



American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists

Promoting excellence in fishery science

Website: www.iattc.org/aifrb/

... BRIEFS ...

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Founding Fellow Collier Now Texas Hall of Famer

Founding Fellow Albert Collier was inducted into the Texas Hall of Fame for Science, Mathematics, and Technology on January 20, 2003. His introduction to the group assembled in Austin was by Sammy Ray, long time AIFRB membership committee chair and himself a prior inductee into the Hall of Fame. Collier was one of but nine inductees for 2003 and was recognized for his contribution to marine biology. Other disciplines recognized included astronomy, aeronautical engineering, ecology and evolutionary biology, biological sciences, chemistry, biotechnology, psychiatry, and the category "champion for science". The induction ceremony included recognition of the inductees, dinner, and entertainment by Campanas de America and by the University of Texas Ballet de Folklórico.

By: Gene Huntsman and Sammy Ray



Sammy Ray (left) and Founding Fellow Albert Collier at ceremony inducting new members to the Texas Hall of Fame for Science, Mathematics and Technology. Both are now members of the Hall of Fame. Photo provided by Sammy Ray.

Soh Receives Award



Past President Gary Sakagawa (left) presented a plaque and a check to the recipient of the W.F. Thompson Award for the best student paper of 2001 to Dr. Sung Kwon Soh of Korea at a ceremony at Raratonga, the Cook Islands, in early October 2003. Dr. Soh's paper, "The potential role of marine reserves in the management of shortfin rockfish (*Sebastes borealis*) and roughey rockfish (*Sebastes aleutianus*) in the Gulf of Alaska, was coauthored with Donald Gunderson and Daniel Ito and published in *Fishery Bulletin* 99: 168-179.

Note: Educators and mentors should not fail to nominate eligible works for the 2002 award. Submissions should be to Jack Pearce, Thompson Award Committee Chair.

Selling AIFRB!!

Report and Recommendations

Recruitment & Marketing Committee 2002-2003

Co-Chairs: Marty Golden – Southern California District, Gilbert C. Radonski – Carolinas District

Members: Kim Anthony – Southern California District, Jon Brodziak – Northeast District, Dieter Busch – Keystone District, David Cowley – New Mexico & Arizona District, James Haynes – Keystone District, John Merriner – Carolinas District, William Phoel – Keystone District, Don Schloesser – Great Lakes District

Goals & Objectives:

The goals and objectives of this Committee are to identify ways to enhance the recruitment of new members and the retention of existing members to ensure a viable organization for the future. The charge of this Committee is to come up with ideas that can be implemented to meet these goals and objectives.

Preamble:

Richard Schaefer, upon assuming the duties of the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists (AIFRB) President, stated concern for retention/recruitment of AIFRB members. He cited the problem of a maturing AIFRB

The AIFRB is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization (EIN 61-6050711).

population noting that fish stocks come at risk when attrition exceeds recruitment. Taking action to ensure that simile applied to the AIFRB population should not go unnoticed, he appointed a committee to investigate what can be done to retain and attract members and another to develop a marketing strategy. Marty Golden would chair the former and Gil Radonski the latter. The two chairs met and decided to form a single committee that was approved by President Schaefer.

To initiate a marketing program for AIFRB two questions must be addressed: What are we? and What do we want to be when we grow up? If we look at the first question and find that we like what we see, the exercise is finished. If we want to move on to the second question we must reinvent AIFRB. The matter of reinventing AIFRB is broached here in response to very thoughtful responses that Mary Golden received to queries of his committee members. How this proceeds is in the hands of the Board of Control. In this report I will assume that we like what we see and want to market the historic AIFRB. –*Gilbert C. Radonski*

Historic AIFRB:

The AIFRB was incorporated in 1956. The Incorporators, William F. Thompson and Clinton E. Atkinson, were joined by cadre of fishery scientists that includes the *crème de la crème* of their contemporary profession as Honorary Incorporators (ARTICLE VIII, AIFRB ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION). In 1956 the fisheries profession was in its early stages of development (*The Historical Development of Fisheries Science and Management*, taken from a lecture given at the Fisheries Centennial Celebration www.nefsc.noaa.gov/history/stories/fsh_sci_history1.html#c, William F. Royce, 1985.) Based on the significant societal changes in the time frame 1956 to present, it could be argued that retention of the historic AIFRB does not reflect the needs of a profession that has matured and continues to be dynamic. But it can be strongly argued that the ethical growth of the profession has its roots in Article IV (Purposes) of the AIFRB ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION, viz:

The purposes for which this Institute is incorporated are the following:

1. To advance the theory, practice and application of the science of fishery research biology; and thereby to promote the conservation and proper utilization of fishery resources.
2. To maintain high professional standards in fishery research biology by recognition of achievement and by adherence to a code to be known as “Principals of Professional Conduct for Fishery Biologists.”
3. To do everything necessary, suitable and proper for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing purposes; provided it be consistent with the provisions expressed herein and with the laws under which this Institute is incorporated.
4. In pursuing these purposes, the primary role of the Institute shall be concerned with the professional development and performance of its members, and the

recognition of their competence and achievement.

From the incorporating document it is evident that the founders were advocates of an ethical profession that respected the fishery resource. There is no mention of any other form of advocacy on behalf of the membership other than that mentioned in item 4 of ARTICLE IV of the ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION of AIFRB. The officers of AIFRB are elected and serve without compensation; there are no bricks and mortar to call home and no paid staff. That was so in 1956 and remains true today, a remarkable record.

In comparison the American Fisheries Society (AFS), our sister professional organization, does have paid staff and a home building. In contrast to the AIFRB, their mission has evolved to issues beyond professionalism alone and has incurred the problem of raising sufficient funds to support programs the officers and staff espouse but which the members are not willing to underwrite. The AFS has done an admirable job over the years of bringing to the fore issues confronting the fishery resource. There are costs associated with their fine record of accomplishments. The human and financial resources necessary to run a business the size of AFS is significant.

There are those who see AIFRB as a subset of the AFS and periodically talks of merger of AIFRB into AFS surface. The situation has been debated by the Board of Control in 1964, 1970, 1991, and 1992. The position is clearly described in the AIFRB Bylaws, ARTICLE IV – DECLARATION OF AFFILIATION, viz:

Consideration of the problems raised by affiliation of the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists with other biological organizations and of the role of the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists demonstrates the continuing need for an independent, fully professional organization. Accordingly the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists will not affiliate or merge with any other group.

Volume 32, number 1 of the AIFRB *BRIEFS* contained two articles germane to this report. The first is titled “The Inspiration for the Thompson Award,” by J. Richard Dunn. The article described the career, and to a lesser extent the personality, of William F. Thompson. It is a profile of a leader and the prototype of the founders of AIFRB. His character was sturdy if not rough and fully loaded with integrity and principle. After reading the article it is easy to understand why AIFRB was created and endured.

The second article is titled, “AIFRB vs. the AFS – A Giant Difference,” by Michael Hinton. The “versus” abbreviated in the title is not pejorative in the sense of competitive but more ameliorative in the sense of “compared to.” There are differences between AFS and AIFRB and those differences are explored in a professional manner. The author does a fine job of comparing the two organizations on the basis of professionalism. It is a blueprint for an AIFRB recruitment program.

