



North Dakota Sportfishing Congress

Board Meeting

Saturday, April 10, 2010 – 10:00 AM

ND Game and Fish Offices – Bismarck, ND

Members Present: President Clark Williams; Past President Duaine Ash; Vice President Lynn Schueter; Treasurer Rick Eagleson; Board members Mike Anderson, Don Baasch, Dave Bement, Ed Dosch, Paul Haug and; Members Miles Bobb, Ralph Bandnal, Ken Cumber, Terry Fleck, Joe Herda, Frank Kartch, Rynee Kellar, Ron Kraft, Tony Splonskowski, Ed Sweeney. Others Present: Terry Steinwand, Greg Power and Scott Gangl, G&F; Rob Holm and Steve Krentz, USFWS; Charles Sorensen, Corps; and Executive Secretary Marie Hoerner.

- President Clark Williams called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and thanked everyone for coming.
- After reviewing the minutes from the Board meeting on December 12, 2009, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Miles Bobb seconded by Lynn Schlueter and passed.
- Treasurer Rick Eagleson distributed the "Treasurer's Report" which revealed the income and expenses as of April 10, 2010. A motion to approve the financial reports was made by Lynn Schlueter, seconded by Paul Haug, and passed.
- President Clark Williams had a plaque recognizing Phil Brown, Lake Manager Lake Sakakawea, US Army Corps of Engineers for his support of the fishing industry. Phil is moving to Iowa.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

- **Terry Fleck:** Chairman, Friends of Lake Sakakawea (office 223-9768)
Terry Fleck was recently appointed to represent recreation on the Missouri River. Mr. RP is the Missouri River Recovery Plan (www.moriverrecovery.org/mrrp). Dave Johnson is the ND representative on the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (Mr. RP), along with Terry's involvement. He talked about the different plans from 1944 to the present time impacting the Missouri River – from flood control to recreation. Terry also talked about how the NDSFC can get involved (Missouri River is everyone's river, not just those on the River).

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is conducting a collaborative long-term study authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The study, known as the **Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement** (www.moriverrecovery.org/mrrp/f?p=136:11:4096311474375054) will identify the actions required to: mitigate losses of aquatic and terrestrial habitat; recover federally listed species under the Endangered Species Act; and restore the ecosystem to prevent further declines among other native species. The study will result in a plan that guides the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' mitigation, restoration, and recovery efforts for the Missouri River for the next 30 to 50 years. Additionally, the study will provide a blueprint for cooperating agencies from other federal agencies, Tribes, state governments and communities throughout the basin to pull from as they desire. Terry challenges members to encourage, support and go back to clubs/community understand how they as stakeholders will shape the river, even 30 years from now – from St. Louis to Sioux Falls.

Terry Fleck said the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study (Mr. APS – www.mraps.org) – is another study. A public information meeting regarding the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study is being sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Wednesday, April 28 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Radisson Hotel, Bismarck. Representatives from the Corps will conduct the meeting, which will consist of a presentation regarding the study process and the relationship between the study and the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee. Terry encourages our members to get involved with Mr. APS and understand the importance of getting involved to understand the value of the Missouri River.

