

NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

## Walleye Technical Committee

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### **2009 Winter Business Meeting Minutes**

*70<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, Springfield, IL  
December 6, 2009, Springfield Hilton, Vista 6*

1. Chair-elect VanDeHey called the meeting to order at 1:10pm. Introductions of the 13 members present were made.
2. Chair-elect VanDeHey added a request from the 2010 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference Committee to the agenda items under new business. The agenda with the addition of request item was approved by the membership.

#### **Old Business**

3. **Presentation of the Sander travel awards:** Jason DeBoer (University of Nebraska—Lincoln) and Jordan Allison (Grand Valley State University, Michigan) were presented with the travel awards to the 2009 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference. Jason and Jordan were each given \$100 from the WTC as well as Jordan received a matching \$100 from the Michigan state chapters. Both students are conducting research on bottlenecks affecting walleye recruitment in their respective states.
4. **Approval of the 2009 summer meeting minutes:** Jason Goeckler moved to approve the minutes, no objections were made, motion passed.
5. **State reports:**

**Iowa:** Randy Schultz reports that the state is working very closely with the Army Corps of Engineers to minimize losses of walleye at reservoirs, especially at Rathbun reservoir.

**Kansas:** Jason Goeckler reports that a publication on recruitment overfishing of walleye is in the works in conjunction with Mike Quist (Iowa State University). The state is also working on evaluation of triploid saugeye survivability research.

**Wisconsin:** No report.

**Nebraska** (submitted by Daryl Bauer): Things are looking up in many Nebraska reservoirs as water levels have improved dramatically in the past couple of years. Walleye anglers will likely find some tough fishing in all the newly flooded habitat, but we will benefit from higher water levels in a few years. Walleye fishing at Merritt Reservoir in north-central Nebraska was excellent this year, as good as it has been in several years. We had a high density of walleyes in Merritt last fall and then a significant winter die-off of alewives, the primary prey species in Merritt. That was a prescription for great walleye fishing and that good fishing lasted through most of the summer. We have completed VHS testing of wild fish throughout the state. At this

point all of Nebraska is VHS-free and we hope to keep it that way. We have several walleye research projects on-going. Most of that work is being done by graduate students at both the University of Nebraska—Lincoln and the University of Nebraska—Kearney. Some of that work has been shared with the Walleye Technical Committee already and we should see more of that in the future.

**Illinois:** No report.

**South Dakota:** Matt Ward reported that walleye raised in lined ponds at Blue Dog Hatchery have similar survival to those raised in un-lined ponds. However, the fish were larger thus increasing production. Matt presented this research at the conference. Justin VanDeHey added that the state is evaluating stocking success and stocking density of OTC marked yellow perch. The OTC markings were good; however it will take a few years to evaluate if the stockings actually contribute to a year-class. Other on-going research includes impacts of gizzard shad and rainbow smelt in reservoirs and glacial lakes, smallmouth bass and walleye competition, and smallmouth bass and yellow perch interactions.

**North Dakota (submitted by Jeff Hendrickson):** North Dakota continues to use OTC marking as a means of determining stocking success and efficiency. In 2009, stocking success and natural reproduction of walleye were very good statewide. Devils Lake led the way with a catch rate of 107/net night in 6x125x1/2 inch mesh gill nets, which was all natural reproduction. This catch rate was approximately six times higher than the long-term average. Walleye fishing was phenomenal in the Missouri River below Lake Sakakawea and that portion of Lake Oahe in North Dakota. Quantity and quality were both very good. Our biologists annually evaluate the need for specific length regulations, such as a “one-over” type of maximum length limit, or a “slot limit”. Over time, the conclusion has generally been the same: such regulations are not biologically necessary to protect the stocks for reproductive purposes. However, some anglers still request length-based harvest regulations for social reasons (e.g., to catch more big fish). This fall, we utilized data from our creel surveys and long-term tagging dataset to evaluate whether a one-over limit would enhance fishing quality. During the months of May-August, anglers on the Missouri River and Lake Oahe harvested approximately 300,000 walleye. Of that total, about 37,000 were greater than 20 inches, and 8,000 were greater than 22 inches.

