



AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

# NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 12, NUMBER 2 OCTOBER 1992

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is a tough message to compose because it is with great disappointment that I have to say our annual Northwestern Ontario Chapter meeting is cancelled. Most members are aware of travel restrictions placed on MNR employees and this situation would, no doubt, restrict attendance. Arrangements for a meeting on First Nations and Fisheries Management were progressing well toward an agenda that sparked interest from across Canada and the U.S. The background continues to unfold before us, however, as the Canadian Constitutional debate defines future direction that can form the theme of our next opportunity to get together. The diligent work of our executive committee in progressing toward an enlightening agenda should not be regarded as lost, but as important background work. Thanks to all involved.

As an alternative, it is proposed that all Chapter members make a concerted effort to attend the 54<sup>th</sup> Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference from December 6-9<sup>th</sup> in Toronto. During this time period, the Executive Committee will meet and exchange ideas on where we go from here. If enough members are present, we may even be able to hold a business meeting.

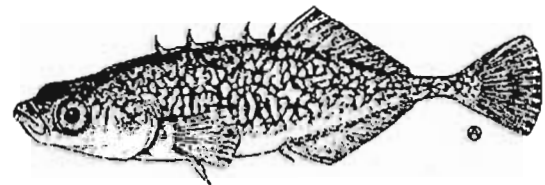
Some good news! The resolution passed at our last gathering in Thunder Bay urging the formation of a Co-operative Fisheries Unit between MNR and Lakehead University has been acknowledged. Bev Ritchie has been representing our Chapter at recent meetings between the two parties and has more details of progress further on in this edition.

At the Parent Society Annual Business Meeting held in Rapid City, South Dakota, on September 15, 1992, the matter of a name change for the Society was put to a vote. Although I was unable to attend, I voted by proxy as I'm sure all Chapter members who belong to the Parent Society

did. Unfortunately, only 42 % of voting members supported the name change, and the motion was defeated.

Please read on to catch up on Chapter activities and updates so that when we get together in Toronto we can get right down to business. I hope to see you there!

*Randy Wepruk*



### CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	1
CHAPTER & COMMITTEE NEWS	2
PARENT SOCIETY & DIVISION NEWS	4
NEWS FROM NW ONTARIO	6
CALENDAR	7
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION	8

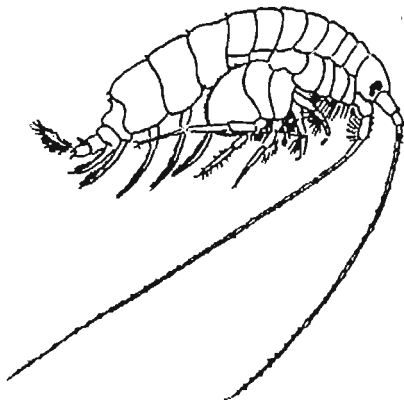
## CHAPTER AND COMMITTEE NEWS

### Annual Meeting

As you know, our annual meeting/conference slated for fall '92 was cancelled. Executive Committee discussions, along with conversations with members at large, led to that decision. It was felt that with tight travel restrictions in effect, the majority of members would be unable to attend. Rather than lose our deposits for conference facilities etc., we cancelled.

Also, with the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference scheduled for Toronto this December, many members would likely prefer to attend that, if allowed the choice. The Executive Committee is planning to meet at the Midwest, and a number of other members I have spoken to are planning on attending. Please let me know if you are planning to attend the Midwest. If we have enough members attending, I can arrange for facilities to conduct a business meeting. 🐾

*Kim Armstrong*



### Cooperative Fisheries Unit

The Northwestern Ontario Chapter's challenge to Lakehead University and MNR to consider creating a Co-op Unit similar to the one at Laurentian University has been met with a positive reception by both President Rosehart (LU) and MNR representative, Don Johnston. While the idea is a good one - especially since it would be mutually beneficial to both 'partners'- the logistics will prove to be a challenge. To this end, Bev Ritchie consulted with John Gunn (Laurentian Fisheries Co-op Unit) and forwarded his advice to Connie Nelson (LU Research Liaison) and Don Johnston about both the gains and the pitfalls to consider, as well as the arrangements that MNR and Laurentian University enjoy. The future of this partnership is still being considered at this time, but no commitments have been made. Obviously funding is a large hurdle in the current economic climate. 🐾

