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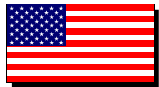
Volume 3

March 2003

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Duaine Ash

I hope everyone had a great summer enjoying our great outdoors. I, for one, had an enjoyable summer, did a lot of fishing. Retirement is GREAT and I hope that I can maintain my health so we can continue doing the things we want to do for many years to come!!!



We are living through an interesting time in history. With the uncertain time in the world, I'm hoping that the Iraq crisis can be settled without blood shed. But I am standing behind our president 100%. The activation of our National Guard is going to create hardships for the families and employers, but we are a strong nation and will live through our trials and tribulations. Let's keep all the soldiers and their families in our prayers.

We are also living through a unique situation here at home (North Dakota). We have excess water in the eastern part of the state and its extremely dry in the west. Devils Lake is trying to secure a controlled outlet to reduce some of the flooding in the basin. On the other hand, the west is wishing there would be a way of diverting some of the excess water out to them. If our current weather pattern continues, we will be losing our temporary prairie pothole lakes as well as Lake Sakakawea. If we lose our cold water habitat on Lake Sak, we have lost our fishery for years to come. We will not only be losing our fishery, but this the beginning Lewis & Clark Bi-Centennial. Isn't this going to present a pretty picture to the 100,000 out of state visitors? I've heard talk that the corps is trying to lower the water in reservoirs of Lake Sak & Oahe so the visitors will be able to see the original river channels that Lewis & Clark traveled, which we know isn't true, but it sure seems like it. If conditions don't change in the near future, there are a lot of us that will never see the fishery as we have it today.

**NDSFC annual meeting and banquet/fundraiser** will be held at the Elk's Club in Bismarck, **Saturday, April 12, 2003**. The annual meeting will start at 11:00 a.m. We will be having guest speakers and the banquet will start at 6:00 p.m. with a social hour. A prime rib supper will be served; cost of the ticket is \$25.00. Hope you come and spend an enjoyable evening with us. Your support is truly appreciated and we hope it continues.

There haven't been many fishing issues being presented this year in this legislative session. Our lobbyist Tom Abrahamson has been doing a good job. This is his first year as a lobbyist. Thanks, Tom!

Last year, a group of concerned individuals and businesses surrounding Lake Sakakawea gathered to form an organization, Friends of Lake Sakakawea. The new organization can now talk with a unified voice and work for the common good of the whole lake. It's a challenge to say the least. The NDSFC has a seat on the board of directors and I am currently filling that position. If you have concerns or ideas, let me know and I'll bring them up at our next board meeting.

I've rambled enough. If you are or you know someone that would be interested in holding a position on the board of directors or one of the officer positions, please let me know.

## GAME AND FISH PERSPECTIVES

by Terry Steinwand

I want to 'hit' on a few items in this article that are of importance to the state and to the general angling public. Depending on who you talk with all the issues are important but as with any other business we have to decide which are the most important and put our time and energies into addressing them.



On most everyone's mind are the predicted water levels for the Missouri River System and particularly Lake Sakakawea. The situation is certainly not very rosy and we wouldn't be in the predicament currently seen if water levels had been managed differently. Additionally, it doesn't look all that great for the foreseeable future. Coldwater habitat is in jeopardy and, in turn, the backbone of the fishery, the rainbow smelt, are at risk. Boating access will be negatively affected, at least in the short term. This is certainly a situation that can affect our number one fishery and we're doing whatever is in our power and ability to address it. The Game and Fish, State Water Commission, State Health Department and Governor's office are constantly putting together information for litigation, talking with other upper basin states to join in on what has become an almost untenable issue on water levels. However, we don't want to send the message that the fishery is lost and you can't get on the water. In fact, if current snowpack situation continues we will want anglers to come and fish Sakakawea and harvest some of the resource they've helped create. Fishing should be above average this summer with the large number of fish concentrated in a smaller area. Additionally, depending on the circumstances going into spring, we may want some good harvest to take the pressure off of the forage to avoid the situation currently being experienced in Lake Oahe, which is too many predators for a limited forage base. As we move closer to spring and have better information the Game and Fish will likely be having some press releases to inform the public of what can be expected. In the mean time, we need to keep the pressure on the Corps of Engineers and the politicians to do what they can to maintain this excellent fishery.