If a one-over 20 inches regulation had been in place this summer, anglers would have had to release about 6,600 of the fish over 20 inches. Based on our tagging data for multiple returns, about 21%, or 1,400, of those fish would be re-caught at some point in time by another angler. The other 5,200 would likely die of natural causes and never be caught again.

If a one-over 22 inches regulation had been in place, anglers would have had to release about 650 walleye, with about 140 of those eventually caught again.

None of the interviewed parties had more than one fish per angler greater than 24 inches, so any larger limits would have been completely ineffective.

During the same survey, anglers voluntarily released 77,000 walleye, many of which were over 20 inches.

**Indiana (submitted by Sandy Clark-Kolaks):** Sandy reports that their fall continuing education workshop featured a presentation by Mark Mychreest of the Michigan DNR, who shared research and techniques presented at the 2009 Michigan AFS meeting. The hands on workshop described methods for the collection, preparation, and reading of walleye fin rays. Previous work conducted by Michigan DNR on known-age walleye fin rays was used to determine aging accuracy between readers. The purpose of this effort were to investigate growth patterns that may occur in natural settings, create a catalog of known-age fish aging structures to use as a staff

tutorial and support the use of walleye fin rays as a method to determine ages of wild fish. The workshop was informative and helpful and DNR fisheries biologists are already putting the new techniques to use. Hopefully this will lead to fewer walleye being sacrificed.

**Michigan** (submitted by Patrick Hanchin): Pat reports that Michigan is still dealing with VHS issues. Only stocking walleyes in inland lakes that are isolated from other waterbodies, or that have a connection to the Great Lakes. No walleye stocking in Lake Superior drainage at all. Policy will likely not change until there is a rapid VHS test, or until disinfection techniques are proved effective. Number of walleye stocked is approximately 25% of pre-VHS years. Michigan DNR instituted a change in recreational fishing regulations for the walleye (reduced bag limit and shortened season) on an inland lake (Mullett) in response to a combination of low walleye abundance, tribal harvest declaration (50% of safe harvest), and the Parties' desire to maintain self-sustaining walleye populations. Also, the state is being sued by a Saginaw Bay (Lake Huron) commercial fisher for the right to harvest walleyes.

**6. Financial Report** (submitted by Donna Muhm):

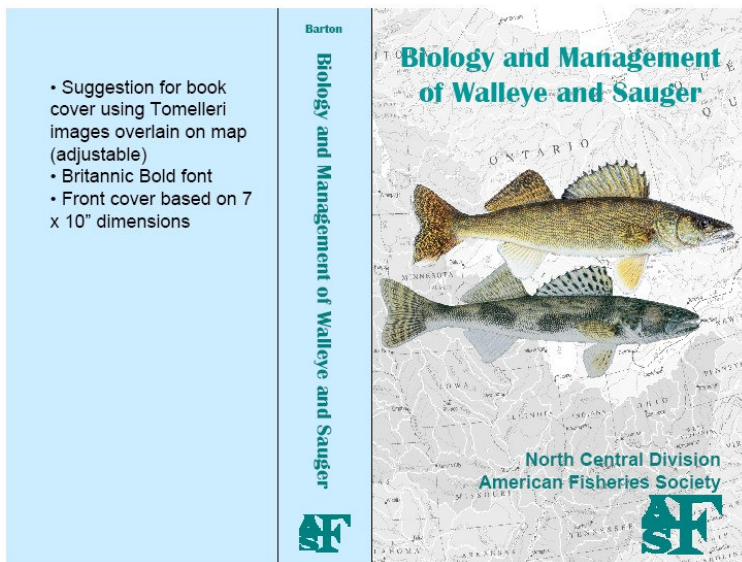
<b>WTC FINANCIAL REPORT</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>
<b>Beginning Balance, December 1, 2009</b>			<b>\$28,435.07</b>
<b>Monthly Interest Earned July 2009 – December 2009</b>	<b>\$128.13</b>		
<b>Income from Summer meeting 2009</b>	<b>\$1,475.00</b>		
<b>Expenses from Summer meeting 2009</b>		<b>\$1,426.72</b>	
<b>Disbursement to Bruce Barton, managing editor, synopsis</b>		<b>\$5,000.00</b>	
<b>Synopsis Donations: Indiana Chapter</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>		
<b>Ending Balance as of July 1, 2009</b>			<b>\$24,111.48</b>

