

UMRCC Fisheries Technical Section Minutes of the 2007 Spring Meeting

**March 20
Welch, MN**

The annual spring meeting was held this year in Welch, Minnesota at the Treasure Island Resort and Casino as part of the 63rd Annual Meeting of the UMRCC. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by chair Dan Dieterman. A total of 54 people attended the meeting. All 5 UMR States, USFWS Upper Miss. Refuge managers and FAO, USACOE (St. Paul, Rock Island, St. Louis Districts), and USGS (Onalaska) were represented. An agenda and attendance list is attached. The Fall 2006 meeting minutes were approved without discussion.

Driftless Area Fish Habitat Partnership

Louise Mauldrin (USFWS) gave an update on this partnership in which a joint resolution was recently signed by the USFWS director and the Governors of MN, WI, IA, and IL. This partnership is one of five pilot projects that were chosen from across the nation with a goal to protect, enhance, and/or restore fish habitat in the Driftless Area. A key player in this partnership has been Trout Unlimited. A 2nd Stream Restoration workshop will be held in LaCrosse, WI later this year. No discussion.

RAMSAR

Tex Hawkins (USFWS) presented and handed out information concerning the designation of the UMR NWFR as a Wetland of International Importance. This type of designation was originally conceived at the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance held in Ramsar, Iran in 1971. The designation would heighten awareness of the international importance of the Refuge and its wetlands. No discussion.

UMRCC Fish Distribution Table

Scott Gritters (IADNR) gave an update on the progress of this recent effort. A meeting was held in each of the COE Districts, over the past 2 months, to review and suggest changes to the existing UMR Fish Distribution Table. This effort is being done to update information regarding the distribution and abundance of all fish species found in the UMR, and to track the spread of invasive exotic species, ie. bighead and silver carp,

round goby, etc. Eight new species were added to the species list, and three name changes were made. There was good agreement among the States and Feds (LTRM) about suggested changes to species status and distribution, reflecting increased sampling effort by river managers and researchers. Overall, the changes suggest an upward trend in species diversity and abundance. A suggestion was made to consider producing a document that could be submitted for peer-reviewed publication. Mike Steuck (IADNR) and Dan Kirby (IADNR) will complete the document and a decision will be made at the fall meeting about publication and distribution.

MICRA Paddlefish Update

Ann Runstrom (USFWS) gave an update on the status of the MICRA Paddlefish Report. A “first” draft has been routed to all partners and Ann is looking for comments and additional input from the States. A request from the American Fisheries Society to help fund publication of Proceedings of the Paddlefish Symposium, held in conjunction with the 2006 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, was discussed briefly and Mike Steuck agreed to investigate further. A decision will be made at the fall meeting whether or not to help fund the publication.

MICRA Sturgeon Update

Mike Steuck gave an update on the MICRA discussions currently taking place concerning the overall health of shovelnose and pallid sturgeon stocks, and the risk to those populations from demand for roe from the caviar trade. Most of the evidence suggests declining sturgeon stocks in waters where they are commercially harvested, and States are trying to regulate that harvest even more. MICRA has asked the USFWS to consider listing shovelnose sturgeon within the historic range of pallid sturgeon as “a species of similarity” which would provide additional protection to pallid sturgeon stocks. An important MICRA meeting concerning the potential listing of shovelnose sturgeon will be held May 29 and 30 in the Quad Cities.

Coordinator’s Report

Scott Yess (UMRCC Coordinator) gave his report and a copy was submitted and is included in the annual proceedings.

Mussel Ad Hoc Committee Update

Gary Wege (USFWS) gave an overview of the Mussel ad hoc and Mussel Coordination Team (MCT) meeting that was conducted at 10:00 AM, which featured 4 key agenda items: 1) Mike Davis (MN DNR) presented results of the pool-wide population estimate for mussels in Pool 5 conducted in 2006. A total of 183 million live mussels were estimated with a 95% confidence interval that ranged from approx. 150 to 217 million. A pool-wide estimate, using similar protocols, will be made in Pool 6 in 2007; 2) Jon Duyvejonck (USFWS) gave a presentation that outlined standardized sampling and decision making protocols needed to better assess, manage and protect UMR mussel resources. UMRCC endorsement will be sought in the near future. Additionally, it was proposed that conservation of native mussels be included as a program element of any NESP legislation; 3) Dan Kelner (COE) gave a demonstration on the use of the new mussel database that has been recently developed to improve data management and utility; 4) Gary Wege showed a schedule of activities planned by the Mussel Coordination Team for 2007. Volunteers are needed for various activities throughout the summer (contact Gary).

Generic Dike Flume Study

Brian Johnson (COE-St. Louis District) presented experimental results of a Generic Dike Configuration micro-model developed by the Applied River Engineering Center in St. Louis, MO. The results showed how the use of different dike configurations could potentially increase depth and flow diversity of main channel border habitat in the open river portion of the UMR, without adversely affecting main channel depths and maintenance requirements.

Fisheries Assessment Using Bioacoustics and Sonar

Eric Laux (COE-Omaha District) presented information about using non-traditional freshwater sampling methods and techniques to identify and locate fish in the Missouri River. His efforts focused on using passive acoustic equipment to listen for signature sounds associated with certain species. He was attempting to locate spawning locations of pallid and shovelnose sturgeon by listening for signature sounds that have been recorded from spawning sturgeon in a laboratory setting. He was then hoping to visually verify that the sounds were coming from those fish by using imagery transmitted to a screen from a Dual Frequency Identification Sonar (DIDSON). Application of this type of technology, while expensive, shows real potential as a fisheries sampling method.