*Bev Ritchie*

### Committee Reports

#### MEMBERSHIP

The membership committee has not made any progress towards its goal of producing a pamphlet/brochure on our Chapter for new members and potential members. However, we will hopefully have better news for the next newsletter. 🐾

*Ed Paleczny*

### FUND-RAISING

The fund-raising committee is developing ideas for our next meeting. We are still accepting donations for an auction. There is also a supply of Chapter hats, T-shirts and sweat shirts still available - contact Dana at (807)934-2233. 🐾

*Dana Kinsman*

### CERTIFICATION

As promised here is a not so brief summary of results from the survey that appeared in our last newsletter:

Thanks to the eight professionals out there who responded. I'm not sure what the return rate was but it appears to be rather low. However, the responses were of such high quality that they could form a good source of ideas for a workshop/debate and chapter position statement.

**Of the eight respondents, seven felt it was important to have certification for fisheries professionals for reasons such as:**

- improve credibility with public and employers;
- promote excellence by providing appropriate hiring criteria;
- raise the profile of the profession;
- meet public expectations for high quality/value by professional biologists hired with tax dollars; and
- use as a basis to establish working conditions, salaries and expectations of those employed by MNR, DFO, etc.

In contrast one respondent felt that certification anywhere is nothing more than a formality and it increases rigidity in the types of

people that we need; based on the broad criteria that AFS uses, just about anyone can be certified so why waste the time to create certification.

**The following were cited as important qualities of a professional:**

- ability to identify and focus on goals/objectives;
- keeping current with science;
- interaction with other professionals;
- educated (at least B.Sc.), well-trained, knowledgeable and experienced;
- industrious;
- accountable for work done;
- ethical and unbiased approach to all work and actions;
- promoter of profession; and
- openness and willingness to discuss controversial issues objectively.

**How has the lack of accreditation in the fisheries profession in Ontario/Canada affected employer and public perceptions?**

- people don't look for accreditation in other professionals very often, much less fish and wildlife professionals. Because of the complexity of the problems and numerous situations that face aquatic biologists it would be a disservice to the profession to require a general certification because it would 'standardize' their diverse backgrounds;
- an increasing knowledgeable public and user groups demand professional service from fisheries staff yet the employer is not assisting by removing the need for a fundamental requirement (i.e. B.Sc.). One respondent stated that OFAH wants certified (similar to AFS system) fisheries biologists to review timber management plans, another offered that consulting firms want well qualified professionals with credentials as it creates a more positive client perception;

-fisheries is a practising profession as is forestry, engineering, and law, but employers and the public don't see us in this light;

-employer reputation and integrity is enhanced with 'qualified, professional' staff that have strong credentials;

-resource users appear to question the knowledge and professionalism of fisheries biologists;

-biologists' qualifications are challenged at EA and OMB hearings;

-the need for sustainable development and habitat protection requires highly skilled and continuously trained biologists with cross-disciplinary backgrounds;

-accreditation will assist in eliminating the 'political' aspects of hiring and focus on best qualified for the job and best value for taxpayers;

-current government perception appears to be 'biologists are a dime a dozen' and are enforcing this by not requiring minimum educational training to qualify for biologist positions let alone accreditation; and

-employer not recognizing fisheries as a profession means salaries don't keep in step with other professionals, competitive pricing would increase competition and result in highest quality staff as long as hiring/interview process is effective in matching the job requirements with the individual.

**Should a fisheries certification process and criteria be developed for Ontario?**

-one of eight: No- individual agencies/organizations/companies will set the criteria of a position and try to find individuals to fill that based on specific qualifications, not just general certification. Certification will reduce flexibility in development of these individuals.

