

## The Northeast Fish Rapper



Newsletter of the Northeastern Division of the American Fisheries Society March 2008 Volume 24 Issue 1 eds. Fernandes, S. and Gardner, C.

#### President's Message

Greetings everyone! I hope this snowy (and rainy) winter finds you well. Here in New Hampshire, we've had our share of the white stuff but it's nice because I like to ski as well as icefish. As I write this, it is mid-February and the lakes are a little sloppy right now, as recent snowstorms have been ending as rainstorms! Well, enough of the weather, lets talk about AFS.

I was officially installed as your NED President at the conclusion of the Annual AFS Meeting held in San Francisco back in September 2007. My term will run through the end of the next Annual AFS Meeting that will be held in Ottawa, Ontario in August 2008. One of the "perks" of being NED President is being able to travel to the AFS meeting to participate at a national level for the organization. To travel to a venue like San Francisco would not have been possible for me without funding from NED as my employer typically has a small travel budget. So this is just one of several reasons to consider running for NED officer and becoming part of AFS governance.

The months have flown by since I became President back in September of last year and I can't believe my term is half over already. Since then, a couple of exciting things have happened that I would like to mention.

First, is the NED website is officially up and running and has been since November 2007. Our webmaster, Greg Kozlowski, has done a superb job with getting it up and functional. Until we get our old domain back

(nedafs.org) the best way to get access to the website is through the AFS website <a href="http://www.fisheries.org/units/ned/">http://www.fisheries.org/units/ned/</a>. The website will continue to be our main conduit for communication to our members, so check it often. Please contact Greg or myself if you have any issues with or suggestions for improvement to the website.

Second, is the further development of the Rivers and Streams Technical Committee. First established as a "special committee" under Larry Miller's presidency, I have reappointed this committee for my term. The committee is chaired by Dave Day of the PA Fish and Boat Commission with assistance from Ken Sprankle of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Committee members are primarily representatives of each state and provincial fish and wildlife agency in the NED geographic region. The Committee will be sponsoring a symposium on "Large River Management" with 28 speakers committed at this year's Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference April 27-30.

Speaking of the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference, make plans now to attend if you can. The location is the Marriott Seaview Resort and Spa in Galloway, NJ (near Atlantic City). For more details on the conference see <a href="http://www.neafwa.org/">http://www.neafwa.org/</a>. The NED annual business meeting will be held on April 28 during the conference so I hope to see you there. Please feel free to call or email me about anything regarding the NED or AFS. I am here to serve you!

Scott Decker





#### AFS Mission Statement

The mission of the American Fisheries Society is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

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#### - WEBSITE-

The NED AFS has a website: <a href="http://www.fisheries.org/units/ned">http://www.fisheries.org/units/ned</a>. Check it often for new information and updates!.

### \*UPCOMING MEETINGS\*

## AFS 138<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Aug. 17-21, 2008 Ottawa, Canada

The 138<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting is fast approaching. Registration

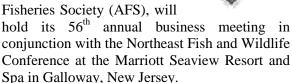


information, deadlines and an overview of activities may be found on the meeting website at: <a href="http://www.fisheries.org/afs08/index.html">http://www.fisheries.org/afs08/index.html</a>. The theme of the meeting is "Fisheries in Flux: How Do We Ensure Our Sustainable Future". Hope to see everyone there!

## 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference

April 27-30, 2008 Galloway, New Jersey

The Northeastern Division (NED) of the American Fisheries Society (AFS), will



## 34th Annual Meeting of the Atlantic International

Chapter of the American Fisheries Society



September 21-23, 2008 – Digby, Nova Scotia

We are pleased to announce that the 2008 AIC annual meeting and conference will be held at the Digby Pines Golf Resort and Spa in Digby, Nova Scotia.

**2008** Meeting Theme – From the Mountains to the Sea, Ecosystems in Action

More information will be available in the coming months on the AIC website: <a href="http://www.fisheries.org/units/aic/aic2008.htm">http://www.fisheries.org/units/aic/aic2008.htm</a>

Looking forward to record attendance this year! -Alison Johnson, President AIC

#### CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

## 2008 NED AWARDS OUTSTANDING CHAPTER AWARD

We are seeking nominations from each chapter for the division's Outstanding Chapter awards. Winners from each of the three categories will be considered for the parent society's Outstanding Chapter award. Categories are:

- large chapters (100 members or more);
- small chapters (less than 100 members); and.
- student subunits.

