

**NORTH DAKOTA**  
**SPORTFISHING**  
**CONGRESS**

P.O. BOX 2472 • BISMARCK, ND 58502

***Annual Meeting***  
***Saturday, July 18, 2020 • 9:30 a.m.***  
***Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck***

**MINUTES**

**Attendees:** President Rich Brueckner, Vice President Ken Cumber, Past President Duaine Ash; Board Members Mike Anderson, Wayne Beyer, Tom Boerger, Ed Dosch, Terry Fleck, Don Schick, Keith Seidlinger and Tony Splonskowski; Game & Fish Representatives Greg Power and Terry Steinwand; Lance Gaebe.

**Absent:** Treasurer Jeff Herman and Secretary Marie Hoerner were not able to attend due to COVID-related issues.

1. President Brueckner called the meeting to order and introductions were made.
2. A motion to approval the October 26, 2019 minutes was made by Ed Dosch, seconded by Don Schick and unanimously approve as distributed.
3. Treasurer's Report for the general and legislative accounts was prepared by Jeff Herman and distributed at the meeting. President Brueckner noted that 33 individual members were paid and that Marie Hoerner did not take a fee for April and May, so only payments for June and July were included. A motion was made by Keith Seidlinger, seconded by Duaine Ash and unanimously passed to approve both financial reports.
4. Membership – Marie Hoerner reported to Rich in advance of the meeting that Great Planers and Friends of Lake Sakakawea had not yet paid their 2020-2021 club dues. Rich also said that Southwest Angler have not paid. In past years, there have been 13 active clubs, including Southwest Anglers in Dickinson. Rich said that he has sent letters to the Badland Bass Club, but has not received any response. Rich also suggested that clubs push the NDSFC individual and/or family memberships (\$10 per individual/family), which are vital to our cause. If you would like Rich to attend any of your club meetings, just let him know in advance.
5. Old Business
  - Second reading on changes to the NDSFC By-Laws and Constitution (both documents were distributed) – changed from three membership classifications to two; changed the wording to combine the individual/family memberships; increased club dues to \$100/year and individual/family to \$10/year effective April 1, 2020. Note – clubs were only billed \$50 for 2020-2021 since the Bylaws changes were not approved. Articles V and VI relating to the number of Directors-at-Large and Board members were also recommended (refer to the ByLaws' 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> readings handout for all recommended changes from the 1<sup>st</sup> reading on October 26, 2019). Corrections to the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the Bylaws should be effective April 1, 2020 for both Sections 1 and 2 in Article III-Dues. A motion to approve the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the Bylaws and Constitution with the proposed changes was made by Mike Anderson, seconded by Tom Boerger and unanimously passed.

- Update on website (Wild Apricot) – No update was provided.
6. Greg Power – Report from Game & Fish Department -- attached presentation on fishing licenses, COVID-19, ANS and fishing regulations update, as well as other items over the last 6-9 months, and Zebra Mussel Q&A sheet. Greg said that license sales are up, which may be due to COVID. There was discussion about purchasing an ANS sticker for boats. Greg said there were 125 citations and 85 warnings given for ANS, which is up.

Rich Brueckner said we need to educate people what to do when they find ANS on their boats. He said that Andrea Travnicek is the new director for State Parks and she said that they too are very interested in supporting programs that protect the waters and areas from ANS. She was not able to attend today's meeting, but will be on the road with Terry Steinwand to visit some of the parks. Rich encouraged her to work with the NDSFC and the Game & Fish on ANS by providing staffing, since they don't have the funding to put in wash stations. Andrea said she would visit with Terry on what the state parks can do to provide support.

Greg Power said that only 3-4 people said no to watercraft inspections of over 1100 conducted so far this summer, so they are very pleased. Greg talked about federal legislation, including the Great American Outdoor Act.

Regarding the Recovering American Wildlife Act (in July, it was amended into HR 2 a transportation act), Terry Steinwand said it passed the House, but has not gone to the Senate. This could mean about \$12 million a year in federal money for North Dakota. He recommends that the clubs ask their members to call their Senators to help get the bill passed in the Senate.

Terry Fleck said that Friends joined the North Dakota Tourism Alliance, because of education outreach. The Alliance promotes fishing and hunting, and ways they can give back to North Dakota – i.e. buying a license for fishing/hunting. Terry said they asked him to serve on their board.

It was noted that fishing in North Dakota generated \$48 million in sales tax and G&F gets nothing from these dollars.

7. New Business
- a. Election of Officers/Board Members – the list below and all of the individuals have expressed an interest to continue their seats for an additional two-year term. Hearing no nominations from the floor, a motion was made by Keith Seidlinger to cast a unanimous ballot for the VP and four board members as indicated. The motion was seconded by Tom Boerger and passed.
    1. Vice President (Ken Cumber) --
    2. 4 (four) Board Members (Armstrong, Eagelson, Schick, Witt)
  - b. Lobbyist Agreement - Clearwater Communication – Rich Brueckner commented that without the help of Lance Gaebe this past session, the legislation we got through would not have happened. Duaine Ash made a motion that the NDSFC renew an agreement for the 2021 ND legislative session with Lance Gaebe, with the dollar amount to be determined. The motion was seconded by Don Schick and passed unanimously.
  - c. North Dakota Aquatic Nuisance Species Awareness Week – Rich Brueckner said that the state of New York identified they are going to have an ANS awareness week. He distributed a packet with

an article from St. Louis County in Minnesota (in Elli area) and they spend about \$600,000 in their county working with their local communities keeping their ANS under 5%, while the rest of MN is growing rapidly. He asked what the NDSFC can do to have an ANS Awareness Week in North Dakota. Tourism was invited to attend our meeting and Rich believes this would be a good place for them to spend some of their dollars. Rich had a packet with different ideas/packets of how to promote ANS, which can be ordered. Rich asked if the NDSFC should take a leadership role in getting a partnership with North Dakota Tourism and ND Game & Fish to help with ANS Awareness Week, with the hopes of getting funding from Tourism. The clubs could help with handing out these items at boat docks/wash stations during this week/weekend. Mike Jensen from Tourism was invited to the meeting today and is interested in promoting ANS. Terry Steinwand said he would be willing to talk to the Governor about setting aside an ANS Awareness Week in 2021, since it would probably be too late to have one this year. Terry Fleck suggested holding it in early May before school gets out and before summer events start. Rich said if we would like to pursue the Awareness Week, then we should form a committee – Tourism, Water Commission, G&F, NDSFC are a few organizations that could serve on the committee. Ken Cumber suggested that we should go back to our clubs to get their interest in participating and helping with this initiative. Following Ken’s recommendation, President Brueckner asked each club representative to address this initiative with each of their clubs and be prepared to talk further at the next NDSFC meeting this fall.

- d. Wildlife Forever – Clean Drain Dry Initiative
- e. Boat Gas Tax NDCC20 1-03-12. Discussing on changing the wording to included non-resident watercraft – Rich Brueckner said that Bill Penos from the DOT was not able to attend the meeting today, but his discussion with him was about how DOT can help in providing safe locations for wardens/officers to inspect boats along two or four-lane highways where pulling over the side of the road can be a hazard while pulling a boat and camper. He agreed and asked Rich to provide him with a list of locations in ND that would be appropriate. Rich provided him with a list but has not heard back. Rich also spoke with Kim at Game & Fish about rewriting the language in the existing code to include non-resident boats in the count. We currently pay \$2.50 for each watercraft to go toward education. Kim said she talked to Terry and he didn’t think it would “fly”. Terry said it’s too early to know if there will be legislation in 2021 to raise the gas tax. Rich said he does want to keep it on the burner, but he believes there are safe places on the highway to conduct these inspection and he plans to continue his discussions with Bill. Terry said if we can get the ANS Awareness Week, this could be a good follow-up.
- f. Wash Station in select State Parks – Terry and Andrea will have discussion next week.
- g. Safe checkpoints locations for watercraft inspection. A joint effort between DOT and Game and Fish enforcement – this was discussed earlier in the meeting.
- h. Greg Westlind – Representative from District 15 from Cando was hoping to be at the meeting. He was talking about introducing legislation that had to do with outfitters and slot limits.
- i. Mike Jensen – ND State Tourism – Mike was to express their ANS interests, but Rich will circle back with Sara.
- j. Setting up legislative committees – Rich Brueckner said that in order to move forward on ANS or any other issues, we should hold meetings with our local legislators. He recommends that each club go back to their local legislators this fall to discuss our issues. Lance Gaebe said it’s a good idea to visit with legislators prior to the November elections as they will be more apt to sit down and listen to your concerns (i.e. focus on ANS). At the suggestion of Terry Fleck, Rich will email the list of the legislators’ voting records from the last legislative session. Rich had a handout from

Ben at G&F from their last ANS meeting on their program showing the activities from 2019 and 2020. If you have questions or suggestions on what the G&F has planned for 2020, you can let Rich or Ben know. Some have changed due to the Lake LaMoure Zebra Mussel findings.

