

**NORTH DAKOTA
SPORTFISHING
CONGRESS**

P.O. BOX 2472 • BISMARCK, ND 58502

ND SPORTFISHING CONGRESS WINTER MEETING AGENDA

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 2005 — 10:00 AM

ND GAME & FISH BUILDING — BISMARCK, ND

Members Present: President Duaine Ash; Board members Rick Eagelson, Paul Haug, Don Baasch, Emil Berard, Richard Fink, Bruce Hagen and Paul Kriege; Mike Anderson, Dave Bement, Ken Cumber, Reinold Kellar, Doug Kelly, Lee Klapprodt, Mark Lamprecht, Jim Nagel, Lynn Schlueter, Bryan Siegel, Tony Splonskoski, Gene Van Eeckhout and Randy Yoder; Game & Fish – Terry Steinwand and Dean Hildebrand; US Fish & Wildlife Service – Steve Krentz, Karen Kreil and Roger Collins; US Corps – Phil Brown; Sen. Conrad’s office – Lynn Clancy; and Executive Secretary Marie Hoerner.

- President Duaine Ash called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Roll call was taken — attendees signed in prior to the meeting.
- The minutes of the Oct. 30, 2004 minutes were approved as distributed. Motion by Paul Haug, second by Dave Bement.
- Rick Eagelson distributed the Treasurer’s Report showing a beginning balance of \$12,155.57 on 10-30-04 and an ending balance of \$10,913.76 on 1-8-05. This report revealed total income of \$201.00 and total expenses of \$1,442.81. A motion to approve the financial statement was made by Ken Cumber and second by Paul Kriege.
- Committee Reports and Assignments:
 1. Fundraising (Mike Anderson) – The fundraiser is set for Saturday, April 23, 2005 at the Bismarck Elks Lodge. Mike said the committee is looking at using the same format, unless anyone would like a change. The committee will again be looking for help; however they are just getting started and please mark your calendar.
 2. Friends of Lake Sakakawea (Lee Klapprodt) – Lee distributed three handouts – “Missouri River Basin Mountain Snowpack Water Content 2004-05” for Fort Peck/Garrison, “Jan. 1, 2005 Most Likely Runoff Simulation, Adjusted Lower/Upper Decile Simulation” and an article from the *Kansas City Star* from Jan. 7, 2005 titled “Officials call for water conservation measures”. Lee said we are not doing real great as far as snowpack, and the runoff forecast reflects that. If we were still operating under the old Master Manual, the forecast would likely be much worse since we would have the 61 day shortening of the navigation season. He said Sen. Dorgan’s office was able to get \$100,000 earmarked for Friends of Lake Sakakawea for weed control. They have been meeting with the Corps on lake shore access issue to try to maximize the amount of shoreline access. Friends will also have a problem with the Corps intent to allow no camping on the shorelines. With the low water levels, this will have a huge impact on recreation opportunity on Lake Sakakawea. The Friends will be talking with the Governor’s office regarding water conservation issues. They also have a good working relationship with the Congressional delegation in working with water levels. Friends has a good working relationship with the Corp, although they don’t always agree.
 3. Memberships (Emil Berard) – Emil mentioned an updated membership brochure was distributed and approved at the Fargo meeting in October. He mentioned it was agreed that anyone joining at this time

would receive membership through April 2006. Emil said he put a list together of possible new club members (approximately 84) that received the last newsletter to hopefully generate more club memberships; however no new club members yet. It was mentioned that five of our current club members do not specifically dealing with fishing, but as long as a club is involved with fishing, they can be members. One of our objectives is to unite manpower. It was mentioned that only fishing issues will be addressed by NDSFC. There was a brief discussion on the need to improve the look of the NDSFC membership brochures. A motion to print 1,000 brochures on a glossy paper using two colors was made by Mike Anderson, seconded by Ken Cumber and passed.

