University in 1970. His fisheries-related experience began in 1965 as a research assistant and continues through the present time. Roy began teaching fisheries management in 1970, and rose through the ranks from Assistant Professor in 1971, to Associate Professor in 1975, and to Full Professor in 1980. He was appointed Director of the Cooperative Fisheries Research Laboratory at Southern Illinois University in 1986 and continued in that capacity until his retirement in 1999. While Director of the laboratory, he developed plans that promoted expansion of the laboratory's research scope and oversaw development of facilities including a sizable wet lab, a 90-pond research pond complex, and special buildings to house fisheries equipment and boats.



Roy's research with black bass management took him to many areas of North America. In Cuba, prior to the strained political relationships that still exist today, he was consulted to evaluate several largemouth bass reservoirs as potential trophy fisheries that would help increase tourism in the financially stressed country. Although well known for his research with black bass early in his career (he wrote the largemouth bass synopsis for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), interest in teaching and research expanded his management expertise to include many warmwater, coolwater, endangered, and exotic species in rivers and reservoirs throughout the Midwest. His research and teaching of fish aging methods to more than 50 graduate students that have become biologists for many state agencies promoted the alteration of aging techniques for many fish species across North America. Dr. Heidinger helped develop a chemical marking method (oxytetracycline) now widely used for fish marking; investigated the use of threadfin shad, gizzard shad, and inland silversides as prey for sport fishes; and was instrumental in developing strategies for stocking ponds with hybrid sunfish.

Dr. Roy Heidinger clearly is dedicated to the fisheries management profession and will likely be contributing to it for many years to come.

Elected into the NATIONAL FISHERIES HALL OF EXCELLENCE, 2005

Endangered Species Act activity

As we were preparing this newsletter, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 3824, the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005 (TESRA). Based on preliminary information, this act would weaken the provisions of the original Endangered Species Act. We suggest that FMS members educate themselves on this issue, and interact with your own legislators. The Senate has not yet (i.e., as of 5 October) taken up this issue, so there still should be time for input by the time you read this newsletter.





Information from IAFWA on Transportation Bill (August 2005)

This may be old news to most FMS members, but it's so important that we decided to include it in the newsletter.

The House (412 to 8) and then the Senate (94 to 4) overwhelmingly passed the massive Transportation reauthorization bill which is now signed into law by the President. Major fish and wildlife conservation funding and policy provisions include the following:

Wallop-Breaux (Aquatic Resources Trust Fund):

1) The bill achieves full recovery into the ARTF of the 18.3 cents per gallon gasoline excise tax attributable to outboard motors and small engines. This means an additional \$110MILLION of permanent (not subject to appropriations) funds per year to the state fish and wildlife agencies for sportfish restoration, boating safety, boating access, and other programs under the ARTF.

2) The bill reflects the angling and boating community (ALAB) recommendations to simplify and restructure the administration of the W-B program accounts, including bringing permanency to boating safety funding, equity of distribution of receipts to all W-B program accounts, etc.

Many thanks to the angling and boating community for their solidarity and persistence over the last 3 plus years in achieving this, especially our colleagues in the Congressional Sportsmens Foundation, American Sportfishing Association, National Marine Manufacturers Association, and National Association of State Boating Law Administrators.

Other fish and wildlife conservation provisions:

1) \$10M per year to enhance fish passage in National Forests (road culvert maintenance, repair, etc).

2) Increase in funding for NWR system roads and trails from \$25M to \$29M per year.

3) \$1M per year for signage for access for hunting and fishing on public lands.

4) Direction that long-range transportation planning be done in consultation with state and tribal conservation plans and maps, if available; and, mitigation for habitat affected by transportation projects be accomplished through early consultation with state wildlife agencies.

5) Establishment of a program to educate state highway officials on best management practices (including preference for native vegetation) for highway shoulders and medians to minimize attraction to large grazing herbivores and thus reduce vehicular collisions.

6) Increase in funding for recreational trails from \$50M to \$75M per year.



Your Suggestions Are Needed!!!

I run The Nature Conservancy's Delaware River Basin program in NY. Last year our program removed a low head dam on the Neversink River, a large tributary to the Delaware, in Cuddebackville, NY. The primary objective of the dam removal was to remove a passage barrier for migratory fish as well as host fish for the endangered dwarf wedgemussel.

The two questions that we are trying to answer with our monitoring are:

Are shad now moving past the dam? And, are they spawning in newly available habitats upstream of the former dam?

I've been investigating several possible monitoring techniques...radio tags, gill netting, electroshocking, and egg surveys (we've done a few years of larval fish sampling and although we documented a blueback herring spawning in the Neversink we have been unable to document shad spawning). Has anyone done egg surveys?

My concern with radio tags is the percentage of shad likely to exhibit "fall back" behavior. I'm curious to know more about gill netting. Does anyone have any experience using gill nets on American shad and, if so, what is the mortality associated with this technique?

The NeversinkRiver can be challenging to electroshock at summer base flows and during the spring may be impossible much of the time. I'll appreciate ANY suggestions from the group.

PLEASE RESPOND TO George Schuler [gschuler@TNC.ORG]

Thanks.

George

**Past President:****Steve Rideout****S.O. Conte Research Center****One Migratory Way****P.O. Box 796****Turner Falls, MA 01376-0796****(413) 863-3802 - phone****(413) 863-9810 - fax****stephen_rideout@usgs.gov****President:****Dave Willis****Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences****South Dakota State University****Brookings, SD 57007-1696****(605) 688-6121 – phone****(605) 688-4515 - fax****david.willis@sdstate.edu****President-Elect:****Joe Larscheid****Iowa DNR****122 252nd Ave****Spirit Lake , IA 51360****(712) 336-1840 – phone****joe.larscheid@dnr.state.ia.us****Secretary-Treasurer:****Dirk Miller****Fisheries Management Coordinator****Wyoming Game and Fish Department****5400 Bishop Boulevard****Cheyenne, WY 82006****Voice: (307) 777-4556****FAX: (307) 777-4611****dirk.miller@wgf.state.wy.us****Regional Representatives****Northeast:****J. Randy Jackson****Cornell Biological Field Station****900 Shackelton Point Rd****Bridgeport , NY 13030****(315) 633-9243 – phone****jrj26@cornell.edu****North-central:****Mark Porath****NE Game and Parks Commission****2200 N 33th St****Lincoln , NE 68503****(402) 471-7651 - phone****mporath@ngpc.state.ne.us****Southern:****Robert L. Limbird****PO Box 403****Knoxville , AR 72845****(479) 967-7577****blimbird@agfc.state.ar.us****Western:****Dave Zafft****WY Game & Fish Dept****528 S Adams St****Laramie , WY 82070****(307) 745-5180 – phone****david.zafft@wgf.state.wy.us**

Our *Highly Esteemed* and *Greatly Appreciated* web site manager:

Mr. Fred W. Janssen**TX Parks & Wildlife****4200 Smith School Rd****Austin , TX 78744-3292****(512) 389-4655 – phone****fred.janssen@tpwd.state.tx.us****Newsletter editor:****Rob Colombo****Fisheries and Illinois Aquaculture Center****Department of Zoology****Mailstop 6511****Southern Illinois University****Carbondale, Illinois 62901-6511****618-453-2608****rcolombo@siu.edu**