



## NORTH DAKOTA SPORTFISHING CONGRESS

### ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

APRIL 5, 2014 – BISMARCK AMVETS

Present: President Clark Williams, Past President Duaine Ash, Treasurer Rick Eagleson; Board Members Mike Anderson, Dave Bement, Ken Cumber, Richard Fink, Paul Haug and Ed Sweeney; Club Members Rick Brueckner, Tom Miller, Clayton Schumaker and Tony Splonskowski; Game & Fish Representatives Terry Steinwand and Greg Power; Steve Krentz, US Fish & Wildlife Service; Rob Holm, Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery and Secretary Marie Hoerner.

President Clark Williams called the meeting to order and attendees introduced themselves.

#### PRESENTATIONS

Steven Krentz: Project Leader, USFWS, Missouri River Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office

- Krentz said the success on recruitment of juvenile fish is outstanding. Also, they continue work on a lot of Missouri River issue, work on the Refuge program and work with the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, which brings together individuals on a regional scale. A lot of mussels have been declining, saying that losing these species faster than expected, but they are trying to reverse these trends. He said that landscape effects, not just the water, impact the species. Sportsmen are dedicated and supporting the restoration of fishing across the state from various groups across the state.

Rob Holm: Project Leader, Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery

- Rob Holm has been with the Hatchery since 1996 and they have consistently meet fish requests for all the major species produced. Rob said the Hatchery needs to continue stocking programs to keep recreational fishing at this level. They have initiated programs for restoration and recovery of native fishes as well – i.e. Pallid Sturgeon, Shovelnose Sturgeon, Sauger, Burbot. Even though they do native fishes, they are still working with the recreational fishes. Rob said they are renovating the Hatchery's trout pond, working with Corps and Game and Fish, as well as renovating the Hatchery's Kids Fishing pond in Valley City.
- National Fish Hatchery System Strategic Plan – reestablished the FWS priorities —1) threatened and endangered 2) imperiled aquatic species, 3) tribal trust, 4) native species, 5) non-native (i.e. salmon). He said funding wasn't sufficient to do any of the recreational fish species which upset fishermen, upset businessmen, upset State G&F Agencies and Upset Congressmen which lead to a 'delay' in implementation. Holm doesn't think the implementation part of the strategic plan was well thought out. As a result of Congressional action they are not going through this plan in 2014, but need to keep watch for how it is implemented next year. The Western Association of Fish And Wildlife Agencies passed a resolution to – restore the National fish hatchery System funding to federal budget year 2010 levels and obtain full mitigation funding from the Dept. of the Interior (Bureau of Reclamation) and Dept. of Defense (corps of Engineers) agencies. Congress restored funding to the hatcheries this year and made it clear to the Director that no hatcheries would be closed without input from the State agencies. Dan Ashe is director of US Fish and Wildlife Service in Washington, DC. The Service needs to seek input and support from groups like the NDSFC. There are 70 hatcheries and they were proposing to close up to 13 of these if not fully funded. Rob doesn't think Garrison would be one that would be proposed to close as the State of North Dakota and Corps of Engineers funds the majority of the recreational fish stockings and they are already are raising endangered and imperiled species as well as their tribal trust requests.
- The goal of the review was to ensure that the National Fish Hatchery System could operate more efficiently and more effectively. 56% of the FWS hatchery funds were not provided to the hatcheries, so there apparently problems in how the budgets are allocated. Future changes to the allocation formulas used to fund the NFHS will reflect changes in the NFHS priorities and how those priorities are to be addressed within each region.

- Hatchery intake after 2011 flood – new intake is scheduled to be in place, for walleye production with funding provided by the ND Game and Fish Department. The hatchery is funding 5100 ft. of 18” diameter pipe to secure water supply for hatchery from the penstock line to the east unit ponds.
- Valley City hatchery has done a lot of renovations to their ponds, so they are able to produce more fish. During the summer months, G&F helps out in staffing Valley City. Without the support of State Game and Fish Agencies, Sportfishing groups and intervention from our Congressmen watching out for their constituents, the Fish and Wildlife Service hatcheries may not be around for long.
- Clark said that the benefit the fishermen get out of the FWS is good.

Tom Miller: North Dakota Fishing Hall of Fame (formed in 1981) is currently located in Garrison at the fishing marine. They are the newest member of NDSFC. Bob Gibson has been elected as a member of the Board of Directors. Nominations for the Hall of Fame should be submitted ASAP. Additional information on the North Dakota Hall of Fame can be found on their website: [www.ndfishinghalloffame.org](http://www.ndfishinghalloffame.org). If you know of anyone interesting in sitting on their board, please let Tom know. Their next meeting is May 15<sup>th</sup>. They would like to get the word out that that ND Fishing Hall of Fame is back in business. They are a 501 (c)(3) and their major funding use to come from the Governor's Cup and they are looking at getting it reinstated. Tom Miller will provide each club with their brochures to distribute to their local clubs.

