



P.O. Box 2472 • Bismarck, ND 58502 • www.ndsportfishingcongress.org

Volume 4

May 2004

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Duaine Ash

First of all, I would like to thank all of you that bought tickets and attended our Annual Fund Raiser and banquet which was held on April 3 at the Bismarck Elks Lodge. The Elks Lodge did an excellent job preparing the meal—it was a very delicious Prime Rib supper. Each year we try to make improvements and so far we have been able to accomplish it. I would like to thank all the people that took time to make sure that we had a successful fund raiser.

This past year has been a busy one, with the Missouri River system facing its worst drought since the dam was built. We have been working with the Corps of Engineers to try and conserve some of the water that passes through the system. I feel we have made a difference, but we cannot stop our efforts. It appears to me that there are a lot of people in North Dakota that do not care what happens to our water or feel that their voice will not be heard. I for one do not believe this. We are lucky to have the talented individuals in various federal, congressional and state positions that are more than willing to attend and work with us and to continue the fight to keep what is ours (water).

We will be working with the ND Game & Fish to make sure that Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) doesn't get introduced into our state waters. It is going to take all of us to make sure that when we take our boats to other waters (in-state and out-of-state) that we inspect and disinfect our boats to make sure that we do not introduce any foreign material into our lake. Each year, ANS is found in lakes closer to ND. If you notice unwanted riders (ANS) on visiting & local boat trailers, please bring it to the attention of the owners that they need to



remove and disinfect their boat before launching in our waters. The NDG&F is doing a great job of getting the word out, but they cannot do it by themselves. The NDG&F has produced a video to try and educate the public. If you would like to show it at your meetings or gathering to try and educate the public, contact a NDG&F office in your area – they will assist you in obtaining one. With all of our help, we can keep ANS from spreading to all our waters.

As you can see, we are involved with many issues. We are always looking for individuals that would like to be involved with state fishing issues. Our membership dues are very reasonable and by you being a member it helps to get people to listen to us when we can boast of a large membership.

Til next time, get out and enjoy the great outdoors. Have a little patience at Lake Sakakawea boat ramps this year, as access is going to be limited. Help your fellow boaters load and unload their boats – things will go a lot smoother and faster with us helping each other.

NOTE: Please visit the North Dakota Sportfishing Congress website at www.ndsportfishingcongress.org for the minutes of the April 3, 2004 meeting, as well as past minutes and newsletters.



Pictured (left to right): Lynn Schlueter, Game & Fish; newly-elected Director Emil Berard; Past President Bruce Hagen; President Duaine Ash; Director Richard Fink; Secretary Marie Hoerner; newly-elected Director Ed Dosch; Fund Raiser Chairman Mike Anderson; Director Paul Haug and Treasurer Rick Engleson.



EXECUTIVE BOARD

President..... Duaine Ash, Devils Lake (701-662-3989)
 Past President .. Bruce Hagen, Devils Lake (701-739-8689)
 Vice President Paul Kriege, Dickinson (701-483-0479)
 Treasurer Rick Eagleson, Fargo (701-235-6536)
 Directors At-Large Paul Haug, Fargo (701-232-0944)
 Don Baasch, Valley City (701-845-1693)
 Emil Berard, Dickinson (701-225-3072)
 Ed Dosch, Devils Lake (701-395-4302)
 Richard Fink, Bismarck (701-258-6181)
 Exec. Secretary .. Marie Hoerner, Bismarck (701-223-8067)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	Page 1
Protecting ND's Precious Lady – Senator Conrad	2
Access to Lake Sakakawea – Senator Dorgan	2
Game & Fish Perspectives	3
Better Missouri River Management, Gov. Hoeven; Dakota Anglers, Jamestown; It's New; It's Not Good – LR Schlueter	4
Southwest Anglers and Bowman-Haley Anglers Associations	5
Lake Region Anglers, Devils Lake; Red River Area Sportsmen's Club; Great Planers; Barnes County Wildlife	6
ND Walleye Production; Annual Dues/Sponsorship	7
Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery; Fund Raiser	8

PROTECTING NORTH DAKOTA'S PRECIOUS LADY

By Senator Kent Conrad



Senator
Kent Conrad

Our home, North Dakota, is blessed with an abundance of beauty, in the land, water and sky. This beauty has not gone unrecognized and our state has become a destination of choice for outdoor enthusiasts from across the nation – and Lake Sakakawea is one of the main draws. The pristine lake offers some of the best fishing in the country. Northern pike, salmon and world-class walleye are just some of the bounty that can be found in the lake, one of the largest man-made reservoirs in the nation.