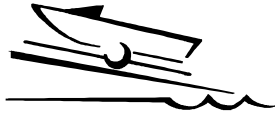
The second item is that of special interest groups and their desire to have lakes managed for their particular 'brand' of fishing. There is basi-

**GAME AND FISH — CONTINUE ON PAGE 5**

## PART OF THE PROBLEM MAY BE US

by Lee Klapprodt

This article addresses the Missouri River system management and the boat ramp situation we'll have this spring on Lake Sakakawea. From what I've been able to learn, things aren't looking very good. The continued drought in Montana and the Dakotas means there just isn't near enough water for all the system users. To compound the situation, the money needed to provide a reasonable boat ramp access on Lake Sakakawea is proving hard to come by.



For the sake of background. The Corps' January 24<sup>th</sup> announcement on their 2003 Annual Operating Plan tells us a lot about their priorities. Two things are dictating reservoir releases – barges and endangered birds. Recreation on our reservoirs is barely in the picture if at all. The Corps is in a vise between the navigators and the Fish and Wildlife Service who needs to protect Least Terns and Piping Plovers. Protecting the birds is required by the federal Endangered Species Act but looking out for the navigators over the interests of all other system users is primarily politics. Its true, the squeakiest wheel is getting the grease – water in this case. I'll get back to this later.

Here's the situation as I understand things. When Lake Sakakawea drops below 1830 feet msl, the cold water species (smelt and salmon) start to become stressed (Game and Fish biologists saw this starting to happen last year). When the level falls below 1825 feet msl, fish die offs begin to occur due to reduced habitat and low oxygen levels. As it dips below 1823 feet msl, major die offs can result. These elevations are most critical during the hot months of July and August. At this time, the Corps is expecting Lake Sakakawea to fall to around 1819 by the end of March. Levels will fall until spring runoff offsets discharges and other losses (if it does). The Corps current "steady state" release plan anticipates Lake Sakakawea could be 1823.4 in July in their lower decile or "dry" scenario. Obviously, we have a big problem.

While losing the salmon may not be a major concern for some anglers, the loss of the smelt forage base will be a severe blow to all predators in the system and no doubt seriously impact our world class walleye fishery. Have you paid attention to what has happened to walleye fishing on Lake Oahe since the big flush of smelt in 1997? My greatest fear with the salmon stems from the fact that our Missouri River reservoir salmon are the only certified disease free population of salmon in much, if not all, of North America. South Dakota has essentially discontinued their stocking program due to poor forage base. Montana has never had much luck spawning salmon in Ft. Peck. Our salmon fishery is completely dependent on stocking. If Lake Sakakawea salmon are lost, we may not be able to find disease free eggs to supplement our own. Result? A long slow rebuilding process.

As for the boat ramps, what do you think the low water means to lake access on Lake Sakakawea? Some might think we're in good shape since we built all those low water ramps back in the late 1980s and early 1990s during the last drought. Think again! Most of those low water ramps have been flooded by the lake for ten years or more. Many of them are heavily silted in. You may not even be able to find them let alone find a trail to get to them.

Remember the million dollars of ramp work done in 2002? Almost all of those ramps were out of the water before freeze-up last fall. As it stands now, we may only have a handful of useable ramps at ice-out this spring (if we're lucky).

The shiny spot in the ramp situation is that both Governor Hoeven and Senator Dorgan fully realize the problem and are hard at work on a fix. Governor Hoeven has pressed, and the Corps has tentatively agreed, to do more in dedicating additional funds, personnel and equipment to work on Lake Sakakawea ramps. I attended a meeting in the Governor's office just before Christmas to discuss expected ramp problems. All totaled there are about 47 public ramps on Lake Sakakawea. Some are just low water or alternate ramps. Bob Froelich of the Game and Fish Department and Linda Phelps of the Corps' Riverdale office had looked over the situation and currently estimate it will take \$800,000 to do the work needed up and down Lake Sakakawea to provide access at lake elevation 1819 feet msl. The Corps said they have only \$50,000 budgeted for Lake Sakakawea ramp work this fiscal year and they are authorized to only work on their category one ramps. By my count there are nine category one ramps on Lake Sakakawea. I hope Dorgan's and Hoeven's demands on the Corps will bear fruit.