- Fishery Issues (Dean Hildebrand/Terry Steinwand) – Following is a summary of suggested items for the 2005 session relating to fisheries:
 1. Increase the cost of paddlefish tags. Based on public meetings in Williston in 2002, increased tag costs were overwhelmingly supported by the public. It's recommended to increase the cost to \$11 and \$25 for residents and non-residents, respectively (currently \$3 and \$7.50). Montana's tag prices are \$5 and \$15 for residents and non-residents, respectively. *Need to control the demand for paddlefish. Duaine Ash asked should NDSFC sponsor a bill to support this fee increase or should G&F sponsor the bill and have NDSFC support the bill. G&F sells as many licenses as wanted, but they limit the number of paddlefish harvested. Dean's personal feeling is that the paddlefish are getting extinct and he doesn't believe there should be a harvest season for them. Terry said if the paddlefish number gets too low, the G&F will have to close the season for them. G&F continues to watch the number of paddlefish which will determine the length of it season. It was decided that NDSFC not sponsor this legislation in this session.*
 2. Change the section of the Century Code NDCC 20.1-02-05(13) } to state that commercial licenses (e.g., bait vendors, private fish hatcheries, guides/outfitters, etc.) are exceptions to the residency waiver, similar to lottery licenses. Or can we do this without legislation? (I think we likely can.) . *Terry said the G&F has decided to do this by policy, rather than legislation. Non-resident wholesale bait vendors come in to the state.*
 - Delete select language pertaining to private fish hatcheries. A change in 20.1-01-02 (31) "Private fish hatchery" means a body of water, whether natural or artificial, and any other facilities used, maintained, or operated by any private person, firm, corporation, or limited liability company for the propagation and production of fish for sale or planting in other waters. ~~Except in the case of trout, walleye, northern pike, and crappies, which may be raised in a private fish hatchery without the director's approval;~~ the director may, by rule, regulate the species of fish which may be raised in a private fish hatchery. No waters stocked by any state or federal governmental agency may be considered a private fish hatchery. *Terry said they are getting a lot of requests for private fish hatcheries. Mark Lamprecht feels we should support and the G&F should have control of what is being stocked in hatcheries. The NDSFC will support this legislation.*
 3. Allow for a special permit for handicapped individuals during paddlefish season? (Similar to 20.1-02-05(11)). *This should be taken out.*
 - Change 20.1-06-14 to read "The director shall adopt rules to control and supervise the operations of minnow or other live bait wholesalers and retailers. The director shall issue a license to each wholesaler when the wholesaler has complied with the director's rules and has paid the appropriate annual license fee. The director shall also issue a minnow or other live bait retailer's license to any person when the retailer has complied with the director's rules and has paid ~~upon payment of~~ the appropriate license fee. No person..." *(delete—already submitted) HB 1137 — it is the consensus that NDSFC support this bill. This cleaned up the language for the reporting requirements. Not part of 1137 – there have been a couple non-resident wholesalers (they paid their fee and they can sell bait) and are making a large amount of money selling bait. Dean said MN can trap ND minnows and take them to MN to sell them for a fee of \$200; however, ND wholesalers cannot sell in MN.*

■ Game & Fish Legislative Issues – Terry Steinwand

1. The ND Sportfishing Congress wanted to propose the hiring of another biologist for the Northeast and one technician for the Missouri River. The reason to hire additional fishery personnel is because of the increased fishing pressure the state is receiving and we wanted to make sure that we stay on top of all of the fishing issues. Following is the background presented to the Congress by G&F:

There are six fisheries management districts in North Dakota. These were created to provide equity across the state for personnel and putting emphasis and prioritizing work required on important fisheries. It's recognized there are still some needs in order to adequately collect and analyze the information necessary to sustain these fisheries.

- The Fisheries Division currently has one position included in the budget proposal that was sent to the Legislature. This position was originally specified as a biologist for either the northeast or southeast districts. However, with the additional district (south central) and its need for support staff in the form of technician, it was decided if this position was approved by the Legislature it would be placed as a technician in the South Central district office, located in the Bismarck shop complex.
- There is still a need for another biologist in the Northeast Fisheries District. There is currently one biologist for one of the top fishing lakes in the state and he still has responsibility for 58 other lakes within the district. He also has more area to cover than any other fisheries district as well as more lakes per biologist.
- An additional need is for a technician in the North Central Fisheries District. There are currently three biologists and one technician to work on the state's number one fishery and 18 district lakes. Although this might seem to be a sufficient amount of personnel since it is more than any other district office, but the difference is the amount of work required to sustain the Lake Sakakawea fishery. Additionally, we have asked this office to be one of the more involved field offices in fish distribution (May-July) since it is closest to the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery, where the majority of the fish stocked originate.