But the future of Lake Sakakawea is threatened. Gross mismanagement of the Missouri River by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has caused record low lake levels, wreaking havoc on our fisheries, leaving boat ramps high and dry and threatening the businesses that rely on sportfishing.

For years, the Corps has controlled the flow of the Missouri River, draining Lake Sakakawea to benefit the small down-river barge business. Our state has suffered millions of dollars in losses to our recreation industry and seen serious damage to our precious drinking water supplies. One only needs to look at Lake Sakakawea for evidence of the Corps' mistreatment of the river.

Over the years, I have walked much of the lakes 1,530 miles of shoreline. I was just in the Garrison area and what I saw there was disturbing. With ramps more than a mile from the lake's edge, anglers can't get their boats on the water. One-time lake front cabins are no longer along the shoreline and thriving fish and wildlife habitats are drying up at a record pace.

Last month, after 14 years of study, the Corps finally released its long awaited Missouri River Master Water Control Manual, explaining their management plans for the river. Unfortunately, the Master Manual only reveals that the Corps plans to continue draining the water out from under North Dakota's fishing and boating industries. The Corps has failed again to recognize the economic realities along the Missouri River by letting barge traffic – which accounts for only \$7 million in activity on the river – dictate policy to the detriment of the \$90 million upper basin tourism and recreation business.

Our state's economy relies on Lake Sakakawea and I will continue to work to protect the lake and North Dakota's marina owners, outfitters, fishermen and guides who depend on it to run their businesses.

It is time for the Corps to take bold action and fundamentally change course on the river's management. I am devoted to correcting the damage being caused by the Corps' mismanagement, restoring Lake Sakakawea's fisheries, and bringing equity to the river's management.

A native of Bismarck, Kent Conrad has been serving the people of North Dakota in the U.S. Senate for close to 18 years. To learn more about Senator Conrad's work for North Dakota, please visit www.conrad.senate.gov.

ACCESS TO LAKE SAKAKAWEA BETTER THAN ANTICIPATED

It's hard to dream of netting that prized walleye when the prospects for even launching a boat in Lake Sakakawea appear dim. That was the scenario earlier this year, when low lake levels caused by consecutive years of drought and poor management of the Missouri River led to predictions that *zero* of the lake's 78 boat ramps would be accessible this year.

That dim outlook, however, recently got a bit brighter for North Dakota's sport fishermen.

U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan secured \$200,000 in federal funds through his position on the Senate Appropriations Committee for the Corps to use in collaboration with Friends of Lake Sakakawea to upgrade and repair ramps on the lake. But in March, the Army Corps of Engineers announced it was going to target part of that money toward ramps it was already in charge of maintaining—instead of using the money to repair even *more* ramps.

Dorgan, in a letter General Robert Flowers, called for the Corps to “change course” and allocate the money where it was intended to go: “To the North Dakotans and other visitors who want access to Lake Sakakawea for recreational and other purposes, especially in light of the upcoming Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Celebration,” he said.

The good news: Dorgan announced March 26 the Corps reversed its decision. And while Lake Sakakawea still faces access problems, Bob Frohlich of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department said he now expects 23 boat ramps to be usable by Memorial Day.

“This decision by the Corps will ensure some better boat access for people who enjoy Lake Sakakawea, and that's good news for the entire area as we approach the summer boating season,” Dorgan said. “I'm glad the Corps is moving in the right direction. But we need to continue pressuring them on broader water issues related to the Missouri River so that low lake levels will no longer be the perennial problem they've become.”

Jill Denning Gackle, Secretary of Friends of Lake Sakakawea, thanked Dorgan and others for their work to secure additional funding for ramp repair, but warned that without further action the state's tourism industry is at risk.

“Thanks to our congressional delegation's hard work and everyone's spirit of working together, lake access this summer will be challenging but possible,” Gackle said.

Frohlich said the lake level is expected to peak at 1,817 feet in June. These record lows—which vary from year to year based on drought, snow pack and dam releases—mean it's hard for regional businesses to grow a tourism industry based around the lake.

“One year you're building a high-level ramp and the other year we're chasing the water with low-water ramps,” Gackle said. “Recreation isn't just about getting a jet ski on the lake. Recreation means tourism, which is the number 2 industry—a \$100 million a year industry—in North Dakota.”

Meanwhile, Dorgan has been critical of the Corps' recently released Master Manual for Missouri River water management, calling it “essentially the same as the old Corps plan, favoring the downstream users over the upstream users.”

