

RYBA: The Newsletter of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

A Cast from the President Kristen Blann

This year's joint professional society meeting between the Minnesota chapters of the American Fisheries Society, Society for Conservation Biology, Society of American Foresters, and The Wildlife Society was another great success. Judging from attendance (>400) as well as comments and general positive feedback, we along with our natural resource colleagues appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of these meetings as well as the opportunity to interact outside our field. The meeting featured more than 100 presentations on a variety of wildlife, forestry, fisheries, and endangered species topics, including keynote addresses from Dr. Karen Poiani, Director of Science for The Nature Conservancy and Dr. Daniel Svedarsky of the University of MN-Crookston on "Global Climate Change: Perspectives from Copenhagen and Implications for Local Action". The plenary session also featured the special opportunities and challenges for us as fisheries professionals by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy constitutional amendment overwhelmingly approved by Minnesota voters in 2008, with addresses from Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council chair and forester Mike Kilgore and Board of Water and Soil Resources executive director John Jaschke. Special sessions and symposia on climate change and ecosystem services throughout the two day meeting featured leading and well-known research scientists in climate, fisheries, forestry and conservation biology, such as Drs. Mark Seeley, Lee Frelich, and Steven Polasky.

I would like to reiterate my thanks and appreciation for the many of you who worked to make this year's annual meeting a success. My sincere thanks also to the outgoing AFS officers and ExCom members for their contribution to the chapter throughout the year. These include outgoing president Tim Cross, whose organization skills and consistent commitment to the chapter helped ensure a smooth and profitable year. Academic Chair Pat Ceas and Student representative Marcus Beck helped make this year's student attendance at the annual meeting among the highest in recent history. Edie Evarts succeeded in reviving the Continuing Education activities, with a successful statistics refresher course, and we can look forward to some momentum going into this year. Calub Shavlik and Eric Altena also received well deserved recognition awards at the business meetings for their ongoing contributions to the chapter. I also appreciate the regular news updates and summaries from our liaisons with other agencies and bodies, such as federal representative Scott Yess and FWLA delegate Loren

Miller. I take a risk in naming specific individuals, however, as there are so many of you that help out in so many ways. It is a privilege to be part of such a well-organized and committed group of people.

Our chapter has a full slate of opportunities and issues ahead of us in the year ahead. As the theme of our recent meeting "Science in the Century of Accelerating Change" suggested, we face enormous challenges in the coming years. Globally, fisheries are under ever increasing pressure, and the news is often grim. At home, our lakes, rivers, and streams are threatened by a host of exotic invaders from Asian carp to spiny water fleas. A recent USGS study recently reported that 100% of fish sampled in U.S. streams were contaminated with mercury. A substantial percentage of water bodies assessed by states under the Clean Water Act are classified as impaired, primarily due to nonpoint source nutrients, sediment, and other contaminants coming from our highly modified landscapes. Resource management agencies and authorities struggle to keep pace with these challenges. As keynote speaker Dr. Poiani referenced, even as we struggle to conserve and manage for goal states based on past conditions, we are increasingly confronted with novel ecosystems. As the organization representing fisheries scientists and professionals, it has perhaps never been more important for us to take seriously our responsibility to provide the best possible professional guidance and input to natural resource decision-making at all levels of governance. This was a theme I heard reiterated time and time again at the recent annual meeting, from the banquet speech by Jim Martin, to the Amendment symposium, to the session on public involvement in natural resource decisionmaking led by Tim Goeman and Julia Nerbonne. Our issues committee is currently developing guidance on invasive carp, aquatic habitat needs and spending priorities, as well as on how to improve the chapter web site generally as a discussion forum and as a resource for our members on a broad variety of issues with the potential to affect our fisheries and aquatic resources in the state. We welcome your input.

We also have the 71st Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference coming up this December 12-15 in Minneapolis, and there are still a number of opportunities for getting involved and helping through the chapter. We are also already involved in

President's Message continued...

preparations for our role as hosts of the 2012 annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society. In particular, there is a need for Ex-Com/chapter representation on the 2012 planning committee (preferably non-DNR, for reasons relating to the new guidelines and restrictions for DNR involvement in professional society meetings). We also need a replacement for the Salmonid Technical Committee, as Eric Merten is now at UW-Eau Claire. If you are interested in any of these roles, we need you! Please feel free to contact me at kblann@umn.edu.

Thanks! I'm looking forward to a productive and active year for the chapter!



New AFS Minnesota Chapter President Kristen Blann recognizes the newly minted Past President, Tim Cross for his year of leadership.

