

UMRCC Fisheries Technical Section
March 24, 2009
UMRCC Fish Tech Spring Meeting, Radisson Hotel, La Crosse, WI

The March 24, 2009 spring meeting of the UMRCC Fisheries Technical Section was called to order at 1:10 by Jeff Janvrin, Fisheries Technical Section Chair. Forty-seven people were in attendance (see attached sign-in sheet). The minutes of the fall 2008 Fish Tech meeting were approved and are posted on the UMRCC website: <http://mississippi-river.com/umrcc/>.

The meeting was opened with recognition of duties above and beyond the job description of a fisheries biologist. Over the past year, Scott Gritters, fisheries manager with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, was called upon to provide assistance with several train derailments along the Mississippi River and in northeast Iowa. Scott was awarded a RR engineers hat emblazoned with the name "Little Bob" in commemoration of his graphic description of the relocation of "Big Bob" during his fall tech section presentation about lessons learned from a derailment south of Guttenburg, Iowa.



UMRCC Coordinator's Report -- Scott Yess – Scott presented the UMRCC coordinator's report. A copy of the report is included with the March 26 exec board minutes available on the UMRCC website.

UMRCC Fisheries Strategic Plan – Tom Boland – Tom facilitated a review of the UMRCC Fisheries Strategic Plan goals, objectives and performance measures. See Attachment 2 for notes of the discussion.

Next steps:

- Goals, objectives and performance measures will be edited based on comments provided.
- Tom will coordinate development of a draft of the report (introduction, background, introduction for each goal) and provide to agency POC's for initial review.
- Draft of entire plan will be provided for review and discussion at the Fall Fish Tech meeting.
- Final draft will be prepared for review and fish tech endorsement at the 2010 spring fish tech meeting prior to submission to the UMRCC Exec Board action.



Habitat Use and Movement of Juvenile Lake Sturgeon in the Mississippi River -- Nicholas Bloomfield, Travis Moore and Tim Spier -- During 2007 and 2008, two juvenile lake sturgeon telemetry projects were conducted. The 2007 project focused on fish between $\frac{3}{4}$ pound and nine pounds. Habitat preference was similar to previously observed adult and subadult lake sturgeons: sandy substrates, main channel and main channel border habitats. Large-scale within pool and beyond pool boundaries coinciding with high flows.

The 2008 project focused on short- and long-term dispersion and habitat preference of fingerling lake sturgeon, post-stocking. Fish were stocked at two sites. The first site was at LaGrange, Missouri in Pool 21, in a main channel border habitat. Most fish dispersed quickly downstream immediately after stocking and settled into Pool 22. One fish passed through Lock and Dam 22 and was last contacted in the lower half of Pool 24. Another fish stayed within Pool 21 and moved upstream to the Lock and Dam 20 tailwater.

The second stocking site was at Soulard Access on the Fabius River, a major tributary to the Mississippi River in Pool 22. Soulard is located two miles upstream of the confluence with the Mississippi River. Fish stocked at this site remained at this site until after sunset (approximately

seven hours) before traveling downstream, as a group. Upon entering the Mississippi River, the fish dispersed throughout the pool.

The preferred habitat for both fingerling groups was inside bend dike fields with sandy substrate. Fish overwintered in the Lock and Dam 21 tailwater and in the dike fields.

An equal number of dummy-tagged and untagged fingerlings were also retained at Hunnewell Hatchery to determine survival and growth. Fifty-two day post-implantation survival was similar for both groups (96.7% and 97.6%). Both average length and weight of dummy-tagged fish was reduced. Dummy-tagged fish grew 15% in length and 29.6% in weight. Control fish grew 17.9% in length and 43.8% in weight.