**7. Walleye Synopsis Update** (submitted by Patrick Hanchin, steering committee chair):

**Update on the "Biology and Management of Walleye and Sauger"**

For those that are not aware of the project, the Walleye Technical Committee (WTC) is producing a book entitled "The Biology and Management of Walleye and Sauger" that will be published by the American Fisheries Society Books Department. We have contracted Dr. Bruce Barton to oversee completion of the manuscript, who has been working diligently over the past 1.5 years with a collection of great authors and editors. First drafts for several chapters have been submitted and a few have been reviewed. A few drafts are tardy, which is understandable when many of us are being asked to do more with less. Our Dec 31, 2009 deadline for completing the manuscript is fast approaching, but I do not envision us being too tardy in that regard. Bruce and I agree that a good product arriving a little late will be superior to an on-time product that was rushed through. We are still soliciting editors for a few chapters, so let Bruce (bbarton@xplornet.com) know of your interest and area of expertise, and he will let you know if we can use the help.

I recently sent four choices for book covers to the WTC email list. Thanks to all that replied. The winning cover design is below (by Bruce Barton), which utilizes Joseph Tomelleri's artwork. Also thanks to Scott Zoellick, who offered his artwork "Heads or tails" to us at a bargain price, which was a close second place in votes.



The book has an estimated production cost of \$30,000, of which the WTC is responsible for one half (\$15,000). Compensation for the managing editor is \$20,000, so our fundraising goal is \$35,000. To date, we have commitments for \$33,950, though only \$27,950 has been secured. Thus, we are still making funding requests to cover the remaining balance of our goal. If you are interested in assisting in any way, please contact Patrick Hanchin ([hanchinp@michigan.gov](mailto:hanchinp@michigan.gov)).

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***Biology and Management of Walleye and Sauger***  
Book Chapter Update — 3 December 2009

Chapter 1: Introduction – This will be completed after others have finished drafts and author had a chance to look through them for which to base his introduction for the book.

Chapter 2: Systematics of Percidae – A second draft from the author was sent out to two knowledgeable reviewers in the fish systematics field; one has responded so far and his initial comments have gone back to author – more to come. This chapter is a complex one still needs some organizational work along with a summary of Percidae phylogeny based on the author's research findings, which have not been previously published.

Chapter 3: Molecular Systematics and Hybridization – Most of the draft has been completed by lead author, but still waiting on input from co-author. This chapter will use the Tomelleri digital images obtained for use with permission from the artist (which presumably will also be used for the cover).

Chapter 4: Population Genetics and Distribution – Significant portions are completed, but lead author has not had enough chance to dedicate significant time to complete; author plans to devote the Christmas break to completing this draft.

Chapter 5: Reproductive and Environmental Physiology – The major components of this chapter are completed. Some additional aspects of fish health and reproductive endocrinology plan to be completed for inclusion by the end of the year.

Chapter 6: Bioenergetics and Feeding Ecology – Parts written, other parts still synthesizing information re: feeding across multiple systems. A draft has been promised by Christmas.

Chapter 7: Life History – Draft has been received from the lead author – mostly complete, but coauthors are also having a final look-through right now. Once done, it will go out for review.

Chapter 8: Population Dynamics – The draft is almost complete; authors are finalizing standardization of data to be presented and working on integration and syntheses of the data in summary form. Lead author plans to submit by mid-December.

Chapter 9: Exploitation – First draft has gone out for review, and one reviewer has responded and supplied additional information for authors to include. This update is minor so final draft should be available shortly.

Chapter 10: Habitat – The draft is nearly, but not fully, completed including coauthor component, but lead author will submit an interim draft to me within the next week or two.

Chapter 11: Management – First draft has been reviewed and review comments are being incorporated into final draft. Updates are minor so final draft should be available shortly.

Chapter 12: Culture – Draft is near completion and author plans to submit complete draft by the end of December. A 70% complete draft was sent earlier in the year for comments.

Chapter 13: Stocking – Author has incorporated three reviewers' comments into first draft and presently waiting on one final review. Once received and incorporated, this chapter will be completed.

