

HISTORY OF THE WALLEYE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

A number of people were instrumental in developing the idea of a committee or workgroup for walleye/sauger and in bringing the committee to life. Then North Central Division (NCD) President Tim Modde noted some interest within the NCD in walleye biology/management, and decided there was enough interest to form a walleye committee or working group. Steve Serns (WI) and Lee Redmond (MO) made most of the initial contacts with states and/or individual biologists. Steve and/or Lee contacted fisheries chiefs of each state/province in the NCD about the proposed group; and an announcement on forming a committee was published in the April 1985 Division newsletter. Eleven biologists responded that they would be interested in being involved with the committee and several other people with expertise in walleye management/research were identified who should have input in the activities of a working group. Steve Serns (WI) and Lee Redmond (MO) were most influential in forming the committee, and Steve was particularly active in making initial contacts among biologists who were interested in committee activities.

The first meeting of the WTC was held in Omaha, NE in conjunction with the 48th Fish and Wildlife Conference. The organizational meeting determined there was enough interest in the NCD to form a workgroup devoted to the walleye/sauger and adopted the following mission statement:

"The purpose of the Walleye Technical Committee of the North Central Division of the American Fisheries Society is to promote the research and development of functional management strategies leading the wise use of native, and introduced stocks of walleye, sauger and their hybrids, to improve culture techniques, and to facilitate the dissemination of pertinent data and technology to both the scientific and user communities."

Early in committee development, communication among members was considered to be the most pressing need and one of the greatest challenges. In the few short years the WTC has been active, communication abilities have grown rapidly. Electronic mail, electronic bulletin boards, web-sites and home-pages have been developed. Each method has benefitted communication among WTC members, and has provided another avenue for communications among members and from individuals interested in walleye/sauger/saugeye development. Effective communication, while greatly enhanced, is still a challenge for WTC members.

In 2007, the WTC instituted an annual student travel award of \$100 to attend the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference for students working on percid research of interest to the WTC. The student's AFS Chapter is requested to match the award but is not under obligation to do so. In 2018, the travel award was increased to \$200.

February 7, 2017, at the Annual General Meeting of the North Central Division, Yellow perch was added to the mission of the WTC. This change in the bylaws was approved at the WTC July 27, 2017, summer business meeting.

WTC Meetings:

Meetings of the WTC/NCD have been held in conjunction with the annual Midwest fish and Wildlife Conference since 1985. A two-day workshop was started in 1991 to allow additional time for individual and group discussions in a more informal meeting.

Members are encouraged to attend either or preferably both workshops. Since 1991, the WTC has sponsored two “annual” meetings.

Membership:

The WTC has grown steadily since its formation. Membership during the early years ranged from 20 to 45. However, by 1990 the membership had grown to over 180, and by the mid-1990's to over 250.

Chairpersons of the WTC:

There is some difficulty in determining exactly which year the WTC became a functional unit since the committee formation was pursued over a several year period. Following discussions with Lee Redmond (MO), it was decided that 1985 was probably the "first" year for the WTC, with the first meeting actually in 1986. Only chairpersons are listed for each year, though generally each chair served as chair-elect in the previous year.

1985 Steve Serns (WI)	2004 Mike Sullivan (Alberta)
1986 Steve Serns (WI)	2005 Jeff Reed (MN)
1987 Lee Redmond (MO)	2006 Tim Haxton (Ontario)
1988 Dick McWilliams (IA)	2007 Patrick Hanchin (MI)
1989 Bill Franzin (Manitoba)	2008 Donna Hanen Muhm (IA)
1990 Daryl Ellison (NE)	2009 John Kubisiak (WI)
1991 Cheryl Lewis (Ontario)	2010 Justin VanDeHey (SD)
1992 Dave Fielder (SD)	2011 Andy Jansen (KS)
1993 Mike Staggs (WI)	2012 Paul Christel (WI)
1994 Tom Gengerke (IA)	2013 Daniel Isermann (WI)
1995 Neil Billington (IL)	2014 Hilary Meyer (SD)
1996 Tim Goeman (MN)	2015 Randy Schultz (IA)
1997 Dr. Richard Holland (NE)	2016 John Bruner (Alberta)
1998 Dr. Ron Brooks (IL)	2017 Jeff Koch (KS)
1999 Dave Lucchesi (SD)	2018 Dale Logsdon (MN)
2000 Joe Larscheid (IA)	2019 Mark Ermer (SD)
2001 Steve Newman (WI)	2020-2021 Lawrence Eslinger (WI)
2002 Jeff Hendrickson (ND)	<i>Covid pandemic, served 2 years</i>
2003 Tim Banek (MO)	

*Brett Johnson served as chair-elect in 1992 and was replaced by Mike Staggs during the year

The history of the formation of the Walleye Technical Committee was compiled from notes and in visits with people who were involved with the committee since it's inception.

updated: September 27, 2021