-seven of eight: Yes-to ensure high

standards for profession so must preferably have accreditation required to work in the field or accreditation recognized monetarily

**Who should be involved in developing criteria and the process?**

There was definitely a wide range in the scope of dealing with this issue:

-no certification it is up to the people doing the hiring

-AFS, MNR, Ont. Gov't, Consulting Firms, OFAH, university task force. those agencies, industries that are potential employers of university-trained fisheries biologists.

-a committee of fisheries professionals of varying specialties should be selected to obtain input from employers and develop criteria

-AFS has a committee (Certification) why set up something from scratch?

**Summary**

The fundamental issue in the eyes of our Chapter members appears to be the fact that there is a need to raise the profile of fisheries biologists as 'practising professionals'. This will require scoping out our objectives and a strategy to meet those objectives. In speaking with Terry Marshall and Walter Momot, our committee feels that the survey has provided a good starting point for a Chapter workshop which would scope out the basic issues and set out a position statement. Another key element which we as a professional group can contribute to is providing a service to colleges and universities which provides feedback from working professionals on curriculum content to ensure graduates are best prepared for jobs as well as gaining the fundamental academic training. For example, how many communications, sociology, economics (ie resource valuation), or survey design courses did you have to take in completing a biology degree?

In addition, we are gathering more information from other professional groups in fisheries seeking to do the same: Canadian Aquatic Resources Section-Committee for Certification of Canadian Professionals, AFS, Ontario Association of Biologists. The CARS committee is now working on the results of a survey of 138 diploma-granting colleges and technical institutes to determine the requirements for degrees in fisheries and related programs. These results will be published in the next issue of *Fisheries*. The plan is to compare course requirements in Canada to those in the U.S. to establish AFS Canadian Certification standards. Our Chapter position statement and other input generated from our workshop could then be forwarded to these other groups seeking the same end to lend support and ideas. We certainly want a voice from Ontario heard in the development of Canadian Certification standards, don't we??

We would like to hear from each of you on this workshop idea and the role of our Chapter. We believe it should be held within the next 6 months, so perhaps some of you might be aware of an event (ie Midwest Conf. in Toronto) or place (someone's backyard!!) where we could hold a half or one day workshop to flesh out this position statement.

The AFS certification criteria are attached to the newsletter for your information. Thanks again to all the respondents!! Next stop--Workshop and Chapter Position Statement.📧

*Bev Ritchie*

## Editors' Notes

Some of the news contained within this edition of the Newsletter is not good news - our meeting on Native fisheries issues has been put on hold, and the name change didn't go through.

However, there is lots of good news. There is Parent Society support for the establishment of a Canadian AFS Office (both moral and financial) and CARS has become a reality. We will soon see some real progress within AFS on Canadian Issues. This progress will only be enhanced with more of our Chapter members joining the Parent Society and CARS.

We would like to thank all contributors for their timely submissions and apologize for our tardiness in producing the Newsletter. Finally, if you have any suggestions or submissions for our next newsletter, please send them to us prior to December 10<sup>th</sup>.📧

*Helen Ball and Alan Dextrase*

## AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

### NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO CHAPTER

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Randy Wepruk - President  
Kim Armstrong - President-Elect  
Dana Kinsman - Secretary/Treasurer  
Helen Ball, Al Dextrase - Newsletter Editors

#### COMMITTEES

Membership - Ed Paleczny (Chair), Ed Iwachewski, Rod Sein  
Fund-Raising - Dana Kinsman (Chair), Walter Momot, Rod Sein  
Certification - Bev Ritchie (Chair), Walter Momot, Terry Marshall

## PARENT SOCIETY AND DIVISION NEWS

### News from CARS

The Canadian Aquatic Resources Section is less than one year old, but already represents a strong voice in Canadian AFS matters. CARS is involved in numerous activities, ranging from environmental concern to certification/credentialism matters. Our efforts have been concentrated on two issues, however, which are considered instrumental in the overall success of AFS expansion plans in Canada.