Please remember that full university chapters, e.g. SUNY ESF, will be considered in the appropriate chapter category rather than the student subunit category. The deadline for submitting the nominations to the committee is March 31, 2008. You can also access the form on the AFS web site: http://www.fisheries.org/afs/awards/2007outstan dingchapter.pdf

## DIVISION PROFESSIONAL / EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Division provides several awards recognizing excellence in professionalism / service. Four of these awards are administered by the Awards Committee: the Dwight A. Webster Memorial Award, the President's Award, the Meritorious Service Award, and the Special Achievement Award. The Dwight A. Webster Memorial Award has been presented annually since 1978. The President's Award was established at the 1993 annual business meeting. The Meritorious Service Award and the Special Achievement Award are the newest Division Professional/Excellence Awards, with the first awards given out at the 2000 annual meeting.

Division Professional/Excellence Awards will be presented at the 64th Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference, April 27 to 30th in Galloway, NJ.

The strongest nominations typically include a resume of the nominee, a letter of nomination,

and letters of support from employers, fisheries professionals, and AFS members and officers.

## 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

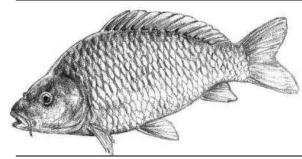
This award is presented to an individual who is selected by Past-Presidents and the incumbent President; it is not limited to Past Presidents. The recipient need not be a current AFS member, and the award need not be presented annually. The award may be presented for any or all the following achievements:

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

#### MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

This award is presented to an individual who must be an 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 NE Division within the Division.



#### SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

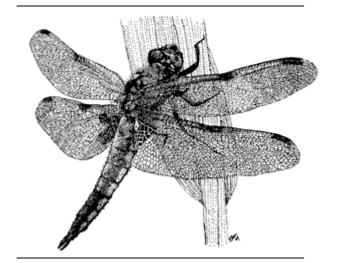
This award recognizes an individual or group acting as a team or committee for any or all of the following special accomplishments.

- 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 16, 2007 to:

Larry Miller
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Resources Office
P.O. Box 67000
1601 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000
email: larry\_m\_miller@fws.gov
ph. (717) 705-7838
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## JOHN MORING STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD

The Northeastern Division of the American Fisheries Society supports student travel to the 64<sup>th</sup> Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference (http://www.neafwa.org/) 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. Student members of AFS winning the awards receive \$300 for travel expenses, plus the early student registration fee (typically \$75), plus a one-year AFS student membership (currently \$19). Non-AFS students winning the awards receive \$300, plus a one-year AFS student membership. A total of five awards are available. 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 64<sup>th</sup>

  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 **electronically** by **28 MARCH 2008** to:

Dr. Donna L. Parrish U.S. Geological Survey Vermont Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit

Email: Donna.Parrish@uvm.edu

#### PADDLEFISH (books) are GOING, GOING, gone!

Joe G. Dillard, Paddlefish Book Sales Coordinator for NCD/AFS, says he still has few of these classics available for sale. For you new timers, or you old timers who have forgotten, *The Paddlefish: Status, Management and Propagation* is NCD/AFS Special Publication No. 7. Topics covered include paddlefish biology, distribution and abundance, management, propagation, threats to the future of the species and an extensive bibliography of all known publications on paddlefish from the 1700s to 1985. This proceedings of a symposium filled a long-standing need for synthesis of the research and literature on paddlefish.

This is an important book for paddlefish managers, biologists, and anyone who would like to know more about this intriguing and valuable fish. Copies of this rapidly vanishing, valuable reference source of paddlefish information are available from:

Joe G. Dillard 3535 West Arbor Way Columbia, MO 65203-9260 Dillardj@missouri.edu

Cost is \$15 (U.S.) per copy which includes tax and shipping. If you are outside the U. S. add \$2 (U.S.). Make checks payable to the North Central Division/American Fisheries Society in U.S. currency.

#### Northeast Rivers & Streams Technical Committee Established!



#### Rivers and Streams in the Northeast: In

the northeast U.S., rivers and streams are at the forefront of natural resource management concerns. Among these concerns are water quality and quantity, fish passage and dam removal, habitat assessment, invasive species and many other issues requiring the attention of fisheries managers and administrators. Developing an understanding of how resource managers are addressing these common issues across the region, can save valuable time, scarce funds, and avoid unnecessary impacts to, or loss of, resources. To foster communication and exchange of ideas encompassing this

important topic, a common forum, the Northeast Rivers and Streams Technical Committee (NERSTC) has been established to allow fisheries resource managers an opportunity to share management and research findings across geopolitical and agency boundaries.

