

NCD Ictalurid Technical Committee
Annual Business Meeting
75th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference
Indianapolis, IN
Meeting Minutes, February 8, 2015

Welcome and call to order by Tony Barada (chair, Jeremy Tiemann, could not be there).

Review and approval of meeting agenda: Motion made to approve agenda, seconded and approved.

Review and approval of January 2014 NCD-ITC business meeting minutes: Motion made to approve minutes, seconded and approved.

Treasurer's report (from NCD files): We now have \$20,542.67 after a Catfish 2010 rebate deposit of \$153.90 and the annual interest of \$81.27 was added to the account December 31, 2014. Motion made to approve report, motion approved.

Chair report: Relayed information included in the ITC report to the North Central Division.

State Report Summaries:

Kansas

- Acoustic tagging study being conducted on a large reservoir through the Kansas Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. Retention rates have been very good!
- Hybrid blue/channel catfish study being conducted on small impoundments. Assessing survival, growth, etc.
- Talk of setting up a 'Blue Catfish Summit' to discuss blue catfish management in Kansas. Possibly bring in other professionals from neighboring states (MO, OK) working on blue catfish.

Illinois

- Catfish study being conducted on the lower Kaskaskia River (below Carlyle Lake). Collaboration between IDNR and EIU.
- WIU study looking at adult blue catfish diets and their consumption of adult Asian carp.
- SIU assessing population dynamics of catfishes in the Ohio River. Developing standardized sampling protocols, estimating population characteristics, and evaluating responses to regulation changes in length and harvest limits.
- SIU is also looking at recruitment sources of catfishes in the middle Mississippi and lower Ohio Rivers. Using otolith microchemistry and stable isotope analyses.

Indiana (recreation and commercial fishing)

- Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife Big Rivers Unit assisted Kentucky DFWR with a catfish trot-lining survey to evaluate large catfish within the Ohio River. DFW also plans to start annual catfish monitoring on the upper Wabash River and the East Fork, West

Fork and mainstem White Rivers in the spring (hoop nets and electrofishing to complement the long-term catfish monitoring data that EIU has been collecting on the lower Wabash River.

- 2nd year of urban fishing program “FishIN in the City”
- Channel catfish hoop net sampling study in Indiana impoundments by Matt Peterson (2012-2013)
- Proposed catfish ‘trophy’ regulations
 - Increase min size limit from 10 to 13 inches for all catfish species on rivers and streams statewide. Only one channel catfish over 28 inches, one flathead catfish and one blue catfish over 35 inches allowed in lakes and streams statewide. These regs include recreation and commercial fishing.
 - Clarification and justification was added to an initial proposal from 2010. Preliminary adoption in Nov 2014 and is currently open for public comment
- Five-yr study examining decline in catfish harvest in the Wabash River concluded. A number of factors attribute to the decline, including increased interest in catfish, increased commercial harvest (targeting large fish), likely negative impacts from Asian carp, periodic water quality issues, documented heavy exploitation in commercially fished zones of the Wabash River.

Missouri

- MDC Truman Reservoir and Lake Ozark Catfish Management: implementation of new blue catfish regulations based on concern from anglers and MDC staff of declining numbers of large blue catfish. In general, regs have been well received with some complaints. Evaluation in the future (no sooner than 7 years following change).
- MDC population assessment and angler exploitation of flathead catfish and blue catfish in Mark Twain Lake. Age and growth information has been collected and angler reward tags are now in fish.
- MDC project using angler diaries to assess catch and harvest trends for Blue Catfish and Flathead Catfish in a Missouri reservoir. A volunteer catfish angler creel was conducted during 2003-2005 to assess catch, harvest trends and the proportional contribution of the two catfish species to the overall catfish fishery by reservoir catfish anglers. Results published in the 2013 SEAFWA Proceedings.
- MDC project determining electrofishing immobilization thresholds of smallmouth bass, blue catfish and flathead catfish. This project aims to develop species-specific standardized electrofishing output goals and will evaluate these output goals in the field to ultimately develop power output tables for each species that field staff can reference. Awaiting proposal and funding approval.
- MDC assessment of vital rates to evaluate the current harvest regulation for blue catfish and flathead catfish in the Missouri and Mississippi River. Sampling will begin in the spring of 2015.
- MDC warm water hatcheries production report: Lost Valley Hatchery and Chesapeake Hatchery produced approximately 160,000 channel catfish (8-12”). In 2014 Hunnewell Hatchery began production of blue catfish.
- MDC commercial fishing program: Catfish were the most harvested species group statewide, accounting for 47% of the total harvest in 2013. Blue catfish remain extremely important to Missouri’s commercial fishers, accounting for over 25% of the total harvest. Flathead catfish harvest was moderate in 2013 compared to peak levels in

the 1970s. Channel catfish experienced extremely high levels of harvest during the 1980s and early 1990s. Harvest now remains lower and continues to account for less of the overall harvest since the prohibition of commercial harvest on the Missouri River. Bullhead harvest is minimal.

