



**NORTH DAKOTA SPORTFISHING CONGRESS
ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 28, 2009; 10:00 AM – Mandan Eagles Club**

AGENDA

Members Present: President Clark Williams; Board members Mike Anderson, Duaine Ash, Ed Dosch, Paul Haug, Rick Lee, Lynn Schlueter and; Members: Randy Anderson, Barb Ash, Jason Bader, Dave BeMent, Emil Berard, Ken Cumber, Richard Dukart, Ralph Gardner, Loran Hibl, Ron Kraft, Joe Neuenschwander, Tony Reinbold, Paul Reinbold, Tony Splonskowski, and Janine Wetzal. Others Present: Terry Steinwand, Greg Power, Scott Gangle of the Game & Fish; Rob Holm, Garrison Dam Fish Hatchery; Steve Krentz, USFWS; and Executive Secretary Marie Hoerner.

- To open the meeting, President Clark asked the participants to introduce themselves. He also welcomed the attendees from the Badlands Bass Bandits, the new NDSFC club member.
- Minutes from December 6, 2008 were approved as distributed, motion by Lynn Schlueter and seconded by Joe Neuenschwander.
- Paul Haug, in Treasurer Rick Eagleson's absence, distributed the Treasurer's report showing the balance as of 3-28-09, as well as 2008 the fundraiser report. A motion was made by Duaine Ash, seconded by Ed Dosch and unanimously passed to approve the Treasurer's report.
- President Clark said the biggest thing in our mission is to work with the clubs to work and fishing organizations (NDG&F, Corps) and have a presence in the Legislature. We want to get feedback from the clubs on their concerns and also inform the clubs on issues in the Legislature.

PRESENTATIONS

- Greg Powers, Fisheries Chief, North Dakota Game and Fish Dept
Latest Fred has been gone, from Williston (paddle fish presentation), gave a report on the fisheries in the Legislature. Two bills directed to fish are 1248 and 2424 (ANS legislation – if there was a water project being developed in the state, we recommended that features be build in; costs should be incurred by the local sponsors, not the G&F). 285 lakes in the state and license sales in the state have been stable. This year, ice fishing was very slow.

Winter kill for this year is about as expected. Northeast part of the state was doing pretty well, but now doesn't look so good. 20 lakes are in trouble and 20 lakes were marginal as to the amount of winter kill.

Flooding has caused record stages in the rivers. There are many areas (LaMoure, Bismarck, Fargo) getting hit and there are others not even started, such as Devils Lake and Jamestown. Recent forecast for Devils Lake is for the lake to rise to 52 feet. There will be flooding in Devils Lake through the summer.

Regarding the volume of water, Oahe came up about 4 feet in one week, which should be about 1607.5 this year. Rivers around Bismarck are all overflowing, even the small lakes and the flooding are causing new lakes and this will challenge the G&F to get fish into these lakes. G&F have a record request to the hatcheries for walleye to stock and restock the lakes. They also want to get perch into the new lakes, since the lakes have food and will reproduce on their own in future years.

The G&F gets more requests for boat ramps than they have money. Between the Corps and G&F, they spend about \$6.5 million. This year the G&F was focusing on the Bismarck area since these areas have had little ramp work, especially south of Bismarck. The ramp work this spring will need to be put off until the fall, due to the excess water. Depending on the water flow, some ramp work may be done this summer. There are 2-3 ramp areas that will be lost due to flooding. There are also load restrictions, spawning issues that won't allow Big 3 (Devils Lake, Sak and Missouri river and Oahe) – smelt in Sak is needed, and Oahe and Devils Lake fisheries are doing very well. Meetings in Devils Lake, Williston, Bismarck and Minot were held to inform them on the G&F work. Next year, there will not be a Bismarck meeting (due lack of attendance), but possibly in Napoleon instead.

Greg gave an update on the condition of some lakes around the state. In ND, 80-85% of people like to Walleye fish, more than any other species.

- Scott Gangle – G&F heads the Paddle Management & Research in ND. Presentations on the meetings will be available on the G&F website. Paddlefish are one of the unique species. The presentation was put together by Fred Ryckman from Williston and therefore focuses more on that area. In the early days 1916, paddle fish were harvested with no limitations. Since the closure of the dam, the paddle fish have gotten a lot fatter – they feed more easily.

There are two goals – 1) is to sustain the paddlefish population, about 50,000. FYI, paddle only spawn every 2-3 years. 2) Sustain a paddlefish snagging fishery, implemented with the simplest regulation possible while still ensuring for the long term viability of the stock.