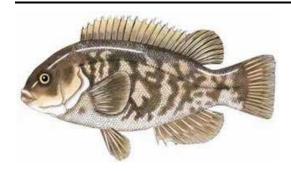
In April 2007, the Directors of the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies', approved the formation of a Rivers and Streams Technical Committee. As an initial effort of this newly formed committee, a survey of representatives designated by the Fisheries Administrators found three high priority topics. These topics included: 1) fisheries management and habitat in large rivers, 2) fish passage and dam removal and 3) instream flow.

Addressing a Need: The committee has moved forward with addressing the issue of large-river fisheries management, and one of the initial actions by the committee has been to work with the NEAFWA conference Committee in New Jersey to organize a Large-River Special Session. This special session has 26 speakers covering a variety of topics on large rivers across the region.

**Expanding the Committee**: To expand the scope of this committee and incorporate the interests and work of fisheries professionals beyond the resource agencies, the President of the NED has approved the formation of a special committee for Rivers and Streams. Initially established by NED past-president Larry Miller, the committee was reestablished by current President Scott Decker. At the April NEAFWA conference, a meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 29<sup>th</sup> (afternoon) to further discuss this committee and enlist support from fisheries professionals across the region. Please plan on attending and getting involved in this effort.



### FISHERIES IN THE NEWS



### NOAA to Close New Jersey Tautog Fishery April 1

NR08.04 March 11, 2008

Contact: Maggie Mooney-Seus

Phone: 978-281-9175

Email: marjorie.mooney-seus@noaa.gov

NOAA's Fisheries Service found that the State of New Jersey has failed to implement measures necessary to fulfill its responsibilities under the tautog interstate fishery management plan and which are crucial for conservation of the salt water fish. As a result, NOAA will close New Jersey's commercial and recreational fishery for tautog on April 1.

Tautog is a popular recreational species whose stock is overfished. Landings data indicate that New Jersey's harvest is significant compared with that of other states, and that its recreational landings more than tripled in 2006. Accordingly, its failure to implement management measures will undermine the interstate conservation plan for the species.

Under the rebuilding plan, each of the Northeastern states are required to reduce tautog

fishing effort by about 26 percent over 2003 to 2005 average levels. On February 7, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission determined that New Jersey had not taken such measures as required by the fishery management plan.

Under the Atlantic Coastal Act, NOAA's Fisheries Service was obliged to conduct a review and make a decision within 30 days as to whether it concurred with the Commission's findings, and whether the mandated measures are necessary for the conservation of the tautog resource.

April 1 was selected for the closure date because it provides significant conservation benefits while allowing enough time to ensure that anglers, commercial fishermen and dealers are aware of the effective closure date.

The most recent landings data from 2006 find New Jersey recreational anglers landed about 700,000 pounds of tautog, and commercial fishermen about 70,000 pounds. In 2006, Northeast fishermen landed about 4.3 million pounds of tautog, most of which was taken by recreational anglers.

Tautog is managed within the framework of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. This Commission, comprising representatives from the Atlantic coastal states, develops fishery conservation and management strategies for certain coastal species and coordinates state efforts to achieve those objectives.

-News Release from NOAA Fisheries

For the Latest News from the NMFS Northeast Regional Office Check out their website:

http://www.nero.noaa.gov/nero/hotnews/



## Maine OKs catch-release salmon season this May

By Kevin Miller Saturday, March 08, 2008

Anglers said Friday they are looking forward once again to fishing for Atlantic salmon on the Penobscot River this May during the revival of a spring tradition.

A roughly 4-mile stretch of the Penobscot near Bangor will be open to catch-and-release Atlantic salmon fishing annually from May 1 to May 31 under new rules approved Thursday. This spring's opening day will mark the first time springtime fishing for sea-run salmon has been allowed on any Maine rivers since 1999.

The state has held a limited fall salmon fishery in the same area of the Penobscot for the past two years. But anglers had been pushing for a spring season because that is when a larger number of the fish are in the river to spawn.

"I think this is a great first step," said Ralph Keef, a longtime salmon angler and member of the area's three historic salmon fishing clubs.

Maine's Atlantic Salmon Commission approved the spring season on Thursday after several months of study and comment from the public. The proposal had strong support from local salmon clubs but was opposed by several individuals and groups, including federal authorities.

Commission members based their decision on predictions from state biologists that a catch-and-release season would have "no measurable negative impacts" on Penobscot salmon, which constitute the last remaining sizable run of wild salmon in U.S. rivers.

"We took and weighed the information that was presented during the public hearing process ... and it was unanimous to move forward," with the spring season, said Dick Ruhlin, chairman of the three-member commission.