- **Steve Krentz:** Missouri River FWCO, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices provided an update on the Aquatic Habitation – focus efforts and money on aquatic habitats. He said the Midwest Glacial Lakes will overlap with the USF&WF project. Federal government and states and individuals don't have enough money to work on these projects, so trying to work together. The USF&WS is working with tribes to try to improve the fish and access, as the tribes have control of the stocking and managing the lakes.
- **Charles Sorensen:** Natural Resource Specialist, US Army Corps of Engineers – is a ranger in charge of shoreline management and said he is not up on all the Mr. ERPs. Charles reported that the elevation on lakes will top out at around 1842. He said that all but two ramps will be usable – Blue Water and Hells Marina. The Corps are in the process of a program EPA for the oil and gas around the lakes. Mineral rights supersede surface rights, so they need to work with the mineral rights' owners. The Corps is the surface manager and they do not allow the oils pads or facilities to be within 300 feet of the lake. Charles also talked about the oil production around the lakes and they are concerned with water contamination from the oil wells. No wells are to be drilled within ½ miles of any species habitat (i.e. Sturgeon), and no drilling ¼ mile from recreation areas. He talked about how they deal with the oil developments, addressing threatened species and working with the oil developers. Specifically, he talked about how oil well drilling impacts the waters, as well as water rights and the conflict with recreation and revenue from the oil wells. Charles said it is going to be very interesting as oil well drilling increases.
- **Rob Holm:** Project Leader, Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery, US Fish and Wildlife Service. Rob talked about the 2009 fish production at Garrison Dam and Valley City National Fish Hatcheries. Perch were produced at the Garrison Dam hatchery for the first time in several years. A lot of the wetland had been eliminated due to mosquito borne West Nile Virus - may also have indirectly impacted fish production as midge larvae are the most important food source for the hatchery's walleye, perch and pike. Rob said that the Blue Dog SFH in South Dakota lined their ponds, as was done at Garrison, and also found better fish production with the lined ponds. Showed the 2009 Garrison and Valley City Hatchery production by species and how it matched up with the ND Game and Fish fish requests. Fish in excess of North Dakota's requests often go to other states such as Wyoming, Montana or South Dakota. Walleye will take priority this year over the other coolwater species at the hatchery (perch/pike). 2010 Production Changes – big increase in walleye stocking Lake Sakakawea; dropped perch to make room for walleye; increased Chinooks stocking from 100,000 to 200,000 in Lake Sakakawea and continued stocking of 50,000 in the Tailrace. Showed how Garrison's walleye stockings and requests from 1964 to 2010 met the needs of the state and that this year's request will be a challenge. He said that with liners, however, they can get improved production. Rob said that funding for the new liners money came from the Obama stimulus money – all 24 FWS ponds are now lined and the cost is approximately \$92,000 per pond (1.5 acre). Rob showed a table on the effect of cormorant depredation on yellow perch in hatchery ponds. Rob noted that Garrison has been a major producer of Pallid Sturgeon – 2009 was an excellent year (record) for production with 61,555 stocked and 9,400 still on hand. Garrison Dam has release 263,198 fingerling pallids in the Missouri River over 800,000 fry. 254 individual pallid sturgeon adults have been captured since 1988 in the Missouri and Yellowstone River in ND/MT. Garrison Dam budget for 2009 was \$692,477 from various sources (i.e. Corps, ND state Grant; ANS, Hatchery operations and maintenance). Stocking is no substitute for habitat; more stocked fish is not better fishing and better habitat creates better fishing. Stocking is a tool – which gives the G&F a better way to manage the fish. Recreation fishing programs are funded from the NDG&F grant, federal appropriations. Hatchery's economic impact - fishing expenditures in North Dakota – the average angler spends \$39/day for a total of \$94 million. Wyoming's walleye stockings which come from Garrison Dam NFH provide \$46 million in economic impact in Wyoming. FYI - 2006 survey reported 476,051 walleye were harvested on Lake Sakakawea.

Links of interest:

- Lake elevation: www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc/reports/showomarep.cgi?0TRIB_RESERVOIRS
- Garrison Dam Home Page: https://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/html/Lake_Proj/garrison/welcome.html

- **Terry Steinwand:** Director, North Dakota Game and Fish Dept – Terry said we need to get younger people involved in the NDSFC events. He addressed the carp in the Red River side of the drainage in

the Devils Lake area and the problems of getting contracts signed, but hopefully should have the final contract signed this month, so the G&F will be able to start the project to control carp. Mr. APS (www.mraps.org) – asking the Corps to take a contemporary view of the project. Terry encouraged everyone to attend the informational meeting on April 28 at the Radisson Hotel in Bismarck. Terry said the energy issue (oil) has a huge economic impact for the state of ND and possibly impairing and impacting resources of the fishing industry.

- **Greg Power:** Fisheries Division Chief, ND Game and Fish Dept. He said from 285 lakes statewide last year, the G&F is looking at approximately 340 lakes in 2011. License sales have remained stable and there are about 35,000 non-resident licenses. Greg said winter fishing this past year has been dismal and that lake access was not good. They are not expecting a lot of winter kill, but will know within the next couple of weeks. He mentioned that the spring spawning plans will be underway in the next few weeks. Administrative – ANS, bait vendors (2/3 of the bait from vendors is shipped out of state). Greg said the biggest issue is the spring is the migration of the cormorants. G&F got permit to help control cormorants; however, only approved G&F personnel can shoot cormorants and they are authorized to shoot upwards of 1,000 cormorants in 2010. G&F approved about 120 statewide tournaments, which is about the same statewide as last year, but received more requests for Lake Sakakawea. Development of boat ramps – need to spend more money in Devils Lake area than they planned. Also need to do work on the Riffle Range ramp. Fish cleaning stations – there are about 30 around the state. The big issue on the cleaning stations is 1) initial costs (\$60,000) and 2) long-term maintenance. The G&F may try to get a cleaning station at the Riffle Range next year and other high use ramps in the near future.

