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Volume 13-01

March 2013

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Clark Williams



ANNUAL FUNDRAISER/SMOKER *Saturday, April 20th*

The Annual Smoker is set for Saturday, April 20th at the Mandan Eagles Club again. Tickets are \$25 and must be purchased in advance, so contact your club leaders or Mike Anderson at manderson@bis.midco.net soon. The

doors open at 6:00 p.m. with a social and a banquet to follow. Also if you are coming from out of town be sure to get your lodging reservations soon.

This a great time with lots of prizes and a buffet dinner. Proceeds go to support the Congress in its effort to support your fishing and boating in North Dakota. Without your support the Congress cannot continue to function.

This is also a great time to hit the river. While the rest of the state is just waking up and the lakes starting to thaw the river is hot HOT HOT. Bring your boat, bring your friends, make it a long weekend.

CASH RAFFLE

If you haven't gotten some tickets yet, its not too late. The Congress used to hold a gun raffle in the spring but with all the issues over guns and gun purchases and registration the Board decided to change to a Cash Raffle to help support the Congress and its efforts on your behalf. Tickets are \$5.00 and prizes are \$500,

\$200, \$100 and \$100. The drawings will be at the Smoker but the winners do not need to be present to win. We still have some books that have not been distributed so if you think you can sell some or want tickets for yourself, contact you club representatives or email Clark at shadrap@gondtc.com and we'll get you some. STEP UP TO HELP. THANKS.

ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

The morning of the 20th is the Annual Board Meeting. Now I said Board, not Bored! The meeting starts at 10:00 a.m. at the Mandan Eagles and is also open to everyone. If you are interested in what's going on around the state that affects fishing, THIS IS NOT A MEETING TO MISS.

There will be Congress business, but first we will have presentations that pertain to North Dakota's fishing by about every organization and entity. Planned presenters include, but not necessarily limited to:

- ✓ Game and Fish
- ✓ Fish and Wildlife
- ✓ Hatcheries
- ✓ Legislature
- ✓ Army Corps of Engineers

THE HATCHERY UPDATE IS NOT TO BE MISSED. Our hatcheries are run by Fish and Wildlife and the Feds have threatened in recent years to get out of the hatchery business. We cannot lose our hatcheries; too many of our lakes depend on stocking to maintain their fish populations.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President..... Clark Williams, Devils Lake (701-662-5008)
 Past President.... Duaine Ash, Devils Lake (701-662-3989)
 Vice President Ken Cumber, Jamestown (701-252-4534)
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19TH Annual Sportsmen's Smoker and Raffle

Sponsored by: **North Dakota Sportfishing Congress**

When: Saturday, April 20, 2013 • 6:00 PM
• Following Annual Meeting

Where: Eagles Club, Mandan

Tickets: \$25.00 Includes Buffet Dinner;
4 Cash Door Prizes—\$500, \$100, 50 (2)

Time: Cash Bar & Raffles begin at 6:00 pm
Buffet Dinner 7:30 pm

Activities: Raffles Throughout the Evening

Cash Raffle: \$5 Cash Raffle sold separately,
4 Cash Prizes – \$500, \$200, \$100 (2)

Tickets: Contact Mike Anderson 701-224-9048
or manderson@bis.midco.net



SPORTFISHING CONGRESS "CASH" RAFFLE

For the past few years the Congress has held a gun raffle to help support its activities on your behalf. Due to the problems with gun purchasing, the Board decided to change to a cash raffle. The women felt this would appeal to a broader population also.

Tickets are \$5 each in books of 10. Prizes will be cash awards of \$500, \$200, \$100 and \$100. We need sellers. If you feel you can sell a few books, please contact me at shadrap@gondtc.com. Include your name, mailing address and how many books you will need.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by Duaine Ash



We are half way through with the 2013 legislative

session and may I say that things are going quit well. We have not had that many bills that pertain to fisheries. HB 1130 & SB 2231, both pertain to increase in license fees and with your help we were able to come to come up with a reasonable figure-- we didn't want to get the licenses to high as the conservative legislator would question us as to why we would need as big of an increase. In fact, when testimony was given in the Senate Natural Resources Committee we were surprised when it was asked why we weren't asking for more of an increase.

Some of you may wonder why it is necessary for a license increase and I would like to list a few of areas that will need these additional monies.