In summary, until debated by the Board of Control, the AIFRB will be marketed/promoted on the basis of its historic

program and performance. It is recommended that the Membership Committee created in Section 5 of the AIFRB Bylaws be assigned the responsibility to develop strategies for recruitment and retention of members.

Recommendations

To Improve Recruitment:

A) Put increased emphasis on recruiting students by:

- 1) Encouraging major professors to attend District meetings and bring students
 - Incentives?
- 2) Encourage Members & Fellows to attend District events to promote AIFRB with guests. (Such events are a forum for informal mentoring of young scientists)
 - Member recruitment incentives?
- 3) Do more advertising of AIFRB student award opportunities. Examples:
 - Get involved in science fair judging
 - Advertise the AIFRB website more
- 4) Remind students/young scientists that as an AIFRB member they will get opportunities to interact with established scientists, which in turn can lead to job opportunities.

B) Encourage colleagues to join and be active in District events so that they may meet promising young scientists (possible future employees).

- Encourage members to establish dialogs with students at meetings and events – students are often intimidated to take the first step.
- Encourage members to include their AIFRB affiliation when being introduced, recognized on a conference agenda or any other appropriate venue.

C) Emphasize the opportunity for peer recognition through AIFRB awards program and AIFRB “Briefs”

- Develop an employer mailing list for “Briefs” – result more advertising.

D) Have President contact key employers to request that they develop an AIFRB support policy (e.g. one being worked on for NMFS). A sample policy could be developed and provided to perspective employers.

E) Develop innovative ways to advertise and market AIFRB

- 1) Ensure AIFRB website is optimized to address recruitment and retention goals
 - Note opportunities for student awards (in timely manner)
 - Recognize student research
- 2) Ensure AIFRB “Briefs” is optimized to address recruitment and retention goals.
 - Make sure every “Briefs” has the AIFRB website prominently displayed
 - Note opportunities for student awards (in timely manner)
 - Recognize student research
 - Do short biographic profiles of new members and other members in “Briefs”
- 3) Place ads and AIFRB news (taken from AIFRB “Briefs” and website) in professional newsletters

- Sea Grant (numerous)
- State Fish and Game Agencies (numerous)
- Federal Agencies (numerous)

4) Place ads in professional journals

- Fisheries and Transactions of the AFS
- Copeia (American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists)

5) Have AIFRB banners/booth/table at various fisheries related events – Banners should include website, names, phone numbers, and be interesting (pictures of student research, neat fish, etc.)

- Create a National chair to produce custom banners for Chapter activities, etc.
- AIFRB events
- AFS annual meeting
- Develop and distribute an AIFRB recruiting poster

6) Develop an AIFRB speaker’s bureau

- When members are “on the road” give presentations on their current research at agencies and universities and include the AIFRB connection in advertisement and in the introduction for each presentation.

To Improve Retention:

A) Conduct District events that members will be interested in attending. Examples:

- Quarterly dinner meetings with an invited speaker
- Conduct workshop on issues of interest (possible fundraisers?)
 - (a) GIS training
 - (b) Writing scientific papers
 - (c) Scientific presentations
 - (d) Grant writing
- Conduct symposium on issue of interest (possible fundraisers?)
 - (e) Marine protected areas
 - (f) Artificial reefs
 - (g) Exotic species
 - (h) Sustainable fisheries
- Recognize members publications and presentations in AIFRB “Briefs”

B) Conduct events at BOC meeting that members will be interested in attending. Examples:

- Discussion on topic of current policy or scientific interest with a summary published in AIFRB “Briefs”

C) Get members involved in AIFRB business, as officers and on committees. Examples:

- District membership committee
- District event committee
- District speaker committee
- Join a National committee
- Prepare and submit materials for AIFRB “Briefs”
- District Directors should encourage all members to attend BOC

To Modify the Role of AIFRB: Many comments were provided addressing significant changes that AIFRB may want to consider. Some of these suggestions are listed below. It is recommended that they be discussed at the AIFRB Board of Control Meeting and for those of particular merit a committee could be formed to analyze them in detail.

- Expand AIFRB scholarship programs
- Publish very focused papers on specific philosophical issues to get AIFRB recognition as a “Think Tank”.
- Encourage members to apply for funding/grants but use AIFRB as the endorsing program.
- Act as intermediary organization to fund projects of a philosophical nature similar to the National Academy of Science
- AIFRB sponsored lecture series. A prominent member tours a sector of the country speaking on a current issue – jointly funded by AIFRB and members institution, with member’s institution funding as much as possible.
- Promote better implementation of Policy Item 9 (disseminate information on fishery science).
- AIFRB sponsored research reviews.

Marty and Gil eagerly desire comments, criticisms, and suggestions from members. Comments may be sent by regular or email to Editor, Briefs. See back cover for address.

Members at Work

An important initiative for Fishery Management Marine Strategic Guidance for Implementing an Ecosystem-based Approach to Fisheries Management

A synopsis prepared by W. - Dieter N. Busch www.EIAdvisory Services.com

In July 2001, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) joined forces to prepare a guidance document designed to assist fisheries management move towards the use of an ecosystem-based approach in resource management. In order to be in compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (1971), the effort was carried out under the auspices of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC). The process relied on input from members of an interdisciplinary Technical Committee under the guidance of an interagency Ecosystem Approach Task Force, led by W.-Dieter N. Busch (ASMFC and NMFS contractor), Bonnie L. Brown (Virginia Commonwealth University), and Garry F. Mayer (NOAA Fisheries/HC). Initial input and guidance were obtained through a workshop. The resulting document underwent extensive editing as well as intramural and extramural peer review. Concepts from the document were presented in a special symposium of the American Fisheries Society 2002 annual meeting and at a number of other conferences and workshops.

The report, *Strategic Guidance for Implementing an Ecosystem-based Approach to Fisheries Management*, was completed and accepted by MAFAC in May. The text of the report may be obtained from the MAFAC web page, or from my web page. Selected topics from the *Strategic Guidance* are summarized below.

Policy Challenges

The development of the *Strategic Guidance* builds on the process started by the Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force and the Ecosystem Principles Advisory Panel. The ecosystem-based approach is a return to the holistic philosophy expressed in the *public trust doctrine* and in the resource husbandry promoted by the concept known as *traditional knowledge*. The ecosystem-based approach reemphasizes these guiding principles; all who use or *take* the natural resources must also *take care of* them. However, since the responsibility of caring for resources has been separated and assigned to various governmental agencies at the state and federal levels, the task of moving towards an ecosystem-based approach in fisheries management faces numerous obstacles.

Some perceive that use of an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management requires such a great deal of new information and may change management so drastically that it can not be advanced at this time. The Fisheries Management Councils (FMCs) acknowledged that more data and direction are needed and expressed concern that the estimated cost of implementing ecosystem-based management would be high if the activity were mandated to be accomplished quickly and comprehensively. However, a more pragmatic view was also expressed by some of the FMCs - i.e., that moving towards the use of an ecosystem-based approach “is a process and can be started regardless of the level of information on hand.”

