FISHERIES AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY
Chair: J.D. Strong (OK)
Vice-Chair: Vacant

Tuesday, September 24th, 2019
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Minnesota West Ballroom

109th Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting
InterContinental Saint Paul Riverfront Hotel
Saint Paul, MN

1:00 pm  Call to Order/Introductions/Review Agenda – J.D. Strong, OK
  • Action: Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda/March 2019 minutes
  • Minutes approved

1:10  Subcommittee and Working Group Reports
  • Subcommittee on Water – Jason Olive, AR/Jon Sjöberg, NV
    o Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Survey
      ▪ Many agencies do not know about the Act
      ▪ Inconsistencies in use across the country
      ▪ Working to address issues
    o Section 401 – Proposal for AFWA prepare comment letter on the Section 401
      changes and explore signing on to other efforts on issue – Motion along those
      lines - Approved
      ▪ Drafting paper developed
      ▪ Legal Committee is also examining court cases around Section 401
    o FY2020 WRDA Bill – Comments by the end of the month
    o Quarterly conferences noted and invited Committee attendees
  • Drug Approval Working Group – Alan Johnson, IA/Kevin Kwak, CA
    o Priority drug list – 16 on list – Changes in formalin and peroxide
      ▪ Survey sent out to assist in examining list
      ▪ Added drugs – Esterdiol and Common Carp Pituitary
    o MOA – Final draft reviewed and will finalize for signatory directors (AFWA, USGS,
      USFWS, NOAA)
    o Aquatic Drug Coalition – Improve approval process
      ▪ FDA letter will ask for improvements and will request a meeting on issue
    o Quarterly calls will be conducted ASAP and will examine science to improve
      process along with MUMS

109th Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting
• Bird & Fish Related Conflict Working Group – Craig Bonds, TX/ Jim Fredericks, ID
  • Written report done
  • No specific actions
  • Joint working group between this committee and bird conservation committee
  • Four activities
    o Finalized focus areas and goals
      ▪ Communication
      ▪ Science needed for issue
      ▪ Recommendations
    o Invited to USFWS Cormorant Core Team meeting – Provided input from state perspective – Letter provided on USFWS assistance to workgroup
    o Two-day meeting in July
      ▪ Needs and challenges on core areas and goals
      ▪ Working group deliverables
      ▪ Other opportunities to communicate – Special Symposium in Reno (Oct 1) – 11 presentations and panel session
      ▪ Oct 3 – A Great Lakes focused symposium
  • Letters – Conduit for AFWA comments on rule making, Coordination on intra-agency communication
  • USFWS Actions
    o 4-5 actions given to USFWS leadership and updates given up to the Secretary’s office (Thursday)
    o Additional would be flexible, likely on aquaculture and wild fish

2:00  American Fisheries Society – Doug Austen, AFS
  • Update on Standard Sampling book proposal and Grey Literature clearinghouse proposal
    o MSGP
      ▪ Standardized sampling underway and chapters moving along – Scott Bonar will be here in the spring
      ▪ Grey Literature Clearinghouse – Reference service similarity
        ▪ Improve communication
        ▪ Should be ready end of year
      ▪ Four this year
  • Upating Bluebook on fish health
    o State employees are plugged into process
    o Ad hoc group reviewing gaps and expect a call for state input into writing team
  • Standardized sampling
  • Research BMP on priorities, current research and workshops using external info sources too
  • Current research database
  • Books
    o New Books – Trout and Char of the World
    o Looking for more
  • Partners
    o Expand voice

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1. CASS (Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies) – Eight entities on aquatic sciences
   - Joint meeting June/May 2022 in Grand Rapids, MI
2. 150th Anniversary AFS Meeting
   - Units developing materials/exhibits
   - Mississippi/Yangtze River symposium – International big rivers meeting there too
3. Hutton Program
   - TX model mentioned – Using a grant to support
   - Six-week work period and bring them together in one place (VTU) for a week
4. AFS/TWS 2019 Reno
   - 4000 attendees
   - 3000 presentations and hundreds of symposia
   - Video on Monday – Issues by state
   - NFHP Film Festival

2:15 AFWA Government Affairs Update – Devin DeMario, AFWA
- Legislative summary handout
- RAWA – House bill and changed prime sponsors (Fortenberry) – House Natural Resources Committee HR3742
  - New tribal title and not under PR/DJ - BIA
  - General fund is now revenue source instead of energy funds
  - Added pathogens as an eligible area
  - 10% to competitive grants to support technologies for SGCN
  - 116 cosponsors and likely subcommittee hearing soon
  - No Senate bill yet but likely pending
  - Toolkit available
- Appropriations
  - CR likely – House passed bills and Senate is meeting now on Interior et al bill
- WRDA pending
  - Directs USACOE operations and has a lot of natural resources items in it
  - Requests to Devin by September 30
- Surface Transportation Bill
  - Infrastructure is not in it
  - DJ reauthorization – Angling and Boating Coalition language will be included
  - Connectivity is another key piece and webinar pending
- AFWA comments on CWA WOTUS
  - Repealed 2015 WOTUS rule – 2007/8 Guidance document in place
  - Developing new rule