Sauger Hooking Mortality Study

Jon Meerbeek (MN DNR) presented preliminary results from a two-year study that looked at winter hooking mortality of sauger from the tailwaters of Lock and Dam 3 near Red Wing, MN. Sauger caught from depths between 20 and 70 feet during winter 05/06 and 06/07 were individually marked from whichever 10-foot depth interval they were caught and held in a net pen for three days. Hooking mortality did not vary much between winters 05/06 and 06/07 and averaged 26% and 27%, respectively. Percent mortality was generally higher from fish caught from depths greater than 40 feet, but did not appear to be size related.

The fall meeting will be held in Illinois at the Kibbe Field Station during either the 3rd or 4th week of September.

Respectively Submitted by,
Dan Dieterman, Chairman

Agenda

9:30 – 1:00 UMRCC Registration and check-in

1:00 – 1:05 Welcome/Housekeeping –Fish Tech Chair, Dan Dieterman (MN DNR)

1:05 – 1:20 Driftless Area Fish Habitat Partnership Update-Louise Mauldrin (USFWS)

1:20 – 1:35 Designation of UMR NWFR as Ramsar recognized wetland

Tex Hawkins (USFWS)

1:35 – 1:50 UMRCC Fish Distribution Tables Update – Scott Gritters (IA DNR)

1:50 – 2:05 MICRA Paddlefish Update – Ann Runstrom (USFWS)

2:05 – 2:20 MICRA Sturgeon Update – Mike Steuck (IA DNR)

2:20 – 2:45 Break

2:45 – 3:00 Coordinator's Report – Scott Yess (UMRCC Coordinator)

3:00 – 3:15 Mussel Ad Hoc Committee Update – Gary Wege (USFWS)

3:15 – 3:35 Results of St. Louis District Generic Dike Configuration Micro-Model Study

Brian Johnson (COE)

3:35 – 3:55 Fisheries Assessment using Bioacoustics – Eric Laux (COE)

3:55 – 4:15 Sauger Hooking Mortality from LD 3 Tailwaters, winter 05/06 and 6/07

John Meerbeek (MN DNR)

4:15 – 4:30 Open Discussion

2007 FISH TECH

NAME AGENCY E-MAIL

Bernie Schonhoff IA DNR

Patrick Short WDNR Patrick.short@wisconsin.gov

Mark Endris WDNR

Michelle Marron WDNR Michelle.marron@wisconsin.gov

Mike Steuck IA DNR Michael.steuck@dnr.state.ia.us

Caleb Schnitzler IA DNR Caleb.schnitzler@dnr.state.ia.us

Kirk Hanson IA DNR Kirk.hansen@dnr.state.ia.us

Ross Dames MO DOC Ross.dames@mdc.mo.gov

Martin Konrad IA DNR Martin.konrad@dnr.state.ia.us

Jennifer Sauer USGS jsauer@usgs.gov

Steve Zigler USGS szigler@usgs.gov

Jeff Janvrin WI DNR Jeff.janvrin@wisconsin.gov

Brent Knights USGS bknights@usgs.gov

Dan Kirby IA DNR Daniel.kirby@dnr.state.ia.us

Steve Waters IA DNR Steve.waters@dnr.state.ia.us

John Pitlo IA DNR (retired)

Tom Boland IA DNR (retired)

Dan Sallee IL DNR Dan.sallee@illinois.gov

Mike Cochran IL DNR (retired) nhawk@adams.net

Louise Mauldin USFWS Louise_maudlin@fws.gov

Ann Runstrom USFWS Ann_runstrom@fws.gov

Karen Osterkamp IA DNR Karen.osterkamp@dnr.state.ia.us

Ken Von Ruden WDNR Kenneth.VanRuden@wisconsin.gov

Jeremiah Haas Exelon Generation Jeremiah.haas@exeloncorp.com

Mel Bowler IDNR Melvin.bowler@dnr.state.ia.us

Josh Petersen IA DNR Joshua.petersen@dnr.state.ia.us

Elliott Stefanik Corps Elliott.L.Stefanik@usace.army.mil

Al Schmidt MN DNR Alan.schmidt@dnr.state.mn.us

Randy Binder MN DNR Randy.binder@dnr.state.mn.us

Andy Bartels WDNR abartels@usgs.gov

Jodi Staebell Corps Jodi.K.Staebell@usace.army.mil

Kip Runyon Corps – St. Louis Kip.R.Runyon@usace.army.mil

Rob Simmonds USFWS – Carterville FRD rob_simmonds@fws.gov

Eric Laux Corps – Omaha Eric.A.Laux@usace.army.mil

Brian Johnson Corps – St. Louis Brian.L.Johnson@mvso2.usace.army.mil

Pam Thiel USFWS pam_thiel@fws.gov

Tim Schlagenhaft MN DNR tim.schlagenhaft@dnr.state.mn.us

Dan Wilcox Corps – St. Paul Daniel.B.Wilcox@usace.army.mil

Travis Moore MO DOC

Mark Cornish Corps – Rock Island

Brian Brecka WI DNR Brian.brecka@wisconsin.gov

Dennis Anderson Corps – St. Paul

Rebecca Winterringer Ecological Spec. Inc rwinterringer@ecologicalspecialists.com

Nicole McVay Corps – Rock Island

Scott Gritters Iowa DNR

NAME AGENCY E-MAIL

Jon Duyvejonck USFWS Jon_duyvejonck@fws.gov

Jonathan Meerbeek MN DNR

Ken Lubinski USGS

Mike Davis MN DNR

Steve DeLain MN DNR

Walt Popp MN DNR

Dan Dieterman MN DNR

Kevin Stauffer MN DNR

David Heath WI DNR