Key Concepts

Specific activities that are part of the main structure for moving towards use of an ecosystem-based approach include:

1. *Identification of the geographic area to be managed, its boundaries, and the mapped inventory of its major characteristics (as available).*

Delineating Geographic Area(s) of the Ecosystem - Most management units are identified by political boundaries. However, to delineate ecosystem boundaries, it will be important to identify the geographic ranges/areas using ecological metrics. Political boundaries usually do not match ecological boundaries, leaving the management and assessment of a system disjointed. This problem is compounded because jurisdictions and mandates operate at different temporal and spatial scales (e.g., local, state, and federal management systems). Ecosystem-based initiatives may need to include significant focus on the current

condition, restoration (if needed), and sustainability of ecological parameters within the geographic area of responsibility. This would be in addition to the more common focus on sustainability of individual fish populations.

Delineating ecosystems or subsystems at various user-defined scales requires a hierarchical approach. It is reasonable to start with the Large Marine Ecosystem classification and step the area down as necessary using metrics such as:

- A. Natural physical boundaries such as those of an estuary.
- B. Range of key species and the physical conditions that limit this range.
- C. Political boundaries of responsible jurisdictions.

2. *Setting goals with reference to the larger environment, including ecosystem parameters or environmental conditions (e.g., water quality), that limit fishery management options. The guidance also includes the identification of specific elements/indicators and their application to describing the goals and objectives of the desired future conditions/settings of the specific geographic area to be managed.*

Public support and understanding will be improved when management decisions connected to achieving desired resources goals and objectives are clear, are based on quality information, and require management accountability. Accountability requires specific goals and quantifiable objectives. Such accountability is coming into use for terrestrial natural resource management but is not yet common in aquatic resource management. Therefore, the *Strategic Guidance* suggests the following:

- A. Use an open and public process, guided by historic resource structure and limitations, to develop general goals and specific objectives that describe the “desired future condition” of the ecosystem and its major component parts.
- B. Identify and define tolerance limits for the evolving or functional ecosystem within an acceptable range of fluctuations similar to the natural historic fluctuations.
- C. Develop a process for evolving policy, direction, and resource objectives as well as an institutional process for implementation strategies, integrating inputs, and evaluating outcomes.

The process of determining the goals and objectives (future desired conditions) of an ecosystem-approach to marine fisheries management requires the use of measurable characteristics related to structure, composition or functioning of the ecological system. Because ecosystems are dynamic and can be unpredictable, a precautionary approach must be implemented to accommodate natural variability, our incomplete understanding of ecosystem structure and function, and other uncertainties encountered in setting ecosystem reference points and in assessing the direct and indirect effects of anthropogenic stressors, including fishing, on natural ecosystems. Once selected, the effectiveness of these indicator characteristics in identifying, describing, and conserving ecosystems and their natural resources must be reviewed with respect to uncertainties and unpredictability of responses to management actions. The following criteria should be considered:

- A. Indicators for robust and resilient single species, multi-species, and/or the more holistic ecologically functioning eco-reach.
- B. Descriptors or metrics that are easily understood (e.g., desired age depth, size range, geographic distribution, and abundance for species).
- C. Needed/required habitat areas of particular concern to support important life history functions.

Characteristics of desirable ecosystem indicators include:

- Be reasonably simple to compute and understand,
- Have an intuitively reasonable interpretation,
- Be discussed in a comprehensive way (statistically, mathematically and /or ecologically),
- Have some appropriate foundation in terms of an ecological theory, statistics or mathematics, and
- Be applicable to marine ecosystems, including the open oceans, the EEZ, and continental shelf, and the near-shore and its watersheds.

3. *Instituting proactive interagency communication and coordination with other resource regulatory agencies. This includes becoming familiar with their available descriptive data for the specific eco-reach and sharing in future planning.*

Successful implementation of ecosystem-based approaches will require unprecedented changes in approach and communication. An ecosystem approach is, by design, interdisciplinary and should benefit from the coordination and cooperation of numerous agencies at all levels of government. The good news is that many agencies already are collecting and processing information that would provide major building blocks for implementing an ecosystem approach. However, most marine resource agencies or departments within these agencies still focus mostly on their direct responsibilities. For example, in a recent U.S. state survey of fish and wildlife agencies, only 64 percent cooperated with their state’s environmental agency. An exception is the biannual “National Coastal Condition Report”, which is a start in interagency cooperation dealing with marine resources. The addition of a few more trends in physical habitat and biological resources would make it even more applicable.

- A. Focus on interactions among constituents, understanding of the problem, team building, and trust.
- B. Put emphasis on “coordination and cooperation” as supposed to “control.”
- C. Access and incorporate local and regional expertise (regionalize).

Recommendations

A. Evaluate a limited number of current Fishery Management Plans with regard to ecosystem issues (delineate boundaries; set natural resource goals; establish indicators for measuring ecosystem effects; compile social and economic data; establish interagency cooperation) and recommended management tools. The outcomes would include improved understanding of the more common ecosystem issues that are adequately included while also identifying those challenges that are not being addressed.

B. Prepare a guidance document that describes ecosystem indicators and their recommended use and potential limitations through participation in the 2004 SCOR/IOC activities.

C. Assist in the preparation of “desires” natural resources goals, based on historic conditions and abundance and modified by current irreversible and reversible constraints. A limited number of successful examples of proactive development of common resource goals and objectives, for select ecosystems or eco-reaches (estuaries), could greatly advance the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach to resource management.

D. Assist in the preparation of one or more Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs)(a comprehensive outline for preparation of an FEP is included in the *Strategic Guidance*). The FEP may be prepared at different scales such as on a broad scale for an LME or with more specific data for smaller geographic areas. The development of these FEPs should encourage the collection of all relevant information (biological, physical, and socioeconomic), processed through a logical sequence of analyses, leading to solid options.

E. Assist/encourage the standardization of data collection and reporting for habitat inventories (Geographic Information System inventories and mapping of physical and chemical conditions and trends). GIS inventories are planned or underway for some offshore areas by NOAA Fisheries, NOS, and USGS. GIS mapping of coastal watersheds has been underway by USFWS.

F. Regional interagency workshops may be needed to bring the various federal and state partners together in order to increase cooperation (to use the same “sheet of music”). In order for the *Strategic Guidance* to be as ecosystem-based as possible, it should include information, assessment, and/or management topics that are the responsibilities of agencies other than NMFS. An ecosystem-based approach acknowledges the need for partnerships; interagency workshops can/should be used to bring them together. New efforts (data compilation and management, new field collections) can/should be identified and prioritized at these workshops for/by each cooperating agency.

G. Through pilot projects, assist and encourage FMCs, states, and costal commissions in the preparation of assistance in setting the desired goals and quantifiable objectives, by eco-region. The objectives will need to reference life history metrics for key species, trophic guilds, or habitat important for supporting populations or communities.

Transition to ecosystem-based management benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Improve conserving natural resources and protecting biodiversity while optimizing social and economic benefits and minimizing negative social and economic impacts to communities.
- Improve public understanding of natural resource management; including public participation in the management process and in identifying required tradeoffs.
- Help bring fisheries management into compliance with existing and proposed laws because resource goals and objectives have been prepared to guide the restoration and maintenance of fish communities with respect to harvest effects, forage, and habitat, thereby reducing the incidence of unintended consequences of management.

