



President's Message

I hope 2005 is treating everyone well! And I hope that you will find the time this year to get involved with the AFS and the Northeastern Division (NED)! We are currently focusing on planning for our annual meeting which will be held in conjunction with the 61st Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference, April 17-20, in Virginia Beach, VA. If you have not yet submitted your abstract, don't worry – you have until February 25, 2005 (see call for papers below). I hope many of you will take the opportunity to come to the meeting to present your research and interact with fellow fisheries professionals in the Northeast!

One focus for the NED for this year is trying to become more accessible to students. We have increased the award amounts for the John Moring Travel Award to help students get to the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference to present research findings and network with fisheries professionals – please point your favorite student to the John Moring Travel Award opportunity described below. We also have an active liaison with the Student Subsection of the Education Section and there are many ways for students to get involved – if you are interested in the AFS and are in the Northeast, contact Justin Davis (justin.p.davis@uconn.edu).

Take a minute or two to reflect on those whose activities and accomplishments make you proud to say you are a fisheries professional – why not nominate these individuals or groups for the NED awards for this year? There are many deserving candidates in the Northeast, and we are currently seeking nominations (see call for awards below).

Finally, please take a few minutes to ensure that your contact information (including e-mail) is current with the American Fisheries Society. We are increasingly relying on e-mail as a way to communicate with our members – for example, you should expect to receive your ballot for this year's election and news regarding our bylaw changes via email during the next couple of months. If e-mail is not a good way to reach you, please let me know how we should reach you in the future (my contact information is listed on the attached NED leaders list).

Best wishes for a happy, productive, and safe 2005! See you in Virginia Beach!

Paola Ferreri

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The Northeast Fish Rapper



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61st Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference

Abstracts accepted until Feb. 25, 2005

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries announces the 61st Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference April 17-20, 2005 at the Cavalier Hotel in Virginia Beach, Virginia. You are cordially invited to submit presentation and poster abstracts for review and inclusion in the conference program. We are interested in developing sessions that involve Wildlife, Fisheries (including freshwater, marine, and anadromous), Conservation Law Enforcement, Information and Education, Real Property Management, Conservation Engineering, and Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy topics. Abstract submissions will be received through February 25, 2005. For more information about abstract submission procedures, format, and presentation or poster guidelines, visit www.conted.vt.edu/nefishwild/ If any organization, agency, or individual has an idea or subject matter for a particular symposium, session, or workshop, and wants to

help coordinate program development, please contact the appropriate Session Chair (contacts on the web site) as soon as possible. To reserve a room and/or make arrangements for a special meeting outside the technical sessions go to the Special Meetings section of the web site.

Aquatic Resource Conservation through the State Wildlife Grant Program

The Northeastern Division of AFS is sponsoring a half-day session highlighting aquatic resource conservation programs funded through the State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Program at the 61st Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in Virginia Beach, VA on April 17-20, 2005. The session will feature presenters from across the Northeast discussing how this program is being used to advance aquatic resource conservation in their states. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Federal Assistance will provide an overview of work to date under the SWG program that in fiscal year 2004 provided \$13.7 million to Northeast states. Presenters



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from New York and Connecticut, where a number of aquatic SWG projects are in place, will describe how this work relates to statewide species planning efforts required under the program. Other presenters will focus on specific projects they are leading in their states, and report on progress to date. The session will cover a diversity of topic areas (e.g., freshwater and marine invertebrates, non-game fishes, habitat restoration, and fish and shellfish restoration), including a wide range of aquatic species and species groups (e.g., paddlefish, freshwater mussels, longear sunfish, river herring, American eel, Atlantic sturgeon, bay scallops and horseshoe crab). This half-day session was developed to complement a larger symposium that will focus on Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies that are required to be submitted by October 1, 2005 to participate in the SWG program.

East Coast Trout Management & Culture Workshop IV

Lock Haven State University, PA June 6 - 8, 2005

First Call for Papers

The Southern Division AFS Trout Committee announces the 4th East Coast Trout Management and Culture Workshop June 6-8, 2005 at Lock Haven State University in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania. This workshop is unique in providing a forum for both managers and trout culturists to share results, techniques and concerns. Since East Coast III in 2000, priorities, concerns and public demands have shifted for both management and culture staffs. This conference will emphasize presentations on the current status of native brook trout populations, brook trout management, trout stream restoration, challenges of new hatchery effluent standards, hatchery BMPs and renovations, and the impact of any change in production on management programs. All other topics related to trout management will be considered for inclusion in the workshop program as well.

