

## 2018 Wisconsin AFS Subunit/Committee Summary Reports

### ➤ **UWSP Student Subunit President -- Zach Mohr**

The UWSP subunit is having a great year! Our weekly meetings are well attended by students and we would like to thank all our guest speakers so far for imparting their knowledge on us. Many fish were sampled during our annual Little Plover River survey and Wisconsin River survey. Currently, we are looking at purchasing a tool set and possibly a new fyke net or two. We look forward to the spring field season and helping the Wisconsin DNR with spring sturgeon sampling and our weekly meetings.

### ➤ **Northland College Subunit President -- Joshua Lyons**

The Northland College Subunit has been productive this academic year. Our members helped the WiDNR seine salmon at Big Rock in the Fall. This was a great opportunity to get members of the subunit hands on experience working with large salmon. Furthermore, we had Mike Seider, of the USFWS, give a presentation on pop-up satellite archival tags beings used to survey Lake Trout in Lake Superior. Members from our subunit are also helping (or helped depending on when you read this) with sturgeon spearing at Lake Winnebago. Lastly, a group of our members will attend the WiAFS annual meeting. We hope to do many more activities over the course of the winter.

### ➤ **UWGB Student Subunit President -- Angela Grimm**

The UW-Green Bay student subunit has been busy participating in many activities this year. Meetings have featured guest speakers from the WDNR as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service allowing students to network with fisheries professionals. There has also been active participation from our members at many conferences, including annual Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conferences, giving talks and presenting posters. Members have also been eager to get into the field volunteering in multiple areas of work from small stream sampling and monitoring to working with adult Lake Sturgeon and Chinook salmon. We have also had members represent the subunit at the Besadny Anadromous Fish Facility open house in Kewaunee. With many volunteering opportunities, we have also added more activities that are fun to our meetings such as fish trivia night and a movie/documentary night. Our subunit continues to pursue a balance of educating our members with fun activities as well as meeting professionals in the fisheries field.

### ➤ **UW -- Stout Student Subunit President -- McKenzie Librande**

Over the past year, the UW-Stout subunit has been working on growing interest for our subunit. We currently have 16 members of which about half are active in AFS activities such as surveys. In addition to educating members on creek surveys, we have been introducing equipment types to our members including large and small seine nets, hoop nets, and fyke nets. I would like to thank our guest speakers from last year for their time and commitment to help educate our subunit on a variety of topics; Joseph Gerbyshak- DNR Fisheries Biologist, Kassey Yallaly- DNR Fisheries Biologist, and Jay Walker- Great Lakes Aquarium Director of Operations. As a subunit, we will continue our efforts and look forward to opportunities to come!

➤ **Newsletter Editor & Communications -- Max Wolter**

Newsletter will continue to come out twice a year (spring/fall ... links to [Spring 2018](#) and [Fall 2018](#) newsletters). My goal is to make this an interesting and useful record of our chapter's activities, as well as a source of information for students and young professionals looking for career advice, writing experience, or exposure for their research. If you have suggestions for content or if you want to pen something for the newsletter, please contact me at [max.wolter@wisconsin.gov](mailto:max.wolter@wisconsin.gov). Committee members and student subunit chapters should keep an eye out for calls for content for the spring 2019 newsletter. Thanks for all the past and future contributions everyone has made to the newsletter.

➤ **Fishing Contest – Luke Roffler**

The Wisconsin AFS Fishing Contest was once again a popular outlet for our members. Now in its third year, the contest offers bragging rights and fun competition for those who participate. Processing submissions was streamlined via the new [wafsfishing@gmail.com](mailto:wafsfishing@gmail.com) address and members were able to stay updated on the contest at the new [WAFS Fishing Contest Facebook Page](#). We once again received dozens of submissions from people throughout the DNR, USFWS, and others. As of January 31st, a total of 55 species have been submitted, with 21 individual anglers listed on the leaderboard. This compares to 58 species and 25 names in last year's contest, and 46 species and 16 names in 2016. Final contest results will be presented on a poster at the Annual Meeting in Green Bay and a very brief summary before the banquet.

➤ **Membership -- Tony Rieth**

Tony Rieth assumed leadership of the membership committee in 2018 and reorganized the spreadsheet to more efficiently aid tracking membership numbers. There were 237 paying members in 2018, with 137 (58%) "regular" paid memberships and 100 student, young professional, and retired memberships. Sixty-six of the 237 (28%) memberships were new members to the Wisconsin Chapter. In 2019, we will continue to make methods for tracking members more efficient.

