



# NORTH DAKOTA SPORTFISHING CONGRESS

**Fall Meeting • Minutes**  
**Saturday, November 4, 2017 • 9:30 a.m.**  
Jamestown • Game & Fish Office

Present: President Rick Brueckner, Vice President Ken Cumber, Past President Duaine Ash, Treasurer Rick Eagleson; Board Members Mike Anderson, Dave Odin, Joe Solseng and Ed Sweeney; Club Members Barb Ash, David Chadduck and David Schmidt; Game & Fish Representatives Terry Steinwand, Greg Power, BJ Kratz; Rob Holm, Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery; and Secretary Marie Hoerner.

1. Call to Order – President Rich Brueckner called the meeting to order and everyone introduced themselves.
2. A motion to approve the April 22, 2017 minutes of the ND Sportfishing Congress was made by Duaine Ash, seconded by Ed Sweeney and passed.
3. Treasurer’s Report– Rick Eagleson distributed an income and expense summary, as well as a summary from the past five annual fundraisers. He noted that 201 people attended the April 2017 banquet/fundraiser. A motion was made by Ken Cumber, seconded by David Chadduck and unanimously passed to approve the Treasurer’s report distributed.
4. ND Game & Fish Reports – Greg Power:
  - Power gave an overview on the ND fisheries (Attachment 1 – “State of ND Fisheries”) – He reported there was minor winter kills, but some summer kill. G&F is trying to pour new boat ramps themselves versus contract the work out. There was a record number of fishing tournaments (approximately 160). No biological impacts have been noted with few social issues. Tournament policy has reduced greatly the social conflicts (e.g. allow only so many tournaments at certain areas at certain times, etc.). New fishing proclamation and new bait vendor rules are pending changes.
  - There are never-ending concerns expressed by a few that additional walleye length restrictions are needed (Attachment 2 – Discussion on Walleye Length Restrictions for North Dakota’s Fisheries) – currently 10 water bodies with length restrictions in ND. It’s critical to understand the nature of the fisheries and the parameters that dictate fish population strength. ND is different than MN (and other states to the east) because we experience extremes in everything (including water elevations). Currently there is no need for any walleye length restrictions for the vast majority of North Dakota's fisheries.
  - ANS Report (Attachments 3 & 4 – “North Dakota’s ANS Program”) – Greg Power said that ANS Coordinator Jessica Howell is doing a great job on ANS issues. Greg said that Jessica has a committee including industry folk to help address ANS matters. Once again surprisingly there were no new ANS infestations in ND noted in 2017. Zebra Mussel still present in the Red River and the Department will be trying to find out the impacts to businesses, etc.
  - Greg said that this week the G&F stocked 3,600 muskies in ND lakes (stocking information will be available on G&F website).
5. Update by Rob Holm – Project Leader, Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery– 2017 Hatchery Production report at Garrison Dam, with record year for walleye, northern pike and Chinook Salmon, SS Rainbow Trout (Attachment 5 – Fish Hatchery Update). Valley City Hatchery had an all-time Walleye

production record. Walleye stocking summary – 94 lakes in ND, 11 lakes in Wyoming; Collected 3 million eggs from Lake Sakakawea and the Hatchery’s salmon run, which was a hatchery record held since 1999. Visitor Center Expansion is currently in progress, which was in the works for 3 years. There were historical concerns about changing the looks of the building, which caused the delay of the expansion. As far as funding from the federal agency, Congress hasn’t been doing very much. There was a hiring freeze last year. The G&F lost their employee at Valley City, but they are looking to filing the position next spring.

- Rich Brueckner asked Rob Holm to keep the clubs posted on federal funding issues and if there is anything the NDSFC and club members could do to help get funding.
- Rich Brueckner had an article from The Fishing Wire on “Conservation Groups Call on Interior to Protect Public Lands Fish & Wildlife from Uncontrolled Energy Development” ([Attachment 6 – The Fishing Wire](#)) – Basically monitoring the speed up (giving equal protection to the water and lands). Rich asked if there was anything the NDSFC could do on our public lands to make sure the lands are protected, but Terry Steinwand said the G&F does not have a lot of authority on this issue.