- k. Fund raising – Terry Fleck suggested that we get an estimate from Lance Gaebe on what his proposed 2021 legislative fees will be and then determine what amount we would need. He said that last session Friends gave \$6,000 for legislative fees and some of the other clubs also donated a total of \$12,000. Lance said that just tracking and monitoring legislation is not as expensive as the actual work done last session (develop the initiative/background, testimony and support). He said he wouldn't need the same level of commitment in 2021 if it's just keeping track of things and monitoring legislation. Rich said we will table this discussion until the fall meeting and to discuss it with your clubs.
- l. Club updates –
  - LRAA – Keith Seidlinger said COVID has also affected their club. They have 34 paid members, down 109 from last year, with 46 lifetime members and 8 honorary members. They canceled their March and April meetings as well as their five outings. They postponed their April annual meeting until September 17<sup>th</sup> and didn't have a fundraiser this year, so no ticket sales.
  - Red River Sportsman – Wayne Beyer noted they had their ice fishing derby in February, but had to cancel their Catfish tournament and two kids fishing derbies like everyone else. They were able to put fishing piers in and fishing has been fantastic on the river. There has been a lot more people fishing this year, especially with COVID. Their fundraiser is in the fall and the banquet was moved from April to the end of August 2020.
  - Dakota Anglers – Ken Cumber said they cancelled their annual tournament, but had their fundraiser, which was a calendar raffle. They are still having their two outings.
  - Bis-Man Reel and Rec – Don Schick said they held their ice tournament in February and nothing since then. They held two meetings and will try to have their derby this fall.
  - Great Planers Trout & Salmon – Mike Anderson said that like most clubs, they are still holding on like a shoestring. They had trouble recruiting officers and all summer activities were cancelled, but they are hoping to have their Labor Day event. Had some good reports on Salmon being caught. They're hearing speculation that Fort Peck salmon are showing up, which will be good for the fall run.
  - Voices of Lake Oahe – Tony Splonskowski said they have 143 members and 54 lifetime members. Cancelled their fundraiser and their membership is tied in with the meal, so don't know the impact. They have had luck with gun raffles, so are making a little money. All of their sites are Corps regulated. They started two years ago to get a fishing cleaning station at Cat Tail and had issues with the water source and two weeks ago the well was drilled. They hope to have the station in by fall. Had the kids winter fishing, but had to cancel the summer event.

Congratulations to Ken Cumber who was nominated and inducted into the North Dakota Fishing Hall of Fame.

Next Meeting – Saturday, October 17, 2020 and tentatively set for Jamestown

A motion to adjournment the meeting was made by Mike Anderson, seconded by Don Schick and passed.

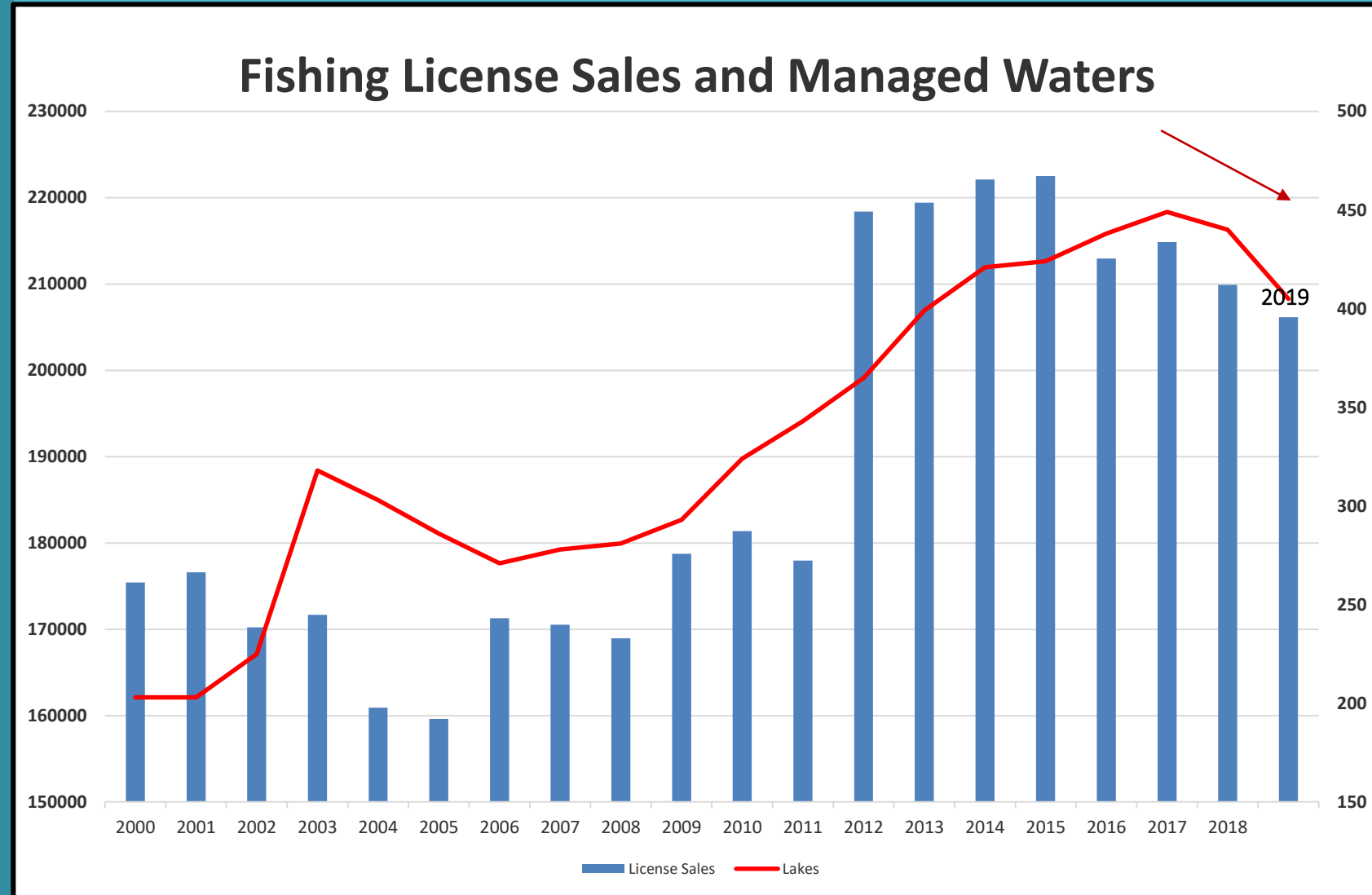
Submitted by: Marie Hoerner  
Date: August 18, 2020

