

Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum

Cleveland, WI

April 5, 2014

Meeting Notes

8:00 Registration and refreshments

8:30 Introductions

Phil Moy stepping down as chair and Titus Seilheimer new chair.
Introductions around the room.

8:45 Coded Wire Tag Update (Eggold) – Video of head cutting/stocking issues/CWT in stocking allocation; Salmon Ambassadors (Seilheimer)

- Overview of the CWT program in Wisconsin and some initial tag returns. Age 1+ chinook salmon caught by Wisconsin anglers have been about 55% wild since the OTC/CWT program began in 2007. Results from 2013 revealed a slightly higher level at 65%. Results also indicate that WI anglers are catching fish stocked from all agencies in Lake Michigan and some stocking locations in Lake Huron. Distribution of stocked fish based on the new formula. Still some concern/discussion over the formula and why it is strongly influenced by the fall fishery. Predator Prey ratio was discussed as a new way to determine stocking levels.
- Consensus reached to have Forum Chair send a letter to the USFWS director in support of continued/base funding for the Great Lakes Mass Marking Program.
- Chuck Bronte provided answers to some questions about the Mass Marking program.
- Introduction to Salmon Ambassador program from MI Sea Grant. Described what it is and how the data can be used to supplement the CWT, creel, and charter reporting.
- Talk at future forum meeting on predator-prey ratio, if adopted. How it works (how well do the alewife and salmon models work?), how the analysis was done on past stocking cuts.

10:15 **Break**

10:30 Deep water fish assessment and chub discussion (DNR/Boyarski)

- USGS trends in preyfish show in general low numbers of alewives, bloater chubs and smelt. Small chubs are not turning up in assessments.
- Dressedid mussels are a big problem
- Commercial fishers catching in deeper water. Doing well at 500 ft. Evidence from catch and USGS support shift to deeper water.
- Automated quota was probably rolled out too quickly and DNR will be coming back with summer with new revised rule.
- Discussion of how automated quota would work. Acoustic survey would be used to set quota but what about the shift to deeper waters? Need more work to get it going. Commercial fishers

not sure there is a need because not a lot of fishing going on now and don't want it to go too low. DNR wants to protect recovery, if that starts happening.

- Gary Seger – gear efficiency is an issue because increased water clarity lets them see the nets and avoid.
- Market forces are important factor in how much chubs are targeted. More of a novelty species now because less available and are selling for higher prices.

11:15 Fish stocking and net pens (Boyarski)

- Presentation on experiences in other states (Michigan, New York). Results from other agencies have been mixed with some places showing higher survival while other areas showing no effect or lower survival with net pens. While there appears to be support for them based on expectations of how they would benefit fish (e.g. larger when stocked, better imprint on river, and protection from predation), this is not always and clearly supported by the evidence. Tracking success is difficult and would cost money to do right. Where would the money and personnel come from? Seems like a good opportunity for a M.Sc. project if some funding could be brought in.
- Some confusion over what's going to happen next and how permitting will work. Need to clarify the process in a single sheet fact sheet or something? Wisconsin DNR will be formalizing the whole process later this fall.

12:00 **Lunch**

1:00 Lake whitefish sport harvest in Green Bay (Hansen)

- Overview of sport harvest of whitefish on the ice.
- Concern about harvest by guided trips and how well those catches are being or not being reported via creel.
- Scott showed some results of DNR guide questionnaire but return rate has not been good, especially from some of the key/busy guides.
- Use our current license system ALIS to collect guide license information
- Slow growth lately in GB whitefish. Doing better with shift to gobies?
- Consensus decision that Forum chair should submit a letter to Secretary Stepp about the need to implement the fishing guide reporting requirements currently in the code. This in reference to form 9400-019 and Wis Stats 29.512

2:00 **Break**

2:15 GLFC Yellow Perch Meeting Highlights (DNR/Sea Grant Seilheimer)

- Titus gave a brief summary of GLFC Lake Michigan Committee's yellow perch summit in Chicago which took place on March 22, 2014.
- Minimal discussion of issue by forum. Stocking question raised?

2:30 Lake Michigan Integrated Fish Management Plan update (Eggold)

- The LMIFMP was not ready to present to the Forum but Dave Boyarski asked the Forum about how to handle the roll out of the plan to the public.

- The Forum members thought that 3 listening sessions (south, mid and north) from July 1 to August 31 would be a good idea to get public input. These sessions would all be the same and would include a brief presentation either orally or via posters with the main point focused on getting comments from stakeholders.
- The Forum agreed that they would like to meet in mid-September to look at the summary of comments and provide input and direction into the final draft of the plan which is slated for December 2014.
- In addition, Dave told the Forum members that they should be commenting on the plan along with their groups and members during the comment period (July 1 through August 31)

3:30 Open floor/future issues

- Next meeting will be sometime in September to specifically review the comments on the LMIFMP. Based on the response the group may decide to hold another LMFF meeting in October – December time frame.

4:00 **Adjourn**

Attendance at LMFF meeting – April 5, 2014

Stakeholders

Wayne Utterstedt
 Brian Risinger
 Richard Jones
 Dennis Hickey
 James Hirt
 Steven Roach
 Jonathan Hemb
 Jerry Fetterer
 Chuck Bronte
 John Hanson
 Ed Krueger
 Paul Schwengel
 Gary Seger
 Chuck Weier
 John Janssen
 Phil Moy
 Henry Koltz
 Scott Haberman
 Duane Nadolski
 Charlie Henricksen
 Lee Haasch
 Dr. Patrick Forsythe
 Jake Gajewski
 Bob Wincek

Tom Kocourek

DNR Staff

Brad Eggold

Mike Donofrio

Dave Boyarski

Randy Schumacher

Scott Hansen

WI Sea Grant

Titus Seilheimer