

# Flatwater Examiner

Newsletter for the Nebraska Chapter  
of the American Fisheries Society

Volume 29, Number 1 January, 2001

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## President's Report (Gerald Mestl)

This being my first President's Report, I would like to begin by thanking you for the honor of electing me President of your chapter. Secondly, I would like to ask each of you to take the time to vote in the election for President-Elect at our meeting in February. We have two fine candidates, each worthy of their nomination.

Planning is underway for the upcoming Thirty Second Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The meeting is scheduled for February 13th and 14th, 2001 at the Aksarben Aquarium. The meeting will start at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, including a social that evening, resume at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday morning and conclude at noon. As the meeting details are worked out, they will be made available on the Chapter Web Page. I will be asking many of you to participate in the program and assist with the many tasks that it takes to make a successful meeting.

If you have not had a chance, check out our Chapter webpage <http://www.4w.com/> Please check your email address (if applicable) and e-mail any changes to the webmaster. We are looking for feedback, so email the webmaster any comments or suggestions about the design or content of the page. We are investigating the possibility of adding a member's forum. This would give members a means to communicate about topics of interest to the chapter (such as legislation, meetings, etc.).

Please make plans for attending and participating in the annual meeting. See you then!

Gerald

### **Past-President's Final Report (Bob Thomas)**

Greetings NAFS Members! My move from president to immediate past-president took place in September, during the EXCOM meeting. Gerald Mestl is now President of your Great Nebraska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. It has been an honor to serve and has helped to round out my schedule. I have benefited greatly.

I want to emphasize communication in this third report to the members. We have our annual meeting, which provides our best opportunity to visit with each other and to meet new members. I did enjoy the recent joint meeting with the Iowa Chapter. Excellent posters were displayed outside the meeting room. The meeting papers were good science and the visual aides were high quality. I hadn't seen the laptop computer used in presenting a paper before. Very impressive when a graph is drawn across the page as you watch, and a small marker pops around and points out things on the screen. The use of Remote Sensing, GIS and GPS in fisheries work represents a new era for Fisheries Scientists, and was utilized in papers presented. I personally want to thank members who presented papers at the meeting, and all who were able to come to the meeting and make it a great success. I enjoyed our speaker of the evening Dr. Moulton from the University of Nebraska who gave some history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition on the Missouri River.

My brief experience as president has impressed me with the internet as a tool of communication. I got online about the time I was elected President, and must say it helped me greatly in keeping in touch with Dr. Summerfelt in Iowa on the Joint Meeting, and keeping our officers and others informed on things. The big challenge was to read everything thoroughly that came my way, and to find out how to do various things on the computer such as forwarding mail and dealing with "fatal errors." I never have learned how to deal with MIME and Acrobat messages which caused me to miss out on some things. With the internet we can communicate freely 24 hours a day, hooray!

We do have our Newsletter, thanks to Becky's efforts in getting it out to us. It is our way of keeping the membership informed of happenings. Now because of foresight on planning of volunteers, we have a website, which will help communication, and there are plans to put the newsletter on the website. The website is linked to the Parent Society and the address is listed in Gerald's message. Also, if you have information for the newsletter, just drop Becky an e-mail.

Hutch and Gene have been busy with their Legislative and Current Affairs committees and information on their work is on the webpage, which Gerald, created and is also the webmaster. Keith is doing a great job as Secretary-treasurer and presented the Chapter's sound financial

report at the EXCOM meeting. You will find a list of members on the webpage also. If you have a e-mail address and want it listed please send it in. In closing I urge all of you to inject yourselves into affairs of the Chapter and to actively campaign for Offices. I anticipate that the new WEBPAGE will make this easier. Cheers!

Bob Thomas

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## CHAPTER NOTES

### **32nd Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Chapter of the AFS**

The annual meeting of the NAFS will be held February 13 and 14 at the Aksarben Aquarium. The meeting will begin at 1:00 on Tuesday the 13th, and there will be a social that evening. Meetings resume at 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, and conclude at noon.

### **Seeking Newsletter Editor**

Due to an unprecedented lack of any free time in which to solicit information and organize that information into a newsletter, I will be vacating the position of newsletter editor once a replacement is found. I was only able to get one newsletter out during the past year, and my workload at work and at home does not show signs of lessening.