Other:

Chapter drafts received will be key-worded for indexing, and a common species listing made for inclusion at the beginning of the book. This process has started for drafts received. The late submissions by most authors will mean a short turnaround time from reviewers, but so far reviewers have been accommodating and getting their comments back in a timely way so the time out for review probably can be reduced.

All drafts will be copy-edited for standardization of style and format before the package is submitted to AFS. An alphabetical listing of all chapter reviewers (not linked to specific chapters) will also be included at the beginning of the book.

Bruce Barton  
Managing Editor

## **New Business**

- 8. Dakota Chapter AFS—Percid Management Symposium:** Justin VanDeHey invites anyone working on special Percid management activities to attend the 2010 Dakota Chapter AFS Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held February 22-24, 2010 in Spearfish, SD. In addition to the Percid symposium, there will also be symposia on trout management and non-game fish management. Please contact Justin if you are interested or have questions about the symposium.  
justin.vandehy@sdstate.edu

- 9. New item: 2010 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference:** Justin VanDeHey reports that the planning committee for the 2010 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in Minneapolis, MN has requested that the WTC sponsor a symposium at the conference. Brad Parsons mentioned that the WTC has historically had involvement in previous meetings held in Minnesota and that it might be good to continue. It was also discussed that the WTC could team up with the ETC and possibly sponsor a “coolwater fishes” symposium. It was decided that this item should be sent out to the entire membership via e-mail to increase discussion on the subject.
- 10. Chair-elect nominations and installation of the 2010 chair:** Justin VanDeHey stated that two names were mentioned during the summer meeting for chair-elect including Corey Mason from Missouri and Andy Jansen from Kansas. Justin asked the membership for additional nominations, however, none were made. Andy Jansen accepted the nomination and will be the chair-elect for 2010. Justin VanDeHey will move from chair-elect to chair for 2010 and Donna Hanen Muhm will remain the secretary. Chair-Elect VanDeHey presented a certificate of appreciation to John Kubisiak for John’s exceptional work as the 2009 chair of WTC. Glenn Miller, WI AFS president, accepted the award on John’s behalf.
- 11. 2010 Summer Meeting Location and Theme:** Justin VanDeHey suggested that a joint meeting with the ETC and CTC seemed to be appropriate due to out of state travel restrictions. Previous joint meetings have been well received by the membership.
- a. *Theme:* The theme for the meeting will be Age and Growth and we will try to get presentations with an emphasis on these topics as well as student talks. Justin has lined up Dan Isermann (UW—Stevens Point) and Brian Graeb (SDSU) to organize and implement a ~1.5 day workshop for meeting attendees. The workshop will cover many age and growth topics including using microscopes to look at different structures. Some of the more specific topics Dan and Brian will cover include:
- Otolith/spine preparation and viewing techniques including use of a low speed saw for sectioning.
  - Using digital images for age estimation and back-calculation and as a means for archiving samples.
  - Analysis techniques for comparing ages among readers or structures.
  - Back-calculating from otoliths and spines.
  - Validation opportunities and establishing reference collections for training new employees.
  - Use of oxytetracycline.
- b. *Location:* Dubuque, Iowa and LaCrosse, Wisconsin were mentioned as potential locations for the meeting. The membership had no objections with either location. Justin spoke with Jim Diana of the ETC and LaCrosse, WI was decided as the location.
- c. *Dates:* A late July meeting seems best. Either July 20-22 or July 27-29 seemed to work best for the membership. Justin spoke with the ETC and the last week of July was chosen.

So, pencil in July 27-29 in LaCrosse, WI on your calendars!!!!!!

- 12. AFS President Don Jackson (Mississippi State University)** asked the membership if anyone was in communications with Mississippi on the propagation of Alabama-strain walleye. Strategic planning with the southern division may be necessary as water temperatures continue to increase and may exceed the normal ranges of the northern strains. Jason Goeckler reports that Kansas has discussed

this issue, but nothing has pursued because they do not want to interfere with the current genetics. More discussion on this issue may be necessary in the future.

**13. Adjournment:** Chair-Elect VanDeHey asks for motion to adjourn. Motion made by Jason Goeckler, seconded by Luke Schultz, no objections. Meeting adjourned at 2:05pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by Andy Jansen on behalf of Donna Hanen Muhm.