“I believe the Corps should do more than simply reprint the 1979 Master Manual,” Dorgan said. “The people of the Missouri River Basin deserve and expect more.”



Senator
Byron Dorgan

GAME AND FISH PERSPECTIVES

by Terry Steinwand

As I wrote the last article for the ND Sport Fishing Congress we were just entering into ice fishing season. We hadn't yet encountered the brutally cold weather that comes with living in North Dakota. Overall, it wasn't a bad winter in most areas of the state. It didn't get that cold (or at least didn't stay cold for very long). But we didn't get the much needed snow we needed in the mountains either. We've all heard the stories about access on Lakes Sakakawea and Oahe. It's certainly not a perfect situation but we will have between 20 and 25 access sites available within a couple months. Realistically, that's not too far from what we have in a normal year. Although we continue to fight the battles I've come to the conclusion it doesn't do any good to get depressed or angry about it. We have to remain aggressive, which I believe North Dakota is doing, and we also have to take advantage of every opportunity or opening that comes along.

I'm probably going to be "all over the board" during the course of this article since there are so many things happening at this time of the year. And there's so much I'd like to see get done but we only have so much funding and a finite number of people to work with. Statewide clubs have been nothing short of excellent to work with over the years and it's really appreciated. It's kind of like a marriage though. After a period of time we sometimes forget to show our appreciation for all the hard work that's been done simply because we almost come to expect it. Don't get me wrong. We don't necessarily expect clubs across the state to come through on everything but what I'm saying is that we sometimes forget to say "Thanks. We really appreciate your help." I'd give some examples of all the help given but I'm afraid that I'd forget some very important contribution and I don't want to do that. Rest assured we are very appreciative of the help and support we receive from statewide clubs and the North Dakota Sport Fishing Congress.

There never seems to be a dull moment in our lives. Aside from the massive amount of time spent on Missouri River System lawsuits in the past year we have our 'regular' duties with which to contend. To give an idea of a year in the life of a fisheries person in North Dakota, this would be the chronology of a typical biologist starting at spring spawning. Beginning in early March, prepare equipment for spawning to insure everything is in working order. There's nothing more frustrating then getting out in the field and finding you've forgotten something or a piece of equipment doesn't work. Just about the time everything is put in order, nets are set out to catch pike. Depending on the location this can last any where from one to two weeks. In order to make the best use of time you also set nets in suspected winterkill lakes to assess the severity of the kill. Maybe once a week you get back into the office to check your mail and e-mail and hopefully respond to the most critical ones. Once pike spawning is over you once again make sure all equipment is working and go on to finding walleye. You might find a few days to trap and transport some yellow perch or bluegills to lakes that you've found were hit a little harder than expected on winterkill. This also takes some time and effort since just when you think you have a good supply of perch they don't show up in the numbers needed. Or if you find the supply, the walleye start running and that consumes a minimum of half your day for about the next two to three weeks. Forget



about weekends off. Food and sex are about the only things fish think about so this time of the year it's simply sex. If you want to get them you better be there when they're ready! By the time you're done with walleye spawning you get to go back to the office for a few days and try to catch up on the massive amount of mail, phone calls, and e-mails (many of them probably from me!).

Temporary workers begin to arrive in mid-May and provide some much needed help, since many of the technicians are getting ready to distribute pike fingerlings across the state. Many of them have already spent hundreds of hours distributing trout but that's only the beginning of the production season. You provide orientation to the seasonal workers and set out the work schedule for basically the remainder of the summer. By that time it's time to go out and start sampling lakes in your particular district. Although this sounds simple there's an awful lot of travel time. And once the lakes are being sampled there's an abundance of data to be collected—all in the name of providing information to manage the lake as best as possible for recreational fishing. This goes until the end of July. Given the fact that there are over 350 managed lakes in the state we can't begin to net them all. It's a matter of prioritizing and getting the best 'bang for the buck'. We can net about 8 to 10 small lakes per week if we're lucky. Sometimes a few more but not many.

Beginning in August, we start to check select lakes to assess natural reproduction and stocking success. Again, we can't net them all. During the course of all this netting, the technicians are in and out hauling walleye, perch, bluegill, crappie, bass, and muskie to lakes across the state. By the time fall reproduction sampling is done (and sometimes it's not completed) we lose the seasonal workers, which most of the time are college students in the fish and wildlife field.

By the time September rolls around, we've about netted all we are able to and it's the beginning of some well earned time off. Some take time to go hunting. Others go fall fishing. In some areas, like Sakakawea, spawning starts again with Chinook salmon.

