



2017 Annual Meeting Minutes
Ictalurid Technical Committee
North Central Division of the American Fisheries Society
Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Yankee III, Lincoln, NE

3:00-4:00pm, 5 February 2017

Welcome and call to order by Tony Barada, Chair

Attendees:

Name	Organization	Email address
Tony Barada	NGPC	tony.barada@nebraska.gov
Mark Pegg	UNL	mpegg2@unl.edu
Jeremy Tiemann	INHS	jtiemann@illinois.edu
Ben Neely	KDWPT	ben.neely@ks.gov
Greg Pitchford	Allstate Consultants	gpitchford@allstateconsultants.net
Ross Dames	MDC	ross.dames@mdc.mo.gov
Dave Lucchesi	SDGFP	dave.lucchesi@state.sd.us
Henry Hansen	UNL	henry.hansen@huskers.unl.edu
Jason Olive	AGFC	jason.olive@agfc.ar.gov

Review and approval of February 2016 NCD-ITC business meeting minutes

Treasurer's report: No expenses or credits to the checking account during 2016, therefore the balance is still \$5650.59. The \$15,000 originally invested into the AFS investment portfolio during 2015, is now at \$15,548.

Chair report: The ITC provided a short mid-year report to the NCD during the summer of 2016. Nothing major, just highlighted the 2016 winter meeting, online communication, and planning for Catfish 2020.

State Report Summaries

Dakotas – Dave Lucchesi reporting

- The Lake Mitchell flathead catfish analysis has been completed. Originally discovered in 2007, the flathead catfish population had gone unstudied until 2013. Population estimates, growth rates, condition, mortality and inter-seasonal diets were estimated to characterize the population.
- World class fishing for channel catfish has developed in the Oahe Dam tailrace. Trips that yielded 40-50 channel catfish averaging 8-10 lbs were not uncommon.
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Illinois – Jeremy Tiemann reporting

- Nothing new to report other than a continuation of things going on from last year. Numerous research projects are ongoing on a number of river systems
- No official report. See [report from 2016 meeting minutes](#)

Indiana – no representative present; Craig Jansen submitted report via email

- Numerous projects going on with catfish: Inland rivers catfish monitoring, Ohio River catfish monitoring, nesting box project
- Hatcheries produced and stocked over 45,000 channel catfish stocked around the state; mostly in small reservoirs and urban areas with high fishing pressure. Also used some catfish stockings in conjunction with some outreach events.
- A study assessing age, growth and mortality of channel catfish in Indiana reservoirs was completed during 2016. Growth rates ranged from 0.07 to 0.12, and mean total annual mortality rates ranged from 0.21 to 0.26. Low instantaneous fishing mortality rates, 0.06 to 0.08, suggested the channel catfish fishery was under-used and should be promoted to Indiana anglers.
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Iowa - no representative present; Dan Kirby submitted report via email

- Blue Catfish have been stocked in DeSoto Bend Lake in order to provide a trophy fishery and possibly a broodstock population. A single 11.5-inch blue catfish was sampled using low-frequency electrofishing during the summer of 2016. Blue catfish were also stocked into Three Mile Lake during 2016. Evaluation will occur in the next few years as fish recruit to the sampling gear.
- During 2016, approximately 140,000 8-inch channel catfish were produced at Rathbun Hatchery and stocked in Iowa.
- DNR is reviewing rules associated with catfish tournaments. Tournament organizers have asked for additional rules with fish holding and culling.
- An ongoing study on fish mercury accumulation rates in interior rivers includes channel catfish and flathead catfish. Fish mercury concentrations in Iowa rivers are generally low. Mercury concentrations were positively related to length and age. A species-specific-length-based advisory will likely be developed from the results of this study
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Kansas – Ben Neely reporting

- Retention of freeze brands on channel catfish and channel catfish female x blue catfish male hybrids – results indicate freeze brands are suitable for marking channel catfish through 460 days and 360-mm TL and hybrid catfish through 410-mm TL
- Evaluation of channel catfish x blue catfish hybrids in two small Kansas impoundments – Results demonstrated that hybrid catfish might be suitable for stocking in Kansas waters when rapid growth is desired. However, channel catfish remain an important sport fish to Kansas Anglers. Social components of stocking hybrid catfish in place of channel catfish should be thoroughly evaluated.

