

**MSSFA Presidents and Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**MUCC Headquarters, Lansing, Mi.**  
**Saturday, Jan. 16, 2010**

1. The meeting was called to order by Rick Balabon at 10:00am. A 26 member quorum was present.
2. A presentation about Asian Carp was given. The Bighead (100#) and Silver (60#) grow twice as fast as any fish other fish in the Mississippi river system, consuming plankton at 40% of their body weight per day. They are filter feeders that prefer warm, turbid, fast current rivers for breeding purposes. There are not many rivers that fit this bill in the upper Great Lakes, but in the lower Great Lakes the risk of establishing a breeding population would be much greater. The Chicago sanitary canal passes 2 billion gallons of Lake Michigan water per day into the Mississippi river system. A host of invasive species (longspine daphnia, mottled fingernail clam, skip jack herring) have entered the Mississippi from Lake Michigan. Asian carp have been located in the DesPlaines River, parallel to the sanitary canal. If the river floods, the fish could readily move into the sanitary canal and then on to Lake Michigan. \$13 million has been designated to put a barrier between Des Plaines and the Chicago shipping canal. An electric barrier that was installed to arrest the migration of gobies into the Mississippi River system (unsuccessfully) is now used to inhibit the migration of Asian Carp. A second (more powerful 5 volt) barrier is being built to supplement the 2 volt barrier. On December 9<sup>th</sup>, the canal was poisoned with Rotenone while maintenance was performed on the electric barrier. No Asian Carp were found during the poisoning. A University of Notre Dame research group has used a new method of collecting DNA samples from the canal system. They reportedly have collected a positive DNA sample of Asian Carp from above the electric barrier. There are a number of ways (transferred from a barge hull, fish moving upstream then back down, etc.) that the DNA could have arrived there. Some biologists are concerned about the accuracy of the Notre Dame results because the DNA research methods have not been released for peer review. Never the less, many biologists believe that the best strategy may be to apply Rotenone to the canal system all the way back into the Mississippi River for 200 miles. This would put a major check onto the migration of these Carp while a permanent solution to stop the migration path is found.
3. A presentation on letter writing and petitioning with regard to the Asian Carp issue was given by the Metro-West Chapter President. An information package with guidelines was distributed to all the chapter representatives. Ben Morlack, of the state attorney general office public relations, clarified the injunction application to the Federal Supreme Court for closing the Chicago Sanitary Ship Canal.
4. A presentation about an endowment to Michigan State University fisheries management students was given by Howard Tanner (originator of the great lakes salmon program). Howard has authored a historical presentation of the Michigan salmon program that lasts 30-40 minutes. Howard offered to give this presentation to any local chapter that was interested. The presentations are scheduled through John Hesse (Mid-Michigan chapter). Contact John at 517-626-6194 or [hessej@msu.edu](mailto:hessej@msu.edu) for arrangements. Howard reminisced that as a DNR fisheries biologist, he and many other biologists made strong public objections to the importation of Asian Carp for the southern fish farmers by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. For the Mississippi River system and possibly beyond, it is unfortunate that their objections were ignored.
5. A tribal update was given by Jim VanderMaas. Abandoned nets are the worst tribal fisheries problem. A policy that you must turn in used nets before you can get new ones would help to

solve the problem. The Grand Traverse Bay tribe pulled two abandoned nets from the bay in November. The Little River Band tribe adjudicated abandoned net cases in Ludington and Manistee. The Bay de Noc walleye violation case is in the Sioux Band tribal court. The DNR commercial law unit pulled 3400 feet of abandoned gill net from the water this year. Call the RAP line if you spot an unmarked gill net. Manistee area has 6 trap nets; Ludington has 10 nets; Leland has 3 nets. Gill net locations are not online as yet.

**6.** A report was given on a "conservation coalition" group by Jim VanderMaas. The group wants to amend Executive Order #45 which recombined the DNR and DEQ. The group wants the jurisdiction of licensing fees and rules of take to be under the Natural Resource Commission instead of the DNR/DEQ.

**7.** A Sea Grant Lake Michigan workshop report was given by Dennis Eade. Sea Lamprey wounding rate has declined since 2006. A Cisco (lake herring) study concluded that the species collapsed due to low dissolved oxygen levels (< 11.2 ppm) during the annual November – January spawning period. Green Bay has 16-18 ppm during the spawning period and is the proposed stocking area for the hardy strain from Grand Traverse Bay. A 50-75% survival rate is anticipated and the Cisco could provide 15% of the dietary requirement for Chinook salmon.