When the field season is over (what is the open water season for us) it's time to start looking at the data accumulated over the last four to five months. Although this sounds easy it can be an intense and laborious process. This can easily be a three to four month job along with the associated reports. Interspersed amongst the data analysis, reports, and phone calls are meetings (which also occur during the summer). By the time this is all completed we're back to March and preparing for another year.

I've made this sound relatively simple and certainly doesn't cover everything we do, like ramp construction, maintenance activities, coordination for eggs, fingerlings, boating, aquatic nuisance species work, bait vendors etc. But hopefully it gives you a snapshot view of what we do during the course of the year. Needless to say, there's never a dull moment! The bottom line is, you have a tremendous group of dedicated fisheries people in North Dakota and they do put in some long hours trying to make (or keep) the fisheries as good as possible.

Now onto more contemporary topics. Although we appear to be in a drought I don't believe we're in crisis stage yet. I know there are some that would disagree with me and there is cause for alarm in some instances. But I want to stay positive. I know things could always be better but they could also be worse. I believe we'll have a relatively good

BETTER MISSOURI RIVER MANAGEMENT NEEDED TO PROTECT NORTH DAKOTA'S RECREATION INDUSTRY

By North Dakota Governor John Hoeven

The Missouri River provides many economic, recreational and environmental opportunities for North Dakota. However, the current low water levels and lack of aggressive drought conservation measures by the Army Corps of Engineers are threatening municipal water supplies, fisheries and the recreation industry.



Lake Sakakawea is North Dakota's number one recreational fishery in terms of angler participation and use. The annual economic value associated with open water fishing is estimated at more than \$39 million. To sustain that impact on local and state economies, adequate water levels must be maintained to protect the quality and quantity of our fisheries, as well as access to them.

Normal target elevations for Lake Sakakawea are between 1,837.5 and 1,846 feet mean sea level (msl). Currently, we are far below those levels, creating challenges for communities, businesses and fisheries up and down the river. As a result, proper water management is critical to sustaining this important resource long term.

Over the past year, I have invited several high-ranking Corps officials to North Dakota to see firsthand the effect of low water levels on the Missouri River. Brigadier General William Grisoli, Assistant Secretary John Woodley and Colonel Kurt Ubbelohde have toured the areas and met with state and local leaders, as well as the public, about the Corps' management plan.

In February, the Corps released a revised draft of the Missouri River Master Manual and final version of the Environmental Impact Statement. Some drought conservation measures were included, such as shortening the navigation season by thirty days and implementing minimum service flows. Despite these additions, the plan doesn't go far enough.

Instead of implementing a management proposal agreed to by seven of the eight Missouri river basin states, the Corps is putting forward new rules that include some drought conservation – like the new dry season water management measures – but not enough to raise and stabilize water levels. We will continue to pursue every means available with the Corps, the Administration and Congress to provide better river management.

Despite the low water levels and our on-going discussions with Corps officials, lakes Oahe and Sakakawea, and the upper and central Missouri River, are accessible and the fish population is strong. The river continues to provide legendary fishing and recreational opportunities. □

DAKOTA ANGLERS — JAMESTOWN

The Dakota Anglers is a club that promotes conservation, education and fellowship. This year's projects include putting in 1-2 new docks at the Jamestown Reservoir. Past projects have been putting in new docks, fish cleaning stations and toilets, at Jamestown as well as surrounding area lakes.



Some of the clubs events planned for the summer are the 28th Annual Walleye-northern tournament which will be held on May 22-23 at the Jamestown Reservoir with 76 teams participating. Other summer outings the club has planned this year are:

- June 5 Little Britches Derby at Jamestown Reservoir
- June 19 Fish Fry at Spiritwood Lake
- July 10 Hog Roast at Jamestown Reservoir
- August 14 Steak Fry at Jamestown Reservoir
- September 18 Turkey Roast at Jamestown Reservoir

All outings include a fishing derby with a potluck afterwards.

IT'S NEW; IT'S NOT GOOD

by LR Schlueter, ND Game & Fish

Last fall, zebra mussel larval were collected below Gavins Point Dam and Ft. Randall Dam. With larval sampled below the dams, it means that adults are living somewhere above these dams. In addition, a large number of *Corbicula*, the exotic Asian clam, were found in a water intake pipe near Yankton, SD. All of these locations are on the Missouri River.

Minnesota found more lakes with infestations of Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels in 2003. There are now lakes with these problem plants within 100 miles of our border. To add to the problem, there are zebra mussel infestations in Minnesota and those are not that far away.