Grass Carp and 2008 flooding in Iowa – Scott Gritters – The 2008 flooding in Iowa affected many of the hatcheries in Iowa along with hundreds of ponds throughout the state. This flooding and previous flooding, increased the potential of escape of the stocked grass carp. Before the floods of 2008, grass carp were established in some river systems such as the Iowa River near Iowa City. This population was established by previous flooding of a private fish hatchery. Undoubtedly portions of this population were displaced in the 2008 floods and some would end up in the Mississippi River.

The Iowa DNR use of grass carp has greatly diminished. Previously in the 1980's and 1990's grass carp were used for vegetation control on our eutrophic lakes. Presently nearly all the grass carp raised and stocked in Iowa are from private hatcheries and stocked in private ponds. Most stocked grass carp are diploid but some triploid grass carp are raised. The testing of the grass carp for ploidy remains a key issue as ploidy tests are rarely undertaken mainly due to budget shortfalls and lack of oversight.

Discussions following the presentation focused on triploid requirements for stocking of grass carp, given that reproduction of grass carp has been documented in Illinois and Missouri. It was noted that MN and WI don't allow the stocking of grass carp. However, while they were reported by commercial fishermen in the past, the numbers increased in 2008, most likely due to the flooding in Iowa and elsewhere. Minnesota has sent samples of grass carp in for determination of ploidy. Commercial harvest of grass carp in Iowa waters has continuously increased over the past few years.



NFHAP Legislation And Midwestern Partnerships Status – Louise Mauldin – Louise presented a status report on the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (people unfamiliar with the program can visit www.fishhabitat.org to learn more.) NFHAP received \$5.15 million in 2008. \$2.15 million went towards continued development of the program and program support, with \$3.0 million used to fund 63 on the ground projects in 28 states. 2009 funding is \$5.375 million with \$2 million from stimulus funding. At the time of the meeting, there were 9 recognized partnerships and 11 candidates. Three partnerships, Midwest Glacial Lakes, Hawaii and Desert Fish were recognized by the Board the first week of March.

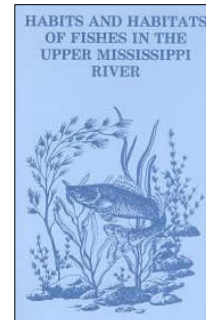
Development Of An Expanded Integrated Pest Management Research Program To Control Aquatic Invasive Species -- Rosalie (Roz) Schnick and Mark P. Gaikowski -- A "unique delivery technology" is now available that could make substantial advancements in managing

invasive species in aquatic environments and pathogens of wild and cultivated aquatic species. In particular, it has the potential for making traditional fisheries management chemical applications more selective than traditional dissolution application strategies. This technology called MicroMatrix™ is a product of Advanced BioNutrition Corporation (ABN); it is already in use in human and animal foods to deliver bioactive ingredients and has recently been proven effective in the delivery of a fish vaccine. ABN selected UMESC to explore under a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement the possibilities of applying the MicroMatrix™ to a variety of problems. Initial efforts would focus on the development of this technology to control and manage three major aquatic invasive species: The “Flying” silver carp (and other Asian carps), zebra mussels, and faucet snails (the intermediate host of the trematodes causing major waterfowl mortalities in the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem).

Discussion following the presentation included a recommendation to send a letter to congress reiterating the UMRCC’s concerns regarding ANS. The audience for the letter would be members of congress. The letter should be “generic” rather than just supporting research by a single agency or of a specific technology (i.e. MicroMatrix™). Also mentioned was including language in support of funding of the State ANS Management Reports.

Action Taken: The UMRCC Fisheries Technical Section voted to recommend the Exec Board write a letter restating UMRCC’s concerns regarding the need for ANS control actions and research similar to a letter that was sent by the UMRCC several years ago. (Follow-up: The UMRCC Executive Board took up the recommendation at the business meeting on March 26, 2009, and directed the fish tech chair to prepare a draft for consideration during the next Exec Board conference call).