#### 6. Club Reports:

- Wayne Beyer, Red River Area Sportsmen’s Club (report provided in advance)
  - No zebra mussels were located this fall on the annual check of four fishing piers and a dock pulled from Red River.
  - Four annual fishing tournaments continue to be held with good participation – (1) Neil Heitkamp Youth Ice Fishing Derby on Heitkamp Pond in mid-February, (2) Vince Herding Youth Fishing Derby on Red River on the first May Saturday, (3) Dick Bell Catfish Tournament on Red River on the first June Saturday and (4) Carp and Sucker Youth Fishing Derby on Red River on first August Wednesday.
  - Fly fishing instruction to Jr. Wildlife Club at Mooreton Pond.
  - Spear fishing instruction to Jr. Wildlife Club at Moran Lake.
  - Three Family Fishing Nights on Red River in June, July and August.
  - Annual river fishing shoreline projects. This year, shoreline will be hardscaped with gravel and a gravel path started to allow improved access to Bois de Sioux River fishing pier.
  - Annual Mooreton Pond project. This year, the fishing pier was rebuilt and shoreline improvements made for easy access. In addition, two other portable fishing piers are being renovated for a couple more shoreline fishing areas. Dock and fishing pier are placed in and out each year.
  - Funding was provided for the Richland Wildlife Club to develop shoreline access and a boat ramp at Horseshoe Lake.
  - Funding is provided for a Minnesota DNR walleye rearing pond.
  - Funding was provided for an Eagle Scout project to add amenities (picnic table, grill, garbage can, gravel access) near a Red River fishing pier.
  - A dock is placed in the spring and removed in the fall from the Red River at the Brushvale bridge.
- Rick Eagleson, FM Muskies – They have 165 paid members with about 40 participating in meetings.
- Dave Schmidt, Dakota Anglers – They are 160 members (from 225) with aging membership. Less members are participating in tournaments, but they are well-received by anglers. Kid's fishing event had a good turnout. Had three outings this past summer and are getting ready to start a new year.
- Mike Anderson, Great Planers – Their club has done a lot sole searching with Board as to their purpose. Members only show up for Derby. They use to do monthly outings, but had very little involvement. They are not folding their club yet, but determining if there is a need for the club.
- Rich Brueckner, FM Walleyes – They are the largest club in ND and do a lot with Scheels. They are very family-orientated and involve everyone, but they are also have reducing membership.