The G&F will work with other groups (i.e. University of Idaho) to maintain the paddlefish population. Paddlefish harvest in ND cap is 1500 each year (3-year running average). The average annual harvest in ND the past 17 years was 1,362. The paddlefish stock is managed with Montana. There is a 3000 combined cap between ND and MT. Every year, paddlefish are tagged to determine how the stocking attributed. The G&F uses ADT radio telemetry and YOY (young of the Year) tagging. Scott showed pictures of how the G&F nets the fish so they can tag the paddlefish. 2008 was a phenomenal reproductive year, as well as the tagging efforts. The problem with YOY is that you don't know what comes back until about 10 years. Scott mentioned it takes three people to tag the YOY paddlefish, and there are free cleaning stations for the fishermen who donate their paddlefish eggs.

Other issues: Caviar industry, water depletions and diversions, oil and gas production, mortality factors other than harvest (i.e. boat encounters) and bank stabilization/channel modification. (paddlefish brochure can be found on the G&F Website at: <http://www.gf.nd.gov/multimedia/pubs/docs/pad-fish-broch.pdf>)

- Rob Holm, Manager Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Gave an update on the 2008 Hatchery Production. The Perch and the Pike are what they are having difficulty in the hatchery to meet these requests. Garrison is putting out a lot of walleye. Walleye and Pike are big at Garrison. At Garrison in 2008, the Hatchery stocked one million pike, 8.8 million walleye, three more ponds lined, 18,000 burbot, and pike production finally hits a wall. 15 of 24 service

ponds are lined and cost is \$82,000 per pond (1.5 acre). No more are planned until possibly 2010, unless the economic stimulus package comes through. Increased 10 year average production on walleye was 15% and pike was 26%. Lined ponds have a higher production, than those not lined. Northern Pike production is effected more by lined ponds, than the walleye production. 2009 production – 40 ponds of walleye; 16 double crops; 32 ponds of pike; and 8 ponds of perch, which are normally not produced. They are also working on Pallid Sturgeon recovery by stocking. They will be tagging and stocking sturgeon.

“Resource agencies are working together to meet common goals with fiscal responsibility”. Memorandum of Agreement – mutual agreement on fisheries programs and activities within the state, identifies responsibilities, validates operations, and provides taxpayers with highly effective fisheries program.

Part of the MOA is the Garrison Dam funding. G&F has picked up a lot of the tabs on getting their efforts done. The personnel are the biggest expense of the Hatchery at nearly 80%. G&F funding over the years has been going up over the years.

Hatchery Impacts “Walleye stocking is one of the most valuable management tools to maintain good fishing in Lake Sakakawea. Rob showed a picture of what the Dam looked like when they weren't releasing water due to flooding.

- Steve Krentz, US Fish and Wildlife Service – When you look at federal and state agencies, ND works together very well that compliment each other. Other states are jealous of our hatcheries.

Last year, drained Lake Ilo and worked on dredging the lake. They will be looking at putting bass in lake. In last couple of years, looked at the refuge lakes and will have reports on the study. US Fish & Wildlife Service is working with the tribes to enhance their fish management capability, particularly at Spirit Lake and the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservations. Work with G&F and are also concerned about ANS. Fish passage is another issue they are working on projects. Looking at tagging and volunteers are welcome to participate in the process. US Fish & Wildlife Service is working with G&F on various initiatives to restoring habitats on aquatic species. Steams and rivers benefit the bigger lakes. The Great Plains Prairie Fish Habitat Partnership will be working on restoring, enhancing and preserving river habitats of the Great Plains. Another partnership, is with the Midwest Glacial Lakes to work on restoring and enhancing aquatic habits in glacial lakes of the eastern Dakotas. Services has been involved with flooding (air boats and operators), with the main focus on the Red River. Pallid spawning and tagging will take place this spring. If anybody is interested in volunteering, contact Rob or Steve.

- Lynn Schlueter, Special Projects Biologist, North Dakota Game and Fish Dept – ANS is not going way and it's not getting worse. We need to keep up with our efforts and continue with the prevention in both in and out of state. The G&F has taken great steps in the last few years with regulations and now have laws that are enforced. People will get tickets for not following the ANS laws. However, the G&F are going to do as much checking for ANS and education as possible.

Friends of Lake Sakakawea are working on applying for a grant in cooperation with the Game & Fish to help with the ANS efforts.

- Duaine Ash, Lobbyist, North Dakota Sportfishing Congress and NDSFC past president. Thanked Terry, Greg and the Department for all the input they provided during the legislative session.

The feedback from the members on legislation was very important and effective. Duaine said we need to keep an eye of 1017, which is the G&F appropriations bill; otherwise, we got everything we asked for.