Dean said that last session they picked up nine and are asking for five in the current legislative session. The money is not coming out of the taxpayers' pockets, but out of grants and license fees. Dean will support NDSFC if he feels the recommendation is needed – it's like asking for another G&F position. Dean feels we have to be careful how we ask for positions, and need to figure out how they are going to pay for the positions. Dean is not saying we don't need the people; it is the justification of the additional employees. Need to find a strategic way to ask for another fisheries biologist for G&F department. Dean would need another avenue of revenue to pay for this person. Dean said \$10 million has to be kept in the G&F reserve fund, so that leaves them with \$15 million to spend, and he tries to keep one year's budget in the reserve fund in case of a disaster. This year they are going to spend it down to \$23 million. NDSFC will not have Dean's support in hiring an additional fishing biologist and technician position. Dean said if we can find a method of funding, he would consider the proposed legislation.

2. One-half of SOL (Save Our Land) funding is from the PLI (public lands initiative). Mark Lamprecht would like to see funding for SOL. Terry said SOL is a little less than a million dollars in the G&F budget.

- Missouri River Trust Fund (Lynn Clancy) – Lynn said that Sen. Conrad believes the resources and input from NDSFC is very important in managing the resources and it is important to our economy and industry. He said Sen. Dorgan sits on the Appropriates Committee and thinks they are in good positions to effect positions and be responsive to the NDSFC and G&F and federal agencies. The three congressional staffs meet regularly with the federal agencies and try to be cooperative to get a ND stand on these issues. Missouri River Trust Fund is to provide for local input on issues related to the use of the river as it relates to urban areas and various facilities on the river. It's been hard to get things going, but a charter has been written. Three of the tribes have designated their affiliate and are waiting for one more from the Turtle Mountain tribe. They want to provide for additional appropriations in the next fiscal year and extend the authorization of the trust since it was only a five-year program and it took so long to get started. The state is in a surplus and federal government is in a deficit situation that may make it difficult to get the federal resources that North Dakota needs. The 2006 budget will be coming out shortly and looking at flat

appropriations, so many of the programs will be less than before so it may be difficult to get funding. Clancy assured NDSFC they will work with the needs of our group.

- Lake Sakakawea Boat Ramps – Bob Valeu from Sen. Dorgan’s office was not able to attend– we wanted him to discuss the money appropriated for the boat ramps. However, Phil Brown from the Corps address this briefly. Regarding shoreline access, Phil said a few of the Friends members have addressed their request to open up the shoreline camping, while other members expressed not allowing shoreline camping, so he said there is conflict from Friends. Phil said the Riverdale office, relating to boat ramps, has been authorized dollars – hopefully to cover 20 of the 36 access areas. Friends and NDSFC will receive letters shortly asking for representatives on the Master Plan.
- Points of discussion for upcoming legislative session:
 1. Missouri River System boat ramp issue –Dean Hildebrand asked Lynn Clancy to thank all three of the Congressional delegation for their help, and thanked Duaine for his help on behalf of the NDSFC. Dean said that if the Game & Fish needs extra money, the Governor’s office has been very helpful. The Governor is chairman of the Emergency Commission (9 member board). Dean has written letters to the Governor asking for additional funds for special projects. After the Governor’s office, it then goes to the Interim Appropriations Committee (approximately a 30 member committee) and then, if approved, the G&F gets authorization to spend money for a special project request, such as SOL.