**7. Continued...** Over 50% of Chinook caught are naturally reproduced. Alewife biomass is up for the one year olds which make up largest share of Chinook diet. The other major diet share will be Mysis (opossum shrimp). Platte River hatchery will raise and release 1.6 million Coho. The Brown Trout strain is being changed from Seeforellon and Wild Rose to Sturgeon River (slower growing). Stocking will ramp up in Ludington, Frankfort, and Manistee from 2010-2014. 9000 cormorants were culled in 2009 and 20,000 will be culled in 2010. Forage fish diets continue to change... diporeia and phytoplankton decline dramatically as quagga (dreissena) mussels increase. Mysis (shrimp) and copepods (zooplankton) make up the remaining dietary choices. There has been a 26% decline in Alewife weight. Remaining forage fish are round gobies (lower energy food source), chubs, and deep water sculpin (300').

**8.** A Lake Huron report was given by Ken Merckel. The 2009 DNR budget was cut by \$3 million. Brown Trout were released at 13" instead of 11". The planting was very healthy (good fat index). Steelhead planting from 2010-2013 will occur in Harrisville/Mill Creek, Oscoda/Van Etton, and Harbor Beach. Predator avoidance planting experiments will be tried in 2010 that include earlier and longer pen and raceway acclimation (until fish reach smolting stage). The hope is that stronger, well imprinted fish will get out to deep water sooner and avoid cormorant predation. Cormorant harassment during plantings will continue. Atlantic salmon production is a go for the Platte River hatchery for release into Lake Huron after a difficult 18 month rearing period. The Cisco project proceeds (to provide alternative prey and recreational fishing) with 40,000 planted in Thunder Bay. A plant of 80,000 (distributed to various sites) is planned for 2011.

**9.** Executive Director, Andy Pelt is out of the state and sent an Executive Directors report that the president read; He reported that Perch size and population in Lake Michigan is up. The stocking rates for 2010 will be the same as 2009. The cost for hatchery fish food increased 30% in 2009.

### **Board Meeting Minutes**

**1.** Motion (Pietila) to accept the minutes as presented... Second (Hunt)...passed.

**2.** Financial Report (Haddad)... Motion (Foster) to table report until next meeting... Second (Hunt)...passed.

**3.** Decals for promotion and fund raising (Haddad)...Motion (Foster) to charge chapters \$1.00 per decal...Second (Hunt)...passed.

**4.** Membership (Gumbrecht)... After 2 months of membership expiration, the name will be dropped from the rolls. Greg displayed the new decals, membership cards, and membership applications. Current membership is xxxxx. Henry Nabors (Metro-West) mentioned that his chapter does not sell raffle tickets at the shows. Instead, they sell the Steelheaders as an organization and specifically, their chapter. They signed up 52 new members in 2009 using this format.

**5.** Dues / Assessment (Balabon)... This subject should be discussed at the local chapter meetings. If we can increase membership numbers by March 2010, the increase could become a non issue.

**6.** It Pays to Belong (Davis)... It is Important to remind members of the vendor benefits. The savings really add up.

**7.** GLSFN Report (Pilara)... Mailing of issues has been largely resolved as the papers are in the mail within 24 hours after printing. There are new guidelines for ad sales which limit the # of sales calls allowed per ad. All trade outs of equipment and merchandise for ad space are mailed to Debbie French for accounting in QuickBooks before being sold to distributor.

**8.** Chapter contact lists (Balabon)... The updated contact list was distributed by Rick Balabon.

**9.** Membership Challenge (Potts) No prize's as of yet and trying to get some more info. from previous membership committee members... Motion (Potts) to table until next meeting...Second (Foster)...passed.

**10.** Consent Agenda Format (Beltor)... Mary Jane distributed an alternative meeting agenda model with the aim of improving the way that board of director business proceeds. Directors will review the model and discuss the suggestions at the next meeting.

**11.** Good of the Order... The Fishing simulator is stored at the Mid-Michigan chapter presidents' home. The Mid-Michigan Swap Meet will be held at the Lansing Days Inn on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Steve Beumer (Holland) distributed a sign-up sheet for the "2010 Steelheader Challenge" tournament which will be held in Holland on May 22<sup>nd</sup> (7am-1pm) and members from all MSSFA Chapters are invited to attend. Grand Haven chapter will be replacing all their net pens this year.

Motion (Sickon) to adjourn...Second (Foster)...passed.

Respectfully Submitted by Gerald Sickon