President Clark Williams said, NDSFC tries to avoid “individual” issues on legislation, but Clark will canvas the clubs (via emails) on issues that someone asks to be supported/opposed. He said we get requests from G&F or various clubs on legislation of concern; however, this year there wasn't a lot of fishing issues.

- Terry Steinwand – Senator Dorgan was suppose to be at a townhouse meeting, but was canceled due to the flooding. Terry addressed three issues that he was going talk to Dorgan about: 1) \$25 million was going to be asked for Missouri River operations, but only \$2.85 million was currently approved and all we were looking for was implementation guidance. 2) Greg Power is to talk to Dorgan about funding for Missouri River ramps. Pam Gulleason, Dorgan's Fargo office, said it looks pretty good for 2010. 3) Is to talk about Elk Management in Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Terry said that Duaine Ash is a very effective lobbyist and works the crowds during the Legislature. Just found out late yesterday afternoon, that the Senate Subcommittee removed \$800,000 for land acquisition which would affect the G&F ability to put a ramp on Pelican Lake at this point (HB 1017). SB 2424 is being kept alive by Senator Fischer through the appropriations process (ANS bill opposed by G&F and NDSFC). A lobbyists meeting will be held next Tuesday on HB 1017.

Club Reports:

- Clark Williams, Lake Region Anglers – Biggest issue is the rising lake to possibly 52 feet, a record high which impacts the ramps and access. Fishing will be good, if you can get there.
- Reel & Rec Derby is scheduled for May 16-18.
- Voices – Annual meeting and dance will be held May 2 in Linton.
- Badlands Bass Bandits – thankful to be in attendance and volunteered to help.
- Ron Kraft – In process of submitting a fish cleaning station.
- Dakota Anglers – Tournament is the third weekend in May and still some openings.

5) OLD BUSINESS

- Committee Reports:
 - Fundraiser: Mike Anderson said a lot of people wait until they know what the weather will be before purchasing a ticket for the fundraiser, however, there were close to 200 tickets sold for this year's event. This year we are doing for the first time, a second gun raffle where tickets were sold in advance and there are only a few tickets remaining. He said there will be special raffles and would appreciate your volunteering to work. After discussing next year's date, Paul Haug moved that we have the 2010 fundraiser on April 10 at the Mandan Eagles.
 - President Clark Williams said the Missouri River Coordinator position is still on our website and it hasn't been a functional issue. Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Duaine Ash, seconded by Ed Dosch and passed to remove this position from our website.

- ANS grant is statewide and Friends of Lake Sakakawea have expressed some interest to come back to NDSFC to work together in a coordinated effort and help with the publicizing. Jill Denning-Gackle is working on applying for the ANS grant and they are doing the work, but NDSFC would have some feedback. A motion was made by Mike Anderson, seconded by Paul Haug and passed that the NDSFC support the Friends efforts with ANS.
- Membership: Marie Hoerner said the number of paid members remains about the same; but we do have one new member club.
- Website – Member were encouraged to keep submitting changes and additions for the website.
- Newsletter – with club information, calendars and on G&F updates. Articles for the next newsletter are due by Friday, May 15 and the newsletter will be mailed around June 1. Please email your articles to sportfishing@bis.midco.net. Any questions, call Clark (701-662-5008) or Marie (701-223-8067).
- Elections: Open positions are for President, Treasurer and 3 Board Positions
Nominating Committee: Duaine Ash
Elections: Duaine Ash
 - President – Clark Williams: A motion was made by Paul Haug, seconded by Rick Lee and passed to reelect Clark Williams to an addition two-year term as President.
 - Treasurer Rick Eagleson – A motion was made by Paul Haug, seconded by Mike Anderson and passed to reelect Rick Eagleson to an additional two-year term as Treasurer.
 - Three Board Members: Mike Anderson, Dave BeMent would replace Richard Fink, and Don Baasch. After receiving no nominations from the floor, a motion was made by Paul Haug, seconded by Ed Dosch and passed to reelect Mike Anderson and Don Baasch to two additional years and elect Dave BeMent for a two-year term on the Board.
- Next Meeting – President Williams said we have not had a good turnout at the summer meetings in Devils Lake. After discussion, it was decided to plan to have a fall/winter meeting and Clark inform the members of the details.
- Ken Cumber reported there was now \$12,680 in the Liudahl Scholarship Fund.
- There being no further business, a motion was made by Ed Dosch, seconded by Lynn Schlueter and passed to adjourn the meeting.

Report Submitted By: Marie Hoerner, Executive Secretary

Date Submitted: March 31, 2009