

Wisconsin Conservation Congress Trout Committee Meeting Minutes



ORDER OF BUSINESS	10 October 2019	1900-2015 hrs.	Teleconference
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I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY	Chairman Vanden Bloomen at 1900 hours
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B. ROLL CALL

ATTENDEES	Dennis Vanden Bloomen, Chair (Eau Claire), Jim Wierzba, Vice Chair , (Ozaukee), Dale Ebert (Florence), Bob Haase (Fond du Lac), Dave Ninneman (Outagamie), Maurice Amundson (Monroe), Scott Pitta (Adams), Robert Tracyk (Iron), Travis Bruce (Buffalo), Michael Hranicka (Sheboygan), Martin Sands (Walworth), David Baron (Richland), John Rennpferd (Milwaukee)
EXCUSED	Roger Roehl (Rusk), George Korn (Menominee), Larry Damman (Washburn), Jacob Macholl (Polk), Andrew Novak (Crawford), Nathaniel Brown (Taylor),
UNEXCUSED	
GUESTS	Joanna Griffin (DNR Fisheries), Matthew Mitro (DNR Office of Applied Science)

C. AGENDA APPROVAL/REPAIR

DISCUSSION	No additions or deletions to agenda
ACTION	Approved

D. REVIEW COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

DISCUSSION	No changes brought forward
ACTION	Approved

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

DISCUSSION	none
ACTION	

II. INFORMATION & ACTION ITEMS

A. REDUCE BROOK TROUT SIZE ON ELVOY CREEK IN VILAS AND FOREST COUNTIES (64-01-19)

LINDA LEHMAN

DISCUSSION	<p>Resolution: The brook trout size limit on Elvoy Creek in Vilas and Forest Counties was recently raised to 10 inches on the entire creek. There are too many slightly undersized brook trout in the lower portion that die to hook mortality and the upper portion of the creek are shallow and narrow and rarely produce a brook trout of 10 inches. Do you favor reducing the size limit on the brook trout in Elvoy Creek in Vilas and Forest County from 10 inches to 8 inches? Vote in Vilas County 33 pass, 15 no. Resolution forwarded to WCC Trout Committee.</p> <p><u>DNR Response:</u> Recently changed this regulation to a 10-inch minimum when the DNR revamped</p>
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	<p>the trout regulations in 2016. For regulation simplicity all of the streams in Forest and Florence Counties went to an 8²/₃ bag regulation (yellow). However, special regulations were placed on the top system in each county that also has best potential for quality sized trout. Brule Creek-Elvoy Creek system in Forest County has a special regulation. The previous regulation for this stream was an 8" minimum size limit for brook trout and a 12" minimum size limit for brown trout. Brook Trout abundance decreased by 27% from 2008 to 2011, mostly in the age 0 and age 1 fish. In 2016, the intent was to make the regulation more restrictive for brook trout and less restrictive for brown trout. Increasing the minimum length limit on brook trout should have positive impacts on brook trout abundance and size structure, which would be a big step in managing this stream to its potential as a quality brook trout stream. The brown trout population in Brule Creek is expanding, likely at the expense of the brook trout population. Reducing the minimum length limit on brown trout in this system would allow for increased harvest opportunity and would allow for some control on the expanding brown trout population.</p> <p>Survey results from Elvoy Creek in 2017, show that the regulation is working as intended as brook trout size structure has increased.</p> <p>The upstream portion of the stream, mentioned in the resolution does not contain as many large trout, but it also receives less angler pressure because the stream is much smaller. Before the current regulations were put in place, the upstream portion was managed under a more liberal regulation (7" minimum size). The 10-inch minimum length limit for all trout keeps regulations simple on the entire system while fulfilling management goals of improving brook trout abundance and size structure and decreasing brown trout abundance.</p> <p>The DNR will continue to evaluate this regulation and make changes as appropriate.</p> <p>Discussion: Agreement on the need to keep the regulations on this stream the same for all portions of the stream.</p>
ACTION	MB M Anderson, SB B Haase to Accept and forward the Resolution. Motion failed. Will not be forwarded to DLC.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Chair Vanden Bloomen	By 1 Nov send letter to author

B. Department Information & Updates
1. Trout Management Plan Update

DISCUSSION	<p>Presentation by Joanna Griffin:</p> <p>We began the trout management plan process in late 2017 when we formed a stakeholder team. The stakeholder team was made up of anglers, land-owners, non-consumptive users, Wisconsin Conservation Congress members, business owner or tourism representatives, and members at large for each district. Additional statewide members included representation from tribal nations, youth fishing organizations, agriculture, USDA APHIS WS, Natural Resources Board, and lake trout anglers.</p> <p>DNR staff met twice with the stakeholder team, once in January 2018 and a second time in March. The DNR trout team compiled all the materials and feedback from the stakeholders and then gathered additional information.</p> <p>The DNR trout team drafted a management plan with input from the stakeholder team and other DNR staff.</p> <p>We then held a public review period from May 15-July 5.</p> <p>Slide #2 This is the first trout management plan for the DNR. The purpose of the document is to</p>
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- Provide direction for inland trout management in Wisconsin
- Guide direction of resources
- Identify constraints
- Determine location and prioritization of where work should be done
- Guide DNR trout team charges and priorities
- Provide an internal and external communication tool

Slide #3--This plan covers brook trout, brown trout, rainbow trout and lake trout in inland lakes, ponds and streams and Tributaries of the Great Lakes, upstream from impassable barriers

This plan will guide the major fisheries management program activities: surveys and sampling, habitat projects, trout stocking, trout fishing regulations and land management and acquisition.