➤ **Awards -- Ben Heussner**

The Awards Committee would like to provide WiAFS chapter members with the opportunity to provide feedback on the current structure of the presentation and poster competition structure. Please look for an online survey following the Annual Meeting in February.

The winners of the 2017 competitions are as follows;

- STEVE YEO STUDENT PAPER AWARD: Douglas Zentner -- [Using GIS to predict near shore habitat composition in lakes](#)
- STEVE SERNS BEST PAPER AWARD: Ryan Koenigs -- [Downstream passage survival of lake sturgeon at two dams on the Wolf River, Wisconsin](#)
- BEST POSTER AWARD: Benjamin Schleppebach -- [Genetic Origin of Walleye Stocked in the Manitowish Chain of Lakes, Vilas County, WI](#)

Thank you in advance to all the volunteer judges of the 2019 presentations and posters.

➤ **Continuing Education -- Allen Lane**

The Continuing Education committee did not offer any classes this year. The committee will be using a poster at the annual AFS meeting to develop ideas for classes this coming year.

➤ **Raffle and Revenue -- Dave Rowe**

For 2018, a raffle was held at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife meeting in Milwaukee. The raffle was run jointly with Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife Society. We spent \$655.64 including license fees, office supplies, and four purchased items and TWS spent \$224.00 on two purchased items. Gross revenue was \$4575.00 and net revenue was \$3695.36. Net revenue was split evenly with TWS, with each organization profiting \$1847.68.

NOTE: Dave Rowe will be stepping down as the chair of the Raffle and Revenue Committee after the Annual Meeting. If you are interested in working on this important fund-raising committee, then please contact Derek Ogle or any other WiAFS officer.

➤ **Resolutions -- Titus Seilheimer**

No resolutions or report this year. Please bring any ideas for new resolutions to Titus' attention.

➤ **Scholarship -- Tammie Paoli**

The scholarship committee, comprised of Tammie Paoli, Jordan Weeks, Tom Burzynski, Justin van de Hey, and Allen Lane, exchanged emails and conference calls with Tim Kroeff to develop criteria for his newly created scholarship. It is open to all undergraduate and graduate students at a Wisconsin college or university and will be annual award amount of \$1000. Through the WIAFS google email list, we solicited applications for the Kroeff Scholarship, Carroll Norden Memorial Scholarship (\$1000), and the Joan Duffy student travel award (\$100 from WI AFS; \$100 from NCD) to attend the Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference held in late January 2019. We received seven applicants for the Kroeff scholarship, four applicants for the Norden scholarship, and one applicant for the Duffy travel award. The Norden scholarship is only open to non-UWSP students, which is why there were fewer applicants for that. Once again, the scholarship committee was impressed by all of the well-qualified candidates. The 2018 Carroll Norden Memorial Scholarship recipient is Stefan Tucker, a M.S. student from UW-Green Bay. The 2018 Tim Kroeff Fisheries Scholarship recipient is Robert Sheffer, a M.S. student from UW-Stevens Point. Finally, the Joan Duffy student travel recipient is also Robert Sheffer.

➤ **Environmental Issues -- Tom Slawski**

No report.

NOTE: In 2014 there was a note that the ExComm would look into combining the Resolutions and Environmental Issues committees. In 2015, the minutes suggested that this happened but I could find not record that it did. Titus Selheimer, chair of the Resolutions Committee, recalled that the two were combined. We will suggest during the bylaws discussion at the Annual Business meeting that the two committees be formally combined.

➤ **Nominations -- Dan Isermann**

We have actively solicited members to stand for President-Elect at the upcoming Annual Business meeting. In addition, we have approached others about becoming involved in various committees that need new chairs or participants.

➤ **Web Coordinator -- Brad Eggold**

In 2018, the WI-AFS website was not only moved onto National AFS web servers but we also completed a major upgrade to the site. These modifications will allow us to create pages more easily, incorporate changes in training sessions and provide more flexible payment options. The new and improved website went live in late summer and has been available for meeting registration and abstract submission for this meeting. If anyone has suggested content for the website then let me know. I am now using WordPress to modify the site, which is a lot easier than the previous version. If you have not checked out the site recently, then take it for a test drive at <http://wi-afs.org>.