# Fisheries Update

North Dakota  
Sport Fishing Congress  
Bismarck, ND  
July 18, 2020



# Recent Fishing License Sales

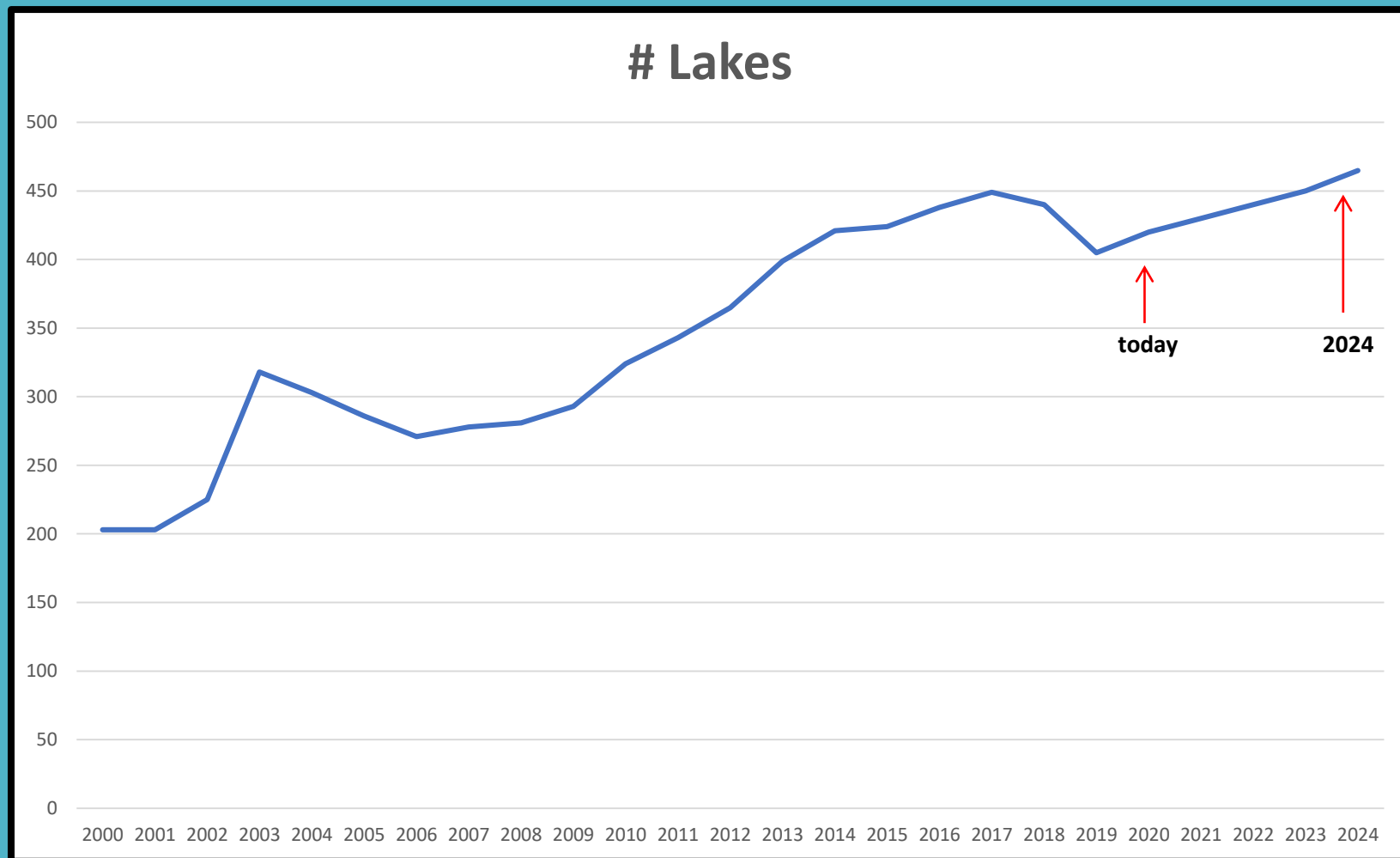




# Record Rains, Record Waters

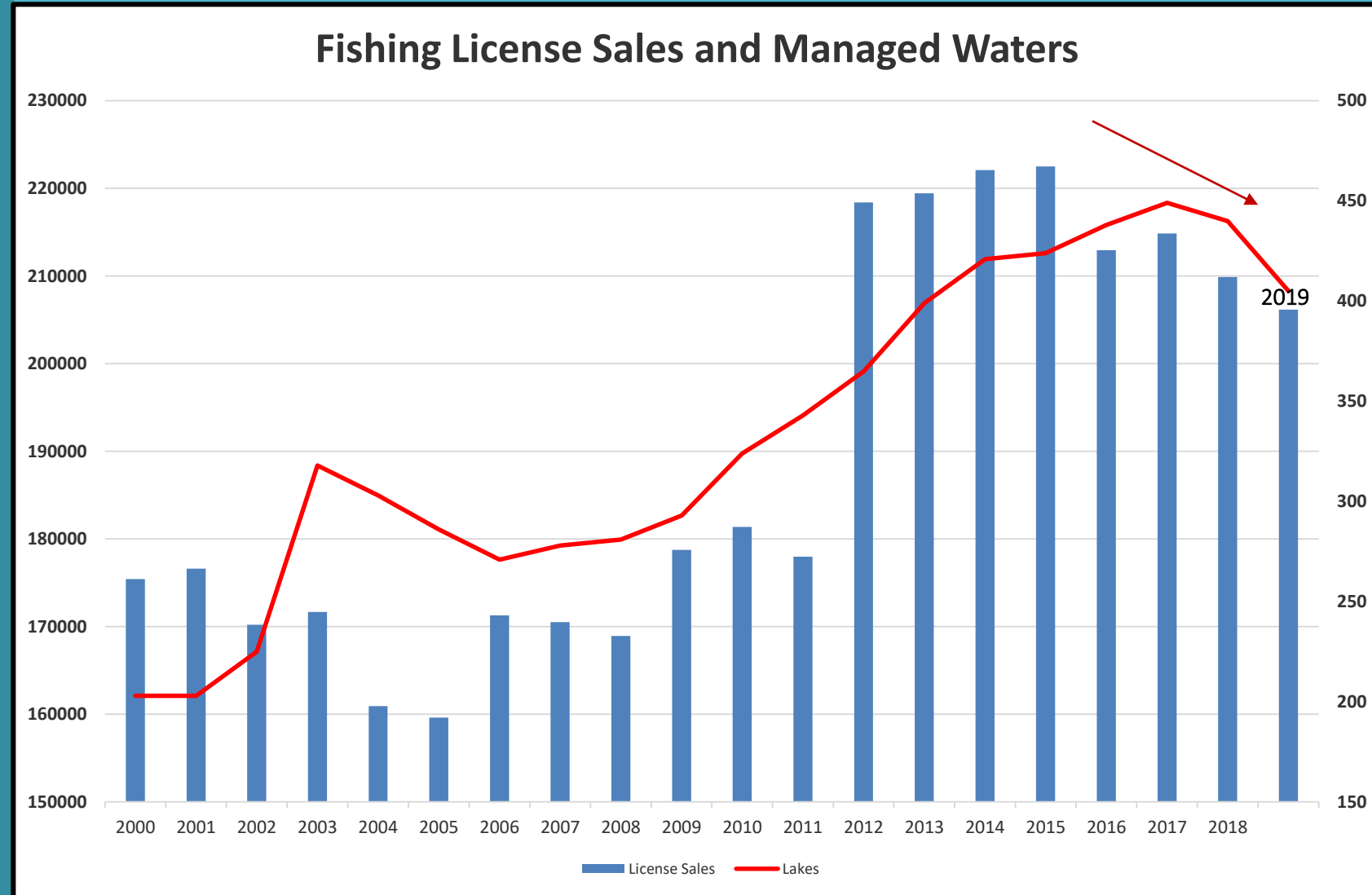


# Recent Fishing License Sales

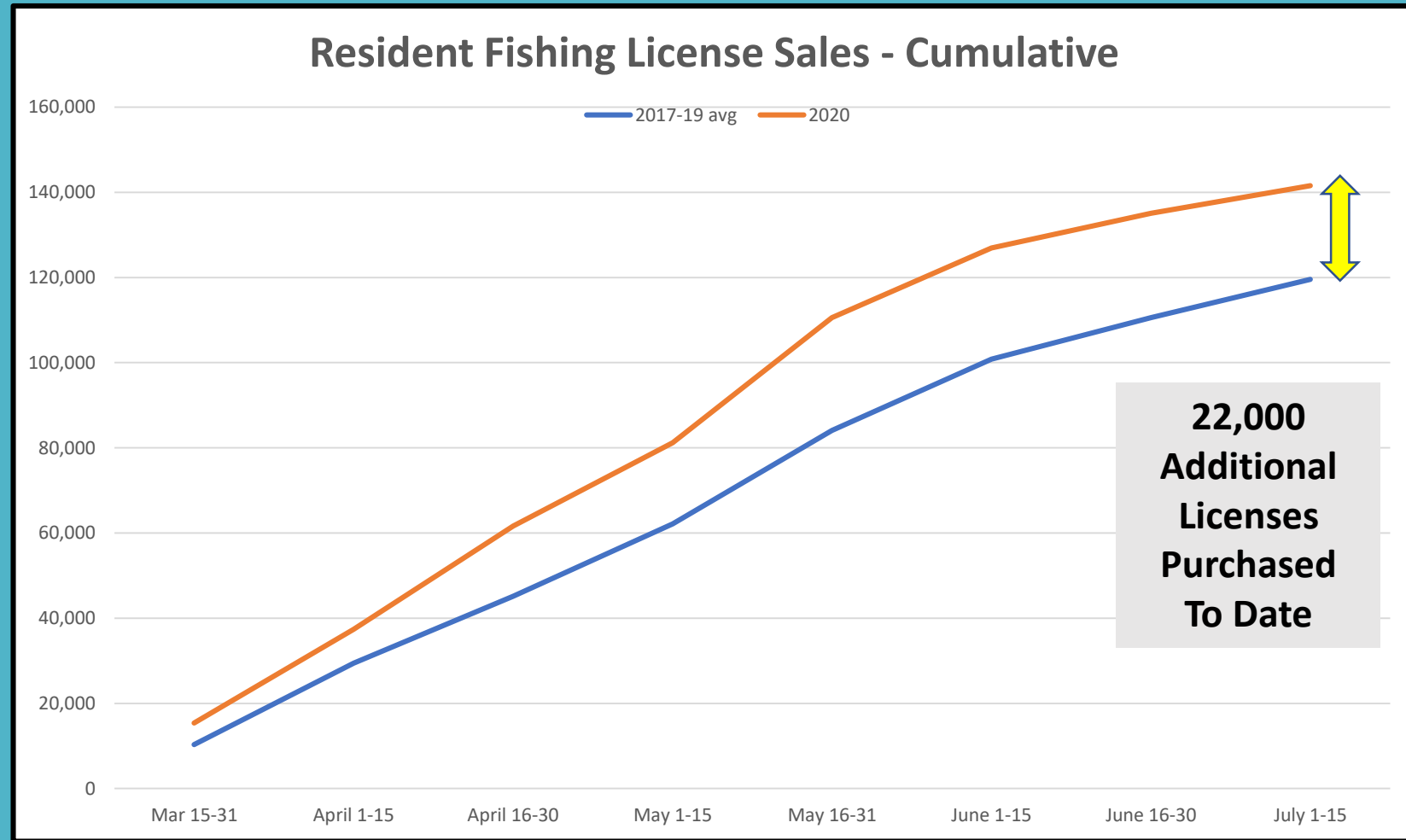




# Recent Fishing License Sales



# 2020 Fishing Trends and Covid-19



# 2020 Covid-19 Actions Internal

## March through early May

- **Staff Transportation** – with few exceptions, staff drive solely. Due to shortage of pickups, ~5 SOV cars used by staff (primarily early arriving seasonal staff).
- **Scheduling** – contingency plans made to address at least the priority spring activities if one crew becomes infected with the virus.
- **Bodily Protection Measures** – socially distancing a minimum of 6 feet always attempted; however, certain work activities required close personal contact. When this occurred, masks were worn. State Health Department and CDC preventative steps also incorporated. A new spawning bench with plexiglass used during the pike and walleye spawn.
- **Fisheries activities have been canceled/postponed including –**
  - Suspension of creel clerk activity for Devils Lake creel survey
  - Net treating
  - Spring paddlefish tagging in the Confluence area
  - Salmon CWT tagging
  - Red River 2020 creel survey
- **Priority Activities** – though there is just a small window of time to complete a number of spring projects, northern pike and walleye spawning, and yellow perch trap/transport are the priorities



# 2020 Covid-19 Actions Internal

## March through early May

### Spring Priority Activities/Projects

Northern spawning efforts at Lake Oahe and Devils Lake produced ~10.4M eggs

Walleye spawning efforts at Lake Sakakawea resulted in ~70.3M eggs

Stocked close to 200,000 adult yellow perch (11,000 lbs.) into more than 40 waters