Revision of “Habits and Habitats of UMR Fish” – Randy Hines -- Randy presented a proposal to update and revise the publication “Habits and Habitats of UMR Fish” since very few copies of the printed publication are left (A PDF of the 1985 version is available for review at <http://mississippi-river.com/umrcc/Publications.html>). The proposal was to use matching funds from USGS to hire a student to update the information. Discussion determined that there were portions of the 1985 document that needed updating based on research over the last 20+ years. The intent of the document is to keep it “light” with a link to more detailed information (i.e. life history browser being developed by Brian Ickes, USGS.)



Action Taken: The UMRCC Fisheries Technical Section voted in support of updating “Habits and Habitats of UMR Fish” and to forward a request that the Exec Board provide funding of up to \$2,000 for a student to prepare a draft for Fish Tech review and eventual publication on the UMRCC web site.

Is there a need for a UMRCC stocking white paper or position – Jeff Janvrin – During development of the UMRCC Fisheries Strategic Plan, a question was brought up regarding stocking of fish to the UMR. Recommendation was to first determine if the UMRCC fish tech has already prepared a white paper or position in the mid 1980’s. If no documents exist, then the recommendation was to review existing guidelines/recommendations from the agencies and other organizations (i.e. AFS, MICRA paddlefish genetics guidelines, etc.) that would apply to UMR fish stocking. A summary of findings will be provided at the fall fish tech. (Note: A check of the UMRCC files for any position or white paper on stocking was unsuccessful, therefore, the UMRCC may not have developed any formal position or white paper regarding stocking).

Committee Reports

Publications -- Mike Steuck -- The UMR fish distribution tables and publication is currently out for review. Commercial statistics is all punched in and a summary is in the works.

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Commercial Fishing – Michelle Marron – At the time of the meeting, Minnesota was the only state to have provided 2008 data. Michelle reported that roe prices were going down even though harvest of roe is increasing while flesh harvest is declining. Roe is currently at \$30 to \$ 55/lb due to restrictions on export. Bowfin eggs are selling for about \$25/lb.

The harvest of big head increased in Minnesota/Wisconsin boundary waters and a there was a confirmed harvest of silver carp from pool 8 in November/December 2008. It was noted that some folks suspected there was some live transport of Asian carp occurring in states that allow live transport of commercially caught fish. (Also see notes from discussion following Scott Gritters presentation.)

Mussel Ad Hoc – The Mussel ad hoc spring meeting was held in combination with the Mussel Coordination Team the 2 days prior to the UMRCC annual meeting. Several members of the fish tech were present at the meeting.

Ed Ad Hoc – Jeff Janvrin – The Education ad hoc meeting focused on how to expand participation in the ad hoc and to identify potential projects for the ad hoc to work on. Cindy handed out a “logic model” to be used as an exercise in identifying target audiences, messages, etc. Action items from the meeting included recommending the Exec. Board form a sub-committee to evaluate combining the Ed Ad Hoc with the Rec. Tech section. Other action items included approving a request that the Exec. Board provide funding for the development of a UMR watershed poster similar to one recently completed by the WDNR for Lake Michigan (to view examples of Lake Michigan poster, visit:



<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/eeek/teacher/pdf/michiganfront.pdf> to view front of poster and <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/eeek/teacher/pdf/michiganback.pdf> to view back of poster.)

Time and Place of Fall Tech Section Meeting – Dan Dieterman – The fall Fisheries Technical Section meeting will be hosted by the Minnesota DNR at Whitewater State Park September 21 - 23, 2009. More details will be sent out later this summer.

Agency Reports – Time did not allow for presentation of agency reports. Following is the agency report submitted by Iowa after the meeting:

Iowa DNR Fisheries Research, Bellevue, IA
Mike Steuck, Denny Weiss and Caleb Schnitzler
State Report – UMRCC Spring Fish Tech Section Meeting
La Crosse, WI – March 24-26, 2009

Walleye/Sauger Work: Evaluation of Regulations – Walleye, 15 in minimum, 20-27 in release slot in pools 12 through 22 to increase or stabilize recruitment. Sauger, roughly a 1 mile closed area in the tailwaters of Dams 12, 13 and 14, Dec 1 through March 15 to decrease mortality rates. Telemetry on walleye to evaluate changes to channel training structures in mid to lower Pool 13 and to evaluate use of backwater habitat in spring prior to spawning.