Federal Agencies Update Scott Yess

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Lake Sturgeon Restoration - The Lake Sturgeon Restoration project will continue on the White Earth Reservation in 2010. Due to the efforts of the White Earth DNR, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Rainy River First Nations and the Minnesota DNR these majestic fish are making a come back on the Reservation.

Fish Passage - In an effort to improve habitat for lake sturgeon and native fish a fish passage structure for Round Lake will be constructed this year when the new bridge is rebuilt. Boulders and rock that was in excess for past projects will be donated to support

this effort by White Earth DNR.

Fish Habitat Partnerships - The Fishers and Farmers Partnership was approved as a full partner by the National Board in March 2010. Ken Lubinski (USGS) coordinates this effort and says the group will now focus on selecting projects that can be implemented on the ground.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The COE has been working on the Fargo/Moorhead flood study. This includes developing flood protection for that area. One of the key obstacles is impacts to fisheries resources, including connectivity and fish passage. The Corps continues to work with MnDNR, NDGF and USFWS to identify potential impacts and will try to design a project to avoid and minimize identified impacts, and determine if further mitigation is warranted.

Minnesota DNR Update Dale Logsdon

Metro Region: Work on metropolitan area rivers has been a strong theme entering 2010. Lake sturgeon tagging in the St. Croix river will continue. Objectives of the study are to develop an estimate of the total lake sturgeon population, determine the size structure of the population, evaluate growth and condition, identify movement and preferred fish habitat, and determine catchability/vulnerability to angling.

The "Metro River Catfish Project" has tagged 147 flathead and channel catfish in 2009 with plans to tag more fish in 2010. Anglers are encouraged to report tags as well as take a larger role in the project through online surveys and keeping angler diaries. Some fish will be aged as part of the project, and channel catfish will be examined to compare hatchery and wild stocks in an



A channel catfish shown with dorsal disk dangler tag.

MN DNR Update continued...

effort to learn more about river catfish genetics. Some objectives of the Metro River Catfish Project include estimating catfish angling effort and harvest, estimating catfish population size and abundance, observing trends in fish movement, genetic testing and makeup of channel catfish populations, and channel catfish and flathead catfish age determination.

Southern Region: An autumn reclamation of Pickerel lake near Albert Lea brought together a number of conservation partners and local government. Crews treated upstream wetlands and ditches as well as Pickerel and Mud lakes. It is hoped that the



A rock-weir rapids just upstream of the old dam site in Dawson along the Lac Qui Parle river.

Roundtable Report Mark Hove

Times are always changing. The Roundtable met at a new location this year to discuss old concerns, contemplate current efforts and raise new issues. Participants included professionals (biologists, journalists, lobbyists, etc.), organization representatives (fishing, tourist, resort, outdoor habitat, etc.) and private citizens to discuss Minnesota natural resource questions. It was wonderful to see several high quality, thoughtful presentations encouraging thoughtful consideration. Presenters included professional biologists as well as enthusiastic Roundtable volunteers who summarized Citizen Advisory Committee activities and fielded audience questions, an impressive feat. Topics ranged from the future of recreational angling in Minnesota to aquatic habitat, walleye and esocid management to fishing tournaments, invasive species and many others. I am so pleased, and frankly proud, to be part of this organization where there is so much energetic participation. As one fishing guide put it, "The Roundtable is changing from hand-pounding to listening and participating in citizen advisory groups." I was delighted to hear non-biologists saying they want scientific information to be used in decision-making and that this information should be available to everyone. Roundtable organizers set aside some nice chunks of time (i.e., > 5 min) to discuss topic issues as well as entertain outside issues. I believe several of us found it to be a productive meeting.

In closing I thank MN AFS for allowing me to represent our professional society at the Fishing Roundtable for the last 8 years. I've shared and learned a great deal at these meetings and I believe it would be wise for our chapter to continue sending a representative to future meetings. I plan to step down as Roundtable Representative this year so I can spend more time supporting UMN Student AFS/TWS Chpt. and MN AFS Scholarship Committee.



MN AFS Members Dale Logsdon, Jack Lauer, and Marc Bacigalupi begin treatment day by coordinating crew activities.

elimination of carp from the Pickerel-Mud sub-watershed will be a key step in sequentially reducing carp abundance in the complex of lakes including Fountain and Albert Lea.

Dam deconstruction in southwest Minnesota reconnected frequently isolated fish communities. The Dawson Dam Project involved removing the dam and constructing a rock-weir rapids just upstream of the old dam site. The dam was a barrier to fish migration most years on the West Branch of the Lac Qui Parle river, isolating 55 of the stream's 57 miles. The rapids was a compromise approach that provided the desired fish passage while maintaining the historic impoundment through the community.