A real concern is that these waters and all of these infestations of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) are within easy driving distance of North Dakota. ANS are moved by hitching rides with anglers, hunters, boaters, and other outdoor recreators. Someone could unknowingly bring these undesirable creatures here. Once established in our waters, it's another new infestation, another source for the transfer of these creatures, more problems for anglers, and less fish in North Dakota waters for us to enjoy.

ANS can be prevented, just — LOSE the HITCHHIKER or LOSE the LAKE, it's YOUR CHOICE. Here is how you LOSE the HITCHHIKER:

If you are a water recreationist — boater, angler, water-skier, scuba-diver, sailor or canoeist - there are some important precautions you can do to prevent transporting harmful exotic species from one lake or river to another. In some states and provinces it is illegal to transport harmful exotic species.

- ✓ **Inspect** your boat, trailer, and boating equipment (anchors, centerboards, rollers, axles) and remove any plants and animals that are visible *before* leaving any water body.
- ✓ **Drain** water from the motor, lower unit, live well, bilge, and transom wells
- ✓ **Powerwash** the hull and trailer to remove small plant fragments, mud or any attached organism. Wash the inside of the boat to remove mud that might be hiding small plants or creatures.
- ✓ **Bury** your bait bucket contents on land or place them in the appropriate receptacle *before* leaving the water body. Never release live bait into a water body, or release aquatic animals from one water body into another.
- ✓ **Wash/dry** your boat, tackle, downriggers, trailer, and other boating equipment to kill harmful species that were not visible at the boat launch. This can be done on your way home or once you have returned home. Some aquatic nuisance species can survive more than 2 weeks out of water, so it is important to:
 - rinse your boat and equipment with *hot* (at least 110° F) tap water; or
 - spray your boat and trailer with high-pressure water; or
 - dry your boat and equipment for at least 5 days, before transporting to another water body; or
 - rinse with a disinfecting solution of one part bleach to 20 parts water.
- ✓ **Learn** what these organisms look like (at least those you can see). If you suspect a new infestation of an exotic plant or animal, report it to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department office nearest you. □

SOUTHWESTERN NORTH DAKOTA ACTIVITIES

Southwest Anglers and Bowman-Haley Anglers Associations

By Emil Berard

My first ten years of fish management in southwestern North Dakota provided many opportunities to promote angling through the volunteer efforts of these two outstanding organizations. Combined contributions account for over 5,000 hours of volunteer labor in rough fish removal (trap and/or enumerate nearly two million pounds), perch trap and transport (stock more than 100,000 fish from private dams), Christmas tree habitat (a dozen reefs and 10,000 trees) and shoreline erosion control (18,000 trees planted) projects. Their community service, organizational and fund-raising efforts provided cost-share for numerous boat ramps, docks, fish cleaning stations, handicap fishing piers, a modern camping area and a marina. They have also sponsored dozens of angling seminars, Pathway to Fishing, Take-A-Kid Fishing, Lure-Em for Life, Family Fishing Fair programs, legislative forums and hosted many Game & Fish Department meetings.



All of this was just training!!! Truth is, none of this would have ever been accomplished without them. In the last two years, their challenges have expanded to the Save Our Lakes (SOL) program and now the ever-present threat of Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS). Last year alone, six significant SOL projects were completed in the southwest at Fish Creek, Raleigh Reservoir, North Lemmon Lake, Belfield Dam, Camel Hump Dam, the Dickinson Dike and Bowman-Haley Reservoir. As it turned out, actual construction of these projects was the easy task.

The Southwest Anglers spawned the Dike project idea nearly three years ago, which was before SOL funding became available. An idea grew over time into what was to be our SOL demonstration project for lake rehabilitation. Plans included watershed clean-up, lake excavation and recreational facility development components. Unfortunately, over time the project was delayed by partnership agreements and had to be down-sized twice due to legal spending limitations set by state law. What a steep learning curve! Tenacity prevailed, and a contract was awarded in July, 2003 with construction completed in December. Today the lake is full of water and fish, much to the delight of everyone involved, especially our young anglers. This project cost was approximately \$350,000 (one-fourth of the original estimate), half of which came from the local sponsors and the remainder from SOL.

The Bowman-Haley Anglers have also been involved for many years with reconstruction projects to reduce in-lake erosion. Many projects were designed to improve water clarity and ultimately improve/expand fish habitat diversity for the Bowman-Haley Reservoir fishery. Their primary obstacles were funding and a general lack of raw materials to include field stone for rip-rap. Partners cooperated through SOL in developing a mile of recycled concrete wave breaks to protect hundreds of acres of headwater aquatic habitat. These projects, in conjunction with the introduction of gizzard shad as a forage, have improved angling and lake use.