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Losses

Harold Berkson Forrest Hauck

Obituaries will be printed when available

Allyn H. Seymour, Sr.

August 1, 1913-September 2, 2003

Al died on September 2, 2003, one month after celebrating his 90th birthday. Soon after his birthday he suffered a stroke leaving him semi conscious for a period before passing on. His lovely wife Barbara preceded him in death. The couple were outstanding hosts to and deeply loved by students and co-workers. They are survived by three sons Allyn H. Jr. "Mike", Denny R., and Gary N.; one brother Richard S. and seven grandchildren; and 5 great-grandchildren.



Al will be greatly missed by his family, friends, former students, co-workers and his competitors on the handball court or at sport fishing. He was a great friend to all and extended himself in inquiring often about a person's family. Al became a Fellow in AIFRB in 1959, Emeritus in 1983. He also belonged to the American Fisheries Society and the Pacific Fishery Biologists. He authored numerous research papers and was a member and chairman of the National Academy of Sciences National Research Council's committee on Radioactivity in the Marine Environment.

Born in Seattle, Washington, Al graduated from Ballard High School and then went on to the University of Washington to earn a B. Sc. and Ph. D. degree in the College of Fisheries. In the fisherman's community of Ballard it is expected most youngsters will be born with or soon fitted to hip boots. Al measured up to expectation as he started his hobby of fishing early in his career. Professionally his early assignments often required foul weather gear. With the Washington State Department of Fisheries, one of his early assignments was the Minter Creek Hatchery on the Kitsap Peninsula. From there he went with the International

Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission working with sockeye salmon on the Fraser river and adjacent waters in British Columbia. During the period 1937-1947, he worked with the International Pacific Halibut Commission and spent numerous winters at sea in the north Pacific on chartered halibut schooners such as the *M/V Eagle* and the *M/V Tordinskjold*. Their job was test fishing to collect otoliths and plankton tows to count pelagic halibut eggs. Those studies through the years resulted in classic management techniques for a sustained halibut fishery in the north Pacific.

In 1947 Al joined Dr. Lauren Donaldson in the Applied Fisheries Laboratory, University of Washington, a group secretly founded during the Manhattan Project and concerned with nuclear reactors and salmon of the Columbia river. Working as an aquatic radioecologist on pioneering studies with the effects of ionizing radiation on aquatic organisms and follow up studies on the distribution and accumulation of radionuclides from nuclear weapons tests on both land and sea in the Central Pacific and their entrance into the clockwise North Pacific current. In 1956 he accepted a temporary assignment for two years to the Atomic Energy Commission in Washington D.C. Al soon became assistant director of the laboratory, known from 1957 to 1966 as the Laboratory of Radiation Biology. In the period starting in 1957 the US Atomic Energy Commission placed a strong emphasis upon "Peaceful Use of the Atom" of which Al was a strong proponent. Trace element studies were started in a nutrient deficient lake using radioisotopes. He returned to the lab and became director in 1966 when the name was again changed to the Laboratory of radiation ecology. Al was appointed Professor at the U of W, College of Fisheries, and taught a course series in Radiation Ecology until his retirement in 1978 as Professor Emeritus.

Al's studies took him to many places from atolls in the central Pacific to islands and coastline of the north Pacific and the outwash of the Columbia river. Field activities often depended upon military assistance such as helicopters, amphibious aircraft, LCI's, LST's, destroyer escorts, destroyers and ocean going tugs. On numerous occasions when the seas got rough, Al's smile would just grow wider while the rest of us were gauging the distance to the nearest leeward rail. He seemed to be well designed for rough weather. It was always a pleasure to work with Al both in the office, laboratory and in the field. Those of us who have had the privilege to associate with Al consider him a real gentleman and an outstanding scientist, fisherman and hand ball player. We miss you Al!

Submitted by: Paul Olson

Lost Sheep: A call to Action

In August at Quebec a list of delinquent members was distributed to the Board of Control (BOC) for their review. Treasurer Allen Shimada reported that as of August 2003 there were 80 one year and 56 two year delinquent members. This represented a \$5,760 shortfall in revenue to the Institute. Shimada suggested that either the Chair of the Membership committee or the President send a letter to two-year delinquent members letting them know that they will be dropped. In order to stimulate payment of dues, the BOC reviewed the procedures for contacting these members. Treasurer Shimada carries delinquent members until December. By this time they will have received three notices from his office. Director Joe Rachlin asked how successful have District Directors been in recovering dues from their notices. Shimada stated that these have been effective and there is usually an inflow of dues shortly after BRIEFS have been mailed. Treasurer Shimada will send an excel file containing the delinquent members list to Secretary Warkentine for distribution to all BOC members. All BOC members were encouraged to contact their regional/district embers to encourage payment.

Members: If you are aware of a delinquent member, encourage them to continue their membership in America's most prestigious organization of fishery biologists. *Editor*

The Case of the Missing Rivers

Not by Arthur Conan Doyle

As one of the many notes concerning aquatic resources that I include in *Briefs*, I annually abstract the list of "America's ten most endangered rivers" as chosen by the organization, American Rivers. American Rivers is a group dedicated to clean rivers with natural flows. AIFRB activist and stalwart Bill Wilson is uncertain of the wisdom of including the list in *Briefs* and has written twice on that issue. Here is his latest missive:

Hi Gene:

If I'm beating a dead horse here, let me know. But I can't resist sending you another email on the American Rivers issue.

I'm surprised at what I read in the May/June 2003 issue of *Briefs*. The article on America's Most Endangered Rivers now, conspicuously, does not list the Canning River in Alaska for 2003 (which the editor so adequately notes). How is it that a river considered to be so endangered as to rank number 2 on the American Rivers list in 2001 has now just disappeared from that list? Actually, every river on the 2001 list has been removed. Which makes one suspect that these lists are like a beauty contest - new candidates are selected each year based on the perceptions of American Rivers at the time...which ones look the "best" for the current year? Which then makes one wonder about the purpose of such lists. Regardless, I'm glad the Canning is off...never should have been there in the first place.

Bill Wilson

Bill raises a logical and powerful point, one which had puzzled me a bit too. The explanation for the dynamism of the annual lists was provided by Eric Eckl, Director of Media Affairs for American Rivers.

Hi Gene,

We do our best each year to address the commonly held misperception that the Endangered Rivers Report is somehow a list of chronically impaired rivers — when in fact it is a list of rivers facing acute crises.

The annual endangered rivers list is not a list of the worst rivers, but rather the rivers that we believe are most poised to take a TURN FOR THE WORSE in the coming twelve months. For example, if a dam is about to be authorized, if wetlands are about to be destroyed, if pollution standards are about to be relaxed, if a restoration effort is about to be botched, and if damaging new water divisions are planned, then a river is a promising candidate for our annual list. Rivers on the list have ranged from the nearly untouched Canning River in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to the lifeless and dewatered reaches of the Rio Grande, but in each case we are pointing to a situation that is likely to get worse rather than better — without public attention and outcry.