Fisheries managers, culturists, researchers, administrators, and sportsmen are encouraged to

participate in this workshop. You are encouraged to submit an abstract for review and inclusion in the conference program. Presentations may include reviews of pertinent works, recently completed studies or preliminary results that are innovative solutions to the challenges we face in managing our coldwater resources. Those wishing to present at this workshop must send an abstract to Larry Mohn larry.mohn@dgif.virginia.gov for management topics or George Duckwall george.duckwall@dgif.virginia.gov for culture topics by March 11, 2005. Abstracts or extended abstracts should be in MICROSOFT WORD, can be up to four, double-spaced pages with additional tables and figures, and will be published. Please use New Times Roman 12 font. All abstracts should include title, name and addresses of each author, and telephone number of the presenter.

Registration will be \$55 for day participants and \$125 or \$150 for overnight attendees (depending on arrival date). The workshop agenda, registration form, and additional meeting information can be downloaded from the Southern Division AFS Trout Committees website www.sdafs.org/trout Pre-registration is strongly encouraged and registration rates will increase after April 30, 2005.

For additional meeting information contact Steve Reeser steve.reeser@dgif.virginia.gov

AFS 135th Annual Meeting

The 135th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society, which is co-convening with the annual meetings of the Western Division and Alaska Chapter, along with the Lowell Wakefield Symposium, will take place in Anchorage, 11-15 September 2005. The meeting theme is "Creating a Fisheries Mosaic: Connections Across Jurisdictions, Disciplines, and Cultures". For details regarding the meeting, please check the AFS web page (<http://www.wdafs.org/Anchorage2005/index.htm>).



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STUDENTS – Get Involved!

The Student Subsection of the Education Section of the AFS is a great place for students to learn more about and get involved with AFS! Our NED liaison with the Student Subsection is:

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If you are interested in finding out about and getting involved in student activities related to AFS and the Northeastern Division, please get in touch with Justin!

John Moring Student Travel Award

The Northeastern Division of the American Fisheries Society supports student travel to the 61st Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference through **The John Moring Student Travel Award**. The John Moring Student Travel Award is a competitive award for students that will be presenting a poster or oral presentation at the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference and students who will be attending the conference to carry out the Division's business. **Students who are AFS members will receive \$175 and will be reimbursed for the cost of early registration. Students who are not currently members of the AFS will receive \$100, reimbursement of early registration, and 1-year membership to AFS.** To apply, please submit the following:

1. A copy of your abstract (if you are presenting a paper or poster) or a statement of how your activities will support the Division's business;
2. A letter specifying your need for assistance with travel costs to attend the 61st Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference (include your AFS member number if you are a member); and
3. A letter of support from your advisor.

Submit materials by **25 MARCH 2005** to:

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Call for Award Nominations

The Northeastern Division of the American Fisheries Society annually presents several awards to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to fisheries, to the Division, and to AFS. Please consider nominating one or more of your colleagues for these awards! Any Division member can submit a nomination. The deadline for nominations is March 18, 2005. Awards will be presented at the 61st Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference, April 17-20, 2005 in Virginia Beach, VA. The strongest nominations typically include a resume of the nominee, a letter of nomination, and supporting letters.

DWIGHT A. WEBSTER MEMORIAL AWARD

This award is presented annually and is the most prestigious recognition given by the Northeastern Division. It may be awarded for any of the following achievements:

- Lifelong contributions to fisheries science and the profession in the Northeast or while working in the Northeast;
- Meritorious/prestigious service to the profession and fisheries;
- Significant academic or technical accomplishments; and
- Long-term service in the Northeastern Division as an AFS member.

PRESIDENTS' AWARD

This award is presented to an individual who is selected by Past-Presidents and the incumbent President; it is not limited to Past-Presidents.



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The recipient need not be a current AFS member, and the award need not be presented annually. The award may be presented for any or all the following achievements:

- Promotion of fisheries management and upholding ideals of professionalism; and
- Dedication to AFS and employer.

MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

This award is presented to an individual AFS member for any or all of the following:

- Leadership and service to the profession and/or AFS;
- Substantial achievements for AFS and the fisheries resource; and
- Significant long-term service to the Northeast Division.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award recognizes an individual or group acting as a team or committee for any or all of the following special accomplishments:

- Notable contribution(s) for conservation and/or the fisheries profession within the Northeastern Division; and
- Administrative or project-related accomplishments.

The recipient(s) need not be an AFS member(s) and the award need not be presented annually.

To make a nomination for any of these awards, please send a resume of the nominee, a letter of nomination, and supporting letters by MARCH 18, 2005 to:

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NED Chapter Updates

Mid-Atlantic Chapter:

The fall meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter was held in Delaware at the Ommelanden Hunter Education Training Center in New Castle. The theme of the meeting was Human Dimensions in Fisheries with presentations on fish consumption advisories, angler attitude and preference, angler tagging programs, and recruiting ethical anglers. The meeting was well attended with fisheries professionals from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, as well as students and faculty from area colleges and universities.

The new executive committee was installed and discussions for the upcoming spring meeting discussed. The Chapter's spring meeting will most likely be held in New Jersey at the Rider University campus at a date still to be determined. All of the presentations at the spring meeting will be by the student members of the chapter, with a poster session open to the full membership. Final meeting arrangements will be posted on the website, or for more information contact Craig.Shirey@state.de.us



The Division Needs Your Help Chair of Finance Committee

Do you regularly follow the ups-and-downs of the stock market? Are you interested in investments and financing? If so, you might be the perfect person to provide a much needed service to the Northeastern Division – we are in need of someone with some market savvy to serve as Chair of the Finance Committee for the Division. If you are interested, or know someone who might be good as the Chair, please contact Paola Ferreri (cpf3@psu.edu).



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Annual AIC meeting to be held

The Atlantic International Chapter of AFS will hold its annual meeting on September 25-27 at the Rangeley Inn, Rangeley, Maine.

Details are still being worked out, however one full day of presentations plus an evening session on Sunday and a morning session on Tuesday are anticipated. In addition, the annual business meeting will be held to elect new officers.

Goals for both the chapter and the meeting are to support and increase student involvement by recruiting students to present and participate, as well as offering a travel stipend to student presenters. Increased participation among biologists working in the marine environment is also hoped for. Details will be forthcoming in the Atlantic International Chapter newsletter, and on the website: (<http://www.fisheries.org/aic/>).

NED FISHERIES IN THE NEWS

The Connecticut May Look The Same, But It Has Changed A Lot Since 1975

By STEVE GRANT
Courant Staff Writer

Its waters rise and fall over the seasons, but otherwise the Connecticut River seems so stable, so unchanging.

Not so. Under that often-placid surface is a dynamic, ever-changing environment where, over the past three decades, a virtual revolution has transformed the river's fish life.

"Most people would think, 'Yeah, there probably have been some changes, but they're probably relatively modest.' What really turns out is that the changes are nothing short of dramatic," said William Hyatt, director of inland fisheries for the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The changes are documented in a just-published collection of scientific papers by a team of scientists who studied the river's ecology more than three decades ago and went back in recent years for another look.

Their findings are startling, and reflect some of the broad national environmental trends and issues of recent decades, from improved water quality to the threat of invasive species, overexploitation of resources, and global warming.

The original Connecticut River Ecological Study, conducted from 1965 to 1973, was intended as a baseline assessment of the river as the Connecticut Yankee nuclear power plant in Haddam went into service. One issue at the time was the potential impact of discharged cooling water from the plant, which went into service in 1968 and ceased operating in 1996.

The study was overseen by Dan Merriman, a professor at Yale University, and Lyle Thorpe, former director of the state Board of Fisheries and Game. Much of the work was carried out by four young scientists; William C. Leggett, Barton C. Marcy, Ronald R. Massengill and Paul M. Jacobson.

In recent years, Leggett, Marcy, Massengill and Jacobson, either retired or in the later years of their careers, conducted a reassessment in conjunction with other researchers.