1. ANS and ANS inspections. We are lucky to be pretty much ANS free in the state but to stay in that status it will require that NDG&F check the bodies of waters for invasive species and it will also require checking of boats and hunting equipment.
2. There have been about 140 dams built in the past sixty years and most of these are nearing the stage of needing maintenance work. As we all know it will be a costly.
3. As we have observed over the past years, the US Fish & Wildlife has gradually gotten away from raising sporting fish and gone to endangered species and with this happening it requires for the state to take on more of the expense of running the hatcheries at Riverdale and Valley City. North Dakota is the only state that doesn't have its own state run hatchery.
4. The number of stocked lakes in the state have more than doubled in the past 20 years. It will cost quite a bit more to hire the additional personnel necessary to survey, manage and maintain our world class fisheries which we are enjoying and hope to enjoy into the future.

The Congress would like to thank Director Terry Steinwand and Fishery Director Greg Power for furnishing the information needed for us to determine the amount of license fee increases. Thanks to all of you that responded to Chairman Williams' emails seeking your opinions on what the increases should be.



ND GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT UPDATE

by Greg Power – Fisheries Chief

Statewide Outlook

Spring is very near and as always some of the best fishing of the year awaits. Even though ice fishing is beginning to wind down, this past winter we observed both good participation and effort. Snowpack on the ice was not a limiting factor for most of the state, thus allowing decent access for ice fishing. Typically, about 25% of our annual fishing effort occurs on the ice and this past winter was probably pretty typical. Although walleye lakes received their normal attention, the new northern pike and yellow perch waters became destinations for many. It should be noted that with the liberalization of the pike daily limit from three to five – and – most lakes now open to darkhouse spearfishing, there was a record of more than 2000 individuals who registered to spearfish.

The real good news for the immediate future is with the lack of a heavy snowpack this winter, the likelihood of winter kill for most lakes in the state is/ was low. We will undoubtedly lose fish populations in some lakes to winter kill, but it's likely not to be significant from a statewide perspective.

Of course the downside with the lack of a heavy snowpack, is this springs runoff into our lakes likely won't be substantial. Last summer, we lost 2-4 feet off of most lakes in the state and we're now to the point where we really could use some refilling. Nonetheless, North Dakota currently sits with a record number of fishing lakes (around 400) and many of these lakes should continue to offer great fishing this spring/summer. Our old standards such as Jamestown Reservoir, Lake Ashtabula, Lake Audubon, Heart Butte, Lake Darling, and the Red and Sheyenne rivers will continue to produce. At the same time, there are a lot of new or newer lakes such as Dry, Alkaline, and Stump lakes (to name just a few) that offer great and diversified opportunity. Reference the Game and Fish Department website for a current list of lakes - <http://gf.nd.gov/fishing/fishing-waters-and-access> - again most of these lakes have very healthy fish populations.

The 'Big Three', Lake Sakakawea, Lake Oahe / Missouri River and Devils Lake, continue to provide about one-half of states fishing effort and as has been the history of these water bodies, two of the three are doing well while the third (Oahe in this case) has its issues (see Paul Baileys short report on the health of this

fishery). Declining water levels in these waters, esp. the Missouri River System, continues to be a concern.

April 1st means a new fishing season and the need to buy a new fishing license. Because we're on the 'off year' of our two-year proclamation period, there are NO changes to existing regulations.

On the legislative front, the Game and Fish Department did initiate a fishing-related bill that has been favorably received so far (we're only at half-time of the legislation session as I write this narrative). This one bill gives with the Department, through the Governors Fishing Proclamation, the ability to implement a paddlefish lottery system and increases the costs of a paddlefish tag. Also along the legislative front, both the House and Senate have passed their bills supporting an increase in the cost of most fishing and hunting licenses. The increases are needed as the Departments reserve budget has dwindled (largely due to the severe winters a few years back and fewer deer tags being issued). It should also be noted that resident fishing license fees have not been increased for more than a decade (e.g. an individual fishing license costs \$10 today; twenty-five years ago (1988) it cost \$9). The Sportfishing Congress provided support for these bills which is greatly appreciated.

For the upcoming open water season, aquatic nuisance species, bait vendors, and fish (aquatics) movement rules and regulations will again be emphasized. Although many of these rules have now been in place for at least a few years, ongoing information/education along with enforcement will always be fundamental legs to the stool.

As we've been truly blessed with a landscape that is home to a record number of outstanding fishing lakes, it's time again to get out and wet a line!!! Happy angling!

