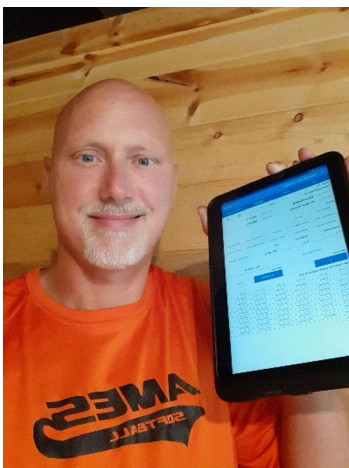
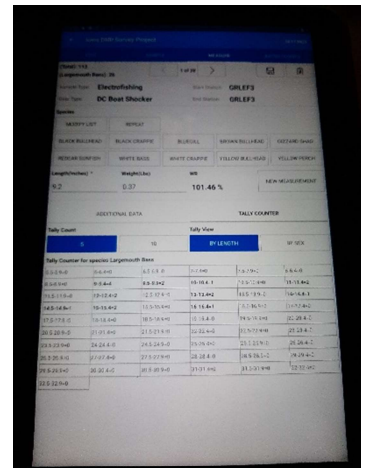


Hey NCD, squeaking in a July Presidents Blog here shortly before the end of the month. Only one or two more of these to go before I hand the reins off to Joe!

This month I am going to briefly touch on a couple of topics that have been near and dear to my “fisheries heart”. As I mentioned last month, people have bought fishing licenses like crazy. Here in Iowa we have had an electronic license sales system since 2001. We can look back at daily, weekly, and monthly license sales to that time, and 2020 has the highest license sales through the end of June of any year this century! Wow. Our analyses of license sales patterns tell us that 80% of annual license sales occur by July 1, and that the weather and the economy strongly influence license sales in Iowa. We had great weather this spring, the best since 2012, and the best license sales since 2012. The economy - when the economy is poor, housing starts are down, and our license buying contingent from the construction trades (our #2 purchasing group) buys a lot of fishing licenses. Unemployment this spring was at an all time high, and license sales went way up. Iowa is participating in a multi-state angler survey with LSU to see what impacts COVID-19 had on fishing participation. It will be interesting to see the results of that study; were people fishing because they had free time, or to provide food to the family. Stay tuned!



For the last 20 years, I’ve thought we should have the technology available for our staff in Iowa to stop collection survey data on paper, and start collecting it electronically. For the last 10 years, I’ve been working specifically on making that happen. One year ago, Iowa DNR issued an RFP to select a vendor and get this project moving. Today, we are doing our beta testing and actually collecting data in the field on devices. All the metadata gets entered right with the survey data, you can take photos of and save the locations of busted-up boat ramps and shoreline erosion. We’re calculating on the fly to aid in QA/QC, running tallies to tell the user when



enough age-growth structures have been collected. QR code scanners for scale envelopes and otolith vials. Bluetooth connections to PIT tag readers. What a long and winding road, but I think we have finally arrived. I might get to retire someday!

I hope you have been able to go out and enjoy summer, at least a little bit. My garden is growing well, pickles have been canned, and salsa will happen soon. The mint plants have yielded enough for some tasty mojitos, and the basil makes for some refreshing gin-basil smash beverages. I spent a day with a buddy and two of my nephews last week, fishing for catfish from my kayak on the Des Moines River. I haven’t done that in over a decade. We had a great time, and those catfish made for a tasty supper. Thanks for all the hard work you do to make these kinds of opportunities available to our constituents. Keep it up!

Thanks,

*Jeff*