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Bluegill/Crappie Work: Telemetry work with bluegill, black and white crappie and largemouth bass less than 14 inches to describe the characteristics of fall and winter habitat preferences utilized by these species and describe the physical and chemical nature of the fall and winter habitat selected by these species to develop recommendations to maintain and improve these habitats. Have worked in backwaters in several different pools and are currently working in the lower Pool 11 Islands HREP area to evaluate the use and function of the recently completed habitat project. We have seen improved use of Mud Lake with the reduction of flow through the project area. Preliminary results show the possibility of bluegill/crappie homing to specific backwaters to spend the winter. Several fish moved from one area to another have moved back under ice and across the main channel. Were able to move fish from both areas this year and it will be interesting to see if they returned.

Flathead Catfish Work: Evaluate the status, distribution and habitats of the flathead catfish population and the flathead catfish sport fishery in Pool 13 as a part of a statewide study in conjunction with our interior river research biologist.

Paddlefish Work: Capture roughly 100 to 300 paddlefish mainly by snagging annually as a part of the basin wide MICRA paddlefish assessment project. Capture gear in the past has been snagging. We are now using 5 inch gill nets so data is comparable to other basins. Proposed paddlefish sport fishing regulation changes in the Iowa/Illinois border waters are moving forward. Changes include shorter season, a maximum length limit and hook size restrictions. These regulations are aimed at protecting the spawning stock of paddlefish.

UMRCC Fish Tech Section Publications: Continue work on the Distribution and Abundance paper and the Commercial Fish Harvest 50 year summary (1953-2003).

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March 24, 2009, Attendance Sign In

Name	Agency	Email if not already in UMRCC Directory
Jeff Janvrin	Wisconsin DNR	
Ann Runstrom	USFWS	
Scott Yess	USFWS	
Tom Boland	Iowa DNR (Retired)	
Rick Frietsche	USFWS	
Jeremiah Haas	Exelon Generation	
Ken Lubinski	USGS	
Kevin Stauffer	Minnesota DNR	
Dan Dieterman	Minnesota DNR	
Steve Delain	Minnesota DNR	
Jon Meerbeek	Minnesota DNR	
Tim Schlagenhaft	Minnesota DNR	
Kirk Hansen	Iowa DNR	
Karen Osterkamp	Iowa DNR	
Dan Wilcox	Corps of Eng., St. Paul	
David Ostendorf	MO Dept. of Conservation	
Bob Hrabik	MO Dept. of Conservation	
Bill Bertrand	Illinois DNR (Retired)	
Pam Thiel	USFWS	
Brian Ickes	USGS/UMESC	
Mark Gaikowski	USGS/UMESC	mgaikowski@usgs.gov
Roz Schnick	AFS – Task Force on Fishery Chemicals	RozSchnick@centurytel.net
Randy Hines	USGS/UMESC	rkhines@usgs.gov
Mike Steuck	Iowa DNR	
Louise Mauldin	USFWS	Louise_mauldin@fws.gov
Travis Moore	MO Dept. of Conservation	
Ken Barr	Corps of Eng., Rock Isl	Kenneth_a_barr@usace.mil
Rob Simmonds	USGWS – Carterville	
Ross Dames	MO Dept. of Conservation	
Dan Scoggin	ESI	
Heidi Dunn	Ecological Specialists, Inc.	
Chuck Spitzack	Corps of Eng. – Rock Isl.	
Martin Konrad	Iowa DNR	
Bernard Schonoff	Iowa DNR	
Sara Tripp	Southern Ill. University	strip@live.com
Marck Cornish	Corps of Eng. – Rock Isl.	
Scott “Little Bob” Gritters	Iowa DNR	
Andy Bartels	Wisconsin DNR	
Brian Brecka	Wisconsin DNR	
Mark Endris	Wisconsin DNR	
Ron Benjamin	Wisconsin DNR	
Jerry Rasmussen	Self	
Ken Von Ruden	Wisconsin DNR	
Dan Kelner	Corps of Eng. – St. Paul	
John Pitlo	Iowa DNR (Retired)	
Dan Sallee	Illinois DNR	
Marian Havlik	Malacological Consultants	havlikme@aol.com

