



Walleye Technical Committee

Randall Schultz, Chair: randy.schultz@dnr.iowa.gov
John Bruner, Chair-elect: jbruner@ualberta.ca
Hilary Meyer, Immediate Past Chair: Hilary.Meyer@state.sd.us
Hilary Meyer, Secretary: Hilary.Meyer@state.sd.us
Web site is: <http://ncd.fisheries.org/walleye/>

2015 Winter Business Meeting Minutes

Discovery A, Hyatt Regency, Indianapolis, IN February 8, 2015

The North Central Division's Walleye Technical Committee met on Sunday, February 8, 2015 in Discovery A at the Hyatt Regency, Indianapolis, IN. Chair Schultz called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM with approximately 15 people in attendance. Chair Schultz welcomed attendees and introductions were made. Minutes from the July 23 – 24 2014 summer meeting held in La Crosse, WI in conjunction with the Esocid and Centrarchid Technical Committees were not available for review.

Chair Schultz asked for the agenda to be reviewed. After no additions or corrections were made the agenda was approved by Jason Doll, seconded by Steve Gilbert.

Old Business

Treasurer's Report:

Chair Schultz provided and discussed the treasurer's report with attendees:

2014 WTC	Description	Expenses	Deposits	Balance
1-Jan				13,469.62
2-Jan	plaque	\$25.00		
21-Aug	meeting	\$1,812.69	\$1,764.58	
	ytd			
31-Dec	interest		\$53.71	
		\$1,837.69	\$1,818.29	13,450.22

After no additions or corrections were made the agenda was approved by Jason Doll, seconded by Steve Gilbert.

Sander Travel Award:

Andrew Carlson, Dakota Chapter, was presented with \$100 checks from the WTC and the Dakota Chapter for attendance to the meeting.

State and Provincial Reports:

The following attendees presented updates on current projects:

Indiana, Jason Doll and Dave Kittaka:

Jason encouraged members to attend his presentation titled "Monroe Reservoir Walleye Yield-Per-Recruit Modeling" Monday afternoon. Jason and Dave led a discussion on creels and walleye marking in Indiana impoundments.

Wisconsin, Steve Gilbert:

Wisconsin Report

1. Wisconsin Walleye Initiative Renewed

The governor just released his state budget plan for the next two years on February 2nd. In it he renews funding for the Wisconsin Walleye Initiative (WWI). This will make about 12 million dollars of general state funds available over the next two years for hatchery improvements and stocking programs. The only changes from the funding in the previous budget are an additional \$100,000 (\$600,000 total) each year to purchase large fingerling walleye from private hatcheries and the annual one million dollar production grant program was dropped.

2. Hatchery Production

Due to the funding of the WWI program a significant number of large walleye fingerlings ($\geq 6''$) were produced in our state and private hatchery system in 2014. The state hatcheries also produced a significant number of small fingerling (1.2 to 2'') walleye.

	State Small	State Large	Private Large	Total Large
2013		416,506	21,965	438,477
2014	1,373,650	506,891	212,779	719,670
2015	1,413,476 (proposed)			787,000 (proposed)

The state will also continue its program to evaluate the success of this stocking effort. Starting in the fall of 2013, lakes already selected by local biologists to receive larger fingerlings were randomly selected to be stocked at a rate of 5, 10, and 15 per acre. Lakes across the state were selected and treatments were stratified by acreage. These lakes were surveyed in the fall of 2013 and 2014. All lakes in the program will be stocked on an alternate year basis as long as fish are available, which looks like another two years.

3. Wisconsin and Walleye Publication

In an effort to highlight walleye fishing and management in Wisconsin a 16 page pamphlet was published by the WDNR. It currently appears as an insert in the February 2015 Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine. You can download a copy of this publication from the WDNR web site at ww.dnr.wi.gov and search for publication PUB FH-516-2015.

4. Regulation Changes

Natural Resources Board Authority

Another major item in the governor's recent budget was the recommendation that the boards authority be changed to be only advisory. This will dramatically change the natural resources rule making process in the state.

The board in a recent meeting granted WDNR flexibility to consider alternatives to reductions in walleye bag limits in the ceded territory. This may result in a system of different length limits by lake rather than the sliding bag limit system used currently.

Statewide Trolling Rule Modification

This regulation is currently sitting on the governor's desk awaiting his signature. If he does sign it there will be a several month delay before it would become law. It is unlikely it would be in effect for the beginning of the 2015 game fish season at this time.

Trolling with three lines with hook and line is currently allowed in most counties statewide. Seventeen of the state's 72 counties are covered by regulations that prohibit trolling or allow it only on select waters.

Based on public hearings conducted in the spring of 2014, trolling would be allowed in these counties with the following restrictions:

- Only one line can be trolled per angler with a limit of two lines per boat.
- You can cast and retrieve up to two additional lines per angler.
- There is a 3 year sunset clause on this regulation.