Nebraska

- A thesis was completed on the management of channel catfish in the Missouri River, Nebraska is being studied by a University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) researcher. During this study, a long-term analysis of population characteristics was conducted (NGPC data starting in 1974) and recommendations for future management were made. Modeling revealed that most reaches of the river could benefit from a 380-mm minimum length limit. Set lining is also an unknown aspect of the fishery and a new method to estimate setline effort and catch was proposed.
- Additional Missouri River catfish research was conducted by the UNL. Standard sampling (long term monitoring program) was conducted with baited hoop nets (channel catfish) and low-pulse electrofishing (flathead catfish). Catfish were floy tagged as part of a mark-recapture study. Flathead catfish predation on sportfish and endangered species within the Missouri River will be one of the goals during 2015. Bomb calorimetry will also be used to determine caloric densities of several popular prey species in the Missouri River and diet analysis will be used with the caloric densities and growth data to determine consumption rates and energy demands of flathead catfish.
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission completed a flathead catfish tagging study in Branched Oak Reservoir (1,800 ac) in 2014. The goal of this study is to evaluate the population dynamics of flathead catfish in the reservoir since little is known about the population. The population was estimated to contain 5,858 individuals, of which 21% were over 34" and 10% were over 40" at the end of 2014. Age and growth information is currently being processed.
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission also conducted a population estimate at Pawnee Reservoir (740 ac). The population was estimated to be 599 (411-866) flathead catfish. Other population characteristics were summarized and age and growth information is currently being processed.
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln continues to research channel catfish ecology and population dynamics across spatial and temporal scales in large-river environments (Missouri and Platte Rivers). Continued to monitor channel, flathead, and blue catfish at 10 long-term monitoring locations along the Platte River. Age-0 channel catfish were collected from location in the Platte, Elkhorn, and Missouri river systems to analyze spine structures to identify differences in Sr, Ca, Ba, and Mg signatures. Tagging continued for flathead and channel catfish in the Platte River with approximately 2,000 individuals tagged.
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission continues to conduct a study to assess southeast Nebraska's rivers and streams, specifically 1) collecting baseline fisheries data for the management of the Little Nemaha, Big Nemaha, Little Blue and Big Blue Rivers, 2) characterizing sport fish (channel and flathead catfish) population demographics, 3) determining factors related to spatial differences in fish community and catfish populations; and 4) indexing aquatic invasive species in these rivers. 96 gear

deployments/electrofishing runs were made collecting 15 species and 424 total fish during 2014.

- University of Nebraska-Lincoln continues to assess population dynamics and movement of channel catfish in the Red River of the North in Manitoba, Canada. The objective of this study is to quantify abundance, age structure, mortality rates, growth rates, and movement patterns of these catfish. Over 12,000 catfish have been tagged in the lower Red River since 2011. Increased tagging efforts and an expanded sampling area will be the focus during 2014-2015. Acoustic telemetry will also be used to determine hooking mortality rates and monitor movements channel catfish.

Old Business: none

New Business:

- AFS has opened up the opportunity for chapters, divisions, sections, committees, etc... to invest funds in a portfolio managed by AXA. This investment opportunity was explained by Vince Travnichek, NCD President. The ITC currently has a large balance (>\$20K) that has been basically sitting stagnant, gaining very little in interest each year. Discussion was made on if this opportunity would benefit the committee. A \$10K minimum investment is required. Funds can be accessed at any point (with 30-day notice), but it is encouraged for funds to remain in the program for at least three years. Vince mentioned that the NCD decided to invest \$20K in the portfolio. With no major expenditures expected in the near future, a motion was made to invest \$15K of the ITC funds in the AFS portfolio. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.
- Catfish 2020 discussion: It was mentioned that the Southern Division was kicking around ideas, feeling it out. Is it needed? Yes, no, maybe?
Our discussion involved questions like: Is there the amount of catfish-centric activity/research going on currently (2010-2020) compared to 2000-2010? Should this be a stand-alone symposium like the past (much more work, but very profitable) or a symposium part of a regional meeting (annual AFS meeting, Midwest, Southern Division?). The general consensus was there is a need and 'want to' for Catfish 2020, but logistics should continue to be discussed at future meetings.
- In an email prior to the meeting, ITC chair Jeremy Tiemann announced the need for nominations for new ITC chair and secretary/treasurer positions. Tony Barada (Nebraska Game and Parks) was nominated for chair and Rebecca Krogman (Iowa DNR) was nominated for secretary/treasurer at the meeting. It was decided that any other nominations should be forwarded to Jeremy Tiemann by March 6, 2015. No other nominations were received by Jeremy, therefore the ITC will proceed with Tony and Rebecca filling those positions.

Attendees:

Name	Organization	Email address
Andy Richards	INDNR	arichards@dnr.IN.gov
Dave Kittaka	INDNR	dkittaka@dnr.IN.gov
Rebecca Krogman	Iowa DNR	rebecca.krogman@dnr.iowa.gov
James Skipper	INDNR	jds0003@auburn.edu
Robin Bruggmann	INDNR	rbruegmann@dnr.IN.gov
Ross Dames	MDC	ross.dames@mdc.mo.gov
Dylan Sickles	INDNR	dsickles@dnr.IN.gov
Jeff Malwitz	INDNR	jmalwitz@dnr.IN.gov
Randy Schultz	Iowa DNR	randy.schultz@dnr.iowa.gov
Jason Goeckler	KDWPT	jason.goeckler@ksoutdoors.com
Debbie King	INDNR	dking@dnr.IN.gov
Matt Burlingame	Manchester University	mburlingame@manchester.edu
Craig Jansen	INDNR	cjansen1@dnr.IN.gov
Mark Porath	NGPC	mark.porath@nebraska.gov
Tony Barada	NGPC	tony.barada@nebraska.gov

Submitted by Tony Barada