- Clark Williams said the Lake Region Anglers is nominating Dean Hildebrandt for a nominee for the ND Hall of Fame.

#### North Dakota Game and Fish: Fisheries Report – Greg Power

- State of North Dakota Fisheries – They are currently managing a record 418 active water bodies in ND. License sales have gone up substantially, partially due to the number of lakes. 25 years ago there were 168 lakes and now 418 lakes and 250,000 more acres. Resident anglers top species choice while open-water fishing – Walleye (80%), Northern Pike (8%) and Yellow Perch (3%) are the “big three”. Niche species total only 4.1%. NDSU fishing/hunting expenditure survey is done every five years. Fishing is \$425M (hunting expenditures at \$217M) in North Dakota. Legislative Recap – Fishing license fees increased in 2014 (\$10 to \$16 for single and are still the cheapest in area states); Boat registration fees increased January 2014. There is or will be shortly only electronic licensing and the ability to conduct a paddlefish lottery.
- Highlighted a summary of the major Proclamation changes – We have a two-year proclamation. G&F is fortunate that there are not a lot of changes. The fishing guide is available on the G&F website, which also include Q&As. A mobile app is also available on their website – includes stocking and development.
- G&F gives an annual award to a local group – in 2013 was Wahpeton Park Board. Largest threats to sustaining ND's fisheries for the next 10 years -- water levels and management, hatchery funding issues and Aquatic Nuisance Species. In 2013 about 35 tickets and 50 warnings were issued for ANS violations.

Report for Bob Frohlich of the G&F given by Greg Power – Fisheries Development Program – Sport fish restoration, ND license sales and local entities, is where money comes from. Work on development boat ramps is done by G&F staff and local contractors. Registered boats in 10 years have increased to 22,000. State School of Wahpeton weld boat dock frames for the G&F. Boat ramps need an easement or agreement for private landowners. Ramps cost approximately \$50k each if done by G&F versus a lot more when done by others.

Rick Brueckner said he would like to see some targeted marketing regarding ANS issues. Need to focus digital and mobile marketing. Greg said the threat is coming from the east. The Desert Boat ramp was moved and the parking is limited and asked if one could be put in across the road.

The Confluence Ramp by Williston will not be available this year.

## OLD BUSINESS

- A motion was made by Rich Brueckner, seconded by Duaine Ash and unanimously passed to approve the February 22, 2014 minutes.
- Treasurer Rick Eagleson provided an overview of the expenses and income treasurer's report, including the last 4 years of the fundraiser. A motion to approve the treasurers report was made by Mike Anderson, second by Rich Brueckner and unanimously passed.

### Fundraiser Report: Dave Bement & Richard Fink

- Tickets sold to date is about 174. A guarantee of 167 plus 10% will be prepared.
- Prizes: Paul Haug & Rick Eagleson – \$4,500 of merchandise (\$9,000 retail cost) was purchased for the \$1 drawing prizes.

Membership: new club member is ND Fishing Hall of Fame

Email Tree: Marie Hoerner gave a report on the number of club and membership dues. 593 individuals are on the mailing list. There are 12 club members and 10 are paid for 2015. Clark Williams said that he will be resigning as President at the end of this meeting, so Marie will maintain the membership list. Clark is moving to Ashland, Wisconsin within the next couple of months.

The newsletter was emailed and posted to the NDSFC website in 2013. Duaine Ash made a motion that the newsletter be sent in electronic format in the future to cut costs. The motion was seconded by Ken Cumber and passed.

Articles for the next newsletter from the clubs and interested groups should be emailed to Marie at [sportfishing@bis.midco.net](mailto:sportfishing@bis.midco.net) by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Duaine Ash and Mike Anderson have contacted an individual that may be interested (no name was given) in lobbying on behalf of the Congress. They will visit with him again following the fundraiser event.

By Laws Committee – No issues

Club Reports – None

## ELECTIONS

- Board Positions up for election: Paul Haug and Ed Sweeney – A motion was made by Mike Anderson, second by Rick Eagleson to reelect Haug and Sweeney for another two-year term. Motion was unanimously passed.
- President Clark Williams Resignation – Clark will be moving out-of-state to Ashland, Wisconsin. Search committee looked at the issue, but no candidate has been identified to date. Options to replace Williams will be left with the Search Committee (Search Committee: Duaine Ash, Ken Cumber, Paul Haug, Dave Bement).

## NEW BUSINESS

- Paul Haug made a motion to hold the 2015 fundraiser on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at the AMVETS. The motion was seconded by Dave Bement and unanimously passed.
- Mike Anderson asked about a summer meeting in Riverdale to finalize our lobbyist and other items. A meeting is set for August 9<sup>th</sup> at Mike Anderson's home in Riverdale. Motion to approve the August 9, 2014 meeting date was made by Duaine Ash, second by Ken Cumber and passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.