Boat ramp work policy –Dean said the G&F has flexibility in some cases on projects and they will match funding from other groups. They are under audit by the federal government, so any federal dollars that comes into the state need to be spent and accounted for, and this is also true for the state dollars. Bruce Hagen said boat ramps is more than a G&F issue and asked if the Economic Development or Tourism people get involved for funding, since this is an economic development issue bringing people into the state. Dean said this is a good point and it is a state issue. Dean suggested to go to the Parks & Rec and Tourism Department about helping to fund the boat ramp work. Dean said we need to get out there and do things that we think cannot be done – i.e. building permanent marinas (can put boats in water no matter how low the water gets; draft a plan) – think outside the container. Richard Fink asked if there were funds in the Lewis & Clark project that NDSDF is missing out on. Dean said they can make some small L&C grants (\$500), but their funds are very limited.

2. Establishment of a Missouri River Corridor Joint Water Board (Lee Klapprodt) – Lee said Friends has been involved with the board. They have been running in to resistance with some of the 11 counties (i.e. Burleigh, McLean). The advantage to anglers would be access to more resources, and he encourages members to visit with their county commissioners on establishing a Missouri River Corridor Joint Water Board. A motion for the NDSFC to take a position in support of formation of the Missouri River Corridor Joint board was made by Bruce Hagen, seconded by Dave Bement and passed.
3. State ANS Plan – Lynn Schlueter had a copy of the ANS plan, which was a large binder. He said they are now at the point where they went to public comment meetings. No one said anything about it being a good thing. However, ANS is out there, it is going to refill and it will take over good fishing. We need to be proactive to keep ANS out. The plan will be cleaned up with a last few comments and recommendations, and then it will go to Dean Hildebrand at the G&F to take to the Governor to hopefully be approved. Lynn said they are looking at legislation for ANS, as we need to be able to look down the road for a long time. Dean said the G&F is going to write a law that they are going to have introduced regarding ANS and he may ask NDSFC to ask for support of this particular legislation. NDSFC member clubs should be sent a supply of ANS brochures to distribute at their meetings. Lynn handed out a flotation items promoting the fight of ANS, which are also being distributed.

4. Spearfishing/Allowing Minnesota to fish in North Dakota – It was mentioned that ND residents currently cannot spearfish in Minnesota. A motion was made for no change in the existing regulation regarding spearfishing. Motion by Dave Bemment, second by Paul Haug and passed.
5. Allowing free fishing licenses after the age of 65 was discussed. No action taken.

- G&F Legislative issues – Dean Hildebrand encouraged every one to subscribe to the “North Dakota Outdoors” magazine, which only costs \$10 a year and has a lot of good information, including the G&F contacts. The ANS website is linked from the G&F website (<http://www.state.nd.us/gnf/>). Dean also mentioned that a new North Dakota road map is available and it includes a lot more information. Right now these maps are available at the Highway Department. As a matter of public interest, Dean mentioned the G&F will help fund a program to improve hunter landowner. Landowner appreciation suppers will be held across the state (eight suppers are scheduled in the Advisory Board areas). The first meeting will be Jan. 17 in New Salem and already 1,200 have RSVP. Dean mentioned they have always had a little trouble fishing at Horse Head Lake, but the problem has been fixed with a new open road.

Dean gave an update on legislation of interest to G&F and an update of these issues can be found at their website at <http://www.state.nd.us/gnf/news/1-update.html>.