➤ **Student Affairs -- Evan Boone**

This is the first official year of the Wi AFS Student Affairs committee. Hadley Boehm started as chair of the committee, but relinquished her position to Evan Boone after being accepted into a PhD program in another state. Stephanie Shaw agreed to join the committee and represent the Wi DNR. Mike Seider, of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Holly Embke, a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, also serve on the committee. The committee was initially charged with facilitating communication between students and the Chapter, preparing educational and professional development opportunities for students, and helping identify and recruit students to the society. This year the committee planned a resume workshop and a student-mentor luncheon for professional development at the Wi AFS annual meeting. Communication with the student subunits identified the desire for an introductory R workshop. As a result, the committee may be seeking to organize a workshop in conjunction with the annual meeting in 2020 or as a stand-alone event that would best accommodate student attendance. To increase communication with students and reach a larger audience, the Student Affairs committee would like to create a Wi AFS Facebook page that could be utilized by all Wisconsin Chapter committees. This would be a great tool to share information about the society, deadlines, and outreach activities.

➤ **NCD Technical Committee - Centrarchid – Chris Sullivan / Dan Dembkowski**

The Centrarchid Technical Committee of the North Central Division of the American Fisheries Society met in conjunction with the Walleye and Esocid technical committees at the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory in Milford, IA on July 24-26, 2018. The technical committees will have a mid-year meeting at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in Cleveland, OH on January 27, 2019. Dates and locations for the summer joint technical committee meetings will be discussed. A few Centrarchid-related activities in Wisconsin are detailed below.

*WDNR Panfish Team Activities in 2018:*

- Prepped biologists around the state for the start of the experimental panfish regulations evaluation (starting in 2019, report in fall/winter of 2021).
- Began developing a social survey about hot-button panfishing issues and regulations with Dr. Bob Holsman.
- Initiated research on temporal trends in panfish angler catch and harvest rates, exploring hyperstability in panfish angler catch and size selectivity of panfish anglers. Would ideally like to be able to draw conclusions about whether electronics and other technological advances have changed angler efficiency.
- Recorded two WDNR podcasts about panfishing in Wisconsin and panfish biology.

#### *Centrarchid Removal Project:*

- A collaborative research project among the Wisconsin Cooperative Fishery Research Unit at UWSP, the Center for Limnology at UW-Madison, and the WDNR began in 2017 to evaluate population- and ecosystem-level responses following large-scale removal of centrarchids from a northern Wisconsin lake.
- Specific objectives of this project are to determine: 1) if walleye recruitment improves following large-scale removal of centrarchids; and 2) the response of walleye and centrarchid population dynamics and demographics to large-scale centrarchid removals.
- 2017 was considered a baseline monitoring year where centrarchids were not removed. Walleye PEs were estimated at McDermott (treatment) and Sandy Beach (reference) lakes. No age-0 walleye were collected. 2018 was the first year of removals. Over 83,000 centrarchids were removed (60% bluegills; 21% largemouth bass; 19% pumpkinseeds, rock bass, and black crappies) via fyke nets, cloverleaf traps, electrofishing, mini-fyke nets, and beach seines. In addition to the removals, baseline monitoring efforts continued and PEs were estimated. Walleye PEs were similar to 2017 estimates. No age-0 walleye were collected.
- Approximately 1,800 centrarchids were collected for age and growth analyses, diet sampling, and stable isotope analysis.
- 2019 field methods will be similar to 2018 where baseline monitoring and removal efforts will continue.

#### ➤ **NCD Technical Committee - Esocid -- Jordan Weeks**

The summer meeting was held on July 26, 2018 in Milford, IA. Six states were represented at this meeting. Each state provided an update of activities which include the following highlights:

*Wisconsin* – Jordan informed us that an effort to set science based 50" lakes is underway. They will also look at some of the other regulations moving forward including the 28" length limit in locations where muskie were stocked but not native. The number of trolling lines allowed is currently being discussed and has some regional differences with the regulation. In addition to the Green Bay muskie movement and habitat use project that Robert Sheffer presented on at the meeting, Wisconsin is also evaluating hot weather hooking mortalities.

*Missouri* – Mike Andersen shared that a muskie management plan has been completed. Individuals can contact Mike if they would like to see this article. They also are exploring the use of an on line trip information form to get angling data. They also had a "Show-Me Muskie Project" newsletter that he shared with the group.