Senator Dorgan has been working to find extra money in the federal budget for Lake Sakakawea ramps as he did successfully in 2002. I understand the best we can hope for this time around may be \$200,000 to be directed to the Corps for ramp work. This would be cost shared with local ramp managers and the Game and Fish Department so it could result in about \$300,000 of ramp work. Still, that's way short of the estimated need. More solid information will be available soon on Senator Dorgan's success.

Back to my point about squeaky wheels getting the grease, er, I mean water. Clearly, the downstream interests have been able to apply a tremendous amount of pressure on the Corps to secure water for navigation. North Dakota had some relief last spring from the lawsuits North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana brought against the Corps to protect spawning. North Dakota's lawsuit is still "perking" in the courts. I hope this ongoing effort can bail us out again this year but we can't rely on that alone.

In July of 2001, twenty-five agricultural, navigational, utility, industrial and business-related entities in downstream states united to form the Coalition to Protect the Missouri River. Their prime purpose is to ensure the Missouri River is managed for downstream flood control and navigation. These folks are heavy-weights with money and other resources. They take Missouri River management very seriously and are bringing lawsuits of their own. They squeak very loud and they obviously have the Corps' and the President's attention.

By contrast, in North Dakota we have only the North Dakota Sportfishing Congress and the Friends of Lake Sakakawea to fight for recreation interests. While both are working with the governor and congressional delegation, they currently lack financial resources or membership numbers to do much on their own. How many of you belong to these organizations? I've seen the numbers and I doubt if many of you could raise your hand.

Personally, I think lack of involvement is a big problem and part of the reason we usually get what's left over

**PART OF THE PROBLEM – CONTINUE ON PAGE 3**

## GARRISON DAM AND VALLEY CITY NATIONAL FISH HATCHERIES

by Rob Holm

Fish production at the two Federal hatcheries in North Dakota has remained fairly steady over the past several years. The unusually wet conditions in the Eastern part of the State has expanded the fishery potential there and with that the opportunity for stocking fish. On the Western front, the lack of moisture is having a negative impact on the fisheries. Spawning conditions have been poor and stocking has been used to keep the fishery going.



This past year 6.6 million walleye were stocked out of Garrison Dam NFH, 5.3 million went to waters here in North Dakota. Just over a million pike were produced for stocking in North Dakota and Montana. Four hundred and seventy thousand chinook salmon were released in Lake Sakakawea. Forty-five thousand eight inch brown trout were released in the Sakakawea tailwaters. Eighty-four thousand ten inch rainbow trout were spread out across North Dakota.

Out of the Valley City Hatchery over a half a million black crappie were produced. Fifty thousand largemouth bass were produced for stocking—primarily in the west. Eighty-thousand tiger muskies were stocked in the Garrison Diversion Canal Lakes. A couple hundred thousand yellow perch were stocked in ponds in mid central North Dakota and in the Kulm Wetlands Management District. The Baldhill Dam NFH produced four hundred thousand pike for stocking waters in the east.

If you're interested in the economics, the walleye stockings run a penny a piece, pike are a cent and a half, salmon almost a quarter each, brown trout twenty-eight cents and the catchable ten inch rainbows are just under two bits. Fishing in North Dakota circulates 400 million dollars.

Stocking requests for 2003 look a lot like last year with the exception of the chinook request which was cut to 300,000 at best in anticipation of low water conditions on the lake. Overall the fishing on Lake Sakakawea will likely be good this year if you can float your boat, but without a change in reservoir operations we will lose this important fishery resource soon. It's time North Dakotans interested in maintaining this recreational fishery and the business it supports make their voices heard. If Corps of Engineers projections hold true, we will lose our coldwater habitat in the lake this summer, the smelt population plummet and our walleye and salmon will follow. □

## BIS-MAN REEL & REC

Errol Behm, President

Now that the weather may get warmer we hope everyone can get more active with the club activities scheduled for this year. The only way these functions can be successful is with VOLUNTEERS. The core group of any club must rely on many other people to get the job done. We hope to see great turnouts for each of the activities that clubs across the state have planned.

A couple of other items are presently a concern for North Dakota outdoors enthusiasts. The first is legislation being proposed concerning out of state folks wanting to fish and hunt here in our state. The second is the Missouri River, Lake Sakakawea & Lake Oahe water management by the Corps of Engineers and the lack of water which only Mother Nature controls. It behoves each of us to be aware of what is going on in each of these areas and don't hesitate to be involved in providing input so our interests are not neglected. Don't take a passive approach and hope "George" will do it!

