

**Lake Michigan Fisheries Team  
Thursday, February 14, 2008  
Lakeshore Technical College  
Cleveland, WI**

**Draft Notes –prepared by Bill Horns**

[Note: This meeting was adjourned prematurely when LSTC closed the campus and evacuated the building.]

Present: Ron Preder, Chris Groth, Joe Jerich, Paul Peeters, Steve Fajfer, Sue Marcquenski, Scott Hansen, George Boronow, Pradeep Hirethota, Dave Rowe, Mike Donofrio, Bill Horns, Brad Eggold, Randy Schumacher, Al Blizel, Dave Giehtbrock (phone).

- 1. Review/revise agenda**
- 2. Review/approve meeting notes from December 6, 2007**
- 3. Brief updates**

Time was allowed for short updates and reminders of topics of interest.

- Annual report to LMC
  - This year the reports book will include chapters on whitefish (Scott), lake trout rehabilitation (Bill), fish health (Sue), cormorants (Paul), production problems/issues (Bill, Al, Dave), electronic reporting (Bliz), walleye and musky (Dave R), GB yellow perch (Tammie), sturgeon (Mike D), sport fishing effort and harvest (Brad), weir harvest (Scott), LM yellow perch (Pradeep), chubs (Tim K), nearshore rainbow (Steve), smelt (Steve), GB forage trawling (Paul?), and predation on stocked salmonines (Brad?).
- VHS and microbes project
- GLFWRA
- Invasive species rule
- Seeforellen brood stock?
- Creel survey vehicle signs
- Lake-wide forage survey report
- Net pen policy
- February 27 NRB briefing re commercial fishing harvest limits
- Charter fishing reporting
  - Paul and Bliz will draft a letter to charter captains for LE review.
- LMTC meeting
- 2/15/08 meeting of WF/GLFSC

- 4. Salmon and trout production issues/concerns in 2008**

Background. 1. Brown trout. 180,000 yearling brown trout will be available from Wild Rose for stocking this spring, not 100,000 as previously projected. Dave proposed to allocate the additional 80,000 fish per existing Wild Rose brown trout quotas on a percentage basis. 2. Coho. Brad circulated a coho stocking plan calling for stocking NER with 54,436 yearlings and 161,564 fingerlings and stocking SER with 105,564 yearlings and 146,007 fingerlings.

Action. The LMFT supports both Dave's and Brad's proposals. Note that all 54,436 yearling coho slated for NER will go to the Kewaunee River.

- 5. Lake trout rehabilitation plan negotiations**

Background. I think we are getting close to resolution of this. The following points summarize what I believed the LMC had agreed to in a January meeting. I asked for concurrence on these points.

- For 2008, USFWS will stock fish now in production, pursuant to the latest draft Implementation Strategy. I think someone said the total number will fall short of that called for by the Strategy.
- During 2008 the Red Flags Group will develop a stocking-reduction protocol for consideration by the LMC. That protocol will include a set of criteria and a response. The criteria will be the measured values of chinook growth, alewife abundance, or whatever that would be of sufficient concern to warrant a stocking cut. The response would be the cuts that agencies would be obliged to make in stocking of all salmonine species, including lake trout, if the criteria are met. In other words, the logical form of the protocol will be something like, "If data show X, Y, and Z, we will reduce stocking by A, B, and C."
- LMC consensus about the stocking reduction protocol will be required in order to pursue the Strategy after 2008.
- Assuming we reach consensus about the stocking-reduction protocol, consensus of the LMC will be required to continue the Strategy after 2015 in any of three targeted rehabilitation areas where the average CPUE in LWAP spring assessments does not exceed 25 lake trout/1000 feet of graded mesh. We spoke of three targeted rehab areas: north, mid-lake, and south. For the north area, did we mean MM/3 or all of the north end?
- The Strategy will expire in 2020.
- We will confer with our agencies and, if authorized to do so, commit to the foregoing terms in a conference call on February 15.

Action. The LMFT endorsed these points.

## **6. Fish health issues**

Background. With chinook size-at-age down, BKD discovered in Seeforellens, high incidence of furunculosis in Besadny coho, lymphsarcoma discovered in northern pike, and VHS at large in the lake, a good discussion of fish health issues would be timely.

Action. Sue led a discussion of fish health issues on Lake Michigan.

## **7. Zone 3 whitefish**

Background. I have drafted a response to Glenn Seger regarding his request for consideration of rule changes.

Action. No discussion.

## **8. Minimum catch rule**

Background. We are scheduled to request approval of hearings on revisions to the minimum catch rule at the April NRB meeting, so we need to discuss options and develop a rule-change proposal. Legislation has been introduced to remove our ability to use harvest requirements in annual commercial fishing license renewals

Action. We had a very brief discussion of the issue.

## **9. Review of LMFT charge and procedures**

Background. 1) The FM Board has formalized new guidance regarding standing teams and task forces. 2) Brad has raised some points about meeting notes.

Action. No discussion.

## **10. Manitowoc River streamside sturgeon rearing facility**

Background. The Manitowoc River SRF is imposing unexpected problems and consuming unacceptable amounts of staff time. The facility has been deployed on the Manitowoc River, because preferred locations on the Branch River have not been allowed by NER because they would arguably violate

WPDES standards. George Boronow asked the LMFT to review the problem and suggest a course of action for consideration by the FM Board.

Action. The LMFT recommends that Brad, Paul, and Bill prepare a recommendation with the following elements: 1) A recommendation that we suspend streamside rearing on the Manitowoc system in 2008. 2) A list of options. 3) A recommendation that the issue be raised to Todd Ambs for review, based on an alternative reading of the rules pertaining to WPDES permits.

#### **11. Yellow perch trap netting in Green Bay**

Background. Dennis Hickey has inquired about using small-mesh trap nets for yellow perch in Green Bay.

Action. Chris Groth reported that this would require a change to the Administrative Code.

#### **12. Quota year**

Background. Mark Maricque has asked the Department to consider changing the commercial fishing license year from July-June to Jan-Dec or April-March. The LM Commercial Fishing Board may endorse that request

Action. Discussion.

#### **13. Next meeting date and location**

April 16, Lakeshore Technical College.