2015 spring Hearings

The statewide conservation congress hearings will take place on April 13th this year. There are many major rule proposals this year including an overhaul of our trout management program. There are also numerous lake specific regulations proposed for this year. There is one major proposal that would affect walleye harvest in several counties:

QUESTION 10. Bass-Walleye Proposal on lakes in 7 counties

Under this proposal, only 3 walleye may be kept and they must be at least 18 inches, and 5 largemouth and smallmouth bass combined of any length may be kept in the following waters: Upper and Lower Eau Claire lakes in **Bayfield and Douglas** counties; Sand Lake in **Chippewa** County; Squash Lake in **Oneida** County; Balsam Lake in **Polk** County; Pulaski Lake in **Rusk** County, and Durphee and Osprey lakes in **Sawyer** County.

The management goal is to eventually restore naturally reproducing walleye populations. The lakes included in this proposal are scattered across the Ceded Territory. All have a history of natural walleye reproduction, yet they recently experienced some marked decline in walleye recruitment and a concurrent increase in largemouth bass abundance.

This proposal is being presented as a package in order for the Department to learn whether this combination of regulations is a tool capable of helping to restore naturally reproducing walleye.

5. Staff Issues

Due to cuts in the recent state budget most natural resources hiring is on hold. There are two fisheries positions in the state that recruitment will continue on:

Fisheries Bureau Director

Ron Bruch who was appointed to this position in early 2014, recently retired. Recruitment details for this position will be announced soon.

District Fisheries Supervisor

There currently is a district supervisor opening in our northern district. Recruitment is currently open and will close on February 20th. The register to fill this position may be used to fill two other district supervisor positions vacancies that may occur in the next year.

Application information for both these positions can be found on the Wisconsin state employment site www.wisc-jobs.

6. Walleye Research

Several walleye research projects from WDNR Science Services and collaborators from UW-Stevens Point, UW-Madison, Michigan State, and Fisheries Management are ongoing.

Gretchen Hansen continues to work on a mixed-effects model to better predict Ceded Territory walleye abundances when population estimates are outdated or unavailable. Hansen is also leading a project to build an EcoPath with EcoSim food web model for Escanaba Lake to test for bass-walleye interactions.

Andrew Rypel and collaborators have estimated walleye production rates over time in Escanaba Lake and have used this information to inform Ceded Territory sustainable exploitation rates. This research is pending approval for submission to the Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences.

Daisuke Goto, post-doc at the UW-Center for Limnology under the mentorship of Andrew Rypel, Jake Vander Zanden, and Greg Sass, continues research on Ceded Territory walleye growth trends and estimates of walleye production for all lakes in the Ceded Territory with sufficient data.

Iyob Tsehaye, Brian Roth, and Greg Sass have developed a statistical catch-at-age model to test for sustainable walleye exploitation rates across the Ceded Territory. This research is pending approval for submission to the Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences.

The Sherman Lake 50% annual walleye exploitation study is ongoing and is being conducted by researchers from the Escanaba Lake Research Station and

collaborators from GLIFWC. The ten year 50% annual walleye exploitation study ends in March, 2016.

Other Research Topics

- Regional model of walleye stock-recruitment across broad spatial scales (collaboration with Ontario, Michigan)
- An improved model for predicting walleye abundance and setting safe harvest levels in northern Wisconsin lakes
- Identifying Recruitment Bottlenecks for Age-0 Walleye in Northern Wisconsin Lakes (led by Hadley Bohm, UWSP)
- New project proposal: Predicting walleye recruitment and survival to develop a decision tool for prioritizing management

Iowa, Randy Schultz and Rebecca Krogman:

Iowa is beginning to evaluate cost-effectiveness of producing advanced fingerling walleye based on their survival, and the evaluation of walleye loss at reservoirs, specifically Rathbun Reservoir. Interior river and stream research is focused on evaluating river stocking strategies. Rebecca discussed her walleye stocking evaluations on seven southern Iowa impoundments.

New Business

WTC Secretary:

The Chair informed members that Donna Muhm had recently retired, having served 14 years as WTC Secretary. Donna's long standing dedication to the WTC was acknowledged with a Certificate of Appreciation from the WTC and the NCD's Meritorious Service Award. With Donna's retirement, the Chair appointed Hilary Meyer, Past WTC Chair, to the vacant WTC Secretary position.

Procedures Manual:

Past Chair and Secretary/Treasurer Hilary Meyer will be working on an update of the WTC Procedures Manual. Chair Schultz encouraged anyone with an interest in helping update the manual to contact Hilary.

Summer Meetings:

The Chair presented an update on the Summer 2015 meeting to be held in Brookings, and the potential of having the 2016 Summer meeting in Chicago, led by incoming Chair John Bruner.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Randy Schultz
Chair, Walleye Technical Committee