

**NCD Ictalurid Technical Committee
Annual Business Meeting, 70th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference
Springfield, il
Meeting Minutes, December 6, 2009**

Welcome and call to order by Kirk Hansen at 3:00 pm

Review and approval of Agenda: Motion made, motion approved.

Presentation and approval of 2007 minutes (they have been posted on the webpage):
Motion made to approve the minutes (Porath). Motion approved.

Reports

Treasurer's report (from NCD files). We have \$35,953.42. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion approved.

Chair Report – Kirk Hansen

- The catfish list serve is down and will no longer be available
 - The Southern Division discussion group message board is up and running.
- Website – the website is taking off and encouragement to send all gray literature including state reports.

Old Business

Update on the 2nd International Catfish Symposium

- Fundraising is going well. We have a goal of \$51,000 and have \$41,700 pledged so still need \$10,000. The NCD has stepped up huge.
- Potential sponsors are needed.
- We are looking for contacts for donations of wine/beer
- Need recommendations on businesses to participate in the trade show
- Need help at the meeting
- Jan 29th is the cutoff date for submission to the proceedings which will be out by the end of 2010
- There are 80 slots for presentations and unlimited space for posters.
- Need International contacts and we are actively looking for international attendees
 - There is an international poster option where for \$50 you can electronically send a poster to the meeting and it will be printed out at the meeting.
- There are good plenary speakers lined up: Don Jackson will be speaking about a management update around the world, Hogen will speak on the Mekong catfish, Armbruster will speak on catfish diversity around the world, and Quinn is from In Fisherman.
- The final cutoff date when the program is due to the print shop is in mid may.
- Registration opens Feb 1, 2010 and is \$225; books will cost \$34 each.

New Business

State Reports

Illinois: They had the largest fish kill in history on the Ruck River which is in the heart of a trophy catfish fishery. The kill was due to an ethanol spill. Sampling is currently being conducted.

Iowa: They are conducting flathead age and growth and habitat use studies on the Missouri River. In addition they are doing a statewide creel survey on angler preference. There is a flathead population dynamics project in 2 large reservoirs where they will be comparing the differences in age between otoliths and spines (Spines seem to be the way to go). There is an urban project on basic population dynamics which is needed especially in Des Moines.

Kansas: A report on small lake surveys on age and growth will be completed in 2010. Handfishing is legal and will open up statewide. There probably won't be much impact and there probably won't be a charge for the permit. Bowfishing is legal in 2010 in waters with no length limit. Blue catfish are foraging on Zebra mussels.

Missouri: Got rid of handfishing because of little participation. Set lines are very effective. Trying to protect top predators in our Great Plains streams with catfish targeted. 20,000 trophy animals are harvested illegally in Missouri.

Wisconsin (Did not attend): The Wisconsin Chapter of AFS has agreed to fund \$500 toward the Catfish 2010 Symposium. Hopefully by then travel restrictions will be eased to allow some people from Wisconsin to attend and present at the symposium.

The Wisconsin DNR has recently formed a Catfish Species Team for the Ictalurid species within the state. The team charge would include development of a statewide management plan, coordinate catfish management statewide, review work plan proposals, assist in development of sampling guidelines and quantitative management objectives, identify informational needs and review regulation change proposals.

The management plan is currently under development with plans to include sections on biology, sampling strategies, flathead and channel catfish distribution maps, age and growth of flathead and channel catfish in Wisconsin. Additional information will include stocking guidance, standardized sampling needs, waters classification, juvenile population information, and angler exploitation. First draft of the draft management plan is intended to be completed in 2010.

In 2008 there were seven catfish related projects proposed to the WDNR Fisheries Board but only one was funded for 2009 to continue flathead surveys on the Fox and Wolf Rivers. Fisheries research is submitting project plans that would evaluate winter site selection and site fidelity of juvenile flathead catfish and to develop standardized sampling protocols for juvenile flathead and channel catfish.

New flathead catfish regulations for Winnebago System Waters went into effect in 2009. The new regulations stipulate daily bag of one with a minimum size of 30 inches and a release slot between 36-42 inches. The rule is intended to reduce harvest on

small fish and provide a protected slot for spawning size fish to ensure adequate reproduction.

Nebraska – Efforts continue to evaluate Nebraska’s catfish populations with a number of collaborative research projects including assessments of the populations in the Missouri, Platte, and Niobrara rivers. A gear evaluation and human dimension studies are also underway. NGPC managers are also performing smaller side projects to evaluate gear efficiencies (hoop-net escapement), assess regulations and perform population monitoring (catch and release trophy flathead fishery at Branched Oak Reservoir).

While resistant to wholesale changes of catfish regulations and management philosophies, there continues to be small movements in both areas. A large number of waters (>70) are now managed with a significantly reduced daily bag limit of 3 instead of the statewide 10 channel catfish, when compared with just 5 years ago. These waters are generally less than 3-00 acres that are typically maintained by periodic stocking of advanced or catchable size fish and see significant fishing pressure. This year we implemented a reduced bag of 5 for channel catfish in three large irrigation reservoirs.

Research collaborations:

USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit with Dr. Kevin Pope. Catfish creel survey of the Salt Valley Reservoirs (18), a segment of the statewide creel survey project, and an evaluation of hoopnets as evaluation gear for catfish in Nebraska waters.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, School of Natural Resources with Dr. Mark Pegg. Platte River catfish population dynamics, and Missouri River catfish population dynamics.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Attendees

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