"It was the starting point for all our careers," Jacobson said of the original study. "For all of us to be able to renew our friendships and do something important from the scientific point of view is very satisfying."

Among other findings, researchers report:

The channel catfish, a species not native to the river and "relatively rare" in the late 1960s, is now the most common member of the catfish family found in the river, possibly displacing brown bullheads, which are native to the state, and white catfish, which are not.

Alewives and blueback herring, once abundant in the river in spring, are declining, with the blueback "in serious decline." Striped bass, which prey on them, are thought to be a significant factor in their reduced numbers.

Gizzard shad and hickory shad, two species essentially unknown in the river 30 years ago, have expanded their ranges north and now are found in sizeable numbers in the Connecticut. Meanwhile, numbers of American shad, the most sought-after shad, have decreased.

The redbreast sunfish, a native species not seen at all in the Haddam area 30 years ago, has undergone a "significant" population expansion since then.

A number of factors are at work, the researchers believe. When the first study was conducted, water quality in the Connecticut may have been as poor as it ever was. Since then, federal and state environmental laws have brought about a major improvement.

At the same time, the average water temperature has risen several degrees, which Jacobson said probably is caused by a combination of global warming and increased development in the Connecticut Valley.

That change in water temperature could have negative implications for some species, notably Atlantic salmon, the object of a 37-year-old restoration effort in the Connecticut.

One compelling reason for the follow-up, Jacobson said, was to assess the impact of the now-idled power plant on the river's ecology.

There is no question the plant had an impact; it sent enormous amounts of heated cooling-water into the river throughout its lifetime, affecting the ecology in the immediate area of the river, though studies suggested the impact was comparatively slight.

Overall, the study concludes there "is no evidence of any long-term impact" of the nuclear plant on the ecology of the lower river. In fact, the authors say it appears other factors,

positive and negative, such as the cleanup of the river, the explosion of invasive species and the overall increase in river temperature - even upstream of the cooling-water discharges - are having far more dramatic impacts on river ecology.

"Besides the natural, dynamic nature of this large riverine ecosystem, we layer on top what we have done with dams and pollution and pollution cleanup and introduced species," Hyatt said, "and it is clearly a system that is not in a steady state. It is still in the process of sorting things out, if you will."

UMAINE STUDENTS SCULPT WINNING SALMON

By WENDY MICHAUD

The University of Maine student subunit of AFS recently showcased their artistic talents in a snow sculpture contest. They took first place and won \$150 with their entry "*Salmo salar*." The group competed with other student organizations as part of the University of Maine's annual Winter Carnival festivities.



FIRST SIGNS OF SUCCESS FOR SEA LAMPREY CONTROL

WATERBURY, VT - Lake Champlain sea lamprey control is producing positive results, according to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

Fall assessments of sea lamprey wounds on lake trout and salmon in Lake Champlain indicate that sea lamprey attacks are down as a result of pre-2004 chemical treatments of Lewis Creek and New York streams. That is really good news in light of the fact that additional benefits of 2004 sea lamprey treatments will not be seen until the fall of 2005.

Treatments of the Winooski River and New York streams in 2004 were estimated to have killed close to 3/4 million sea lamprey ammocetes before they could transform to blood sucking predators and take their toll on Lake Champlain's fisheries.

Each year, biologists from the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sample lake trout and salmon in Lake Champlain. They count the numbers of sea lamprey wounds and determine the number of wounds found per 100 fish sampled.

Data collected last fall show the first signs of a decline in wounding rates since the end of the eight-year experimental sea lamprey control program in 1997.

The goal of the Lake Champlain sea lamprey control program is to reduce wounding rates to 25 wounds (10 wounds ideally) per 100 lake trout and 15 wounds (5 wounds ideally) per 100 landlocked salmon.

"Vermont's Congressional delegation deserves thanks for acquiring additional federal funds that will ensure money is available to Vermont and New York to continue with planned lamprey treatments on Lake Champlain tributaries," said Vermont Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Wayne Laroche. "Congress recently appropriated \$845 thousand dollars to the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission's budget that is "ear-marked" for Lake Champlain sea lamprey control." "Let's hope last fall's reduction in wounding rates will bring better lake trout and salmon fishing this year. Spring fishing will be here soon -- good fishing!"