- Endangered species in the state – Karen Kreil and Roger Collins, US Fish & Wildlife Service
 - Karen said there have been a lot of questions about the sandbar issue. Roger gave some background of the US F&W work — The Service has been involved with the Department on the Missouri River management. The high flows of 1997 created the sandbar habitat and it was a boom for fishing and sandbar usage. Bottom line was that high flows created habitat. F&W came out with recommendations – the Corps need to maintain, increase habitat through flow management on the River. Need to maintain the eco system – spring rise and lower flows throughout the summer. The Corps has wasted away 3-4 years and now they started to create habitat. In 2003, the F&W team was pulled off the program and were replaced with a new team – the administration did not want to go with flow management. The new team didn’t believe they needed flow management. Corps last fall had a public meeting that was very poorly advertised and many pertinent agencies weren’t aware of the meeting. The Corps said they would hold another public meeting, which will be held on January 20 starting at 6:30 p.m. in Bismarck (location not known), to try to explain their proposal. F&W agreed with the Corps to look at goals to see if they could be lowered. F&W works with the G&F on issues. G&F, F&W and State Water Commission are looking to get together before the Jan. 20 Corps meeting. It is up to the Corps to come to F&W to let them know how they will create habitat, even if it is done artificially. Need to consider recreation and land issues.
 - What are the target flows – are we going to loose more water out of our lakes? Corps agreed with F&W recommendations on managing the flow system. Roger said there are currently eight lawsuits on the Missouri River system. In 1997 the Corps had no option but to release water and they essentially released water at high levels throughout the summer, which created sandbars. Spring rises are not being proposed. In the past, the Corps has posted some sandbars off limit for recreational use, but even with that level of small amount of postings, it has helped with habitat. There are enough sandbars to accommodate birds and recreation usage. F&W’s proposal is to clean off some of the sandbars for habitat and some of this can be accomplished with flow management. The Corps is looking to do some of this with herbicides. Unbalancing the reservoirs – generally every spring the Corps wants to have the reservoirs in balance, but from the fisheries standpoint, they want to make the reservoirs unbalanced to give good fisheries production; switching between the three major reservoirs. For our current state of water levels, we just want to get all of the reservoirs back up.

- Phil Brown, Garrison Project Lake Manager — Phil believes there are a lot of good relations between the agencies. He said he doesn't know the location of the Corps meeting on Jan. 20, but strongly encourages everyone to attend the meeting. There is more politics involved and they are not trying to take the easy way out. It was said that restricting sandbar may bring more attention to the sandbars. Dean talked about the article in the Bis-Man Reel & Rec newsletter (by Vic Gibbons), on loosing our shoreline fishing. G&F is working with Corps to have boat ramps on the reservoirs this spring. Elevations have really dropped. Dean said he gets a lot of requests of having access to fish from the lake from shoreline. G&F's proposal has asked Terry to put a one-half mile request from the boat ramps on Lake Sakakawea so shoreline fishing is available for the public, especially older people. Corps is working with shoreline fishing – targeting anglers. The Corps cannot allow ATV usage on shorelines unless it is a designated ATV area, and do not want to jeopardize endangered species. Policy drafting – not going to allow the shoreline overnight camping; fish for the day and leave; no ATV use – cannot control usage. Hope to have a finalized policy by the end of February.

- Old Business – Duaine Ash brought up the following:
 1. Let Marie Hoerner know if you want to receive future newsletters via email. You can email her at sportfishing@bis.midco.net. We are looking at ways to cut expenses. A letter will also be sent this month to members requesting this information.
 2. The legislative issues that the Congress is involved with during the 2005 legislative session will be posted on the NDSFC website at the end of each week. Available in the “Legislative” section under “Information”.
 3. Reminded clubs to submit dates for the “calendar of events” on the NDSFC website, as well as club information to be updated. Email your changes to Marie.

- New Business
 1. Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, April 23, 2005 beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the Bismarck Elks Lodge, followed by the setup and activities of the fundraiser.
 2. Appoint a Nominating Committee — If interested in holding an office, please step forward and let us know.
 3. Duaine received a letter from Friends of Lake Sakakawea for their dues in the amount of \$250 for a “gold business membership”, which would be our third year of paying dues to Friends. It was suggested to keep our membership up and, if the organizations need additional funds, they should send a letter with a request. A motion to renew the \$250 Friends of Lake Sakakawea membership was made by Don Baasch, second by Dave Bement and passed.
 4. Tony Splonskowski, Voice of Lake Oahe representative, mentioned they are currently in the process of getting another ramp and they are working with the Corps who will put the ramp in. Their club now has about 125 members and they have held some fundraisers. Tony said they would like more support from South Dakota and the casinos.
 5. It was decided not to have another newsletter right now, but instead a special letter will be sent to all members asking that email addresses be provided so pertinent legislative information can be provided to members in a timely manner.
 6. Readdressed the “additional fisheries personnel” issue proposed to the G&F – It was the consensus of the Congress to drop the issue for this legislative session.
 7. Reiny Kellar asked about seeking the membership of the Parks & Rec. Duaine will check with Parks & Rec.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Executive Secretary Marie Hoerner

■ Date submitted: Jan. 15, 2005