- Influence of supplemental feeding on the channel catfish fishery in a Kansas impoundment – These results indicate that overall effects of supplemental feeding were variable, and the funds associated with high feeding rates could be utilized to purchase commercially-grown fish approximately equal to channel catfish biomass harvested from the fishery in a given year.
- Examination of the world record flathead catfish captured from Elk City Reservoir, Kansas, May, 1998 – Results presented herein provide evidence of rapid growth possible in flathead catfish and help to foster a greater understanding of the species' natural history.
- Urban channel catfish stocking program in Kansas – For 2016, a total of 128,100 pounds of channel catfish (170,800 fish) were purchased for stocking between March and September at roughly 90 locations statewide.
- Age, growth and modeling of blue catfish at two Kansas reservoirs – Blue catfish were sampled from Lovewell Reservoir during 2016 and a sample from Wilson Reservoir is set to be collected in the spring of 2017.
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Michigan - no representative present; Jay Wesley submitted report via email

- Michigan DNR continues to monitor the state endangered Northern Madtom in the St. Clair River system.
- Michigan DNR will invoke mandatory online fishing tournament registration for all tournaments starting in 2018. Information on catfish tournaments will now be obtained for the first time.
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Minnesota – no representative present; Steve Shroyer submitted report via email

- The Catfish Work Group, a combination of agency representatives and catfish anglers, periodically convened during 2016. Recent topics of discussion have included separating channel and flathead catfish in the angling regulations, with a more restrictive possession limit for flathead catfish and possibly some form of maximum length limit to protect old, trophy-size fish.
- Tony Sindt continues to monitor channel and flathead catfish population dynamics in the river. PIT tags are also being implanted in flathead catfish to enable additional investigation of population dynamics river wide.
- Steve Shroyer, Minnesota DNR Research Biologist, is writing the final report for his Federal Aid research project, “Population Dynamics of Flathead Catfish in the Lower Minnesota River.” One of the more interesting aspects of this study is a comparison of open-population and closed-population abundance estimates, and the insights this gives to sampling with hoop nets in a large river.
- DNR biologists (Joel Stiras et al.) continue to monitor and study channel and flathead catfish in the Twin Cities area rivers. In addition, monitoring and study of channel catfish are ongoing in the Red River of the North (Dennis Topp et al.).
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Missouri - Ross Dames reporting

- Blue catfish population assessment and exploitation study ongoing at Mark Twain Lake. To date, 147 reward tags have been returned by anglers from 2014, 2015 and 2016 tagged fish (1,396 total blue catfish tagged).
- A study assessing the response of fish communities to predator introductions in small Missouri impoundments is being conducted. The experimental design includes reservoirs stocked with hybrid striped bass only, reservoirs stocked with hybrid striped bass and flathead catfish, and control reservoirs (no stockings). Fish communities will be sampled annually for the next three years to assess the effects of the predator stockings.
- A study to determine electrofishing immobilization thresholds of smallmouth bass, blue catfish and flathead catfish is currently underway. Initial results suggest that blue catfish may be best immobilized by high frequency waveforms, but the lack of a surfacing response under these waveforms may make them less efficient at capturing fish in a natural setting. A better capture prone response (i.e. surfacing) is produced under lower frequency waveforms where more of a threshold buffer exists between twitch and immobilization.
- A project assessing Missouri and Mississippi River blue catfish and flathead catfish populations is being conducted. To date, crews have tagged 1,674 (197 returned) blue catfish and 890 (102 returned) flathead catfish with reward tags.
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Nebraska – Mark Pegg and Tony Barada reporting