Since we have few meetings, and are geographically scattered, it is important that the newsletters be current and regularly distributed. **If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please contact president Gerald Mestl.** This would be a good opportunity for a student or transfer member to network with other fishery professionals within the state. I've really enjoyed my years as editor, and appreciate having the opportunity!

### **Thank You from AFS**

The Nebraska Chapter AFS received a "thank you" from Betsy Fritz (AFS) for our \$100 donation to the AFS parent society raffle.

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## NAFS EX-COM Meetings

### **By Keith Hurley, Secretary/Treasurer**

An ex-com meeting was held October 26, 2000 to plan the annual meeting and discuss relevant issues.

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## **New Members**

**We have several new members!**

Allen Szalanski

Genetic and Forensic Analysis Laboratory

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Lincoln, NE

(402) 471-5174 (work)

aszalan@ngpc.state.ne.us

Luke Wallace

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

(402) 221-4885 (work)

a.luke.wallace@usace.army.mil

Carrie Blausey

Dept of Wildlife and Fisheries Science

South Dakota State University Brookings, SD

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## **COMMITTEE NOTES**

**No committee reports**

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## **FISHERIES FORUM**

**Fisheries Forum is an avenue to reflect opinions on aquatic topics.**

The Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association (MICRA) is looking for a full time coordinator to replace Jerry Rasmussen. Jerry has been the USFWS coordinator for the states based on a MOU between 28 state fish and game agencies and the USFWS. Essentially, the states formed a partnership with the USFWS because both have public trust responsibilities for fish and wildlife resources and the habitats needed to support them. When a couple of southern

states decided to allow fish farmers in their state to introduce Black Carp(an exotic species) for use in catfish farms to control snail populations, the 28 state fish and game agencies through MICRA expressed their displeasure because of the ramifications this species will have on native species throughout the basin when it gets loose. This group even offered suggested alternative species such as native red ears which would have been a good substitute for black carp. In carrying out the duties and direction given him by the states, an Arkansas Board of Commissioner member who happened to be a fish grower in that state then complained to his Congressional Senator and the Director of the USFWS. Without even contacting MICRA, the USFWS Director succumbed to political pressure and removed Jerry as the partnership coordinator.

Question? Did the Arkansas Commission member who looked out after number one, fulfill his public trust responsibilities as a member of the Arkansas Board of Commissioners?

Question? Did the Director of the USFWS fulfill her responsibilities to the public trust for her actions?

Gene Zuerlein - NGPC  
Past Chair, MRNRC

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## **AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS**

### **CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

#### **Biological Opinion for the Missouri River released.(Becky Latka)**

The USFWS released a jeopardy Biological Opinion on the current operation of the Missouri River main stem system on November, 2000. The Opinion indicates that the current operation of the Missouri River main stem system of dams and reservoirs jeopardizes the existence of the least tern, piping plover, pallid sturgeon, and bald eagle. The Corps' Omaha District office prepared a conceptual Draft Implementation Plan which was released in December, 2000. Both the Biological Opinion and the Implementation Plan can be accessed on the Corps' Northwestern Division webpage <http://w3.nwd.usace.army.mil/>.

The Corps' future operations of the Missouri River main stem system are in the process of being updated through the revision of the Corps' Master Water Control Manual and its associated Environmental Impact Statement. The flow-related tasks identified in the Biological Opinion could potentially be included in the Corps' preferred alternative under the Master Manual EIS in order to avoid pallid sturgeon impacts.

Within the upcoming year, the Corps, the USFWS, and other agencies and interested parties will be involved in determining the future operations of the main stem dams.

## **Nebraska Game and Parks Commission**

### **Instream Flow Council (IFC) Biennial 2000 International Meeting (Larry Hutchinson)**

The second biennial IFC meeting, held every even numbered year, occurred May 22 - 25, 2000 at Higgins Lake, MI.

It was preceded by the annual IFC Excom business meeting on May 20. Larry Hutchinson, who just completed his 2-year term as IFC Region 3 Director for north-central states, attended the Excom meeting and the following IFC conference. John Marshal (Ohio Department of Wildlife) assumes the position of Region 2 Director and Del Lobb (Missouri Department of Conservation) was elected as Region 2 Director-elect for the 2000-2002 term.