— — — — —
Paul Bailey – South Central District Fisheries Supervisor

Lake Oahe – Missouri River Outlook

The impacts to the Garrison Reach of the Missouri River and Lake Oahe resulting from the historic 2011 Flood became very apparent in 2012. Prior to the flood, the North Dakota portion of Lake Oahe likely has never had more mouths to feed. Walleye abundance was at near record levels, northern pike abundance was three times higher than the previous record, and channel catfish, white bass, black crappie,

RED RIVER AREA SPORTSMEN'S CLUB WAHPETON, ND

by Wayne Beyer

- **30th Annual Vince Herding Youth Fishing Derby** on Saturday, May 4th. Tournament headquarters at Kidder Recreation Area along the Red River. Awards and door prizes will be given away. Open hours: 7 AM to 2 PM. Many door prizes & trophies for youths. Entry fee: Free.
- **15th Annual Dick Bell Catfish Tournament** on Saturday, June 1st. Weigh station at Kidder Recreation Area along the Red River. Entry fee is \$10 (100% payback) plus a youth trophy division. Open hours: 7 AM to 3 PM.
- **27th Annual Carp & Sucker Derby** on Wednesday, August 1st from 1-5 PM at the Kidder Recreation Area along the Red River. Trophies will be awarded for the 10 largest carp or suckers. Open to all youths, high school age or younger. Entry fee: Free.



FM Walleyes Unlimited *Spring Calendar*

by Scotty Brewer, President

While many sportsman and outdoors people enjoy every change of season, manly because of the new opportunities each season brings, Spring hold a very special place in our hearts, especially for anglers. The arrival of spring brings many great activities for our club. Here are a few of our upcoming events:

- **March 15- 17** – Lake Winnipeg Ice Fishing Excursion, up to 120 of our members will travel to Lake Winnipeg and meet up with the Walleye Anglers Association Of Manitoba for a weekend of Trophy Greenback hunting.
- **March 21** – Anglers Night, Keith Kavajecz will be in town to speak. An opportunity to listen to one of the greatest walleye anglers in history.
- **April 18** – April Member meeting, ranger pro Bill Shimota will be in attendance to give a seminar
- **May 3-4** – Fish Fest, we will be at Scheels doing youth education activities during their Spring Fishfest Promotion
- **May 16** – May Member meeting, Red River guide Brad Durick will be teaching us about the mighty Red.
- **May 31-June 1** – Pelican Spring Classic Walleye Tournament

We hope you can attend one of our events, get to know some new people, and maybe even learn something.

PREZ SEZ – (President Clark Williams)

A TIME OF CHANGE

Many wonder about the current Legislative Bills that propose an increase in fishing and boating license fees and where the idea that we need to increase fees is coming from. North Dakota is one of the few fortunate states that have money and are not facing huge deficits and budget cuts, mostly due to oil money. BUT Game and Fish does not get their money from the General Fund and oil revenue but only from license sales.

It's been nearly 20 years since there has been an increase in the resident fishing license fees in North Dakota and that increase was only \$1. A North Dakota resident individual fishing license is extremely affordable and costs less than half of the ongoing rate of the seven neighboring states. Even with the suggested increase from \$10 to \$16, the new fees buys less than \$10 did when it was put into place in 1995. The only reason fees weren't increased even more was worry about the conservative nature of many of our Legislators and outdoors men.

North Dakota's Game and Fish Department is justifiably proud of the fact that as the smallest Game and Fish Department in the country, they have been able to develop the outstanding resources that we have on a very limited budget. If we want to keep our fisheries, we will need to increase the staffing and budget of the Game and Fish Department significantly. Raising our license fees to be at least competitive with surrounding states is a first step. We as fishermen need to continue to let our Governor and Legislators know how important these resources are and that we want them protected AT ALL COSTS. Business as usual is no longer an option.



We look forward to seeing you on Saturday, April 20th at the Sportsmen's Smoker & Raffle!

ND Game & Fish Update –

continued from Page 3

and many other predatory fish populations increased following the return of high water in 2009.

Unfortunately, Lake Oahe's rainbow smelt population was severely impacted during the flood as tremendous numbers of smelt were flushed through Oahe Dam. The cold and turbid floodwaters also negatively impacted zooplankton numbers and reproduction of alternative forage fish species. The net result is that the 'predator and prey' populations became out of balance between Garrison and Oahe Dams. In the spring of 2012, record predator numbers, low forage abundance, and fantastic weather combined to produce some fantastic fishing for our anglers, especially in the river south of Bismarck-Mandan. However, this was really the first sign of the forage shortage this fishery was confronting.

Walleye condition rapidly decreased as the summer of 2012 progressed and walleye abundance declined as many fish were/are literally starving to death. As we saw following the 1997 smelt population crash, Mother Nature will act quickly and severely to correct imbalances between predators and prey but this is a necessary first step towards recovery.