- Missouri River and Platte River catfish populations continue to be assessed by University of Nebraska – Lincoln researchers. Otolith microchemistry analysis was used to document natal origins and population mixing of channel catfish. Channel catfish from multiple river systems were evident within the lower Platte River suggesting population mixing from multiple systems. Flathead catfish diets are also being assessed in the Missouri River.
- Channel catfish movement the Red River of the North is being monitored with 124 fish being implanted with acoustic transmitters during the summer of 2016. Attempts to actively track these fish have been made. A grid of listening stations was also deployed to passively detect movements.
- Flathead catfish monitoring continues to be conducted at Branched Oak Reservoir and Pawnee Reservoir in southeast Nebraska. Of note, a low-dose rotenone application was conducted at Pawnee Reservoir during 2013 in attempts to extirpate gizzard shad and white perch. Gizzard shad were initially eliminated and white perch biomass was reduced by 83%. Flathead condition (W_r) declined dramatically post application (2014), but rebounded in 2015 and reached pre-treatment levels 2016 ($W_r > 100$). This is likely because the white perch pulled off a large spawn and are abundant again as well as the reintroduction of gizzard shad into the reservoir, both of which provide an abundance of food for the flatheads.

- The field portion of a study assessing catfish populations in southeast Nebraska's interior rivers was completed during 2016. Data compilation, analysis, and pectoral spine preparation is currently underway.
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Wisconsin – no representative present; Alan Niebur submitted report via email

- Wisconsin has recently implemented standardized sampling protocols (combination of baited hoop net and low pulse electrofishing) to assess/monitor catfish populations.
- Statewide Catfish Team has been working on Catfish Management Plan for Wisconsin. The plan is still in draft format but we hope to have it finalized within the next few months.
- Wisconsin is exploring the possibility of utilizing channel catfish for urban pond fishing ponds. 19,205 channel catfish have been approved to be stocked.
- The Mississippi River DNR work unit is in the process of finalizing an internal report for 5 recent years of Mississippi River work.
- [Read the state report for more information.](#)

Old Business: none

New Business:

- New officer elections:
 - Tony Barada nominated Ben Neely for chair of the Ictalurid Technical Committee and he accepted; no other nominations were made, therefore Ben Neely will take over as chair of the ITC following the meeting.
 - Nominations solicited for secretary-treasurer; no nominations were made, therefore additional solicitation will be needed from the membership after the meeting via email
- Catfish 2020 Planning Session:
 - Co-chairs, Jason Olive (Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Southern Division) and Jeremy Tiemann (Illinois Natural History Survey, North Central Division) provided a brief overview of Catfish 2020 planning to date. A working list of committee chairs was provided ([provide link to list here](#)) and individuals are encouraged to get involved.
 - After discussion at the Southern Division Catfish Management Technical Committee meeting the week prior, and the discussion at the NCD-ITC meeting, there appears to be a consensus that Catfish 2020 would work best if held the Wednesday and Thursday prior to the SDAFS meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas during 2020. The exact date has not been set, but these meetings are usually in the late-winter, early-spring time period. SDAFS meetings normal schedule: Thurs (tech committee meetings), Fri (workshops), Sat-Sun (technical presentations). Having the meeting set up this way will allow individuals the option to just register for Catfish 2020 only, or register for the whole conference.

Possible catfish-themed workshops were also discussed as they would fit nicely into the schedule for individuals attending both meetings.

- There was discussion about having a meeting or conference call involving Catfish 2010 committee chairs and Catfish 2020 committee chairs. Experiences and knowledge from previous symposia organizers would be extremely helpful with planning moving forward.
- Discussion item about proceedings: Internet and electronic access to articles within the proceedings has been an issue in the past. Web searches do not always pull up the most relevant articles because they are housed within the proceedings. Unless someone provides their articles on a personal website, Researchgate, etc. they can't be accessed without having a physical copy of the proceedings. The previous proceedings are a collection of some of the best catfish research available, how do we make this more accessible? Can we post on our technical committee web pages (with approval from lead authors)? Something to think about with past proceedings and with Catfish 2020.
- A website has been created for [Catfish 2020](#) where updates will be posted as the planning process continues.
- Remind your local chapter members (especially agency researchers and university professors/researchers) that Catfish 2020 would be an excellent avenue for their research. The previous two symposia proceedings have been very successful. There's plenty of time to put together some catfish projects. Looking for ideas? Catfish 2010 proceedings highlighted 'research needs' to guide the advancement of catfish conservation and management.

Submitted by Tony Barada, ITC chair
February 17, 2017