Water quality and watershed protection and improvement management activities are critical for trout. We also recognize the need for continued efforts in trout angler recruitment and retention. These programs and policies are not directly under fisheries management authority. However, collaboration with other programs will be essential in the implementation of this plan.

This is a high level plan. For example, It does not go into details about specific regulations.

Slide #4--**Goal 1** - Protect, enhance, and restore sustainable cold-water aquatic habitats and ecosystems.

Goal 2 - Protect, develop, enhance, and restore trout populations and trout angling opportunities for the diverse preferences and needs of our participants

Goal 3 – Collect, develop and use the best science to guide trout management decisions

Goal 4 – Maintain and expand partnerships and engage diverse anglers, stakeholders, and the general public on trout management and angling opportunities

Slide #9--We compiled all the comments received and categorized them into the following topics:

Angler participation, angler preferences, Beaver management/nuisance species, Climate change/adaptations, Editorial, Education/outreach/partnerships, Habitat/access, policy/funding, regulations, research, stocking, water quality/quantity, and wild/native trout. We summarized comments and responses. Some comments pointed out errors, missing information or confusing text. We addressed these in the edits as much as possible. Some comments either supported or did not support existing parts of the plan. In those cases, the pages and specific areas of the plan were described. The comments were not surprising and we did not find that major changes were necessary.

The DNR trout team will begin to implement the plan as soon as it has been approved. In the future, the Fisheries Policy Management Team will review this plan as part of the biennial work planning process. Fisheries Management will update this plan with stakeholder input if priorities change due to external factors or emerging issues.

This was on the NRB agenda for September and was removed (due to concerns from the NRB). We expect it to be on the agenda at the October NRB meeting.

ACTION	Send letters of support to NRB before October meeting	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

2. Trout Program Updates

DISCUSSION	Hiring three (3) trout habitat specialists-- Two in Black River Falls and one in Fitchburg Interviews hopefully in late October
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	<p>New operation supervisors – Fitchburg and Black River Falls Habitat team – habitat important, mechanisms may change, more partnerships, how we deal with equipment</p> <p>Discontinued trout stamp contest and physical trout stamp. Trout Unlimited is holding a contest.</p>	
ACTION		
	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

3. TROUT RESEARCH UPDATES

	<p>Matthew Mittro presentation and links</p> <p>https://rdcu.be/bMmX1 This is a link to the climate change/trout paper in the journal Hydrobiologia. The link goes to a read-only page.</p> <p>https://www.tu.org/science/science-engagement/science-synthesis/driftless-science-review/ This is a link to the Driftless Science Review (scroll down and look for a PDF link).</p> <p>And here is a link to the podcast from the week of October 6, 2019 https://dnr.wi.gov/social/podcast.html The title of the podcast is “What happens when the fish just can’t live here – off the record podcast”.</p> <p>New study on effects of beaver dam/impoundments and cold water streams to be conducted in the next few years.</p>	
DISCUSSION		
ACON	Information only....	
	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	

4. Trout Law Enforcement Update

DISCUSSION	No report/update
ACTION	
	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE

III. MEMBERS MATTERS

	<p>Dale E: NE bag limit complaints. Increase 8” x3 to 8”x5, Maurice: disappointed DVB letter not the \$15 raise, DLC and 4-day rates in other states are much higher Bob H: high water is also due to climate change Jim W: what can DNR do to update the Trout Management Plan? Joanna G.--Update every 2 years and report to public. Comment and support the plan to the NRB... John R.---priority list of streams that will have a better chance to survive (that is in the Trout Management Plan). Water monitoring results from the TU Chapters. Mike H.—broaden where Trout Stamp increases monies can go. Great Lakes stamp is for stocking not habitat restoration works.</p>	
DISCUSSION		

	Issue: Set the date for the 2019 Trout Committee meeting. Allow the majority of the members to plan schedules accordingly. Possible Saturday dates (15 or 22 August). Keep location in Stevens Point/Wausau area. Check TU camp dates as possible conflict.
ACTION	Poll the committee members for best date for 2020 meeting by Chair.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED	2014 hours MB Maurice A, SB Bob H.
SUBMITTED BY	D. Vanden Bloomen, Chair
DATE	10 October 2019