Terry Steinwand mentioned in the last newsletter that SOL won't be a quick fix, because it has taken decades for

many lakes to reach their current deteriorated status. Well, it won't be a cheap fix either, in terms of what it will cost to reclaim them, or lose them entirely for angling. The SOL program at least offers an optimistic opportunity to try to maintain a status quo.

Not all of our fishing takes place on Sakakawea, Devils Lake, or the state's 14 mid-sized reservoirs. It's our small lakes that represent angling opportunity distribution across the state. A conservative cost of twenty-thousand dollars per surface acre to reclaim a lake should be viewed as a bargain in the long-term when you consider the alternatives. However, a Department budget of one million dollars per biennium (2 years) for SOL won't reclaim many lakes, nor keep pace with our lake losses during tough times.

Last winter we had potential fish kills on roughly 50 active (long-term) lakes, or approximately 25% of the lakes we still depend upon. Many of these were smaller reservoirs which have the potential to be reclaimed. When we return to managing 200 lakes or fewer, will they winterkill every four to six years due to aging or will we be proactive in extending the angling opportunity they offer? This is one problem that Mother Nature can't resolve to appease human behavior.

The two angling associations mentioned, all the groups I've worked with over three decades, the Sportfishing Congress and the organizations they represent are truly owed a debt of gratitude for many accomplishments on behalf of North Dakota anglers. Will it be enough to sustain our angling heritage? Today's challenges might be the loss and impacts of smelt to the Missouri River system, or how we address ANS, or what needs to be done to protect/restore threatened lakes and fish species. I believe that whatever we do to retain what we currently have as angling teaching aids for young anglers (opportunity) will ultimately determine our success or failure to preserve this heritage. □

GAME AND FISH – CONTINUE FROM PAGE 2

year of fishing statewide. We suffered some winterkill situations but only a handful were considered severe. We never like to see these but also know it's what we have to contend with in North Dakota. I talked about the Save Our Lakes program in my last article and this program will ultimately resolve those issues given enough time and funding. Sakakawea should be good fishing this year but now I have to go into the 'not so positive' side. If we don't see relief in water levels we can't sustain the type of fishery we've all come to expect. That's why we are staying aggressive on this very important issue. Devils Lake has already shown some good, early fishing and I expect that to continue. Most smaller lakes are going to be like they've been in the past, which is good early but by about mid-June we'll see fishing taper off, mostly because they become more difficult to fish and not because the fish populations aren't there.



The difficult issues are still present but we're progressing toward resolution on all of those. I'm guessing there will be new ones on the horizon that we haven't yet been able to identify but I'm confident we'll be able to deal with them. But we can't do it without your help. Like a year in the life of a fishery biologist, this article has come full circle. At the beginning I thanked everyone for all their help and we will continue to need it in order to provide good fishing. □

LAKE REGION ANGLERS • DEVILS LAKE, ND

by Ed Dosch

This year looks as though it could be very busy at the boat ramps around Devils Lake. Overall the ramps look to be in good shape for the start of the year, but if the water continues to rise who knows what could happen. The Lake Region Anglers are working with the NDG&F, Devils Lake Access Committee and other entities of the Lake Region to expand the East Bay Ramp. Black Tiger Bay ramp will have work done to raise the ramp and parking area.

With the increased interest in fishing the waters of Devils Lake, there is a concern in the transfer of aquatic species from contaminated lakes. This is a huge concern for the club, and ask that all who come to fish the waters of DL, to wash and sanitize their boats completely before putting your boat in the waters of Devils Lake, and remember, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

We will have our club outing again this year with all tournaments limited to 50 boats and headquarter at public ramps.

- ✓ Spring Northern May 15 – Minnewaukan Ramp
- ✓ East Bay Outing June 6 – Black Tiger Bay Camp Area
- ✓ Devils Lake Open June 20 – Lakewood Ramp
- ✓ Adult Child July 18 – Grahams Island State Park
- ✓ Walleye Widow August 8 – Lakewood Ramp

We are also doing our annual calendar raffle. Tickets are limited to 200, and the proceeds are used for Lake Access and other LRRA projects. If you purchased a ticket, thank you and good luck. □

RED RIVER AREA SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

Wayne Beyer

The Red River Area Sportsmen's Club of Wahpeton has three fishing tournaments planned this summer.

The **21st Annual Youth Fishing Derby** is scheduled on Saturday, May 1, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Kidder Recreation Area, located along the Red River in north Wahpeton. There are 33 different categories, including largest fish of several species, youngest fisherman to catch a fish, strangest catch, etc. There are rods & reels and bait for families without equipment. Every participant receives a fishing door prize.