**Minnesota Chapter
of the American Fisheries Society**



Annual Meeting Best Poster/Best Talk Kat Ruddick

Best Student Paper: Jami Sloan University of Minnesota - Duluth
"Acoustical conditioning of the common carp."

Best Professional Paper: Przemyslaw Bajer University of Minnesota - Twin Cities Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology "Winter hypoxia drives recruitment of the invasive common carp by eliminating native predatory fishes that forage on carp eggs."

Best Poster: Jonathan Meerbeek MN DNR - Lake City "Sampling and tagging lake sturgeon below a Mississippi River dam."

A note from the Communications Committee Eric Altena

The MNAFS Website has undergone many updates and challenges with handling the registrations for both the last two years meetings and general updates. I like to try and keep things fresh and useful. Please help us make the website as user friendly as possible. My intent is that the information should be available to all our members and housed on our web server to be accessed. Please consider joining our online discussion forum. You need to register with the site to do so. It is a place where we can maintain some dialogue of ongoing events of both the EXCOM and the society in general. Just like many things in our very active chapter, the site is only as good as the information it has up there and how useful it is to our membership. Please let me know if you have ideas, suggestions, recommendations or complaints, I will do what I can to address them. eraltena@gmail.com

Keeping our e-mail list up to date is a continual work in progress. If you are a Chapter member and you have not been receiving e-mails from us about upcoming events, such as annual meetings,

newsletters or continuing education opportunities, your e-mail address may be missing from the list or your spam blocker may be hijacking MNAFS e-mails. The MNAFS News list is a low volume e-mail list that typically sends around 2 messages per month about Minnesota Chapter events. It has replaced paper mail for all Chapter notifications. Most news items are also posted on the Chapter website: www.mnafs.org

Please contact Donna Dustin at donna.dustin@gmail.com if you think you have been left off the mailing list or if you would like the e-mails to go to a different address.

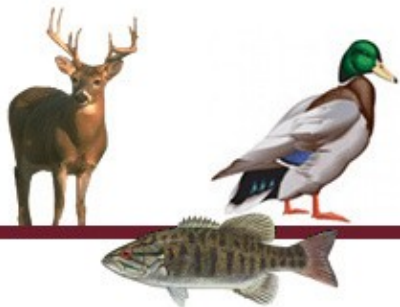
The RYBA newsletter is back up and running with a fervor thanks to Scott Mackenthun. We will be offering these in electronic format unless there are requests for paper versions. Our website will have the most recent version available in the main menu along the left side of the front page and with archived versions also online under archives. Please help Scott out with any pertinent information for our newsletter. It is only as good as the information we can provide him. Scott can be reached at mack0247@umn.edu

Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference

The Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference is coming to Minneapolis this December!

Go to <http://www.midwest2010.org> to learn about plenary speakers, see schedules, get registered, find information about submitting abstracts, or even become a Facebook friend!

The 71st Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference is December 12 to 15.



71st Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference

Minneapolis, Minnesota



**December 12 - 15
2010**

Esocid Technical Committee Rod Pierce

Upcoming Events for the Esocid Technical Committee (ETC)

Age and Growth Workshop and Summer Meeting: The ETC is hosting the latest and greatest age and growth workshop in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, during our annual summer meeting July 27-29. This workshop is a joint venture with the Walleye and Centrarchid Technical Committees. The workshop will be conducted by Dr. Dan Isermann using facilities at UW-LaCrosse. Contact Dan.Isermann@uwsp.edu for more details about the workshop. The ETC summer meeting will also feature contributed papers in our "casual" format. Please contact Rodney.Pierce@state.mn.us for more information about the summer meeting, or if you have information you would like to share at the meeting.

Coolwater Fishes Symposium: The ETC (along with the Walleye Technical Committee) will also be hosting a coolwater fishes symposium at the 2010 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference (Minneapolis, 12-15 December). The symposium will feature new work on the ecology and management of coolwater fish species within aquatic communities. Interest is building fast for this symposium, so please contact Rodney.Pierce@state.mn.us soon if you have a paper you would like to present.



Matt Ward (last row, second from left) poses with students that earned prizes on their aquatics-related projects at the Northeast Minnesota Regional Science Fair. The event was held February 6th at the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

FWLA Update Loren Miller

FWLA reports and requests for information are updated on the Forum site of the MNAFS web site. Register and check the Forum regularly for updates on FWLA and other chapter activities and discussions. <http://www.mnafsf.org>

"Parting Shots" from the Annual Chapter Meeting photos courtesy of Jeff Sluiter