Eric Eckl

Sounds logical to me!

I plan to continue including the lists from American Rivers for two reasons:

First, and generally, most biologists would agree that degraded rivers are an important obstacle to maintaining and replenishing fish populations. Thus, the American Rivers group has, on the whole, goals allied to those of most AIFRB members.

Second, most of us, by the time we have achieved membership in AIFRB, have discovered that often emotion, political acumen, and numerically strong support are as important in resolving resource issues as are logic and science! Thus I believe it pays to know what advocacy groups involved with aquatic resources are thinking.

But I will not require Bill to read the list.

Editor

Another Member At Work: this one might actually make money Pompano Farming

By Michael F. McMaster

The natural spawning season for the revered Florida Pompano (*trachinotus carolinensis*) is now over and Mariculture Technologies International, Inc (MTI) (Michael McMaster, President) reports the successful completion of the first spring season their new Oak Hill, Florida facility.

The pompano, as all seafood connoisseurs know, is perhaps Florida's finest fish on the plate. There has been a shortage of the pompano due to Florida's state ban on gill net use by commercial fishermen. The Florida coastal waters remain abundant with the pompano but due to the fact that they are so difficult to catch by the commercial and recreational fishermen the seafood consumers rarely see them for sale anymore.

MTI is the world leader in integrated Florida pompano farming technology (see www.mariculturetechnology.com and www.pompanofarms.com) for details.

MTI's adult pompano breeding facility was completed in March of this year. By May of this year MTI produced over 400,000 pompano eggs from only three female fish. This met their first production goal. The hatchery is now complete and ready to accept fertilized pompano eggs and other species.

MTI is now accepting advanced orders for pompano fry to be delivered starting in February 2004.

Those farmers interested in growing this finest of marine fish species are invited to contact us as soon as possible (sales@mariculturetechnology.com).

On the Agenda

Fishery Management issues currently or recently before U.S. Marine Fishery Management Councils:

A brief listing:

Western Pacific: Sea Turtles – long lines, Coral harvest, Coral reef fisheries; Private FADS, Blue Marlin, Reef area closures

North Pacific: Gulf of Alaska rationalization, Halibut subsistence fisheries, Pollock, Pribilof King Crab rebuilding

Pacific: Groundfish trawling – individual quotas, Chinook and coho salmon Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM) –

Canadian Catches, Pacific sardine – 2004 harvest guidelines, Ground fish harvest 2005-2006, Groundfish individual quotas, Rebuilding plans (bocaccio, cowcod, widow, and yelloweye rockfish), Limited entry high seas long line – highly migratory species, Cabezon and lingcod stock assessments, Vessel monitoring – groundfish fishery

New England: Scallops – gear rules, closed area rotation, Monkfish FMP, Herring (stock status, limited access, effort controls),

Red Crab – 2004 rules, Dogfish – rules 2004-2005, Groundfish – multi species FMP

Middle Atlantic: Spiny Dogfish quota 2004-2005, Summer Flounder, Black Sea Bass, Scup: Proposed Actions, Essential fish habitat – closed areas, Tilefish – permit system, Bycatch – reduction, state interactions

South Atlantic: Snapper-Grouper (73 reef associated species), Oculina Banks closed area (off Ft. Pierce, FL), Highly migratory species – billfish, tuna

Gulf of Mexico: Coral – protection and management, Yellowtail snapper – stock assessment, Red and other shallow water groupers; reduction in TAC-Alternatives, Tilefish quota, Shrimp – criteria for stock status and benchmarks, Mariculture – council policy, Sharks – bycatch in menhaden fishery

Caribbean: no recent mailings

Ed. Note: In my search for pertinent material for Briefs, I asked to receive mailing from all the councils. The unqualified champion in the mail department in terms of volume is the Pacific Council. However, to date, the quality award must go to the Western Pacific Council for their colorful, slick paper Pacific Island Fishery News with interesting and highly readable reports, including exotic recipes (e.g. Seared ahi over pohole shoots with sweet soy sauce and green onion oil drizzle). Perhaps the Caribbean Council lost my request, but they now hold the booby prize with zero mailings.

Council Approves Guam Bottomfish Area Restriction

After much deliberation, the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council voted during its 118th meeting, June 10-13, 2003, in Honolulu, to close federal waters within 50 nautical miles of Guam to bottomfish fishing by vessels over 50 feet in length. Under this amendment to the Bottomfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Western Pacific Region, Guam-based bottomfish vessels 50 feet and larger operating within the exclusive economic zone surrounding Guam would be required to have a federal permit and keep logbooks. The amendment will go to the Secretary of Commerce for approval.

Because the amendment has the potential to displace larger fishing vessels from Guam, the Council will investigate whether similar management measures for federal waters surrounding the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) are appropriate.

The Council may in the future also consider limiting entry to the Guam and CNMI bottomfish fisheries. A control date of June 13, 2003, was set for this potential measure.

For the Hawaii bottomfish fishery, the Council approved the process to award two Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) Mau Zone bottomfish permits through the Community Development Program. This program aims to increase participation of indigenous communities in fisheries within the Council jurisdiction. Only 17 bottomfish permits are issued for the entire NWHI, 10 in the Mau and seven in the Hoomalu bottomfish zones.

From: Pacific Islands Fishery News, Summer 2003

A Case Study: Summer Flounder

**Published Article in SeaGrant Magazine
by Chris Moore and Marla Trollman**

Every year, scientists, fisheries managers and administrators participate in a process that affects thousands of Virginians and millions of dollars. That process, which involves numerous meetings and hundreds of man-hours, results in a number of commercial and recreational management measures that impact the commercial and recreational harvest of marine fish in the waters off the coast of Virginia. One fish, summer flounder, has been at the forefront of management efforts over the past several years.

Summer flounder, commonly known as fluke, is one of the most important finfish to Virginia fishermen. In 2001, about 2.7 million pounds of summer flounder valued at 3 million dollars were landed in Virginia ports. In addition, Virginia anglers spent millions of dollars on bait, tackle, gas, food and lodging to use hook and line to pursue fluke from shore, piers, and boats in Virginia waters from Chincoteague to Onancock.

The abundance of summer flounder in waters off Virginia is a true success story and directly relates to the positive impact that management measures have had on the stock. In 1988, the *Summer Flounder Fishery Management Plan* was implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Unfortunately, 1988 was also the year of a recruitment failure in the summer flounder stock. Because the fishery was highly dependent on incoming recruitment at that time, commercial and recreational landings dropped dramatically in 1989 and 1990. Survey values also indicated summer flounder abundance was at an all-time low.

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) responded to these declines by developing Amendment 2 to the Summer Flounder plan. That document, a comprehensive amendment first fully implemented in 1993, contained a number of management measures to regulate the commercial and recreational fisheries for summer flounder. These measures included a rebuilding schedule, commercial quotas, recreational harvest limits, size limits, gear restriction, and permit and reporting requirements.

The plan also detailed a process that is followed each year to establish the regulations for the upcoming season. The process begins in June when the stock assessment is completed by scientists in a summer flounder working group. The group includes representatives from coastal states, including Virginia, and the Council, Commission, and NMFS. Commercial and recreational landings and discards by Virginia fishermen as well as Virginia trawl surveys of the summer flounder population are used together with fisheries-dependent and fisheries-independent information from other east coast states and the federal

government to assess the current status of the stock.

