



North Central Division American Fisheries Society

## Esocid Technical Committee

Chair – Keith Koupal: Nebraska GPC (keith.koupal@nebraska.gov)  
Immediate Past Chair – Janice Kerns: ODNR (Janice.kerns@dnr.state.oh.us)  
Chair Elect – TBD (see agenda)



### Wednesday, July 17, 2019 2019 Summer Business Meeting Agenda

Meeting Place: Webster, South Dakota

Meeting Time: 2:30-4:30pm (CST)

Moderating: Keith Koupal (NGPC)

#### Agenda

- Call to order – We did. Attendees at this meeting included Jordan Weeks (WDNR); Jared Krebs (UWSP); Tony Long (UNK); Addie Dutton (WDNR); Mike Anderson (MDC), Dan Dembkowski (UWSP); Jonathan Meerbeek (IDNR); Doug Kingsley (MDNR); Keith Koupal (NGPC)
- Approval of Winter Business Meeting minutes (see ETC webpage / attached / handout)
  - Motion to approve by Jordan Weeks; seconded by Addie Dutton
  - Meeting minutes as provided were approved by affirmation vote
- Budget (see attached / handout)
  - An updated budget was not provided by NCD representatives so previous account balance was recognized. No activity is thought to have occurred on budget balance.
- Old Business
  - Discussion of Esocid(s) Symposium at AFS 2020 – Columbus OH (Kovacs / et al)
    - The membership is still supportive of submitting and organizing a symposia at the 2020 National AFS meeting in Columbus, Ohio. We do not anticipate trying to publish work from this symposia and in his absence we all agreed that Cory Kovacs could organize this effort with help from his ETC partners. Currently we are all challenged to spread the word to all individuals conducting esocid work and encourage them to consider putting in a presentation for this symposia. The symposia requests are typically due shortly after the Midwest meetings so please bring a list of potential presenters to the winter meetings.
- New Business
  - Update ETC state reps on NCD webpage: inventory by state w/ contact info
    - It was noted that ETC member Andrew Schaffer passed away this past year and no replacement has been identified. ETC chair will reach out to Kansas to see if they have someone that will take over this role.
  - State updates as offered (Unofficial updates or topics of interest) – all states attending (and even one not attending) offered state updates that are summarized in the attached appendix.

- A host bid was presented for the 2020 summer joint technical committee meeting. The Wisconsin delegate proposed a meeting site in Woodruff, WI where they promised great resources and good weather. The ETC representatives were supportive of continuing our joint meeting relationship with Percidae and Centrarchidae technical committees, as well as having Woodruff, WI be the next meeting site.
- Membership
  - 2020 Chair Elect
    - After a lengthy campaign, lively debate, some discussion of building walls to keep muskie in, Addie Dutton was nominated by Jordan Weeks (seconded by Dan Dembkowski) and unanimously approved to be the next ETC chair. Congratulations ADDIE!!!
- Adjourn

## Appendix A – State updates

### Wisconsin

UWSP grad. student Jared Krebs updated on his project tracking habitat use and muskie movement in Green Bay. They will be modeling to predict spawning and quantify with side imaging. This seems like a good candidate for inclusion in the AFS symposium in 2020.

Jordan Weeks highlighted how Wisconsin is revamping stocking guidance and integrating variable stocking rates and assignments. They are also getting ready to conduct the muskie mail survey on catch and attitude. This survey is conducted every 10 years. The pellet vs. prey study is on-going to adult survival with the anecdotal report of minnow raised are generally better with some exceptions. The 50” length limit lakes have developed some jurisdictional issues related to the connected tributaries and if movement of fish from 50” protected lakes should extend to areas that typically would not support these growth potentials. There is some genetic work on Leech Lake fish that is on-going. Finally, Dan Dembkowski asked for input on hooking mortality on muskie caught in warmer waters (generally 80°F or warmer) from participating states. Missouri and Iowa felt that most muskie anglers in their states had a self-imposed don’t fish for muskie above 80°F. UWSP wanted to know of interest from other ETC states on developing a regional assessment of post release mortality of muskie. Any states interested in this topic should contact Dan.

### Minnesota

Doug Kingsley informed us that Minnesota has been having some issues with adequate fingerling production to meet some pretty large quotas. As a result, they have classified muskie lakes and prioritized stocking proposals. Northern pike statewide regulations based on zone were implemented in 2018 and these will be evaluated in 10 years or more. Different regulations for spearing will allow 1 mistake fish for size regulations and has gained more acceptance from that constituency. They have around 100 lakes with special regulations that are being reviewed and in the process of public input.

### Iowa

Jonathan Meerbeek reported that Iowa continues to stock pellet-minnow finished yearling muskellunge. Recent telemetry on stocked yearling Muskellunge found that size at stocking significantly improved survival in Spirit Lake. A target length of 13” is preferred and resulted in 85% survival. Iowa will investigate the use of recirculating systems with muskie to try and improve pellet growth and hopefully increase the size of stocked

fish. Some Iowa lakes continue to suffer from emigration. They have trap and transfer operations in some locations to reduce muskie loss from managed waters and in places like Lower Gar outlet they will be trying to adjust electrodes to see if this tool can be more effective. Jonathan noted that Brushy and Big Creek Lakes had some physical barriers in the impoundments and there is an indication that these structures may help keep some of the muskie in the reservoir.

### South Dakota

Tony Long reported that he is working on a project sponsored by SDGFP that is tracking 20 adults on Linn and West 81 Lakes. They will be determining seasonal movement and habitat use with weekly tracking overlaid on top of a habitat map. Additionally, if juveniles are available they will be tracking those starting this fall when they are stocked.

### Missouri

Mike Anderson shared the latest newsletter from their Show Me Muskie Project. This project combines reports on agency sampling and angler activity. This method of communication has become a good way to facilitate management issues related to this trophy fish and their avid anglers. Mike provided all in attendance with a copy of this newsletter and pretty sure that since you didn't attend you will never be able to get one. Okay perhaps if you want to owe Mike a favor you can contact him and get one even though you did not attend the summer meetings. The objective for angling performance in Missouri is 1 muskie every 20-40 hours of fishing that is over 36". Missouri has been raising minnows to feed out their 7,000 muskie, and because it is expensive, it was suggested to look into sucker fry as an alternative.

### Nebraska

Keith Koupal updated that Nebraska is back in the tiger muskie business (sort of). Opportunities to take advantage of some high waters led to some stockings of tiger muskie fry. The Wanahoo northern pike project is continuing and some recruitment was seen. The population estimate on this lake is extremely tight from the multiple years of floy tagging. Our hatchery staff continues to work with buffer solutions to improve hatching percent success.