UMRCC Fisheries Strategic Plan Objective and Strategy Review March 24, 2009, Radisson Hotel, La Crosse, WI

Goal 1:

- 1.1. The compendium and Fish Distribution are done. What else is needed?
 - Consider revising by referencing with an update interval in the performance (ie. every 5-10 years.
 - Add atlas as a product. A distributional atlas was done in the 1970's with verifiable records.
- 1.2. Restore biological potential vs. relative abundance
- 1.4. Add strategy for implementation of wildlife action plan.
- 1.4.4. Doesn't seem to fit. Options presented were add to goal, leave as is, put into introduction since it is already a plan prepared by Mussel Ad Hoc.
- 1.5. Consider using the term "viability" instead of variability. Genetic integrity was also brought up as another possible wording change or addition.
- 1.5.2. Change "reach" to one of the following -- recommend or develop recommendation or seek...(Note, this may apply to several other sections.)
 - Recommendation to add reference to Geographic Distribution to the goal and/or as one of the objectives.
 - Where appropriate, reference state fish implementation plans.
 - Add need for understanding and importance of seasonal needs life history/habitat needs of species in the introduction and/or the objective and strategies.

Goal 2:

- Introduction: -- Define ecological integrity
-- Identify habitats types and develop agreement on description of the various types and how they vary along the system.
- Add objective/performance measure for development of maps showing critical habitat areas for fish and mussels.
- 2.2. Edit/shorten.
Utilize existing information to build upon it and perhaps go into greater detail
 - 2.2.2. Performance measure: Specifically identify overwinter areas and other habitat types as a target of this strategy
 - 2.4.12. Critical habitat -- define for fish and mussel species. (Note: this may not be the correct strategy reference -jaj)

Goal 3:

Missing performance measures for 3.3.4, 3.5.1, 3.5.2

Many of the strategies focus only on the recreational species. Add strategies to better address commercial species.

Should fishing and boat accesses be added to this section? If this were a state plan, these would be included.

Add objective to evaluate effectiveness of regulations to protect of fish populations in critical habitat areas (i.e. overwintering sites and spawning sites.)

3.5. Add performance measure to get a list of agency stocking activities to determine how extensive it is.

Add performance measure evaluating the need for stocking commercial species.

Goal 4:

4.2. Lots of rewording suggestions:

- Aquatic or all Species? Use "native aquatic species"
- Identify fish species and fisheries habitats at risk...
- Reword, "Identify native aquatic communities"
- Fish species and their associated habitat
- Add fish and mussels
- Add in "cahoots" with other plan
- Final consensus rewording recommendation based on asterisk on notes: ***"Identify fish species and fishery habitats at risk."***

4.3. Add reference to Mississippi River Basin Panel on ANS

Goal 5

Add objective to improve angler access.

Add objective to retain anglers and improve angler recruitment.

5.1 Performance measure: Invite representatives from the standing committees

General Plan comments:

- Add crosswalk appendix from old to new plan. Different issues now as opposed to the original plan
- Develop/Define standardized terms (i.e. relative abundance, abundant, rare...) "Fuzzy" terms should be defined/addressed in the introduction.
- Redraft and place on UMRCC website?