Stock assessment results are utilized by the summer flounder monitoring committee to develop recommendations for consideration by the Council and the Commission's summer flounder board. These two management bodies include representatives from Virginia. In August, the Council and Board developed management measures based on recommendations from the monitoring committee, industry advisors and the public. These management measures include a total allowable landing level (TAL), which is divided into a commercial quota (60%) and a recreational harvest limit (40%), minimum fish size regulations, and gear requirements. In 2003, the TAL was 23.3 million pounds with an associated commercial quota for the coast – state and federal waters combined – of 13.98 million pounds. The commercial quota is allocated to each state from Massachusetts to North Carolina; in 2003 Virginia was allocated 2.9 million pounds.

The Council and Board meet again in December to decide on recreational regulations for the following year. These management groups review the most current information on the recreational fishery and compare the performance of the fishery to the recreational harvest limit. Since 2001, the Council and Board have decided to use “conservation equivalency” to constrain the recreational harvest. As a result, each state, including Virginia, is allocated a portion of the harvest limit to develop state-specific regulations to achieve the limit. In 2003, the recreational limit for Virginia is 689,000 fish. The regulations put in place to achieve this limit include an 8-fish possession limit, 17.5-inch minimum fish size, and a closed season from January 1st to March 28th.

The summer flounder stock has responded dramatically to the management measures adopted by the Council and Commission since 1993, the first year that Amendment 2 was implemented. Fishing mortality rates have dropped significantly and spawning stock biomass has increased over 700 percent from 1989 to 2001. Projections of stock status for 2003 indicate that the stock is no longer overfished.

From: Mid Atlantic Perspectives, Fall 2003

Federal Klamath Diversion Plan Found Illegal Water Diversions a Disaster for Salmon

On the Northern California/Southern Oregon border, the federal Klamath Irrigation Project diverts massive amounts of water for irrigation from a river that was once the third mightiest salmon producer in the continental United States. Irrigation diversions from the Klamath River have helped drive three fish species to near extinction, resulting in their protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Recently the Bush administration finalized a ten-year plan that continues large irrigation diversions of water from the river and the communities downstream that rely on salmon. The Bush plan was created over the objections of a least one key government scientist, who tried to point out the damage the plan would wreak on the salmon and their habitat. Earthjustice brought a lawsuit challenging the plan for violating the ESA, and in July, a federal judge agreed, and told the government to redo it. Earthjustice attorneys Kristen Boyles and Michael Mayer represented the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, Institute for Fisheries Resources, The Wilderness Society, WaterWatch of Oregon, Northcoast Environmental Center, Oregon Natural Resources Council, Defenders of Wildlife, Klamath Forest Alliance, Headwaters, and Congressman Mike Thompson. Plaintiffs were joined by the Yurok and Hoopa Valley Tribes, and amicus briefs supporting the plaintiffs were filed by the cities of Arcata and Eureka; Del Norte, Humboldt, and Trinity Counties; and the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District.

From: In Brief, Autumn 2003

Pacific Halibut

Recent Management Changes Affecting Alaskan Commercial, Guided Sport, and Subsistence Halibut Fisheries

As of August 2003

Overview

The Pacific halibut *Hippoglossus stenolepis* population is currently near peak abundance in Alaska, but is projected to decline due to low levels of recruitment of juvenile fish. Halibut are harvested by commercial, subsistence, personal use, guided sport, and non-guided sport users. Allocation issues likely will intensify as abundance declines.

Over the past 16 years, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has addressed allocation issues in the commercial and guided sport halibut fisheries. Beginning in May 2003, a subsistence halibut fishery was defined in Alaska. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is reviewing proposed changes to the subsistence program and inclusion of the charter halibut fishery in the current commercial Individual Fishing Quota program, prior to submission to the Secretary of Commerce for implementation. The Council has no plans to revise management of the non-guided sport halibut fishery.

Authorities

Halibut fisheries are regulated under the authority of the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982, through the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), the Council and, ultimately through regulation by NMFS. Generally speaking, the IPHC is responsible for halibut conservation decisions, and NMFS manages the fisheries and enforces regulations under the authority of the Secretary of Commerce and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The State of Alaska has limited authority under the Halibut Act, but may pass halibut regulations that conform with federal regulations or laws.

Commercial Halibut Fishery

The halibut IFQ program began in 1995 after years of debate on how to address overcapitalization (“too many boats chasing too few fish”) in the Alaska longline fisheries while maintaining the character and size of the fleet. Problems in the fishery included shore “derby” openings (1 day to 1 week), lost gear and resultant “ghost” fishing, gear conflicts, safety concerns, poor product quality, and low dockside prices.

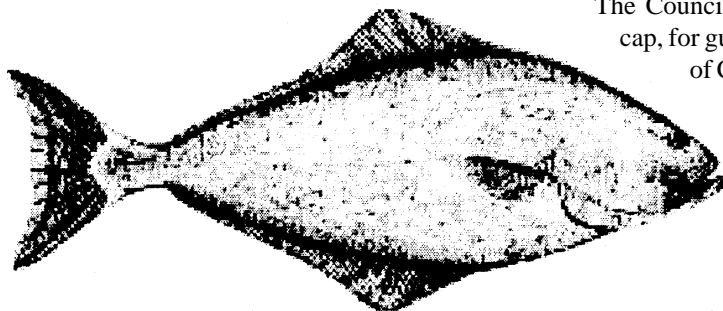
Commercial halibut quota shares are defined by IPHC regulatory area, vessel size, and block status. Quota shares are used to calculate each person’s share of the annual quota set by the IPHS. Fishermen may buy and sell shares, but individual and vessel use caps, quota share block caps, and owner-on-board requirements limit the amount of consolidation that may occur. Strict record keeping and reporting requirements for both harvesters and buyers enhance monitoring and enforcement.

The season for halibut is now more than eight months from March 1 to November 15. Twenty-two percent of the commercial halibut quota in Western Alaska (Areas 4B-E) is allocated to 65 Bering Sea communities; this is known as the halibut community development quota program.

The original IFQ program was approved with strict limitations. Some of these have been relaxed as industry and managers learned what restrictions could be lifted without jeopardizing the success of the program. In 2004, the IPHC and Council may consider extending the halibut season to nearly year-round. The Council has identified additional proposed changes for the IFQ halibut fisheries in Areas 3B, 4A, and 4B for analysis when staff becomes available. The Council also has called for new proposals. New and previously submitted proposals will be reviewed during its October 2003 meeting, including: Change the block program, Allow D-category quota shares to be fished on larger vessels, Sunset hired skipper provisions of initial recipients in all areas.

Guided Sport (Charter) Guideline Harvest Level

The Council has debated the need to limit halibut catch in the guided sport halibut fishery since 1993. Considerations included the ability to maintain the stability, economic viability and diversity of the halibut industry; the quality of the recreational experience; the access of subsistence users; and the socioeconomic well-being of the coastal communities dependent on the halibut resource.