Major actions by the Excom included: Platte River Sturgeon, Sturgeon Chub, and Associated Species Habitat Research (Larry Hutchinson)

In 1999 an alliance of various NRD's, Irrigation and Power Districts, and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission entered an agreement to fund a 5-year research project on pallid sturgeon and sturgeon chub habitat and flow needs in the lower Platte River. The 14 member alliance of various Nebraska entities is called the Pallid Sturgeon and Sturgeon Chub Task Force.

The "Task Force" enlisted the aid of Dr. David Galat (University of Missouri), Doug Latka (U.S.A. Corps of Engineer, Pallid Sturgeon Recovery Team member), Steve Krentz (U.S.F.W.S., Pallid Sturgeon Recovery Team Leader), and Dr. Sheehan (So. Illinois University) to peer review Dr. Ed Peters 5-year sturgeon research proposal. During the May 18 afternoon meeting of the full Task Force, the 5-year research project proposed by Dr. Ed Peters to do pallid sturgeon and sturgeon chub studies was approved. Funding for the study will come from contributions from the various parties and from a Nebraska Environmental Trust Grant. This research project is an important component of a broader research study that includes shovelnose sturgeon and other associated fishes that is being funded by UNL and NGPC with Wallup-Breaux federal aid.

#### **A summary of major objectives of this 5-year lower Platte River project include:**

Document habitat use and species assemblages associated with sturgeon species

Document the phenology and relative abundance of larval recruitment of sturgeon and associated species

Determine how changes in river discharge influence habitat use by sturgeon

Document the catch of sturgeon by anglers

Develop educational materials and management recommendations for the sturgeon fishery in the lower Platte River.

Directed two IFC committees, funded by an \$84,000 federal aid grant, to complete their draft reports by the end of the year. The Methods Committee is preparing a document that provides appropriate instream flow methods for use in various project objectives. The Policy Committee is preparing a document that describes appropriate policies needed to guide sound instream flow

programs for public trust fishery resources. Both committees will meet in Alaska in September to complete their respective draft reports. A small "finishing" subcommittee will combine the two drafts into one document for peer review and IFC membership review before providing it to a technical editor before publication next year.

A Motion was approved to amend the IFC by-laws to provide for Emeritus Members (e.g. past members retired from state or provincial agencies), and Honorary Members (e.g. members nominated and approved because of professional contributions), and to restrict General Council members to state or provincial fish and game agency staff. The proposed by-law amendment will require a vote of all members at the next biennial meeting in 2002.

The technical program of the biennial conference included 13 presentations and a short workshop on a 2 Dimensional Hydraulic Model for stream habitat modeling by Terry Waddle (USGS).

**The following is a list of the presentations.**

Natural Flow Paradigm - J. David Allen, Univ. of Michigan.

A path for setting minimum conservation flows for rivers and stream at the regional scale - Mark Bain, Cornell University.

Delineation and characterization of river valley segments, or ecological units, in Michigan - Paul Seelbach, MI Dept. of Natural Resources.

MesoHABSIM-A Concept for application of instream flow models in river restoration planning - Piotr Parasiewicz.

Changes in a fishery resulting from a change to run-of-the-river from a peaking generating mode - Edward Rutherford, University of Michigan.

Applying bioenergetic principles to instream flow analysis - Paul Dey and Tom Annear, WY Game and Fish Department.

Effects of run-of-the-river hydroelectric generation and mandatory instream flows on a trout population in a high-gradient stream - Hal Beecher, WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife.

Options for modeling and managing stream temperature in the face of increasing water demands and minimum instream flows - Tammy Newcombe, Virginia Tech. University.

A recommended method to protect instream flows in Georgia - Chuck Coomer, Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Instream flow needs in Alberta - Allen Lock, Alberta Environmental Protection.

Water quantity planning tools in use in Montana? Opportunities and Challenges - Kathleen Williams, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

Incorporating instream flow protection into Vermont's water quality standards - Rod Wentworth, Vermont Dept. of Fish & Wildlife.

Gary Whelan (Michigan DNR) advanced to the office of IFC President for 2000-2002. Through mail ballots Rod Wentworth (Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife) was elected President-elect and Larry Hutchinson (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission) was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

Charter membership plaques were presented to state or provincial agencies (including Nebraska Game and Parks Commission) who were members at the 1st biennial IFC 1998 meeting in Denver, CO.