Haddock Recovery: Managers & Fishermen Confront Challenges

BY DAVID PIERCE

Tremendous news for rebuilding of New England groundfish has raised the question: "How do we handle success?"

After decades of relatively low abundance of Georges Bank haddock caused by low to no recruitment of young fish, we're suddenly faced with the fruits of rebuilding and rising abundance of adult, spawning haddock.

Now, fisheries managers of the New England Fishery Management Council must determine how to increase protection of a phenomenal 2003 haddock year-class to ensure that it bolsters the spawning stock and provides sustained annual fishery benefits.

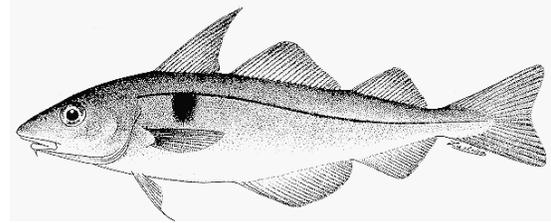
The 2003 year-class of haddock is thought to be larger than the 1963 year-class estimated to be 486 million fish at one year-old! For almost 40 years recruitment has been abysmal - seldom rising above 20 million fish. Prior to 2003, the last noteworthy recruitment was in 2000 with 75 million haddock. It's as if Rip Van Winkle has awakened.

But first, steps must be taken to ensure this year-class is not unnecessarily wasted through discarding of sublegal or legal-sized fish caught as a bycatch. Haddock traditionally have been found across all of Georges Bank, and they seasonally move around the bank and back and forth from shallow to deeper water and are commonly captured in nets targeting cod, flounders, and other species.

The New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) and the fishing industry is faced with a long sought-after bonanza. Most of these haddock will be legalsize (19") in 2006. Perhaps the haddock stock might be returning to levels of recruitment witnessed from the 1930's through the early 1960s -- recruitment averaging over 50

million fish with many greater than 100 million-fish year-classes. This is pleasant speculation.

Annual landings over that time period were frequently more than 90,000,000 lbs. supported by a stock size remaining high - even with fishing mortality levels far above what is now required by the NEFMC. Therefore, it seems that the industry within two years will have a lasting opportunity to harvest haddock.



Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey And Virginia Meet To Discuss Nonnative Oyster Research

ANNAPOLIS — In response to concerns over the environmental impact of potentially introducing a nonnative oyster species into the Chesapeake Bay, environmental officials from Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia met recently to discuss the future of oyster management in Maryland and Virginia.

During the course of open discussion and dialogue, Maryland Department of Natural Resources Associate Deputy Secretary William “Pete” P. Jensen and others briefed Delaware and New Jersey officials on the current status of the oyster Environmental Impact Statement currently underway.

The EIS, which is evaluating eight alternatives, four of which focus on native restoration and one of which focuses on introducing a reproductive nonnative species, the *Crassostrea ariakensis*, to the Chesapeake Bay.

Delaware and New Jersey expressed their concerns over the potential adverse ecological effects associated with an introduction of a new oyster species. However, Maryland and Virginia officials reiterated they would not proceed with an introduction of a new oyster species if unacceptable risks are identified as a result of the EIS process. In addition, Maryland and Virginia emphasized their need to make decisions on native oyster restoration alternatives being considered in the EIS.

Although Delaware and New Jersey environmental resource staff have previously expressed opposition to Maryland’s and Virginia’s proposal to introduce Asian oysters to the Chesapeake Bay, the four states’ representatives have agreed to await the outcome of the EIS process and the assessments that will be available this summer prior to making any judgments.

Maryland and Virginia have also agreed to include officials and experts from Delaware and New Jersey in the technical committees responsible for reviewing the research, modeling and assessments of the EIS. Then, acting together, the four states reiterated the request that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convene meetings of the Interstate Shellfish Transport Committee (Maine to Florida) in recognition of potential coast-wide implications of this EIS.

"We appreciate Secretary Franks willingness to consider our concerns and we look forward to reviewing the reports when available," said Brad Campbell, New Jersey’s Commissioner of Environmental Protection.

At the end of the day, all four states’ officials reaffirmed their commitment to continue efforts to restore native oyster populations in Delaware and Chesapeake Bays.

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