Have a great year in the outdoors and good fishing. □

## PART OF THE PROBLEM — continue from Page 2

after the barge folks get their fill. A case in point. The Corps holds public meetings every fall to take input on their draft annual operating plan for the following year. Last September they were in Bismarck. The Sportfishing Congress testified, the Friends of Lake Sakakawea even had a PowerPoint presentation to illustrate recreation's needs. Governor Hoeven gave a great presentation on our behalf and three or four other people got up to express their opinions. Guess what, if squeaky wheels get the water, then the noise we made compared to the meetings in Omaha and Jefferson City maybe earned us about five gallons. In a democratic society where everyone has the chance (obligation) to participate in the process and where numbers count, we failed badly. We failed because almost no one who depends on the reservoirs for their recreation and/or their business bothered to speak up.

I often hear the excuse that the Corps is going to do whatever they please so there is no point in attending meetings or saying anything. Unfortunately, it often appears that way but I know we in North Dakota can make an impact. During the drought of the late 80s and early 90s, we forced the Corps to cut the navigation season short by five weeks. This year, they may shorten it five days — big deal. During the last drought, we forced the Corps to begin the process of updating their outdated Master Manual, we may see that completed this year. We also got them to put in low water ramps in several key locations.

We clearly missed a key opportunity with the annual operating plan meeting last September. That's bad enough but we also blew it over a year ago when only about 20 people (non-agency) showed up at the Corps Master Manual hearing. Only the Sportfishing Congress and a couple individuals spoke on behalf of angling interests. The folks downstream filled auditoriums and the hearings lasted well after midnight. Their squeaks were deafening.

I don't know how many more chances we will have to impact on the Corps' decisions about this year, or future, reservoir system operations. We may be able to do something through our elected officials. Both Hoeven and Dorgan are going to bat for us but they need to see that we support them. A call or a letter with encouragement to their offices would be welcome. Most importantly, watch for all opportunities to attend Corps management meetings and make a point to speak up. Membership in the Sportfishing Congress and Friends of Lake Sakakawea is a great place to start. They arranged a meeting with General Fastabend on February 18<sup>th</sup> to stress our situation and the need for his help to conserve water for our fishery and recreation. I hope you were able to be there.

As Governor Hoeven said in Garrison, the state will be looking at all alternative available to protect the interests of North Dakota citizens. □

## 2003 LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

by Tom Abrahamson



- **HB 1196** – relating to elimination of optional contributions on income tax returns for the nongame wildlife fund, and trees for the North Dakota program trust fund; and to provide an effective date. *NDSFC opposed. Failed to pass.*
- **HB 1224** – relating to the use of boats to take or retrieve waterfowl. *Monitoring.*
- **HB 1358** – relating to nonresident hunting and fishing licenses and fees; to provide an appropriation; to provide a statement of legislative intent with respect to a short-term lease program; and to provide an effective date. *Opposed as it was written. Amendments were adopted, placed on a calendar.*
- **HB 1465** – relating to a game and fish commission. *Opposed. Failed to pass.*
- **SB 2273** – relating to the designation of trout lakes. *Failed to pass.*
- **HCR 3040** – A concurrent resolution urging the President of the United States, the Secretary of the Army, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers to adopt and implement an updated Missouri River Master Water Control Manual that gives fair consideration to the substantial recreation values present on Lake Sakakawea, Lake Oahe, and the Missouri River in North Dakota. *We are urging to pass this.*

## LAKE SAKAKAWEA ACCESS UPDATE

by Joseph Hall

We are in the midst of a four-year drought that is severely strangling the water resources of the Missouri River and Kansas City River basin. The Corps is doing all it can do to balance the scarcity of these resources basinwide and meet federally required release levels to support all authorized purposes, namely: flood control, hydropower generation, fish and wildlife, water supply and water quality control, and recreation – as well as navigational needs on the lower Missouri River.

The main stem system is working just as it's designed. There is enough water in the system to accomplish authorized purposes.

**Projected Lake Levels** – The most recent projections as of 1 Feb. 03 shows the most likely runoff forecast for Lake Sakakawea for May as being 1819.5. The adjusted lower decile forecast for May shows an elevation of 1817.4.