### Secondary Activities/Projects

Delivered and installed 11 new courtesy docks; delivered portions of several piers

Installed several hundred signs (fillet regulation, COVID-19) at all 65 fish cleaning stations

Completed several dozen maintenance projects (road, ramp, dock, etc.)

Completed pier repair project along with sediment removal. Started a rehab project.

Stocked ~76,000 catchable trout (~ 36,000 lbs.) into 55 waters from GDNFH and 1,550 WY brood cutthroats (1750 lbs.) stocked into 8 waters

Stocked ~2200 lbs. of catchable channel catfish (1300 fish) into 9 community fisheries

Stocked nearly 4000 lbs. (~1000 fish) of catchable northern pike into 4 community fisheries

Stocked almost 1000 lbs. of adult bluegill (~16,000 fish) into 19 waters

Stocked 425,000 chinook salmon smolts into Lake Sakakawea



# 2020 Covid-19 Actions Internal

## March through early May

### Secondary Activities/Projects (continued)

Staff in several Department produced video shows

Numerous zebra mussel early detection and adult settlement samples on the Red and Sheyenne rivers as well as Baldhill and Valley City National Fish Hatchery ponds.

ANS inspections on Lake Sakakawea - 6 Barges, 1 Tugboat.

ANS scheduling coordination and training with the Corps, Lake Tschida Staff, and ND State Parks.

Tagged adult (trophy) northern pike in Lakes Oahe and Sakakawea.

Tagged adult walleye in Lake Sakakawea and Lake Josephine.

Some staff were able to conduct a handful of winterkill assessment surveys shortly after ice-out.



# 2020 Covid-19 Actions External

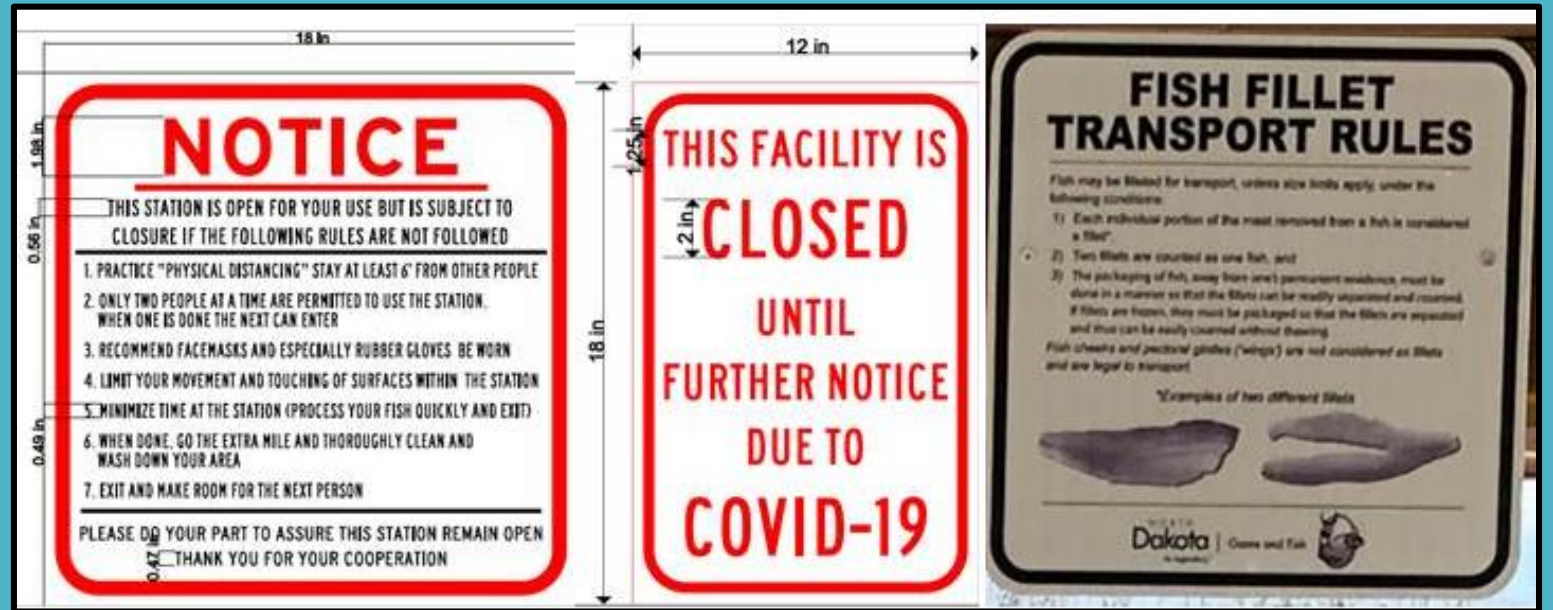
March through early May

- Paddlefish Season
- Fishing Tournaments – **(update: 28 cancelations to date, 60 still on)**
- Signage at (potential) fishing congestion areas
- Fish Cleaning Stations
- Boat Ramps
- Fishing piers (floating)
- Keeping the fishing season open