At the forefront has been the subject of a name change. Canadian members have indicated that this is a pivotal issue - a change to a more generic name is of utmost importance in the fulfilment of AFS goals in this country. Our Section, and the previous Canadian Concerns Committee, have done everything possible to relay this message to other AFS members. We have inundated newsletter editors in AF Divisions, Sections, and Chapters with requests to publish articles which outline the need for such a change, from our perspective. Three recent articles published in *Fisheries*, expound on this subject.

The time was ripe for a Society-wide vote on this issue. CARS presented a motion to alter the constitution of the Society to reflect a more appropriate name at the Annual Meeting in Rapid City (Sept. 92). The name 'North American Fisheries Society' was offered as an alternative. Unfortunately the

motion failed as only 42% of voting members (including proxies) supported the name change. Despite this apparent set-back, progress made in other areas should convince Canadian members that AFS is committed to pursuing aquatic resource management initiatives in Canada.

The second issue of importance is the establishment of a Canadian office. A motion of support for this endeavour was passed at the 1991 annual AFS meeting, but little was accomplished in the ensuing months. During the meeting in Rapid City, the Parent Society gave unanimous support for the motion to provide immediate funding to advance CARS initiatives in 1992/1993 (\$5,500 US) and to provide the proceeds from the 1993 and 1994 AFS Raffles to help establish a Canadian Office of AFS.

The first annual meeting of CARS was convened at Rapid City on September 14<sup>th</sup>. At this meeting, we developed a 92/93 action plan for CARS. The action plan is very ambitious and will require significant involvement from CARS members. If your interested in helping out, please contact Terry Marshall.

While progress has been slow during the last year, overall we are gaining considerable ground. We now have a well-defined section and with continued concerted effort, we can mould the Society into an organization responsive to the needs of all Canadian members.

Terry Marshall

## NCD Special Regulations Committee

The Draft Position Statement on Special Fishing Regulations will be discussed by NCD's Executive Committee at the Midwest Fish And Wildlife Conference in Toronto this December. The executive summary of the statement is included below.

The Position Statement was prepared by the NCD Special Regulations Committee:  
Tim Goeman (MN) Chair  
Dave Willis (SD)  
Nic Baccante (ON)  
Don Bonneau (IA)  
Gary Novinger (MO)  
Rick Clark (MI)

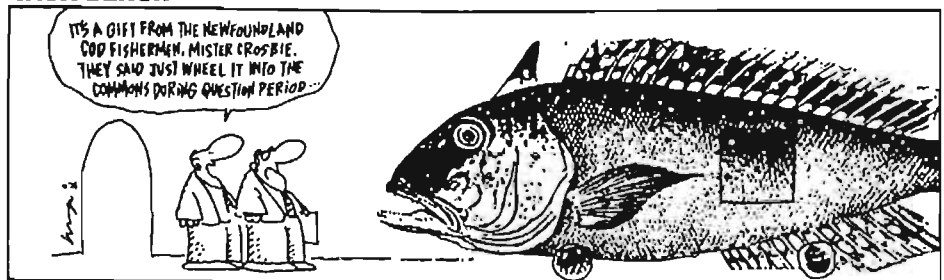
### Executive Summary

Special fishing regulations are defined as those that differ considerably from province-wide or statewide regulations. These special regulations can be used effectively as fishery management tools by controlling angler harvest, allowing for management of unique waters or fisheries, reserving certain fisheries for specific activities, or protection of threatened or endangered species. A clear statement of the purpose for application of a special regulation is essential. Public participation in the development of realistic goals and attainable objectives will help ensure angler support and compliance once a special regulation is implemented. An adequate evaluation and timely reporting of the efficacy of the regulation are the final components of the process used by the fishery professional. Special regulations can provide an opportunity for the fishery manager to educate clientele regarding realistic expectations for a fishery while improving professional and agency credibility. Fishery professionals who take a proactive, scientific approach to special fishing regulations can create long-term positive changes for the resource and the resource user.

The complete position statement can be found in the spring issue of *Mainstream*, the newsletter of the North Central Division of AFS.