**Boat Ramps** – The following information is based on a lake level of 1819. The Corps is planning to fund and have access to the following Cat. 1: boat ramps:

Beaver Bay (low-water), Deepwater Creek (low-water), Douglas Bay (low-water) Four Bears (low-water), Government Bay, Lunds Landing (3<sup>rd</sup> low-water), Reunion Bay (low-water), Tobacco Garden (2<sup>nd</sup> low-water) and Wolf Creek (low-water).

The Corps will assist with silt-removal for the following Cat. 2: boat ramps: Ft. Stevenson State Park (low-water), Indian Hills (low-water) and Sakakawea State Park (main ramp)

The ND Game and Fish and local sponsors are working to provide access at 16 additional areas.

**ACCESS UPDATE – CONTINUE ON PAGE 5**

## LAKE REGION ANGLERS • DEVILS LAKE, ND

by Al Freidig

Where does the time go. Currently the Club is working on several different functions and trying to get everything ready for the spring fishing season. Currently the Anglers have raffle tickets available for cash drawing; to be held every weekend starting; Memorial Day to Labor Day. Tickets are available from board members and also at Ed's Bait Shop.

This year there is also a large number of scheduled tournaments. Devils Lake will be hosting an RCL tournament being located at the Spirit Lake Casino. The Devils Lake Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a tournament at Grahams Island State Park. The Lake Region Anglers will have several tournaments this year on the weekends for members and guests to have fun and fish for some prizes. All Angler tournaments are limited to 50 boats and are headquartered at public ramps.



- ✓ Spring Northern ..... May 10 ..... Minnewaukan Ramp
- ✓ East Bay Outing ..... June 8 ..... East Bay Campground
- ✓ Devils Lake Open ... June 22 ..... Lakewood Ramp
- ✓ Adult Child ..... July 20 ... Grahams Island State Park
- ✓ Walleye Widow ..... Aug. 3 ..... Lakewood Ramp

One of the concerns that has developed with the increased interest in Devils Lake for open water fishing is the transfer of aquatic species from contaminated lakes. The North Dakota Game and Fish has issued mandates for tournament participants but has fallen short in this mandate to make it apply to regular visitors to our fishery. The Club feels that this issue is a huge concern and are asking all fishermen from outside the area to please help protect our fishery. This can be done by washing and sanitizing your boat prior to launching for a great fishing trip on Devils Lake. (*Remember Respect and Protect*)

We will be having our ANNUAL MEETING on Friday, April 4, at the KC Hall in Devils Lake with social hour starting at 6:00 p.m. and meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. We will have several guest speakers. Door prizes will be awarded throughout the evening and presentation of plaques to entitled recipients. □



Lure 'em for Life has been busy with ideas and information to re-group after loosing our 'home' for fish camp. Excited about changes and new places, we have so far found ourselves busy with many more workshops and classes to keep us busy. We recently were involved in the 4-H Activity Days held at Simle Middle School in Bismarck. The kids that attended were able to enjoy four different classes through the day with Lure 'em for Life offering North Dakota fish identification and knot tying and spinner making. Each child left the classes with happy faces as they treasured their new tackle boxes with their 'I made it myself' spinners inside. Our next workshop will be with the 4-H clubs in the Hettinger area in March. Other activities in the near future will include a women's beginning fishing workshop in Bismarck. We will be glad to notify you as other plans and information for fish camp are finalized. Please check our website frequently.

Sincerely,

Nanci Fennern, Secretary/Treasurer • Lure 'em for Life

**GAME AND FISH – CONTINUE FROM PAGE 1**

cally nothing wrong with this attitude but there are some inherent facts that need to be recognized. We are not a state with 10,000 lakes. We do not have blue ribbon trout streams. Nor do we have lakes within 20 miles of everyone who wants one. What we do have is a variety of fishing opportunities spread throughout the state and with the species of fish corresponding to the habitat available. And hopefully in the right combination where the majority of the angling public can enjoy fishing. My philosophy is to meet the expectation of the angling public. As an example, we can't maintain a good walleye population in a ten acre lake. The forage base just won't be large enough to maintain a tremendous predator such as walleye and the harvest won't allow a good balance. We do what we can to provide what the local angling public wants so we don't get the 'midnight stocker syndrome' that ultimately screws up a fishery but we aren't always successful. And we can't always provide the right species within a reasonable driving distance. It will always boil down to the right habitat, right management scheme and local acceptance. The ND Game and Fish Department's slogan for many years has been "Variety in hunting and fishing" and we're doing what we can to provide that.