The Council approved a Guideline Harvest Level (GHL), or harvest cap, for guided sport halibut anglers in February 2000. The Secretary of Commerce implemented GHLs of 1,432,000 lb (net weight) for Southeast Alaska (Area 2C) and 3,650,000 lb for Southcentral Alaska (Area 3A), effective on September 8, 2003. These amounts equate to 13.05 percent, and 14.11 percent, respectively, of the combined commercial and guided sport quota.

The GHLS establish an amount of halibut that will be monitored annually in the guided sport fishery. NOAA legal review identified concerns with the ability to automatically impose or lift management measures without additional public process as harvests exceed or drop below the GHL. Therefore, proposed GHL management measures that were adopted by the Council in October 2000 such as prohibiting skipper or crew harvest, annual limits, and lowered bag limits were not approved. Once a GHL has been exceeded, the Council would initiate analysis of management measures to restrain guided sport harvest to below the respective GHL.

Guided Sport (Charter) IFQ's

In 2001, the Council approved adding the guided sport fishery to the commercial halibut IFQ program as a more equitable way to distribute fishing privileges between the two sectors. The guided sport sector initially would be allocated approximately 13% of the combined commercial and guided sport quota in Southeast Alaska and Southcentral Alaska, which includes a buffer for growth. After initial allocation, quota shares could be bought and sold between and within sectors.

IFQs would fluctuate annually with the combined commercial and guided sport quotas as determined by the IPHC, and would decrease as the halibut stock declines. Quota would be initially issued to a vessel owner, or to a person who leased a vessel from an owner, and who carried clients in 1998 or 1999, and 2000. Seventy percent of an individual's initial allocation would be based on the average of his/her 1998 and 1999 Sport Charter vessel Logbook records with an additional 10% allocation for each year of operation for 1995-97. IFQs would be issued in numbers of fish. Up to 2% of the combined quota share would be set aside initially for underdeveloped Gulf of Alaska coastal communities.

The Council submitted the analysis for this program for NMFS review in May 2003. Revision of the analysis in response to NMFS review and submission for Secretarial review is anticipated prior to the end of this year. Guided sport halibut IFQ measures are not yet in effect.

These regulations may be effective in 2007, assuming Secretarial approval in 2004, program development by NMFS in 2005 (including calculation, distribution, and appeals), and one-year delay between the issuance of quota and fishing to examine the geographic distribution of quota in 2006. The Council will be calling for nominations to a Charter IFQ Implementation Committee after the October 2003 Council meeting. The committee will provide advice on the development of proposed regulations. Letters of interest should be sent to the Council office. Appointees will be responsible for their own travel costs.

Halibut Subsistence Fishery

On May 15, 2003, Federal regulations defined a subsistence halibut fishery for approximately 88,000 eligible Alaska residents who were identified as having customary and traditional use of halibut. Participants must: (1) hold a Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate; (2) use legal gear of up to 30 hooks per longline, hand line, rod and reel, or spear; (3) participate only in customary and traditional trade; and (4) not exceed a daily harvest limit of 20 halibut. Commercial sale of subsistence halibut is prohibited.

As of August 2003, 10,600 registration certificates have been issued, nearly equally split between Tribal and rural residents. Harvest data will be collected through cooperative agreements between local governments and tribes. More information can be found at www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/subsistence/halibut.htm.

In April 2002, the Council approved changes to reduce the subsistence gear and bag limits in all of Southeast Alaska, Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound, and the Kodiak Road Zone and Chiniak Bay to limit rockfish and lingcod catches. The proposed rule will be addressed at the October 2003 Council meeting. The Council also will hear a report on the process under which the Board of Fisheries and the Federal Subsistence Board will review proposals for eligibility from excluded communities, Tribes, and individuals. Any changes to the eligibility lists requires a regulatory amendment and could take up to a year to be implemented. Final action to include Ninilchik will be debated at the October meeting. If approved, Ninilchik could be included by Spring 2004.

Local Area Management Plans

The Board of Fisheries has been awaiting implementation of the GHLS and Charter IFQs prior to recommending additional LAMPs to reduce competition for halibut. The Sitka Sound LAMP was implemented in 1998. Kodiak, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound communities want to develop halibut LAMPs. Other communities that can reach consensus will be considered. All proposals affecting halibut allocation first must be forwarded by the Board, adopted by the Council and approved by the Secretary.

From: Leaflet prepared by North Pacific Fishery Management Council

World Caviar Trade Moving to North America

WWF Highlights Threats to U.S. Sturgeon, Paddlefish Stocks

The recent bust in California of what could be one of the largest caviar-poaching rings in recent U.S. history underscores the need for greater protections for North American caviar-producing fish, according to World Wildlife Fund (WWF) experts.

A report released in May by TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network of WWF, found an increase in both legal and illegal trade of paddlefish and sturgeon in North America in recent years, coinciding with the dramatic decline of beluga sturgeon and other traditional caviar-producing fisheries around the Caspian Sea. The report came out, coincidentally, the same day authorities in California arrested 12 people accused of supplying illegal caviar up and down the West Coast; the 12 were accused of being part of a black market caviar ring along with eight others who were arrested on similar charges earlier in May.

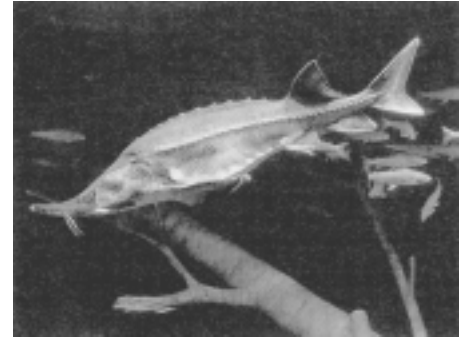
“The arrests in California highlight the need to protect U.S. sturgeon and paddlefish, which are coming under increasing pressure from both the black market and from legal catch,” said Craig Hoover, deputy director of TRAFFIC. “Unfortunately, we expect to see more of these cases since legal sources of caviar in the United States cannot meet the enormous world demand as the Caspian Sea caviar continues to decline.”

In recent decades, Caspian Sea fisheries have produced most of the caviar in international trade. Once carefully regulated, the industry suffered from rampant overfishing and a Russian mafia takeover after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Beluga sturgeon stocks were reduced by as much as 90 percent and international trade restrictions were imposed. Increased harvest of sturgeon and paddlefish eggs for caviar could have a significant impact on several North American species, including those already considered endangered or threatened. The lower Columbia River supports the last major commercial and recreational fishery for the threatened white sturgeon, the largest freshwater fish in North America.



Paddlefish

© WWF-Cannon/Kevin Schaefer



Sturgeon

Richard T. Bryant

Besides the recent case in California, criminal cases have recently been brought in Oregon, New York, Kentucky, and Tennessee against alleged black market caviar dealers in North America.

“Demand in major caviar-consuming countries primarily in the European Union, Japan, and the United States far outstrips what North American wild stock and commercial aquaculture are currently producing,” Hoover said.

“Unfortunately, our study found that many states’ laws regulating catch and trade haven’t caught up with the increased demand.

