

Jason Lee

Northcentral District Fisheries Supervisor
Fisheries Division
North Dakota Game and Fish Department



Greetings to all! I'm a native of Stanley, a small town approximately 60 miles west of Minot. I grew up on a farm/ranch southeast of Stanley and developed my appreciation for the outdoors there. I was fortunate in that during my time on the farm, my dad would take my brother and me fishing at Van Hook and other areas on Lake Sakakawea during the 1980's. Some may remember these as the "good ole' days" of catching many large walleye on Sakakawea. During these outings, it became apparent to me that I would truly enjoy a career that involved working on the lakes and rivers in North Dakota.

After graduating from High School in Stanley, I attended the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, where I received a Bachelor of Science degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology. My first job out of college was with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources in 1990. I spent a little over a year in Indiana helping manage, research, and conduct creel surveys on natural lakes in the northeastern part of the state. In 1991, I had the opportunity to come back to North Dakota at Spiritwood (north of Jamestown) and work on the lakes in the southeastern part of the state. In 1992, I was offered a fisheries biologist position in Riverdale working mainly on the Missouri River System until 2005. In 2005, I was given the opportunity to move to Bismarck as the Southcentral District Fisheries Supervisor and worked there for about two years. Recently, I made the move back up to Riverdale as the Northcentral District Fisheries Supervisor.

My job as the Northcentral District Fisheries Supervisor is to manage and research approximately 50 water bodies in northcentral North Dakota. Included are seven high priority (heavily-used) recreational fisheries in the district; Lake Audubon, Garrison Diversion Canal Lakes, Lake Metigoshe, Nelson Lake, Buffalo Lodge Lake, Crooked Lake and the Souris River.

Like many in the Fisheries Division, our field season typically begins in mid April and runs into the fall. In the spring, adult perch are moved to different water bodies throughout the state, and walleye and northern pike eggs are collected for the hatcheries. During the summer and fall, we sample many of the fisheries in the district. Our sampling effort provides us with information on the trends in the adult fish populations and reproductive success of different species.

Today, I still enjoy my job and the North Dakota outdoors as much as I did 16 years ago when I first started working for the Game and Fish Department at Spiritwood. The diversity of work activities and challenges of the job continue to keep my job interesting and enjoyable. If any of you have any questions concerning the northcentral district lakes, feel free to contact me or stop by our Riverdale office sometime.