*Minnesota* – Nate Hodgins and Loren Miller presented on population estimate work in Southern Minnesota and advancement of muskie genetic database during the meeting. Additionally, Minnesota reported some public concerns had arose over the transition to 54" size limits that happened in the past. In response to this a statewide technical committee is planning to assess 54" and 50" regulations. They are also planning on updating the 10 year plan and will begin collecting public input. A stable isotope project in relation to dietary patterns of introduced and native populations as well as in lakes with cisco and without cisco has also been initiated. Finally, the Vermillion population estimate is also being completed.

*Kansas* – Andrew Schaffer informed us that the pike population in Kingman Reservoir was eliminated with a rotenone event intended to get rid of white perch. After the rotenone the pike were re-stocked but have not been recruiting. They will work with personnel to develop access to a wetland that has been disconnected and it is believed improved recruitment historically.

*Iowa* – Jonathan Meerbeek presented on the unusually large genetic Iowa strain muskies and updated us on improved survivability of larger 13” muskies vs those shorter in length. He also updated us on entrainment loss through an electrical barrier at the bottom end of Okoboji Lake. Other Iowa happenings include Clear Lake will also try to stock larger fish, PIT readers are being distributed to some anglers and looking at 40” minimum.

*Nebraska* – The broodstock source for northern pike has traditionally come from lakes on the USFWS refuge. The series of lakes in this refuge will be rotenoned over the next couple years as they attempt to remove carp from this system, so alternative sources may need to be used. Merritt Reservoir continues to produce good spring catch rates of muskies and a diversity of opinions on whether this population should be managed more conservatively or liberally is starting to develop.

*New business* – In 2020, Ohio will be hosting the national AFS meeting and Cory wanted to know if the ETC had an interest in submitting a symposium. It was agreed that the location of this meeting does warrant discussion on esocids and those attending supported the idea of this symposium. We also delegated Cory to lead the charge on this and we would support him.

➤ **NCD Technical Committee - Ictalurid -- Al Niebur**

Ictalurid Technical Committee last meeting was held at AFS/Midwest in Milwaukee. The committee spent most time discussing preparations for upcoming Catfish 2020. The ITC will be working with the Southern Division to coordinate Catfish 2020 in Little Rock, Arkansas, February 18-20. This conference will precede the annual Southern Division meeting at the same location. Jim Lamer, co-chair sponsorship committee, will be reaching out to state chapters and other potential sponsors in 2018. Suggested sponsorship from state chapters is \$1,000 in 2018 and \$1,000 in 2019. Committee chairs will be soliciting for volunteers soon. Southern Division will be coordinating financials with assistance from Tony Barada of the NCD ITC.

Reports of catfish management and research were given by each state representative. The Wisconsin report is below.

- In 2017, the Wisconsin legislature passed a law allowing catfish to be taken with a bow and arrow, crossbow or by hand. Prior to this legislation, catfish could not be taken by these methods, so the Department of Natural Resources did not have adequate rules regulating these specific methods of take. The department recently implemented an emergency rule establishing bag limits, size limits, gear restrictions and season dates with the goal of protecting catfish (especially flathead catfish) from overharvest with these new methods. The department is currently working on a permanent rule containing these regulations, which is slated to go out for public hearings in February.
- Wisconsin has recently implemented standardized sampling protocols (combination of baited hoop net and low pulse electrofishing) to assess/monitor catfish populations. This past year numerous surveys were conducted on the following waters: Wisconsin River (multiple locations), Wolf and Fox Rivers (Winnebago System), and Fox River (southern Wisconsin). Many of these surveys have become routine annual assessments. Future hoop net surveys are also being planned for the St. Croix River.

- Mississippi River staff have recently produced a comparative channel catfish ageing structure analysis (otoliths, pectoral fin bases, pectoral spines) report, which should be available to the public shortly.
- Pressed soy cake was a standard bait used for most baited hoop net surveys in Wisconsin; however, it has been difficult to find this source of bait in recent years. Fisheries staff on the Wisconsin River have conducted baited hoop net surveys using experimental pelleted goat feed, which was not successful. This upcoming field season they intend to try cottonseed meal.

➤ **NCD Technical Committee - Rivers and Streams -- Timothy Parks**

The 31<sup>st</sup> annual Rivers and Stream Tech Committee meeting will take place April 2-3, 2019 at the Rock Island Conservation Club in Milan, Illinois. Send suggested agenda items and presentations/posters to Megan Thul (RSTC Chair) by March 1. More information about the meeting is in [this announcement](#).

➤ **NCD Technical Committee - Walleye -- Steve Gilbert**

The minutes from the summer 2018 WTC meeting [are here](#).