North American sturgeon and paddlefish are the largest alternative fisheries to the Caspian Sea for caviar production. But TRAFFIC found that wild fish stocks in North America are not plentiful enough to replace Caspian Sea production, and the fledgling aquaculture industry is years away from being able to supplant production from wild sources.

“North American caviar can be a profitable industry, but only if state with healthy paddlefish and sturgeon populations manage the resource carefully,” Hoover said. “There are still some serious regulatory gaps that need to be filled and urgent action is needed to ensure that we don’t repeat the mistakes of the past.”

From: Focus, September-October 2003

Drop in Mercury

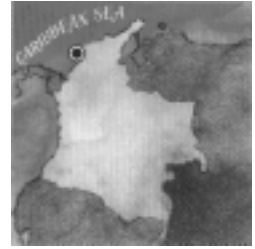
The World Health Organization in June lowered by half the level of methylmercury it considers acceptable in seafood. Dr. Linda Greer, director of National Resources Defense Council (NRDC’s) Public Health Program, helped coordinate a group of 50 international scientists who urged the WHO to adopt the stricter standard. Dr. Greer also called on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to follow suit. Our government’s standard for how much methylmercury we should be consuming with our tuna salad is less stringent than even the WHO’s original guidelines.

From: On Earth, Fall 2003

Protecting a Caribbean Park: Colombia

Corales Del Rosario National Park, a 296,400-acre marine park located 27 miles off the coast of northwestern Colombia, is one of the nation's most popular tourist areas. Unfortunately, tourism, along with dynamite fishing and poaching, has proved detrimental to the park's coral reefs, mangrove complexes, coastal wetlands and marine species. The Nature Conservancy is partnering with the park and the Center for Protected Area Management and Training at Colorado State University to determine the carrying capacity of the park's most popular areas. This study will provide scientific and technical information that will be used by area stakeholders to develop a tourism zoning and management plan, and thereby create a model for conducting similar studies in other parks in the Colombian Caribbean.

A new tourism zoning and management plan will protect the diverse marine life of Corales del Rosario National Park.



From: Nature Conservancy, Fall 2003: 53(3)

A Recreational View:

IGFA Comments On NMFS' Proposed Swordfish Rules

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) solicited comments on proposed rules affecting commercial North and South Atlantic swordfish quotas. The new rules would increase allowed landings in 2003, and a greater increase in 2004 for North Atlantic swordfish. It would also increase the quota for South Atlantic swordfish, and since U.S. long liners aren't even landing the quota they already have, the intent is to transfer 25 metric tons of the U.S. quota to Canada. This is more than the entire estimated U.S. recreational landings of swordfish in 2002. NMFS recently put restrictions on recreational landings of swordfish to control the expansion of the recreational swordfish fishery.

Mike Leech, International Game Fish Association (IGFA) Ambassador-at-Large, sent the following comments regarding the proposed commercial regulations to Chris Rogers, head of the Highly Migratory Species Division of NMFS:

Dear Chris:

The International Game Fish Association (IGFA) is a non-profit, membership supported conservation and record keeping organization with members and representatives in approximately 120 countries and territories. We represent the interests of recreational anglers and would like to comment on the Proposed Rule for North and South Atlantic Swordfish.

IGFA is opposed to ANY increase in North Atlantic swordfish quota in 2003, and an even greater increase in 2004 and 2005. Although the most recent stock assessment indicated an improvement in swordfish stocks, swordfish are still overfished. Any increase in quota will not only slow down or possibly reverse the improvement, but will also lead to an increase in dead discards of juvenile swordfish, severely overfished marlin as well as severely depleted shark populations.

Increasing the swordfish quota goes directly against your stated goal of risk adverse management. The increase in quota is even harder to understand since the U.S. hasn't landed its quota since 1995.

The United States should use its best efforts to get ICCAT to reduce overall swordfish quotas and refuse to accept increases in quota for overfished stocks of any HMS.

IGFA is also opposed to the 80 metric ton dead discard allowance for North Atlantic swordfish over and above the substantial increase in overall quota. All dead discards should be subtracted from the existing overly generous quota.

The proposed transfer of 25 metric tons of U.S. swordfish quota to Canada is strictly a political move to keep from losing part of the U.S. quota that is not being caught anyway. IGFA is opposed the transfer, and suggests instead that the U.S. insist that uncaught quota remain with the country that controls it. If the quota is not landed the stocks will rebuild faster and bycatch will be reduced as an added benefit. We must change our thinking that every ton of quota must be landed.

IGFA is opposed to the increase in quota of South Atlantic swordfish to 100 metric tons through 2005 and a further increase to 120 MT in 2007. Once again this represents increased pressure on a stock we have very little data on. This increase could lead to overfishing and is not needed by U.S. longliners.

It is NMFS' long-standing policy of supporting increased quotas on fisheries that are either overfished or approaching an overfished condition that has led to the depleted condition of many of our fisheries. NMFS needs to change its policy of supporting and encouraging over exploitation if we are ever going to have healthy fisheries.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Leech

Ambassador-at-Large International Game Fish Association

From: International Angler: 65(5), September-October 2003

District Directors

Alaska, Northern

Joseph F. Margraf, Jr.
University of Alaska
P.O. Box 757020
Fairbanks, AK 99775-7020
ffjfm1@uaf.edu

Alaska, Southeast

Bruce Wing
P.O. Box 210265
Auke Bay, AK 99821-0265
bruce.wing@noaa.gov

Arizona - New Mexico

G. Morris Southward
Statistics and Res. Inst.
New Mexico State University
Box 30003 Dept. 3130
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-8003
southward@nmsu.edu

California, Northern

Tom Keegan
ECORP Consulting Inc.
2260 Douglas Blvd., Suite 160
Roseville, CA 95661

California, Southern

Raymond R. Wilson
CSULB Biol Sci
1250 N. Bellflower Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90840
rwilson1@csulb.edu

Capital

Frank M. Panek
National Fish Health Research Laboratory
1705 Leetown Rd.
Kearneysville, WV 25430

Carolinas

Robert L. Dixon
NOAA, 101 Pivers Island Road
Beaufort, NC 28516
robert.dixon@noaa.gov

Florida

Thomas W. Schmidt
USDI Nat'l. Park Service
Everglades Nat'l. Pk., S. Fla. Res. Ctr.
P.O. Box 279
40001 State Rd. 9336
Homestead, FL 33014
tom_schmidt@nps.gov

Great Lakes, South Central

Dora R. Passino-Reader
National Fish. Center
1451 Green Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-2897
dora_reader@usgs.gov

Gulf of Mexico, Northeast

Vacant

Keystone

Joseph W. Rachlin
Dean of Nat. & Soc. Sci.
Lehman College of CUNY
250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W.
Bronx, NY 10468-5189
rachlin@alpha.lehman.cuny.edu

New England

Kevin D. Friedland
Director, UMass/NOAA CMER Program
Blaisdell House
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003-0040
friedlandk@forwild.umass.edu

Oregon-SW Washington

Vacant

Texas

Lance Robinson
Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.
Seabrook Marine Lab
Seabrook, TX 77856

Washington, NW

Bruce S. Miller
School of Aqu. & Fishery Sci.
University of Washington
Box 355020
Seattle, WA 98195
bsm@u.washington.edu

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