The last issue I'll bring up is that of fishing tournaments. In the past ten years we've seen permitted fishing tournaments double in number and participants more than double. Although still having far less fishing tournaments than surrounding states we're also receiving more comments and complaints about the number of tournaments and how they are run. Before I go further I need to mention something that I've mentioned numerous times. It's not currently a biological issue. From comparisons of creel surveys and post-contest fishing reports on our major waters (Sakakawea, Oahe, Devils Lake), fishing tournaments account for less than 3% of the total walleye harvest in those waters. And that's assuming every single fish caught is killed, which we know doesn't occur because of the numerous live release tournaments. So let's put that issue aside. It's a social issue and one of some simply not liking tournaments or being hassled on the ramp or water by tournament anglers. A few years back I asked some individuals if they'd be interested in being part of a committee to review potential policy and rule items as they relate to fishing tournaments. I asked an advisory board member who I knew was interested in fishing, a pro tournament angler, an angler who used to fish tournaments but then decided it was not longer fun, a fishing guide and a representative from the Sport Fishing Congress. I mention this only to emphasize that I'm not making rules or policies on tournaments in a vacuum. Everything we've implemented to this point, whether it be a change in policy or administrative rule, has been discussed with this committee first. The latest go round in policies has brought some reaction from tournament organizers but most recognize the rationale behind it. It's meant to protect all anglers fishing North Dakota, whether they fish tournaments or not. In a nutshell, policies have been implemented on major waters to restrict the number of tournaments and determine who will receive the tournament permits should an excessive number apply, generally allow no live release tournaments in July and August, and allow for the cancellation of tournaments in those areas with low waters if the need arises. Not always popular policies but meant to fairly distribute the use of the resource.

I think I've gone on far enough in this article. I could have gone much further on any of these topics and am certainly willing to do so at any one of your future meetings. Don't hesitate to call, write or e-mail me if any of you have questions, concerns or topics. As many of you already know, I have an open door policy and if you can catch me, we'll discuss it. □

**ACCESS UPDATE – CONTINUE FROM PAGE 4**

The following areas will not be usable this season: Little Missouri, Lewis & Clark State Park, West Totten Trail, Little Field Bay and Wolf Creek East.

**Current Information** – The Corps and the ND Game and Fish Department are currently working on a web site that will have updated information on usable boat ramps around Lake Sakakawea. This should be available sometime this spring. Question concerning lake access can also be answered by the Garrison Project Office in Riverdale at (701) 654-7411. □

**YOUTH FISHING TOURNAMENTS**

The Red River Area Sportsmen's Club, in partnership with Heitkamp Construction, hosted a Youth Ice Fishing Derby on Saturday, January 4, on Heitkamp Pond, located north of Wahpeton.

147 children participated in the catch-and-release tournament and enjoyed good fishing success, including walleyes up to 24", crappies and even a carp. Every participant won a door prize and enjoyed great food, including chili and deer sausage.

The Annual Youth River Fishing Derby is scheduled on **Saturday, May 3**, on the Red River at the Kidder Recreation Area. There will be door prizes for every contestant and trophies for over 30 categories. River fishing is excellent at this time, and catches will



include walleyes, drum, northern pike, suckers, smallmouth bass, carp, catfish, goldeyes and bullheads, to name a few. Sturgeon have even been caught before. Youths are divided into age 12 & under and 13 & older divisions. There are even fun categories like 'Strangest Catch.'

A Catfish Tournament for both youths and adults is scheduled during Carousel Days on **Saturday, June 14**, at the Kidder Recreation Area. Adults will have a chance at cash prizes.

And how about a tournament just for rough fish? A Carp & Sucker Derby is scheduled on **Wednesday, August 6**, from 1:00-5:00 p.m. on the Red River. Kids can register at the Henry Knight Masons Shelter, located near the world's largest catfish – 'Wahpper.' Trophies will be awarded for place winners.

The Sportsmen's Club, in partnership with the Parks & Recreation Department, participates in the ND Game & Fish Rod & Reel Loaner Program. Call Parks & Rec to borrow rods & reels, both during open-water and ice-fishing seasons.