The **6th Annual Catfish Tournament** is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 5, at the Kidder Recreation Area. A cash division has an entry fee of \$10, and there is also a youth division.

The **20th Annual Carp & Sucker Derby** is scheduled from 1-5 p.m. on Wednesday, August 4, at the Kidder Recreation Area. Trophies are awarded for the ten largest carp, with two age categories (12 & under and 13-18).

The Red River Area Sportsmen's Club has been a strong supporter of fisheries development in the southeast area of North Dakota. This year, the club will sponsor a fishing pier at Mooreton Lake, lighting and access along the Red River and door prizes for Lake Tewaukon and Silver Lake fishing tournaments, with proceeds benefiting their respective fisheries. □

GREAT PLANERS TROUT & SALMON CLUB

by Mike Anderson

Spring has sprung and we are headed full speed into summer. Likewise the Great Planers are in high gear preparing for another season on the water. Our annual meeting was held January 19 and a new slate of officers was elected as follows:

- ✓ President Tony Goetz
- ✓ President Elect Dale Twardoski
- ✓ Nominating Chair Kip Greig
- ✓ Sec./Treasurer Barb Fischer
- ✓ Program Chair Eugene Gerber
- ✓ Newsletter Editor Della Schick
- ✓ Derby Chairs Blair Ihmels and Mike Anderson

The year's summer events have been scheduled as follows:

- July 10-11 Monthly Outing Lake Sakakawea
- August 7-8 Monthly Outing Lake Sakakawea
- August 28 Annual Derby Lake Sakakawea
- Sept. 4-6 Monthly Outing Lake Sakakawea
- To be Announced Kids Fishing Day Garrison Dam Hatchery

The Executive Board has committed \$3,000 to the Lake Sakakawea State Park at Pick City to co-sponsor a fishing pier in Scoria (Rodeo) Bay. The bay, when there is water in it, is a haven for most species of fishing found in Lake Sakakawea that would be assessable from a fishing pier. The north shore of this bay is also the primitive camp site for the State Park which many families use throughout the summer. A fishing pier would be an excellent opportunity for families and young people who do not have a boat to experience fishing on Lake Sakakawea.

Everything is in place. Now all we need is WATER. As last year, the Great Planers are concerned over a lack of water, lake access, congestion on the ramp & the water, and stressed fish. We are committed to make the best of things. But, by the time the salmon begin the major run, late July and August, lake levels are projected to be declining towards new record lows with boat ramps approaching high and dry. So get your allotted time on the water early this season and make the best of it. □

BARNES COUNTY WILDLIFE

by Don Baasch

Barnes County Wildlife is in the process of installing a fish cleaning station at Lake Ashtabula near the Mel Reiman Rec. Area. This is the 4th station the club has put in around the lake. BCWF works with the Corps of Engineers, State Game and Fish and local contractors to make this happen. The club has improvement projects at two canoe areas, Faust Park, Chataqua Park, Little Dam and possibly Kathryn Dam, all on the Sheyenne River. There is a small boat ramp on Moon Lake maintained by G&F and BCWF. The County is asking the Wildlife Club to help out with two parks. One at Clausen Springs and the other is Little Yellowstone.

The summer fishing derby scheduled in June is full and will be held at the newly remodeled Crossing Resort. **Have a great summer!**



NORTH DAKOTA WALLEYE PRODUCTION

Rob Holm, Project Leader



Low water levels in Lake Sakakawea, North Dakota, have created a lot of controversy and concern over the past few years. As the water levels in the lake have receded, our water supplies at the hatchery have also been compromised. This year the low water levels will impact forty of the hatchery's sixty-four ponds. These ponds were built in 1988 by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department to meet walleye requests for federal and state impoundments across the state. Marking studies have shown repeatedly that walleye stocked from the hatchery make up the majority of the walleye fisheries in North Dakota, Wyoming and Idaho. The stockings for Lake Sakakawea alone have an annual economic value of \$39.2 million dollars. Statewide the economics of fishing is \$392 million. Not meeting our stocking request this year of nearly 5.5 million walleye will significantly impact fisheries in this state as well as those in Wyoming.