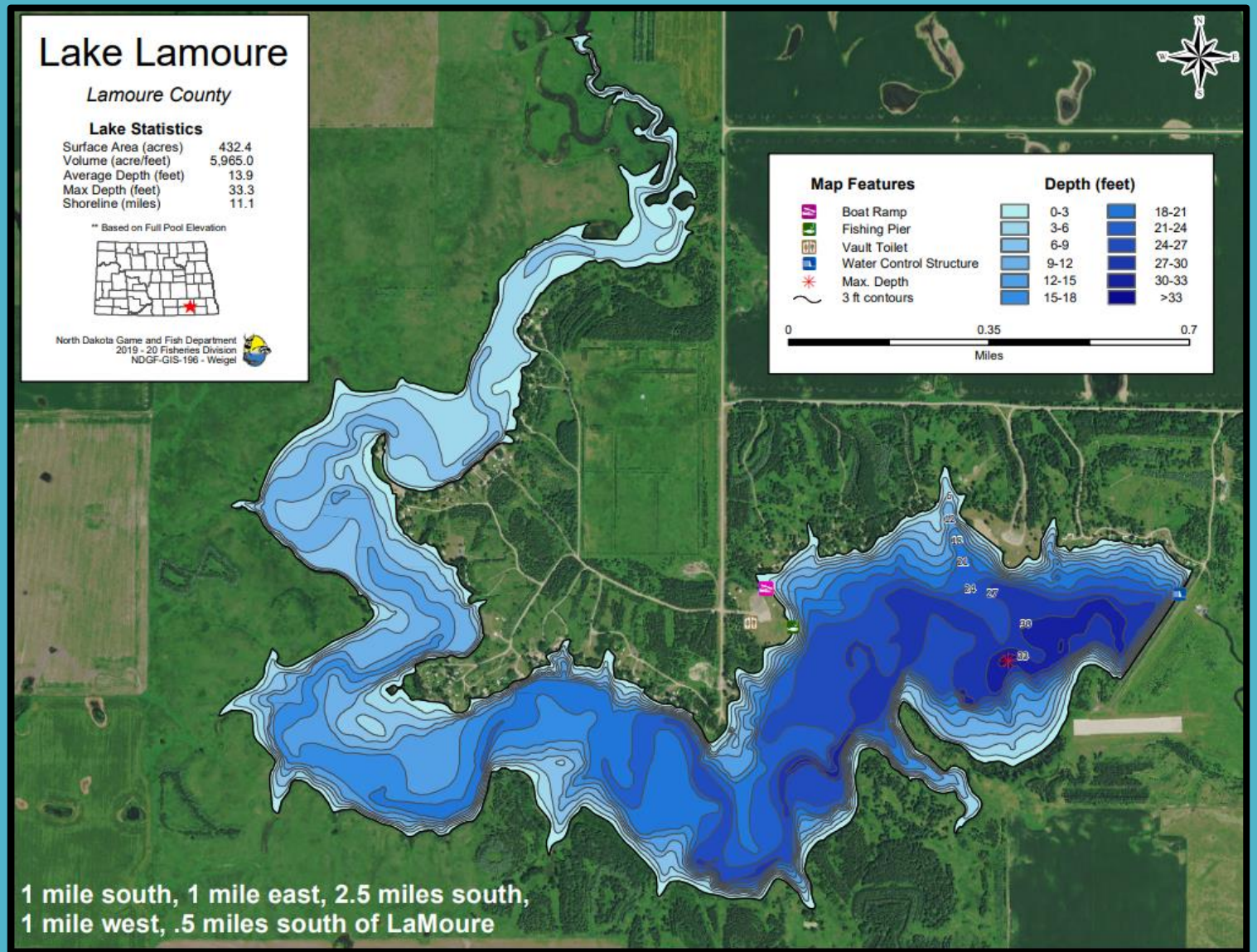
# 2020 Covid-19 Actions

# External





# Aquatic Nuisance Species



**Zebra mussels** were documented in Lake Lamoure  
and the lower James River in 2020



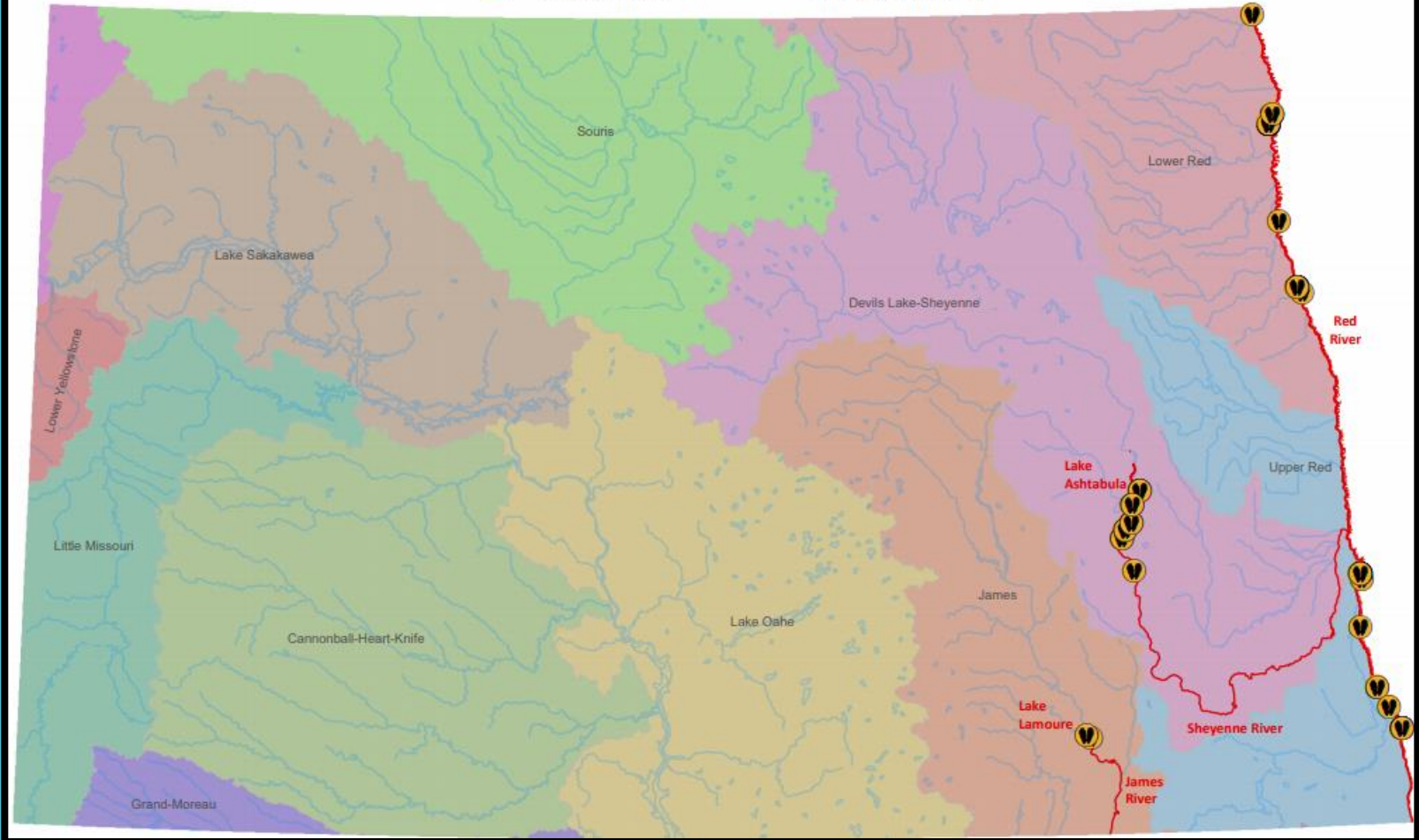


# Aquatic Nuisance Species

## AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES INFESTATION MAP Class 1: Prohibited Aquatic Nuisance Species Infested Waters