Nick Baccante

### BACK BENCH



## NEWS FROM NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO

### Lac Seul

A lake-wide creel survey was conducted on Lac Seul during the open-water season of 1992. The purpose of this survey was to update the most recent lake-wide information (1986) for evaluating the effectiveness of the slot size, as well as preparing for the 5-year review of the Lac Seul Management Plan. Preliminary analysis shows that although fishing effort has increased, walleye harvest is down and catch rates have improved (i.e. more walleye are being released). Although the walleye population is holding its own under increased pressure, harvest is still excessive in some of the management zones of the lake. A Public Advisory Committee has developed a set of recommendations for the MNR to consider when it conducts a review of the management plan this winter. Public workshops for this review will be conducted in late November. For more details, please contact Paul MacMahon at the MNR District Office in Sioux Lookout.

In 1990 and 1991, the muskellunge fishery on Lac Seul burgeoned. Although muskellunge have always been present in Lac Seul, there were few anglers who knew about the fishery. As more anglers discovered the great trophy fishing, word of mouth and eventually publicity from magazine articles and fishing shows, produced a large migration of muskie anglers to Lac Seul. As a result, a large number trophy fish (>50" and >40 lbs.) were harvested in the last few years.

Although we did not have any 'hard' data, we feared that we could lose this unique fishery under the existing 34" minimum size limit. After public consultation, the MNR reduced the possession limit to zero muskellunge on Lac Seul (catch and release only), until such time as information is available to set an appropriate size limit for the lake. This action received virtually unanimous public support from tourist operators as well as Canadian and American muskie anglers. Some of the required information was collected during 1992 through our creel survey, and a cooperative angler diary program.

We are currently working with Lakehead University, Muskies Inc., and Muskies Canada to get an M.Sc. research project up and running in 1993. The purpose of this project will be to examine the biology of the Lac Seul muskellunge population, as well as to develop appropriate management

strategies for the population. If you know of any potential students, please contact Alan Dextrase at the MNR Sioux Lookout District Office, or Walter Momot at Lakehead University.

*Alan Dextrase*

### Remedial Action Plans

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement was amended in 1987 by Canada and the U.S. The Parties concluded that the best way to preserve the aquatic ecosystem and achieve improved water quality throughout the Great Lakes System was by adopting common objectives and developing and implementing cooperative programs and other measures. The Parties further resolved to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.

The parties in cooperation with state and provincial governments and the International Joint Commission (IJC) agreed to designate geographic Areas of Concern (AOCs), develop and implement Remedial Action Plans for Areas of Concern and abide by certain general principles. These included the embodiment of a systematic and comprehensive ecosystem approach to restoring and protecting beneficial uses in Areas of Concern or in open lake water, the provision of an historical record a consultation with the public in all actions taken.

The Remedial Action Plans are to proceed in 3 Stages. Stage 1 defines problems including degradation of fish and wildlife populations, fish tumours or other deformities, bird or animal deformities or reproduction problems, degradation of benthos, degradation of phytoplankton and zooplankton populations and loss of fish and wildlife habitat. In Stage 2 remedial measures are selected to restore beneficial uses and agency or group responsibilities are delineated. In Stage 3 the results of monitoring are reported along with recommendations for de-listing as beneficial uses are restored. The IJC reviews and comments on each stage, not only for the benefit of the federal, provincial and state agencies, but also to ensure the provisions of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement are

being met.

Teams were set up to prepare Remedial Action Plans for each of the 12 all-Canadian AOCs. Representatives came generally from the Ontario Ministries of Environment (MOE), Natural Resources (MNR), Agriculture and Food and the Canadian Departments of the Environment and Fisheries and Oceans. Most of these RAP teams had established Public Advisory Committees (PACs) of citizens representing local interests.

To date RAP development in Ontario has been spearheaded by MOE. This is in part due to emphasis on the obvious water quality problem and the perceived tremendous cost of cleaning up sediments, upgrading sewage treatment plants, and sewer systems, and the perception that these problems belong to MOE. But this is only one aspect of RAP's. Another aspect, which involves the MNR, is the restoration of aquatic habitats and fish and wildlife populations.