The east unit ponds rely on water from the Lake Sakakawea's spillway pond. Water seepage through the spillway gates replenish that water supply. Today the water's edge is 1800 feet from the gates! The pumps that are located in the spillway lake will be able to begin filling ponds but soon the lake level will be drawn down below the pump intake, then the game is over. Last year the Corps of Engineers provided a six inch siphon from the Lake Sakakawea over the spillway to keep the ponds filling. A

month ago I again approached the Lake Manager with my concerns over the lake levels. Once again, all indications were that they would be able to assist using the siphon. Apparently, after taking into account current lake levels and the distance from the lake to the spillway, it was realized that the system would not work. A much larger pipe would be needed to provide the same level of flows we had last year - and their budget did not allow for the expense.

The options that exist to maintain fish production include; 1) extend the pump intakes to a deeper level in the Spillway Lake, 2) connect our west unit water supply line with the east unit line, 3) draw down the Spillway Lake to a point before cavitation of the pumps occur, then hook up a tractor driven pump to our intake to further drain the lake.

Aquatic Nuisance Species have become an issue in the Missouri River Reservoirs. Zebra mussels in the Lewis and Clark Reservoir, South Dakota, have impacted fish distribution from Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery. A proposal has been submitted to Region 6 Engineering to design a gravelbed filtration intake for our east unit ponds that would exclude zebra mussels from our fish production ponds. Extending our water supply in the lake to the bottom and connecting the east unit ponds to the west unit ponds would provide a level of redundancy for filling ponds in low water years while the gravelbed filter would also address issues concerning the spread of zebra mussels. Although this 'fix' will take considerably more time and funding to complete than the other options, it may be one we consider as a more permanent solution to the issues we are facing. The low water issue will likely be exacerbated next year, as will the spread of ANS. □

ANNUAL DUES NOW DUE

This newsletter will serve as a notice to Club and 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., 04/05.)

Club Member 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 2004, please complete the *Membership Application* below and return it along with your payment to North Dakota Sportfishing Congress, P.O. Box 2472, Bismarck, ND 58502.

Individual Member's dues are a minimum of \$5. Please complete the *Membership Application* below and return it along with your payment to the same address on the form.

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

- If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, please email Marie Hoerner at sportfishing@bis.midco.net with a Subject of "Sportfishing Newsletter".
- The year/date above your name on the mailing label indicates your membership renewal date. Your support is needed!

INDIVIDUAL

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

CLUB

- ☐ \$50 - 1 Year

Each Club Member is represented on the Executive Board by two delegates.

(Please check appropriate box.)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____)____ - _____ Email _____

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Club Affiliation _____

Enclosed \$ _____

Mai To: North Dakota Sportfishing Congress • PO Box 2472 • Bismarck, ND 58502-2472

GARRISON DAM NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY



Rob Holm, Project Leader

Production requests for lakes across the state will again tax our production potential. With winterkill in several lakes, pike and perch stockings will be substantial. Currently requests for both pike and perch are near 2.5 million each. Lakes in the Southeast; Bowman-Haley, Heart Butte, and Dickinson Reservoir will receive the lion's share of the pike with a total of 830,000 fingerlings. Walleye requests are also high with a total request of nearly 5.5 million fingerlings. With uncertain water conditions on Lake Sakakawea, walleye will be stocked in other lakes - thirteen will be receiving over 100,000 fingerlings. Included in that list are Darling, Metigoshe, Stump, Buffalo, Dickinson Reservoir, Heart Butte, Bowman-Haley, Ashtabula, Alkaline, Josephine, Dry, Pipestem and Reule. We are planning to release 300,000 Chinook Salmon in Lake Sakakawea this Spring. Another 40,000 brown trout will be released in the Missouri River below Garrison Dam. The stocking of 50,000 ten-inch rainbow trout across the state began last week. Good luck to the anglers and remember to check the web sites for the latest on stocking information!

On another note, thanks to the support from Senator Dorgan, \$300,000 was approved to fund plastic liners on a few of the ponds at Garrison Dam NFH. The ponds leak water to the tune of 280,000 gallons per day making fish production almost impossible. We hope to increase our walleye production potential by over a half million fish annually as a result of the plastic lined ponds.



Thanks to the Fund Raiser Committee for all their hard work in arranging the Annual Sportsman's Smoker & Raffle held on April 3!



*(L to R) 2004 Fund Raiser Committee
Richard Fink, Chairman Mike Anderson,
Roger Haug and Jim Nagel*



Cash Door Prize Winners



- ✓ \$500 Pete Haug, Fargo
- ✓ \$100 Anita Twardowski, Bismarck
- ✓ \$50 Bob Gregoire, Bismarck
- ✓ \$50 Michelle Siegel, Mandan

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 419
BISMARCK, ND 58501



P.O. Box 2472
Bismarck, ND 58502