- Rich Brueckner asked if we should allow members to participate via conference call in the next meeting to get more members involved. Terry Steinwand said that they are having the same issues and the NDSFC is an effective resource group for the G&F. Rich will work with Marie to research the possibility of having a conference call meeting in April. Rich also suggested that everyone go back to their clubs and see what is effective in their clubs relating to social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
  - Hook on Fishing and Pathways to fishing is a resource provided by the G&F, which Lure Em for Life uses.
7. By-Laws Committee – Duaine Ash, Rick Eagleson and Marie Hoerner will review the NDSFC Bylaws and report on any recommended changes at the April meeting.
8. Membership Update – Marie Hoerner – There are currently about 780 people on the NDSFC member list, but there is only a handful with paid-up dues. The list indicates who has attended the 2017 fund raiser. However, all 12 member clubs have paid their dues. An additional list indicates who purchased \$5 raffle tickets, which will help with the 2018 sales.
9. Discussion Items:
- Game and Fish Man Power – Relating to the next 10 years, Terry Steinwand said the Game & Fish Department are short staffed. They currently have 163 fulltime employees. He said they are different than most state agencies, since they don't get any outside dollars and rely on fishing and license sales for funding. Funding would need to come from increased license fees in the future. The G&F does not receive general funds from the ND legislative session. He pointed out that no other agency can use G&F funds (\$30 million in their fund balance). G&F need to show a need for additional employees.
  - License fees (Attachment 7 – “Resident/Nonresident Fishing License Price Comparisons”) – License fees cannot be increased until the 2019 legislative session. G&F will do a comparison of the cost of license fees compared to what other states charge. They have a year to gather the statistics and information they need prior to the next legislative session. Mike Anderson asked if the G&F is going to pursue a license fee change and what can the clubs do to help. Terry Steinwand said they will address fees at the April 28<sup>th</sup> NDSFC meeting in Bismarck.
  - As far as Life Time Fishing Licenses, the G&F are opposed to lifetime licenses.
  - Boat Gas Tax (Attachment 8 – Century Code) – The last legislative session was not the time to bring up these taxes. Mike Anderson said it took many sessions to get the last tax increase. Rich Brueckner said we need to pursue gas taxes and suggested forming a committee to start collecting data with guidance from the G&F. Rich Brueckner and Mike Anderson agreed to serve on this committee. Rich will contact FM Walleyes to see if he can get someone from their club to also serve on the committee. Of the \$2.50 per boat tax per year, 75% goes toward boat ramps. There are about 67,000 boats registered in North Dakota.
  - Negative effects of tiling Agriculture fields – tiling relating to fields (alkaline grounds). The Ag Department regulates what fields are being tilled. Terry Steinwand said the Water Commission has the authority to do this. Mike Anderson said we need to define specifically the concerns. G&F is more concerned from a wetlands perspective than a fishing perspective. No action will be taken at this time, but they will listen and monitor.
  - State wide slot limits – covered in Greg Powers’ discussion/handout.
  - Lobbyist – If you know of anyone who would be interested in serving as the NDSFC lobbyist for the 2019 legislative session, please let Rich Brueckner know in advance. This issue will be brought up at the April meeting.
  - Outfitter and Guides license fees (Attachment 9 – Fishing Outfitters) – This issue has been brought up before. Duaine Ash feels that guides should have their vehicles marked. Terry Steinwand said in 2013 they talked about raising these fees, but nothing was done. We can look at including these fees

increasing when addressing the increase in license fees during the 2019 legislative session. Rich Brueckner said this effects Devils Lake more than any other areas in ND. He would like to secure data to support an increase in fees prior to the 2019 session.

10. Election – Board seats up for re-election in April 2018 (Vice President Ken Cumber; Board Members: Paul Haug, Jeff Herman, Don Schick, Ed Sweeney and Keith Witt) – Rick Engleson said that Paul Haug likes to be involved, but is not physically able to do work. The election will be held on April 28, 2018.
11. Banquet/Smoker Report Update – Saturday, April 28, 2018, AMVETS, Bismarck
  - Raffle Permit should be received from the Policy Department by the end of November.
  - Tickets printed (banquet-400 tickets; cash raffle-500 tickets) – We will order 100 additional tickets for both the banquet and raffle so more tickets can distributed, even though there may not be any more sold.
  - Dinner format – It was agreed that we will have a Prime Rib sit down dinner again this year. It was brought up to have a choice of Prime Rib or Chicken, but the attendees felt it would be a lot more work to keep track of and most prefer Prime Rib.
  - Gaming donation from AMVETS – Apply for this donation again.
  - Prizes: \$1.00 Raffle Drawing.
  - Pursue working with Jerome’s Distributing for donations and a new NDSFC banner.
  - It was agreed to change the name of our annual event to “Banquet & Fundraiser”, eliminating the word “smoker”.
  - Guidelines for purchasing merchandise (dollar amount and when to purchase) will remain the same and will be adjusted depending on ticket sales.
12. The next meeting of the ND Sportfishing Congress will be held the morning of Saturday, April 28, 2018 at the AMVETS in Bismarck prior to the annual banquet and fundraiser.
13. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mike Anderson, seconded by Ed Sweeney and passed.

Submitted By: Marie Hoerner, Secretary

Date Submitted: November 6, 2017