*Wayne Beyer  
Red River Area Sportsmen's Club*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

- President ..... Duaine Ash (701-662-3989)
- Vice President..... Rick Brueckner (701-271-0118)
- Past President ..... Bruce Hagen (701-662-2266)
- Treasurer ..... Rick Eagleson (701-235-6536)
- Directors At-Large ..... Paul Haug (701-232-0944)
- John Haskins (701-572-7347)
- Paul Kriege (701-483-0479)
- Don Baasch (701-845-1693)
- Executive Secretary ... Marie Hoerner (701-223-8067)

# THERE'S STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

By Jill Denning Gackle  
Member of Friends of Lake Sakakawea

I would have laughed if anyone had told me three years ago that we would be hosting a meeting with the prime decision-makers in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Three years ago, we were just a small group of concerned area residents who were going to have one meeting with U.S. Sen. Byron Dorgan to share our story. Dorgan responded with great concern and we began to build a strong relationship with Bob Valeu, state manager. With their encouragement we formally established Friends of Lake Sakakawea and set out on a mission of building on the recreational, economic and environmental opportunities of Lake Sakakawea.

Today, fisherman, cabin owners, chambers, city governments and caring people have joined and came out in numbers when we hosted a meeting in Garrison Feb. 18. About 240 people from all over the state came and listened and spoke on the economic, fishery and tourism ramifications of low lake levels to General David Fastabend and Colonel Kurt Ubbelohde. We may not have liked everything we heard, but his dialogue was excellent. You've since read the news reports, a lawsuit may have been filed and North Dakota continues to push forward to save this great lake of ours.

The battle isn't over with the legal filings. We need to keep up the fight. We need to remind people that we have access to the lake this year and that fishing is great. We have to tell our story again and again.

If you would like membership information on the Friends of Lake Sakakawea, it is available at [www.lakesakakawea.com](http://www.lakesakakawea.com). We discovered that a small group of concerned lake lovers can turn into a large group that can truly make a difference. *Make a splash-join us.* □

# GREAT PLANERS TROUT & SALMON CLUB

by Mike Anderson

Great Planers Trout & Salmon Club newly-elected officers are:

- Kip Grieg, President ..... 223-1743
- Tony Goetz, President-Elect ..... 387-4452
- Sec/Treas, Barb Fischer ..... 255-0419
- Blair Ihmels, Derby Chairman ..... 222-4259
- Eugene Gerber, Program Chair ..... 258-5476
- Della Schick, Newsletter Editor ..... 222-2677

The hottest issue, and draw the most attention of the club this year will low water levels on Lake Sakakawea. Low water levels means less cold water habitat and a major risk to Lake Sakakawea's smelt, trout, and salmon populations. Also, lake access will be a problem. It sounds like very few ramps will be available at ice out this spring. We will be keeping in close touch with the Game & Fish department and assisting where we can to minimize the negative impact on boat access.

The Great Planers is faced with another significant challenge. The family of a very loyal and active club member who recently passed away, designated as his memorial a Take a Kid Fishing fund to be administered by the Great Planers. Much of the attention of the Executive Boards attention in the ensuing months will be devoted to deciding how best to use these funds in concert with the family's wishes. Currently, we are taking inventory of other kids fishing events that are taking place in this area.. We would be interested in what other clubs are doing in the arena of kids fishing & outdoor mentoring.

Annual club events that have been scheduled include club outings on July 12 & 13; August 2 & 3; August 30 & 31; and the Annual Derby on August 23. All these events take place on the east end of Lake Sakakawea. Anyone interested more information on club events can contact one of the officers listed above or visit our web site hosted by the North Dakota Sportfishing Congress at [www.ndsportfishingcongress.org](http://www.ndsportfishingcongress.org). □

# FM WALLEYES UNLIMITED INC.

by Chad Maloy

We have been busy the past couple of months. In January we helped put on an Ice Fishing derby with the YMCA. There were about 80 kids, 200 adults along with a dozen folks from the local Veterans Home. Over 600 tickets were sold for the event and the proceeds went to the Y-Camp on Lake Cormorant which is celebrating it's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The club is hosting a booth at the Red River Valley Sportsman Show. The show runs from Feb. 27 thru March 2.

Past president Ron Sahr was chosen to receive the first annual FM Walleyes Distinguished Member Award. This award is given out to the club member who best displays the ability to unselfishly work towards the club goals in a spirit embodied by membership in FM Walleyes Unlimited, Inc. A big "Thank You" to Ron for all his efforts over the years!