Lake Oahe will be favored for water level management in the spring of 2013 in an effort to benefit forage fish reproduction. The Oahe forage base may quickly recover if Mother Nature cooperates with some favorable springtime weather and the 2012 drought doesn't continue to progress into 2013. However, any recovery will be delayed if water levels continue to decline.

Anglers can expect to encounter fewer walleye in 2013 than in recent years. Most of the walleye anglers will encounter will likely be 13-15 inch fish from the extremely abundant 2009 year-class. Even though the Missouri River and Lake Oahe fishery will be very different in 2013, it will still provide quality angling opportunity, just not the exceptional fishing anglers have experienced in recent years.



GARRISON DAM/VALLEY CITY NATIONAL FISH HATCHERIES UPDATE

Submitted by Rob Holm, Project Leader

In spite of rumblings of closures and budget cuts, the two Federal fish hatcheries are still in business and getting the job done. Thanks to the support of anglers across the country the Federal hatcheries are still operating, and though budgets may be tight, we were able to meet or exceed the majority of the fish requested by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department last year. Some of the highlights included production of 11 million walleye fingerlings and 2.4 million of North Dakota's state fish. If you are interested in where the fish went, you can get on the ND Game and Fish website to check out your favorite fishing hotspot at <http://gf.nd.gov/fishing/fish-stocking-lists>.

If you've been by the Valley City NFH lately you've noticed a change. In July Kurt Eversman moved to the hatchery full-time to revitalize the facility and increase overall productivity. Kurt has been working with the community and Valley City State University faculty and students to energize the hatchery. Expect to see great things in fish production coming in the future. Extensive work was done this fall renovating the aging ponds which will result in more fish for the angler next year. Inside the buildings things may appear in disarray but there is promise of new propagation opportunities to come as the pieces fall together. Valley City plans on bringing musky production back to the state this spring as well as the traditional production of walleye, pike, crappie, bass and lake sturgeon.

Garrison Dam NFH had a very productive season in 2012 nearly breaking the 10 million mark for walleye- a feat we have pulled off now two of the last three years. We are still working to recover from the 2011 flood with our water intake on the former Spillway Pond high and dry. The ND Game and Fish Department rented a 250 HP pump this spring to supply water for walleye production, which worked but came at a substantial cost. We intend to purchase a pump for use this spring which will replace the now obsolete pumping plant used prior to the flood. We also purchased over a mile of 18 inch pipe to connect our East Unit ponds to the waterline originating at the Corps powerhouse. This line will be installed with funding from the ND Game and Fish Department this summer to provide a secure water supply for the hatchery ponds.

As a final note, the North Dakota Sportfishing Congress was chosen to receive the Aquatic Resource Conservation Award from the Dakota Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The award was presented at the annual meeting in February. Duaine and Barb Ash attended the banquet to receive the award. It was a well-deserved award to honor the Sportfishing Congress for their years of dedication and hard work in support of North Dakota's anglers. Congratulations and see you in April!



Lake Region Anglers Association

North Dakota's first public year round fish cleaning station was opened in Devils Lake on Feb 8th.


A cooperative effort of the Game and Fish Department, the City of Devils Lake, Lake Region Anglers and others. This facility is state of the art, boasting two 4x8 tables, handicapped accessible bathroom, heat and air conditioning. Located just south of Ed's Bait Shop on Hwy 20 the station is open from 6AM till 9PM.

Special thanks is due to the City of Devils Lake in helping this four-year project finally come to completion.



2013 LRAA OUTINGS

- ✓ **May 18** – Spring Northern & Walleye Outing
- ✓ **June 1** – East Bay Outing
- ✓ **June 29** – Devils Lake Open
- ✓ **July 27** – Adult/Child Outing
- ✓ **August 10** – Walleye Widow Outing



R.A.P

REPORT ALL POACHERS

1-800-472-2121

This program encourages people to report fish and wildlife violations, remain anonymous if they prefer, and receive monetary rewards for convictions based on their information. Anonymous callers will be given a special code number and are not required to give their name. Rewards range from \$100 to \$1,000 depending on the nature and seriousness of the crime. Call 800-472-2121. Call this number only to report game and fish violations. Note: If calling from outside North Dakota, the number is (701) 328-9921. The reward fund is supported by private donations. If you wish to donate to the RAP program, tax deductible contributions can be sent to RAP, Box 188, Valley City, ND 58072-0188.

Poachers Steal Your Wildlife – Make the Call!



