

**Fish Chiefs Meeting  
Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference  
Madison, Wisconsin  
December 10, 2007**

*Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia* – Follow up discussions to that morning’s VHS informational session. There was general consensus on these follow up activities:

- Develop a compendium of fish movement regulations
  - The Great Lakes Fishery Commission agreed to provide staffing to help pull this together. WI, NY, MI, MN, IN, ON, SD, GLIFWC, and ND agreed to provide a representative to help with the effort and the group may meet in March 2008. Joe Morris, North Central Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC) offered to host the meeting.
  - The preferred format is NOT by jurisdiction, but instead by categories that would be helpful to users such as bait type, user (aquaculture, angler, minnow dealer), or transmission vector. Hopefully the data can be stored in a database that would allow sorting as needed.
- Coordinate and prioritize VHS Research
  - There is a 2 day workshop being planned for May/June, 2008 by the International Joint Commission (IJC) and US Geological Survey (USGS). This would be a good opportunity to develop priorities and work/grant management.
  - IJC, GLFC, OMNR, and USGS will organize (likely a conference call in the near future) and contact the Fish Chiefs for needed staffing and resources.
- Coordinate outreach and education efforts
  - Ask NCRAC to compile VHS related links and information on their Web site hopefully with USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) support. Need to check with Dr. Joe Morris about doing this.

*Northeast Fisheries Administration Association* – Doug Stang, NY reported that this group started in 1997 or so, but it took awhile to get going. They have a Chair and Vice-Chair, one face-to-face meeting each year at the Northeast meeting; and three to four conference calls each year. Having a structure and meetings helped the group remain active. They now have several technical subcommittees handling specific tasks/issues. Some examples of tasks are regional fish health testing plan; coordinating interstate State Wildlife Grants (SWG); and projects and pooling of SWG funds from neighboring states. Although we are not ready to start a formal Midwest Group, there was a consensus to repeat a fish chief’s meeting at the 2008 Midwest in Columbus. Mike Staggs, WI will contact Ray Petering from Ohio DNR and ask him to schedule such a meeting.

National Fish Habitat Initiative Glacial Lakes Partnership: Ron Payer, MN reported that Minnesota DNR is paying for a coordinator and trying to prepare an application for full partnership status. Mike Oetker, USFWS presented an overview of the five (5) emerging NFHI partnerships in Midwest area (see map).

AFWA Update – Ron Regan, AFWA – AFWA is tracking a bill that would exempt small boats from pending EPA “ballast water” discharge permits. Also ongoing is development of a fish health plan with a bill that provides indemnification and an advisory board. The National Fish Habitat Initiative Board is trying to find sponsors for federal legislation to support NFHI, and has designated four (4) formal partnerships to date including the Midwest Driftless Area partnership. NFHI Board will hire a communication specialist. The NFHI Board is asking \$12K/year for three (3) years to support the initiative. A letter has been sent to Directors asking for

contributions. The AFWA Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee is creating a marine subcommittee.

AFWA Science and Research Committee – Amber Pairis is looking for a regional fish chief representative on committee. Mike Staggs, WI will e-mail the request to the chiefs.

USFWS – ESA status reviews – short-jaw cisco, TJ Miller, USFWS. USGS has completed report and formed a study group to look at results and develop extinction risk model. Expecting decision during calendar year 2008 – fall or later.