2:30 Presentation on MICRA Fisheries Commission Concept – Brian Canaday, MO
- Patch work of states
- Currently independent management
- Considering an Inland Fishery Commission with federal funding
- 1989 support
- Successes
  - Focus areas
    - Mussels
    - Habitat
    - AIS
    - STN and Paddlefish
• Getting about $3-8 million annually

• Why
  • Provide for long-term consistent funding for fisheries and access
  • GLFC model is closest fit
    ▪ SEL was formed
    ▪ IJ fisheries management
    ▪ 6 sub-basins
  • Joint Strategic Plan
    ▪ Formal commitment
    ▪ Non-regulatory and non-binding
    ▪ Consensus based
    ▪ Key to have the plan

• Changes
  • Formalize commitment
  • Federal recognition – Economic and social value, investment mgt need, cooperative mgt

• Benefits
  • More effective fish mgt
  • AIS management improvement

• Next
  • Finalizing plan
  • Fish Chief briefing on concept with all agencies – Looking for feedback

• Example – Brad Parsons MN
  • High flows caused many AIS moved north
  • Acoustic array – Silver Carp from Pool 16 along with 3 Paddlefish – Silver Carp now in WI River
  • Currently on soft funds and need a stronger funding source

• Tribes would be included

2:45  CO₂ Piscicide Registration – Mark Gaikowski, USGS

• Advantages
  • Rotenone is the only piscicide
  • Can be a good barrier
  • Easy to obtain
  • Inexpensive and low health risk

• Non-selective
• Need larger scale technical infrastructure
• Will need state permitting
• Feasibility study on Fox River being done
• Cost estimates available from Mark

• Other uses
  • Dreissenid mussels
  • Red Swamp Crayfish

• Examining non-target mortality

• Carp Label – April 2019
  • Asian Carp deterrence
  • Under ice lethal control for aquatic nuisance species
  • Restricted to USGS, USFWS, USACOE and state agencies

• Web enabling reporting system similar to INAD reporting
• USGS would act like a the INAD agent and USFWS is the registered agent
• USFWS developing SOPs for labels in 2021

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• Must have state registration before label use
  • Antimycin registration is also moving forward using same process as CO2
    o Aerial delivery discussed for rotenone and eventually for antimycin on a label expansion
    o Looking for supply sources at this time
  • Mark needs an estimate for rotenone on a per acre foot basin

3:00 Health Break

3:10 USFS Update – Chris Worth, USFS
  • RBFF - Showed banners for state fishing licenses at USFS stations
  • National Aquatic Biodiversity Assessment
    o 5000 taxa on lands
    o Ecotrust – Building a national database that is nationally available to evaluate where opportunities exist
      ▪ NatureServe data
      ▪ NFHP database
      ▪ TU Trout Assessment
      ▪ BISON data system
  • Shared stewardship strategy
    o How to align forests in each state with governor’s priorities
    o Governors and USFS Regional Foresters – MOU between them on priorities
      ▪ Six to date with NC, NM (Nov)
        • NC includes fish and wildlife priorities
    ▪ State sets priorities
    ▪ CA – Watershed protection priority – Potable water
    o Align USFS broadly with state goals
    o Good Neighbor Authority would be included
    o Increase tools available for cooperative efforts with a reduction in paperwork
  • R3 Initiatives
    o Mostly on the fisheries side

3:25 FWS FAC Update – David Hoskins, FWS
  • Handout provided
  • AIS
    o 44 plans approved – 43 funding requested - $42-44K
    o Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers website to allow materials to be shared and customized
    o Joint MOU under development to strengthen invasive species prevention
    o Risk Screening summaries characterize risk – 1140 available – relative risk guide
  • Hatcheries
    o $ 1 million for system wide needs – Genetic mgt plans, new database and lab data system
    o Modernization evaluations at 5 national fish hatcheries
    o Engineering tech support improved – In house into Refuges
    o 70 hatcheries, production nationwide
    o Released 109M fish and distributed more than 79M eggs in FY18 – WAE, CHS, AME, RBT, Steelhead lead the numbers
  • Habitat
    o Sikes Act with USAF - $33 million support provided
    o Service liaison with Army
    o NFHP funding stable with op support increased to $85K to all partnerships
      ▪ Board scored partnership project submissions and scores considered