Williams County Water Resource Board will get an award from the G&F acknowledging their voluntary support in helping out G&F. If anyone has ideas for others as recipients of this award, please let Greg know. Fishing Piers and Docks – trying to get 10-20 done this year, and most are handicap accessible, wherever possible. Dickinson Reservoir – plan to aggressively stock with walleye and crappie, but if there are a lot of bullheads, then pike and catfish. Red River Dams – look at putting fish bypasses in (3 to go). \$1.3 billion Red River Diversion Project would be about 7-year project, but the Fargo area needs to come up with a plan in the next month.

- **Scott Gangl:** Fisheries Management Section Leader at the ND G&F. He talked about Lake Sakakawea, Missouri River/Oahe and Devils Lake. Lake Sakkawea – there has been a drought issues the past three years and then being re-flooded. A lot of new nutrients are being converted to fish food. Showed a chart on the Lake Elevations from 1955 to 2009, as well as the Walleye and Sauger abundance (Walleye are now being a little above average). The body condition of the Walleye, Sauger and Northern Pike increased with the introduction of smelt into the lakes and fish are looking a lot healthier than they have been. Walleye Angling Success – 2006 was the record high for the most recent history, with a few more in 2000. 2009 was way down, possibly due to the amount of food available. 2010 Plans – Water level forecast to peak at 1841.4 in June, currently 1838.6. Stocking Plans – 4 million walleye fingerlings and 200,000 salmon (focusing only a spring stocking; typically stock around the Dam).

Missouri River and Lake Oahe Fishery – 175,000 CFS entering Lake Oahe with Garrison Dam closed. Last year took eggs out of Beaver Bay for the first time in a long time. Missouri River Walleye Trends – netting trends were up in 2009. Missouri River and Lake Oahe Creel Survey – had a lot of angling effort in 2009, with Walleye catch and harvest up, and setting a record for harvest. People are going to see a lot of little fish in the near future. Primary forage was rainbow trout, and replaced with gizzard shad. Stocking Plans – Tailrace only; 50,000 Chinook Salmon, 20,000 rainbow trout; 20,000 Cutthroat trout.

Devils Lake – Water levels have increased. Adult net catch rates have increased to a record high over the years for walleye, compared to perch and white bass. DL YOY (6") Walleye catch rate in 2009 was 6-7 times the long-term average. Devils Lake Plans – 1) Spring Creek Survey – Channel A and area Coulees, 2) Summer Creel Survey – postponed until 2011, and 3) no fish stocking planned for 2010.

BUSINESS:

Committee Reports:

Fundraiser: Mike Anderson – Ticket sales for our annual fundraiser held April 9th were around 210, which was a little light, but there is a limitation (served 175 meals which was 80% participation). When the \$1 raffle incentive started, we only had 50 items, and now have increased to 100 incentive items, which sold out in about 45 minutes. We will look at possibly having a pocket knife for the 2011 incentive item. Sold about \$2,500 in tickets for the gun raffle, but we need to work on better sales. It was suggested that maybe we should put the number of tickets printed on the actual ticket so people know how many are being sold. April 9th is the targeted date for the 2011 fundraiser, but the date has not yet been confirmed with the Eagles Club in Mandan.

Membership: Only three clubs have not yet paid their annual dues for 2011. President Williams said he is not so concerned about individuals paying the \$5 in dues; he just wants to get the word out.

By Laws Committee: Paul Haug, Rick Eagleson, Ron Sahr – nothing new to report.

Club Reports:

- Miles Bobb said Southwest Anglers is holding a “fun night” fundraiser Fish Fry/Meatball Supper on May 7th beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Eagles Club in Dickinson.

Old Business:

Email Tree – President Clark Williams said the legislative session is coming up next year and emails are a good way to communicate with the members. If you have members who are interested, please have them email their concerns to Clark at shadrap@gondtc.com.

Elections: Up for election are: VP- Lynn Schlueter and Board Members: Paul Haug, Rick Lee and Ed Dosch. Clark did not receive a response from Rick Lee to continue serving. Rynee Kellar nominated Ron Kraft for a board position to replace Rick Lee. A motion was made by Duaine Ash to close nominations; the motion was seconded by Rynee Kellar and passed.

Website: President Williams encouraged club to make sure their officers and mission statement was on the NDSFC website.

Lobbyist: No recommendation was made for a lobbyist during the 2011 session. It was decided that we need to have a board meeting before the legislative session to finalize our lobbying efforts.

Newsletter: Articles due by Saturday, May 15 and the newsletter will be published around June 1. Additional newsletters will be published in late summer/fall and prior to the legislative session.

Ron Liudahl Scholarship Fund: Ken Cumber reported that there is \$14,250 in the scholarship fund at the present time. Dakota Anglers committed the proceeds from their event to the fund.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourn at 2:00 p.m.

Date Submitted: April 17, 2010

Submitted By: Marie Hoerner, Secretary