As in the open water of the Great Lakes, the connection between contaminants and fish and wildlife resources in the AOCs goes beyond edibility and reproductive problems to the insidious effects of bio-accumulation at all life stages and ecosystematic levels. Understanding of this relationship and that between aquatic habitats and fish and wildlife populations at all life stages is poor. However, the inclusion of fish and wildlife population and habitat restoration in the clean up of the Great Lakes is beginning to be recognized and the profile of MNR has risen dramatically since 1991.

On the Canadian side of the Great Lakes, 17 RAPs have been completed to Stage 1 and sent to the IJC for comment.

The table below summarizes the anticipated schedule of submissions of RAPS to the IJC for Canadian AOCs by stage. Estimates are in brackets.

Areas of Concern	Stage 1	Stage 2
Thunder Bay	Oct 91	(Dec 92)
Nipigon Bay	Oct 91	(Dec 92)
Jackfish Bay	Oct 91	(Dec 92)
Peninsula Harbour	Oct 91	(Dec 92)
St Mary's River	May 92	
Spanish River	June 92	
Seyn Sound	May 89	
Collingwood Harbour	May 89	June 92
St Clair River	Feb 92	

Areas of Concern	Stage 1	Stage 2
Detroit River	Aug 91	
Wheatley Harbour	June 92	
Niagara River	June 92	June 92
Hamilton Harbour	Oct 89	June 92
Metro Toronto	Feb 90	
Port Hope Harbour	Feb 90	June 92
Bay of Quinte	Jan 90	June 92
St Lawrence River	May 92	

Remedial Action Planning is unique in a number of ways - but the most significant are the involvement of stakeholders and the recognition that new and innovative means of accumulating the required money will be necessary. Stakeholders, including representatives of industry, members of the public and leaders of municipal and non-government organizations, are giving hundreds of their personal hours to develop the tactics and secure the funds to clean-up AOCs.

Jim Atkinson, MNR RAP Coordinator, Maple

## CALENDAR

December 4-5, 1992 - *Cumulative Impact Assessment Workshop* - Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto, Ontario. Sponsored by CARS, NCD, and Continuing Education Section - see Newsletter insert for registration information.

December 6-9, 1992 - *54<sup>th</sup> Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference & Annual Meeting of the North Central Division of AFS* - Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto, Ontario. Contact Laurel Winston-Smith, OMNR, Wildlife Policy Branch, Sixth Floor, 90 Shepherd Avenue East, North York, Ontario, M2N 3A1, (416) 314-1068.

January 3-4, 1993 - *Canadian Conference for Fisheries Research* - Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario. Contact Dr. Daniel Boisclair, Biological Sciences Dept., University of Montreal, P.O. Box 6128, Station A, Montreal, PQ, H3C 3J7, (514) 343-6762.

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Northwestern Ontario Chapter of the American Fisheries Society is a scientific and professional, non-profit organization composed of persons interested in the conservation and enhancement of fisheries resources. The purpose of the Chapter is to: advance the conservation, development and wise use of fisheries resources; gather and disseminate information on fisheries science and management; and promote and evaluate the educational, scientific, and technical aspects of the fisheries profession.

Our Chapter has been active for over 10 years, drawing together fisheries workers with a common purpose. The Chapter publishes three newsletters annually, and hosts an annual business meeting and conference.

Inquiries about the Chapter and its activities should be directed to : **Randy Wepruk**, President, c/o Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 922 Scott Street, Fort Frances, Ontario, P9A 1J4.

Please mail the following membership application with dues enclosed to :

**Dana Kinsman**  
Secretary/Treasurer  
American Fisheries Society  
Northwestern Ontario Chapter  
c/o Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 448  
Ignace, Ontario  
P0T 1T0

Membership dues are \$10.00 annually (\$5.00 for AFS Parent Society members)

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### NWO-AFS Membership Application Form

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_