- As of July 2020 -

 Zebra Mussel      Infested Waters



# Aquatic Nuisance Species

## Lake LaMoure Zebra Mussels Q/A

Explain the emergency rule put in place following the zebra mussel findings? Any additional work?

Explain current ANS testing/methods? Any changes with the recent findings?

How is it that this lake has all age classes and was not caught earlier?

What is happening to the food chain in ANS (zebra mussels) infested waters?

**(Are we doing some longer term work on the Red River?)**



# Aquatic Nuisance Species



## What Water Recreationists Need to Know About Lake LaMoure



### What are zebra mussels and why is this a big deal?

Zebra mussels are small D-shaped or triangular bivalve with alternating light and dark brown stripes. Their filter feeding abilities can impact water quality and ecosystem, which can negatively affect fish and wildlife populations. These mussels attach to hard surfaces and may foul equipment, clog water pipes and cut unprotected feet.

Picture- ANS Sign

### Additional recommendations for water recreationists

Decontamination of watercraft and equipment is not required by North Dakota law, but highly recommend to reduce the likelihood of spread of ANS.

- 140°F for 10 seconds of contact (recommend for the outside of watercraft and equipment).
- 120°F for at least 2 minutes contact (recommend for internal compartments of watercraft).
- Dry for at least 7 days under hot summer conditions. Keep in mind the cooler and more humid, the longer the drying time required to kill adult zebra mussels.

Picture Zebra Mussel

### What are the current regulations?

- **Anglers may not transport live bait in water** away from Lake LaMoure, Cottonwood Creek downstream from Lake LaMoure, and the James River in Dickey County.
- **Remove all vegetation** from boats, trailers, fishing and hunting equipment.
- **Drain all watercraft** including bilges livewells, baitwells and motors before leaving a waterbody.
- **Remove all drain plugs** that may hold back water, during any out-of-water transport.

Picture- Power wash equipment



# Aquatic Nuisance Species SB 2293 Update

A new law was passed last year that created an enhanced ANS program. The expressed intent of this bill is to augment ANS education, inspection, and monitoring programs conducted by the Department.



# Aquatic Nuisance Species SB 2293 Update

## Revenue Update (as of July 15, 2020)

- Resident Fishing Licenses =  
115,050 (141.5k) \$230,000
- Non-res. Fishing Licenses =  
32,350 (37k) \$97,000
- Motorized Watercraft Registrations =  
55,000 \$825,000  
(2017-2019 total 54,200 (63,300))
- ANS stickers =  
4,660 \$70,000
- TOTAL (to date) \$1,222,000





# Aquatic Nuisance Species SB 2293 Update

## Department Efforts

- Eight watercraft inspectors
- More monitoring including wetlands
- More Enforcement interactions
- Fish cleaning station improvements
- To date, expenditures ~\$600,000 + \$170,000 baseline (minus Enforcement)
- Wash Stations/Decontamination





# Aquatic Nuisance Species SB 2293 Update

## Enforcement Efforts

Each Enforcement region was given a target number of hours for the biennium to be dedicated to ANS enforcement.

Regions with water bodies with zebra mussels' infestations were/are given priority. This prioritization includes both individual game warden presence and ANS check stations in the area. If new infestations occur, those will be added to the priority list.

Game Wardens have been and continue to work ANS enforcement both during routine patrol and targeted efforts such as check stations.

To date for this biennium, there have been a total of 125 citations and 87 written warnings for ANS violations.

Even with this enhanced effort there are just 30 Game Warden and 4 Regional supervisors for North Dakota, public full compliance and awareness are still the key ingredients in slowing new infestations.



# Aquatic Nuisance Species

# Activities

## North Dakota ANS Program Current Status 12/31/2019

### CURRENT PROJECTS OVERVIEW

	Project	Priority	Current status	Upcoming Deadline	POC
Coordination and Communication	<a href="#">AISC</a>	High	Convene the AISC once in the spring and once in the fall.	April	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">ANS federal grant management</a>	High	Maintain F-44-O and close out ANS MP grant. ANS Coordinator should code all time to 2600-260 to use federal grants first. Keep in contact with Corey and Kelly to make sure we draw down all those funds prior to switching back to 2200 funds. No additional 2600 funds will be sought. Ignore requests for proposals from Don MacLean for future Management Plan funding.	Ongoing	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">ANS program reporting</a>	High	2019 annual report is nearly complete. Need to finalize 2019 report by March 15th.	March	New ANS Coordinator/Ben
	<a href="#">Contact us/reports/information requests</a>	High	Review and respond as needed.	Ongoing	Jerry/Ben
	<a href="#">Regional coordination</a>	Medium	Maintain contact with these groups: MRBP, WRP, 100 <sup>th</sup> MI.	Ongoing	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">ANS seasons/boat surveys</a>	High	Hire 6 seasons; work plan is updated each year to reflect boater traffic.	February	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">ANS wash station outreach</a>	Medium	New; need to continue to explore logistics including locations, staffing, etc.	Ongoing	New ANS Coordinator
Education and Outreach	<a href="#">Outreach campaign strategy</a>	High	Contracting with Jason Mitchell Outdoors; work with Craig and JMO early each year to develop strategy; approve artwork and scripts early; approve invoices throughout year and send to Jerry to pay.	February	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">Pet store resupply</a>	Medium	Order Don't Let it Loose boxes from ISAN in early spring, then deliver in early June	March	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">Sakakawea concessionaires meeting</a>	Medium	Corps of Engineers requested another presentation/discussion on ANS at their spring concessionaires meeting.	March	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">Website maintenance</a>	Low	Need to periodically review for accuracy.	Ongoing	New ANS Coordinator

Prevention and Control	<a href="#">Weed harvester permits</a>	Medium	These are issued annually. See file for past weed harvest permits.	Early June	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">Permitted equipment inspections</a>	High	These are on request. Usually requests are during construction season, but pipeline requests are often late fall. Only equipment that is being used in North Dakota waters that was last used out of state or in a Class I ANS water need inspected.	Ongoing	New ANS Coordinator/Ben
	<a href="#">Out of State Private Fish Hatchery inspections</a>	High	Work with Janice each spring to identify out-of-state private fish hatcheries requiring an ANS inspection. Conduct inspections as needed.	Early May	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">Bait importer inspections</a>	High	Work with Janice each spring to identify bait import permits requiring an ANS inspection. Conduct inspections as needed.	Early May	New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">Hatchery protocols</a>	High	Work with USFWS to establish acceptable protocols to reduce the risk of ANS transfer from VCNFH and BHNFH during stocking efforts.	Ongoing	Jerry/New ANS Coordinator
	<a href="#">Eurasian watermilfoil assessment and potential control</a>	Low	Assess current status of Eurasian watermilfoil in the Sheyenne River. If feasible, employ hand pulling to control the population or eradicate. Continue annual control efforts as needed and conduct assessments for at least 3 years after last detection.	June/July 2019	New ANS Coordinator/Ben
Sampling and Monitoring	<a href="#">Asian carp monitoring</a>	Medium	Jamestown Fisheries staff will conduct annual electrofishing of James River to monitor existing silver carp population.	June	Jamestown fisheries staff/Ben
	<a href="#">Hatchery sampling</a>	High	Take pond samples in early May from both hatcheries and process results immediately; take July samples and send to MT lab.	Ongoing	New ANS Coordinator/Ben
	<a href="#">Lab processing</a>	High	Process any infested samples in-house, along with other high priority samples as needed.	Fall and winter	New ANS Coordinator/Ben
	<a href="#">Infested water monitoring</a>	Medium	Collect monthly veliger samples from the Red River and Lake Ashtabula to estimate veliger densities. Each water should have at least 5 years of data collection (Red River 2016-2020; Ashtabula 2020-2024).	April-October	New ANS Coordinator/Ben
	<a href="#">Vegetation sampling</a>	Low	Conduct vegetation sampling on waters used by waterfowl hunters but not managed as fisheries to detect the presence of any ANS.	Late June into mid-July	New ANS Coordinator/Ben
	<a href="#">Zebra mussel early detection samples</a>	High	Collect veliger tows from ND waters to detect presence of zebra mussel larvae. Lakes are prioritized based on stocking history, use, and likelihood of introduction.		New ANS Coordinator/Ben



