

## **Centrarchid Technical Committee**

North Central Division of the American Fisheries Society

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Chair Ed Braun opened the 9<sup>th</sup> CTC mid-year meeting on July 29, 2003.

Five presentations were made: Evaluation of limited aquatic vegetation restoration in two small Iowa lakes upon removal of grass carp, Kay Hill, IA DNR; Update on the development of Minnesota's bluegill regulation toolbox, Cindy Tomcko, MN DNR; IDNR permits for aquatic plant control: summary of more restrictive plant removal regulations, Ed Braun, IN DNR; Bluegill growth indices update – a request for data to develop standard relative growth indices for bluegill, Keith Hurley, NE GPC; and Estimating crappie population size, mortality, exploitation, trap-net catchability and temporal variation of catch, Mike McInerney, MN DNR.

The business meeting was conducted on July 30, 2003 with 10 members in attendance.

Black bass database: Fisheries departments for all 50 states were contacted. Surveys were returned from 42 states, which will be compiled and published by Craig Paukert and Mike McInerney.

Lepomis symposium update: Manuscripts have been reviewed and have return dates in August. The symposium will be published in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management (NAJFM).

CTC webpage: The committee webpage is accessed through the division webpage. Keith Hurley agreed to post CTC reports and other pertinent material on the webpage. Thank you, Keith!

Nominations: Eric Weimer, committee representative of the North/South Dakota student chapter, will chair the committee when Ed Braun steps down at the Midwest meeting.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Posters: Because of the popularity of the largemouth bass and bluegill posters, committee members will gauge interest in purchasing reprinted posters by aquatic education departments of the states in the North Central division, rather than creating new crappie and smallmouth bass posters. Mike McInerney will contact Steve Fischer who handled the original production of these posters for advise. Thanks Mike.

Midwest Fish and Wildlife conference: The 2004 conference will take place in Kansas City this year. The deadline for paper submission has been extended and committee reps.

should encourage people to submit. Joe Bonneau will reserve a meeting room. Thanks Joe.

Updates on states' centrarchid management/research: NE – Bluegill grow well in the Sandhill lakes, but do best when shad are absent. Shad are apparently the main beneficiaries of automatic feeding programs, based on surveys using rotenone-laced feed. WI – The state is starting to standardize lake surveys. In regard to bluegill regulations, Wisconsin has a 20 bag aggregate limit for bluegill and other sunfish, yellow perch, and crappies. SD/ND – 45 bluegill > 200mm were tagged. In winter these bluegill were usually tracked in 5-8 ft. water, in heavy vegetation. In summer they were in open water, where zooplankton densities were high. IA – There is an ongoing study of the relationship of bluegill and largemouth bass to lake characteristics and water quality. In regard to renovations, most had a poor cost/benefit ratio and were not used in IA's lakes. MO – A study of bluegill management documented that only 1/3 of MO's lakes produced 8" bluegills. These lakes were characterized by a lack of shad and carp, abundant largemouth bass (>120 LMB/electrofishing hr.), a watershed ration of < 20:1, and abundant aquatic vegetation, i.e., vegetation had not been decimated by grass or common carp. Most of the high quality lakes had a surprisingly high biomass of bluegill, going against the commonly accepted idea that only low density bluegill populations were of high quality. Lakes with 8" bluegills present were the only lakes where regulations (5 bag, 9" limit; 5 bag, 8" limit, C&R) could be used. It would be difficult to tell if regulations were effective, as regulations were only applied to high quality bluegill populations. Bluegill regulations were evaluated by sampling large bluegill, best done at night by electroshocking during the first peak of spawning; sampling later spawnings did not produce large bluegill. C&R lakes had high fishing pressures, > 200 hrs/acre and tended to attract fly fisherman and older anglers. MO has tried to restore aquatic vegetation by killing grass carp and replacing curly-leaf pondweed and southern naiad with water lily and spatterdock. IN – The 18", 2 largemouth bass bag study field work has been completed. In 1 lake where fishing pressure increased from 20 to 200 hrs/acre when a public access was added, Most anglers practiced catch and release. Bass anglers encouraged any angler who attempted to keep a bass to release it resulting in negligible harvest. A quality LMB population has been maintained, and bluegill size structure was improving.