2013 Calendar of Events

TOURNAMENTS

- **May 19-20** – 37th Annual Dakota Anglers Walleye/Northern Tournament, Jamestown Reservoir. To obtain tournament applications, call Kay Herrick at 701-252-8451 or email Kay at ckherrick@gmail.com.
- **June 1** – Little Britches Tournament for kids. Free and open to the public for kid's ages 0 – 16, teams consist of one adult and one child. Registration from 8 to 10 AM and weigh in at 2 PM at Joos Park at Jamestown Reservoir.

MEETINGS (All Vets Club; 7:00 pm)

- March 13th
- March 23rd (Awards Banquet)
- April 10th (Annual Meeting)
- May 8th
- August 14th
- November 13th

SUMMER OUTINGS (Fishing tournaments followed by a potluck meal)

- **June 15** – Fish Fry at Spiritwood Lake
- **July 13** – Pork Roast
- **August 10** – Steak Fry



**NDSFC
WEBSITE**



Visit us @ www.ndsportfishingcongress.org

The North Dakota Sportfishing Congress website has information about its member fishing clubs (including tournaments and events), as well as updates from the North Dakota Game & Fish Department, US Fish and Wildlife, and much more!

ANNUAL DUES NOW DUE

This newsletter will serve as a notice to the Club Members and the Individual Members (who have not already paid their dues) that the annual dues are now due. (Your membership paid-up date is at the top of your mailing label listed as the month/year, e.g., 04/13.)

Club Member's dues are \$50 and are due on or before the annual meeting that is held in April of each year. To maintain your club's voting rights for 2013-14, please complete the *Club Membership Application* in this newsletter and return it along with your payment to North Dakota Sportfishing Congress, P.O. Box 2472, Bismarck, ND 58502.

NOTE: Don't forget to list the names, addresses, and e-mail addresses of the club delegates.

Individual Member's dues are a minimum of \$5. Please complete the *Individual Membership Application* in this newsletter and return it along with your payment to the same address indicated above.

You will note there is a checkoff for payment of multiple years' dues for individual members. For convenience, an individual may choose to prepay several years' dues at one time.

NOTE

If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, please email Marie Hoerner at sportfishing@bis.midco.net with a Subject of "Sportfishing Newsletter".

The year/date above your name on the mailing label indicates your membership renewal date. Your support is needed!



P.O. Box 2472
Bismarck, ND 58502

- \$5 - 1 Year
- \$15 - 3 Years
- \$25 - 5 Years

Enclosed: \$ _____

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) ____ - ____ Email _____

Signature _____ Date ____ / ____ / ____

Club Affiliation _____

I would like to receive the newsletter via email. (please check if applicable)



P.O. Box 2472
Bismarck, ND 58502

- \$50 - 1 Year

CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Club Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Current President _____

Phone (____) ____ - ____ Email _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Date Paid ____ / ____ / ____

Each Club Member is represented on the Executive Board by two delegates. Please provide the following information on your current delegates:

Delegate 1

Delegate 2

Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

Phone (____)____-____-____

Phone (____)____-____-____

Email _____

Email _____



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Ronald D. Liudahl Endowment for Undergraduate Students in Wildlife Management and Fisheries Biology

The scholarship was established in memory of Ron Liudahl by the Liudahl family and the Dakota Anglers.

Ron was a lifelong advocate of conservation and stewardship of North Dakota's wildlife, fisheries and natural resources. He was an avid hunter and fisherman, and although he was not a biologist or teacher, he considered himself a passionate spokesperson on the importance of water quality, wildlife habitat and the sustaining of North Dakota's resources.

The scholarship was set up to provide some financial aid to undergraduate students entering into the fields of wildlife management and / or fisheries biology. The scholarship does not carry a specified amount, but rather is dependent on how the fund grows. Our first scholarship was awarded in 2008 with a total benefit of \$275. The benefit has contin-

ued to grow with scholarships in the amounts of \$675 and \$650 awarded in the years of 2011 and 2012 respectively. The 2013 scholarship amount is \$795. This scholarship is awarded annually; and we hope that the level of the scholarship will continue to increase. The deadline for applying for this scholarship is April 1st.

Contributions or memorials to the North Dakota Community Foundation for the Ronald D. Liudahl Scholarship are tax deductible. Contributions may be made online at www.ndcf.net or by mailing to North Dakota Community Foundation (specifying the Liudahl scholarship) at PO Box 387, Bismarck ND 58502-0387.

Information about the criteria for the scholarship may be found on-line at www.ndcf.net/Scholarships/RonLiudahlApplication.asp