# Aquatic Nuisance Species

# Wash Stations



## North Dakota Game and Fish Department Aquatic Nuisance Species Wash Station Partnership Program (2020-2021)

### Background

Wash stations, used for the decontamination of watercraft, are commonly used by state agencies across the United States to minimize the risk of spread of aquatic nuisance species (ANS). The North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department) is seeking local entities to assist in the development and day to day operation of ANS wash stations, which will be available for public use. For the immediate future, the Department will pay 100 percent of the cost associated with the initial construction of the wash station and provide the local sponsor with an operating grant to cover maintenance and staffing. Local sponsors will be responsible for operating, staff hiring/supervision, and any maintenance associated with the wash stations.

There are several potential wash station designs that could be constructed but, ultimately, the location of the wash station will decide the design and investment from the Department. The ideal location for the stations are high use waterbodies\* that have access to water and electricity. Potential traffic and water runoff issues will also need to be evaluated during any wash station location selection process.

High pressure, hot water wash stations are the most effective way to decontaminate watercraft. This type of wash station requires a large initial investment, multiple seasonal staff and maintenance money. Trained staff are required at all high pressure, hot water stations because they have the potential to cause serious injury. No member of the public will be allowed to operate a wash station with high pressure, hot water without training and consent from the Department.

Low pressure, self-service wash stations require a smaller initial cost and minimal annual maintenance costs. Self-serve wash stations effectiveness is limited to the knowledge of the operator. While not as effective, self-serve stations give a positive message about promoting good ANS prevention habits. Self-serve wash stations do not eliminate the risk of residual ANS on watercraft, so signage is important to notify users of the remaining risk and further steps to take to eliminate ANS.

### Partnership Operational and Funding Protocol

Because of the challenges associated with both high-pressure and low-pressure wash stations, the Department has elected to pursue a hybrid of the two options.

All stations will have the ability to be hot water, high pressure and self-serve. The standard portable wash will mainly be used as low pressure, self-serve during the boating season with a few exceptions. However, local sponsors will have the option to run the wash station as a true high pressure, hot water decontamination site if:

- The local sponsor has a trained staff member (the Department will provide the needed training) present to operate the station as a high pressure, hot water station, AND
- An appointment is made by a watercraft owner for a true decontamination, OR A game warden or seasonal watercraft inspector finds ANS on a watercraft or deems a watercraft high risk and refers them to the wash station, OR A short period of time (e.g. a special event or period of high watercraft activity) is deemed to require maximum ANS precautions.

The Department will accept applications (see attached list of criteria for applicants) from local sponsors and enter into a long-term agreement with the following funding options –

#### For Permanent ANS Wash Stations

- o Department will pay up to 100% cost of the station (up to \$125,000)
- o Department will provide up to \$12,500/year for staffing and O/M costs
- o Sponsor will provide all needed infrastructure including land, water, electricity and water disposal
- o Sponsor will be responsible solely for operating the station and all staffing
- o Agreement duration will be for a minimum of six years

#### For Portable ANS Wash Stations

- o Department will purchase and provide to sponsor
- o Department will pay sponsor up to \$5,000/year for staffing and O/M costs
- o Sponsor will be responsible solely for operating the station and all staffing
- o Agreement duration will be for a minimum of three years

#### \* High Priority Waterbodies

The Department prioritizes the following waters for funding purposes: Yellowstone/Upper Missouri rivers, Lake Sakakawea, Missouri River (Garrison Reach), Lake Oahe, Devils Lake, Stump Lake, Lake Audubon, Red River, Jamestown Reservoir, Lake Ashtabula, Lake Darling, Heart Butte, Sheyenne River, Dry Lake and Alkaline Lake.

# Aquatic Nuisance Species Watercraft



Burleigh	10025	15.3%
Cass	7882	12.1%
Ward	6010	9.2%
Grand Forks	3831	5.9%
Morton	3643	5.6%
Williams	3494	5.3%
Stark	2880	4.4%
Stutsman	2161	3.3%
McLean	1985	3.0%
Mercer	1523	2.3%
Ramsey	1519	2.3%
Richland	1408	2.2%
Bottineau	1322	2.0%
Barnes	1084	1.7%
Mountrail	1048	1.6%
<b>3 County Total</b>	<b>13121</b>	<b>20%</b>

# Aquatic Nuisance Species Success?

North Dakota has ten waters with an ANS that are aquatic vegetation. 'No veg' on ones boat ANS rule became effective in 2008.

- For the 12 years prior to this rule implementation, **seven** water bodies were documented to have an aquatic vegetation ANS (eight incidents),
- for the 12 years since this rule implementation, we've only had **three** newly infested waters (i.e. 2009, 2010, 2014).
  - Since last documented in 2014, there have been 3037 samples taken from 374 water bodies – NO new infestations in new waters.