The next biennial IFC meeting will be in April or May, 2002 in Region 3 (Southeast).

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## **COLLEGE CORNER**

**University of Nebraska - Lincoln (Ed Peters)**

This is an excerpt from Cory Reade's thesis defense November 7, 2000.

With the increasing water demand in and adjacent to the Platte River, it is important to evaluate reproduction of the fish assemblage under the current conditions of the river. These data are the basis upon which the current and future fish community will be evaluated. From May to August of 1998 and 1999, 0.5 meter by 1.0 meter mouth opening drift nets with 0.6 mm mesh were used to collect larval fish and fish eggs at four sampling sites between Columbus, Nebraska and the Platte River mouth. to evaluate diel variation in the drift of fish, samples were collected at three-hour intervals over a 24-hour period, twice a month at Ashland, Nebraska.

Many taxa were not found in significantly different densities among sampling sites. Most taxa that were found in significantly different densities among sampling sites were in greater densities just above the mouth of the river. Cyprinids made up a large majority of fish larvae collected, with overall peak densities of larvae occurring in June of both years. Spawning appeared to be primarily affected by water temperature, and secondarily by runoff events. During the two years that this study was conducted, the river was under high flow conditions. Different timing and magnitude of spawning events would be expected during normal or low flow years, since the river would warm at a different rate than during high flow, and since lower peak discharges would also potentially affect spawning.

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## **ITEMS OF INTEREST**

### **SMALL FRY**

Steve Wilhelm has a new son, Ryan Guy, born June 3, a lunker at 8 lbs, 1 oz.

### **Focus on Christine Moffitt and Fisheries Professions**

Christine Moffitt, past president of the American Fisheries Society, was the focus of the cover story in the latest edition of Women in Natural Resources. The focus of the issue was "fisheries and aquatic ecology". I have a copy of the magazine if anyone is interested in reading it - Becky Latka

### **AFS Internet Site**

Catch up on the latest national AFS info or see what's happening in your local chapter at [www.fisheries.org](http://www.fisheries.org). There are links to publications, certification, policy statements, meetings and events, and jobs information. There is also a link to browse featured articles from the latest Fisheries magazine.

### **New Services Provided by AFS Headquarters**

AFS (Bethesda) is contracting with professionals to provide Web services with two aims:

- . Provide AFS units with Web and electronic services that are reasonable, professional, and consistent
- . Provide AFS parent society and units with consistent and integral information services

To that end, please note the following services that are available to the chapter (for a fee):

Webmaster - Includes all maintenance, updates, and production design service, based on \$50 / hour. POC Bob Rand (301) 897-8616, ext 231.

Web Hosting - \$100 / year for 5 megabytes of space. POC Laura Hutchcroft (301) 897-8616, ext 201.

Abstract Submission Program - Abstract submission via the web, specially adapted for AFS and easy to use. Allows you to publish abstracts on paper, CD, or online. \$200 for chapters (one-time charge for program) POC Betsy Fritz (301) 897-8616 ext 212

CD for Meeting Information - Program for formatting searchable abstracts and anything else you feel is important to include on the CD. \$200 (one-time fee). POC Betsy Fritz (see above)

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### 32nd Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Chapter of the AFS

February 13 - 14, 2001

Aksarben Aquarium

Gretna, Nebraska

\$10/\$5 Registration Fee / Register at door

### 4th International Symposium on Sturgeon

July 8 - 13, 2001

Oshkosh, Wisconsin

For info: <http://infolink.sutrgeousymposium.org/>

### 2001: A Missouri River Odyssey

June 24 - 27, 2001

Great Falls, Montana

Chris Hunter, Conference Chair (406) 444-3183

For info: <http://infolink.cr.usgs.gov/events/01/htm>

### 131st Annual Meeting of the AFS

August 19 - 23, 2001

Phoenix, Arizona

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### News items can be sent to

**Becky Latka**

**2509 S. 34th St.**

**Omaha NE 68105.**

**You may also phone (402) 221-4602 or FAX (402) 221-4886, or e-mail your news items  
Rebecca.J.Latka@nwo02.usace.army.mil**

**Items for the next newsletter should be received by April 15, 2001**