**Babe Winkelman** will be our guest speaker for our March 20 Anglers Night being held at the Doublewood Inn. This event is being sponsored by WDAY, Gate City Bank, DL Marine, Rusco Windows, and Miller Lite. Everyone is welcome and there is no cost to attend. This meeting starts around 6:30. Come early to get a seat!

**Bruce Samson** will be the guest speaker for our April 17 meeting. Brice has won the past two PWT Tournaments held on Devils Lake and also was the RCL Champion winning \$300,000 at Red Wing. This meeting will be at the Doublewood Inn and starts at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome and there is no cost to attend.

Our annual **Dinner Dance** will be held on March 8 at the new Courtyard Marriott in Moorhead, MN. This event is a relaxing evening for couples and individuals to have a nice dinner, win some prizes and enjoy themselves. Contact Russ Tweiten (702-729-2940) or Chad maloy (701-293-2491) for tickets. □

# SOUTHWEST ANGLERS • DICKINSON, ND

Fellow Anglers,

Well as spring approaches we look with optimism toward another devastating ice-out with minimal if any places to launch. On a brighter note we have a lot of exciting happenings with the club. Our Dickinson Dike project is still in motion with much appreciation to Emil and the committee putting in a ton of hours putting out fires that continue to pop up! Also our annual sport show is just around the corner March 21-23. We look forward to all the new vendors and ideas that come with a new season.

Our club has a new president! We welcome Harley Schepp to the office, as Bruce, Brian, Cordel, and Bernie continue on in their positions. Thanks so much doing a great job! We encourage all to get involved with your clubs, the Congress, & Friends of Lake Sak. Our voices CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!! Thanks to all involved!! We appreciate it.

Well, that's about all from the outskirts...pray for abundant run-off!!

SWAA, Paul Kriege

# ANNUAL DUES AND SPONSORSHIP NOW DUE

This newsletter will serve as a notice to the Club Members and the Individual Members (who have not already paid their dues) that the annual dues are now due. (Your membership renewal date is at the top of your mailing label listed as the month/year, e.g., 04/03.)

Club Member's dues are \$50 and were due on or before the annual meeting that is held in April of each year. To maintain your club's voting rights for 2003, please complete the *Club Membership Application* in this newsletter and return it along with your payment to North Dakota Sportfishing Congress, P.O. Box 2472, Bismarck, ND 58502.

**NOTE:** Don't forget to list the names, addresses, and e-mail addresses of the club delegates.

Individual Member's dues are a minimum of \$5. Please complete the *Individual Membership Application* in this newsletter and return it along with your payment to the same address indicated above.

You will note there is a checkoff for payment of multiple years sponsorship for individual members. For convenience, an individual may choose to prepay several years' sponsorships at one time.

## NOTE

If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, please email Marie Hoerner at mhoerner@btinet.net with a Subject of "*Sportfishing Newsletter by Email*".

The year/date above your name on the mailing label indicates your membership renewal date. Your support is needed!



P.O. Box 2472  
Bismarck, ND 58502

- \$5 - 1 Year
- \$15 - 3 Years
- \$25 - 5 Years

Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Club Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_



P.O. Box 2472  
Bismarck, ND 58502

## CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Club Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Current President \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date Paid \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

***Each Club Member is represented on the Executive Board by two delegates. Please provide the following information on your current delegates:***

### Delegate 1

### Delegate 2

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_)-\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_)-\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

# Ninth Annual SPORTSMAN'S SMOKER AND RAFFLE

Saturday, April 12, 2003 • Elks Club, Bismarck, ND

- ✓ Social and Raffles Begin at 6:00 pm
- ✓ Prime Rib Dinner Served at Approximately 7:30 pm
- ✓ Live Auction & More Raffles Following Dinner
- Attendance Open to Public • Advance Ticket Sales Only



**Cash Door Prizes:**    **1<sup>st</sup> \$500**            **3<sup>rd</sup> \$50**  
    **2<sup>nd</sup> \$100**            **4<sup>th</sup> \$50**



[Need Not Be Present to Win Cash Door Prizes]

- ✓ **Approximately \$4,000 of Fishing, Hunting, & Camping Equipment will be raffled off throughout the evening.**

**For Tickets Contact:    Mike Anderson (701) 224-9048 or Jim Nagel (701) 222-1620**

P.O. Box 2472  
Bismarck, ND 58502



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