# ISSUES / CONCERNS

# ANS CONNECTIVITY



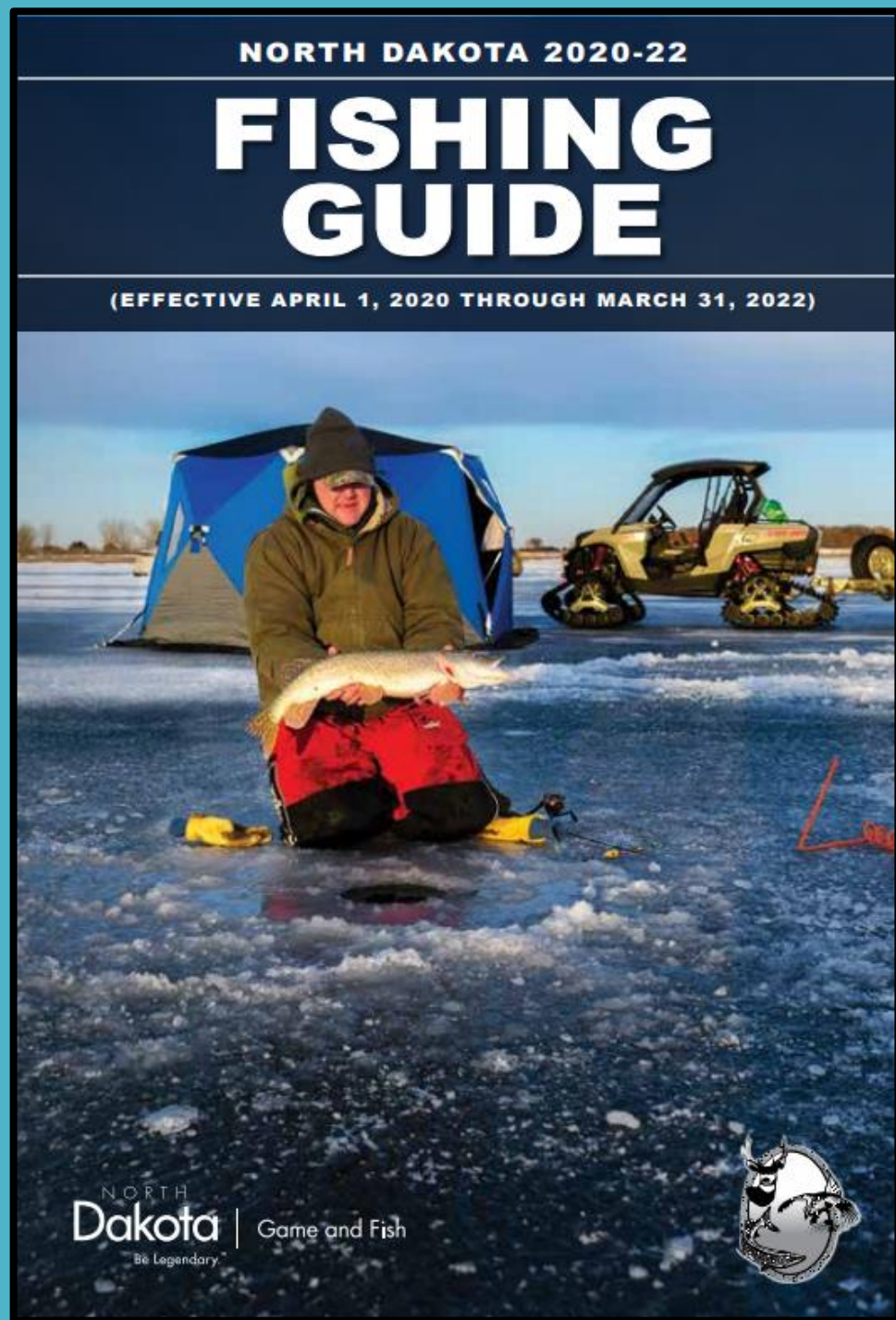
No Carp



No Carp



# Fishing Regulations Update





# Fishing Regulations Update

SECT. 2

## 2. NEW FOR 2020-22 FISHING SEASONS

Lake Ashtabula and Whitman Dam are added to the list of waters where darkhouse spearfishing is not allowed.

The State Fair Pond will be open to fishing year round except for the 2-3 weeks immediately prior to the State Fair. Fish can be harvested at the State Fair Pond year round except from April 1-July 31.

The smallmouth bass daily limit is increased from 3 to 5 in the Missouri River and lakes Sakakawea, Oahe, Audubon, Darling, Ashtabula and Heart Butte.

For fish hooked by a lure with multiple hooks, the fish is not considered foul-hooked if at least one of the hooks is embedded from gill covers forward.

Area and time for paddlefish extended snag/release days is expanded.

Individuals who are not required to possess a valid fishing license (e.g. less than 16 years old) do not need to register prior to participating in darkhouse spearfishing.

Fish may be filleted for transport, unless size limits apply, under the following conditions:

1. Each individual portion of the meat removed from a fish is considered a fillet\*,
2. Two fillets are counted as one fish, and
3. The packaging of fish must be done in a manner so that the fillets can be readily separated and counted. If fillets are frozen, they must be packaged so that the fillets are separated and thus can be easily counted without thawing.

*\*Fish cheeks and pectoral girdles (wings) are not considered as fillets and are legal to transport.*



# Other Questions?

## Federal Legislation

### Great American Outdoor Act

- Deferred maintenance backlog on our nation's public lands and makes annual payments into the Land and Water Conservation Fund).

### Recovering America's Wildlife Act

- Redirect \$1.3 billion annually to state fish and wildlife agencies for proactive conservation actions to restore state species of greatest conservation need - ties into State Wildlife Action Plans.

### Reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration Act



- This Trust Fund is one of the most successful “user pays – public benefits” model programs in the world, relying on excise taxes on fishing equipment, electric trolling motors, and motorboat and small engine fuels to fund fisheries conservation and aquatic habitat improvements.



# Other Questions?

Staffing - does the department have enough seasonal workers to complete the surveys and studies?

Based on North Dakotas current revenues and Covid-19, what is the departments view/belief on the mood of the next legislative session?



# Current Health Of Our Fisheries

**The Big 3 (Sakakawea, Oahe/MOR, and Devils Lake) remain in good shape although a lot of 'small walleye are currently present**

**Record number of new prairie lakes on the landscape – many of these will be outstanding walleye, pike and/or perch fisheries in 3-5 years**

**All-time high lake elevations throughout the state**

**Hatchery production of fish species (e.g. walleye, pike, trout, salmon, etc.) we request remains excellent**

**Fishing access to our fishing waters continues to improve – currently 283 waters have a public boat ramp**





# Questions?





## Zebra Mussel Q/A (July 15, 2020)

### **Explain current ANS testing/methods? Also, any changes with the recent findings.**

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department) and many other state and federal agencies use plankton tow nets as their primary zebra mussel detection tool. Plankton tow nets are used to collect the microscopic, free living larvae, called veligers. It can take time for veligers to be produced in high enough quantities to detect, yet plankton tow nets are often the most effective way to discover new populations. A few high use waterbodies receive adult sampling, however adult searches take considerable effort and time. As an added detection method, the Department increased the number of settlement samplers placed in waters this year. Samplers are collected in late summer to look for freshly settled zebra mussel juveniles.

As a result of the recent finding, the Department hopes to increase the volume of water sampled at lakes when possible. The eutrophic nature of many lakes in North Dakota makes this task nearly impossible at some waterbodies. Many labs refuse to take samples with excess organic material, and it is extremely time consuming for Department staff to process organic heavy samples in house.

### **How is it that this lake has all age classes of zebra mussels and why was it not caught earlier?**

After the initial report by a game warden, Department staff extensively sampled Lake LaMoure, including both upstream and downstream of the lake. Adult zebra mussels were sampled at a depth of at least a meter throughout the lake. Zebra mussel veligers were detected in very low densities. Poor water clarity made searching difficult and may explain why there were no public reports of zebra mussels prior to the initial discovery. The highest concentration of adults and veligers were documented near the dam and overall densities decreased the further upstream staff sampled, with a few localized exceptions. No veligers or adults were sampled at the lake's inlet, or any waters upstream of the lake. Adult zebra mussels were found immediately below Lake LaMoure in Cottonwood Creek. Thus far, no adult zebra mussels have been found in the James River, however, a handful of veligers have been documented in Dakota Lake, on the James River. The Department will actively monitor zebra mussel populations and document ecological changes associated with their establishment.



In 2019, Lake Lamoure was designated to receive annual veliger sampling. Samples were collected in July, when peak spawning should occur. No veligers were found in any samples collected in July or September of last year and the lake had not yet received its 2020 annual sampling. Lake LaMoure received a settlement sampler this year with the intent to collect at the end of the summer. No visible juvenile zebra mussels were recorded on the sampler at the time of the initial discovery. Newly infested waterbodies often have very low veliger densities. It is also true that plankton tow nets, like many sampling methods are subjected to variability caused by wind, temperature, organic matter and lake conditions. It is likely that the instantaneous variability at the time of collection, coupled with very low veliger densities, allowed zebra mussels veligers to be undetected.

### **What is happening to the food chain in ANS (zebra mussels) infested water?**

North Dakota's zebra mussel populations are in their infancy and it will take some time to document changes in the food web. Across the country, zebra mussels' incredible filtration ability allows them to take energy, in the form of phytoplankton, and deposit it in the bottom sediments. As a result, it is common to see a decrease in waterbodies zooplankton population, but an increase in the macroinvertebrate and macrophyte abundance. The effects on fish populations can be highly variable. On some waters, zebra mussel infestations have negatively influenced fish abundance and growth, while other waterbodies have seen little to no change. A variety of factors including, nutrient input, water chemistry, and species composition make predicting impacts to a fishery difficult.

### **Are we (GF) doing some longer-term work on the Red River?**

This year marks the end of a five-year cycle of monthly veliger sampling on the Red River. The data collected over the past five years has given the Department insight on the timing of zebra mussels spawning events, peak months of veliger production and generally veliger densities at popular public access areas. After this year, the Department will monitor the Red River on a two-year cycle. The Department works with Minnesota DNR every five years to sample fish populations on the Red River. Long term sampling data, pre and post establishment of zebra mussels, will give agencies a better understanding of the effects zebra mussels may have on Red River fish populations.