109th Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting
Reduced to 1/3 USFWS to 2/3 Board from 50:50
Funds are at regions – 18 of 20 get project funding
- Bloede Dam removed by Fish Passage Program ($14 million annually) with MD DNR and DOT

**AADAP**
- FDA approved LHRHa spawning aid for immediate release
- OTC 200 study report submitted and will approve for all species for columaris
- DAWG needs survey to prioritize future work
- Facilities needed to conduct labeled claims – Romet, OTC 200, Chlormine T – F hydrophilia and Edwardsia and Columaris
- Filled 2 positions and term INAD position
- President’s Budget shows reduction to $800K

**Communications and Partnerships**
- SFBPC elected new leadership and members of committee
- Recs on Clean Vessel Act, streamlining boating and fishing access, and needed fix to website
  - R3 Plan in progress at Regions and will be shared with the Committee
- 15 hatcheries opened to fishing along with more coming
  - Refuges have not started discussions and managed separately from rest of Fisheries program

**Budget**
- Hatcheries - $59K
- Maintenance and Equipment - $22K
- Habitat – Assessment - $31K and Pop Assessment and Mgt - $30M
- AIS - $22M – 50% Asian Carp
- Total - $167M

3:40
**USGS Update – Camille Hopkins, USGS**
- Reorganizing AIS and pathogens programs
  - Bio surveillance and consequence mgmt
    - Mass Mortality
      - Boise – PKD workshop held
        - Goal was to get all up to date on state of science
        - Needs identified
          - Bryozoan host
          - Vaccine
          - Host
        - Surveillance underway – eDNA and new lab tools developed
          - Map hotspots for risk assessment
          - Environmental conditions link
  - Mussels
    - Clinch River, Huron River (MI), IA – Next generation techs
    - Symposium on mussel/shellfish health at AFS-TWS next week (Oct 1)
      - Bluebook discussion at end

- Webinar on mussel project will be setup this fall (Nov)
- Aquatic Animal Health Workgroup Meeting
  - Matt Nichol chaired on initial meeting
  - 8 state agencies and USGS, USFWS and USFS at initial meeting

3:55
**BLM Update – David Hu, BLM**
- Reorganization underway with Grand Junction (Management)
• Rest of staff to state offices
• Split up agency into new sections
• Flat budget
  o Hydrologists and Fish Biologists (60 now) being reduced overtime
    ▪ Capacity in decline
• Sportfishing is a key area and enhancing existing access
• AIS another key area – Lower CO River is getting $1 million for zebra mussel work
• Family based fishing – R3 plan also includes resources
  o Supporting state agencies
  o Fishing for Veterans – Looking for input
• Asking for assistance on how they should do work into the future on aquatic habitat management

4:10  EPA Office of Research & Development – Bill Fisher - Monica Linnenbrink, EPA
• Same presentation as in other committee updates
• eDNA question
  o Methodology is changing – Is there collaboration between agencies – Not directly.
    ▪ Maybe a need for federal fisheries summit
    ▪ Government eDNA workgroup does do collection with a workshop in FL – ACOE, USFS, USFWS, USGS
  o Loop in states in eDNA work as we have much to offer
• Monitoring HAB database is available

4:25  Additional Federal Agency Updates
•
4:30  National Fish Habitat Action Plan Updates – IDGF Director, Ed Schriever/Ryan Roberts, AFWA
• PPT
4:45  AFWA 2020 Strategic Plan Discussion – J.D Strong, OK- Tabled

  Questions to Consider:
  #1 - What strategic objective, that is related to this committee’s work, would you like to see in AFWA’s next strategic plan?
  #2 – How would you like to see the work of this committee reflected in the next Strategic Plan? What would you change from the current plan?

  Note: AFWA’s current strategic plan is available at this LINK

4:50  Committee Workplan – Devin DeMario, AFWA
• Review plan from Devin and provide comments/thoughts to Devin.
• Let Devin know if you are willing to assist on workplan and new NCN for 2021.

4:55  Identify Follow-up Issues and Next Steps - J.D. Strong, OK

5:00  Wrap-up/adjourn – J.D. Strong, OK

Committee Charge:

Discuss, develop and recommend Association positions related to:
  o Federal laws, regulations and policies concerning water uses, aquatic habitat conservation, fisheries resources and related funding for such programs.
- Fisheries management practices and emerging issues (e.g. climate change) for both freshwater and marine resources.

**Subcommittees and Working Groups:**
- Drug Approval Working group
- Subcommittee on Water
- Bird & Fish Related Conflict Working Group