Fishermen participating in the spring season will have to follow restrictions similar to those of the two previous fall seasons.

Angling will be fly-fishing only using single-pointed, barbless hooks from just above the site of the former Bangor dam to just below the Veazie Dam. Each fisherman will be restricted to one salmon a day and the entire fishery would be closed once a total of 50 fish have been caught.

The commission also would have the authority to halt fishing at any time in order to protect the population.

Maine closed its rivers to angling for sea-run salmon in 1999 because of concern about declining numbers of the iconic fish, which once crowded New England rivers by the millions. Since 1999, the federal government has designated as endangered salmon populations in eight Maine rivers.

The Penobscot was not on that original list. However, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is reviewing whether to list salmon population in the Penobscot and Kennebec rivers as endangered. Such a designation could shut down the fishery.

Ruhlin said the commission made its decision without taking into account the potential endangered listing. A longtime member of the local salmon clubs, Ruhlin predicted that the spring season would draw anglers. "You're going to see a lot of people coming here, and they're not just going to be from Maine," Ruhlin said.

The push to hold a spring fishery divided Maine's sporting community, however.

While supporters regarded the spring season as a safe way to re-engage the public in salmon issues, opponents suggested that the Penobscot population was still too fragile to allow even catch-and-release fishing. Just over 920 sea-run salmon were counted returning to the Penobscot to spawn in 2007.

The membership of the Maine Council of the Atlantic Salmon Federation was so divided over the issue that the council declined to take a stance either way.

Likewise, the Penobscot Nation — whose members have abstained from subsistence salmon fishing for 20 years — declined to endorse or oppose the proposal. "We didn't think there was enough science on either side to support an appropriate and informed decision," said John Banks, director of the Penobscot Department of Natural Resources.

Fisherman Gary Arsenault said he weighed the potential pros and cons of a spring season before ultimately deciding the proposal was a worthwhile opportunity to get people back on the river. Arsenault said he was comforted by the knowledge that there will be many eyes — both paid law enforcement and avid anglers — watching to make sure the fish are not harmed.

"I grew up in Hampden, so I've been on the river all of my life," Arsenault said. "The fishermen I have been exposed to and involved with are very careful and very respectful of that animal. So when somebody takes a fish, there's going to be a crowd and a lot of people helping."

Keef said he probably wouldn't fish for salmon this May. But he definitely plans to spend time on the river with others. "I'll be observing and helping out," Keef said.

Source: Bangor Daily News

# Oil-tax money to boost fish restoration, coastal projects [in Rhode Island]

Contact: Peter B. Lord at (401) 277-8036 Sunday, February 3, 2008

A total of \$225,000 has been awarded to six projects designed to improve coastal habitats around Rhode Island and to open local waterways for spawning fish. The money will go to fish passages, salt marsh restoration work and mosquito abatement.

The grants were approved recently by the Coastal Resources Management Council, based on the recommendation of a technical advisory committee that includes representatives from the CRMC, the state Department of Environmental Management, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Save the Bay, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Money for the grants comes from a fund created by taxing oil imports after the North Cape oil spill in 1996. The tax was originally designed to pay for responses to oil spills, but the General Assembly later decided to direct some of the proceeds toward coastal habitat restoration. So far the R.I. Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund has awarded \$1.2 million to 40 projects.

#### The council awarded:

• \$100,000 to the Ten Mile River Fish Passage in East Providence, which officials at the state Department of Environmental Management contend is the most important fish-passage restoration project in the state. It would allow alewives access to 340 acres of spawning habitat. A total of \$150,000 had been requested. The total project cost will be \$958,755, and it will create passages around the Omega Pond, Hunts Mills and Turner Reservoir Dams.

- \$40,000 to the Woonasquatucket River Paragon Dam Fish Passage in Providence. A total of \$50,000 had been requested for the \$732,917 project. This will be the second fish passage established to allow herring to spawn in the river.
- \$35,000 for the Pawcatuck River Lower Shannock Falls Fish Passage in Richmond. Some \$50,000 had been requested for the \$111,500 project that includes removing a deteriorating dam. This would allow fish access to 1,300 acres of spawning habitat in Worden Pond.
- \$35,000 for the Blackstone River Fish Passages in Pawtucket, Central Falls, Cumberland and Lincoln. A total of \$50,000 had been requested for the projects, which will cost \$2.1 million for four passages around dams.
- \$10,000 for the Silver Creek Salt Marsh Restoration in Bristol. Some \$19,879 had been requested for the \$167,908 project, which would restore tidal flushing to 13 acres of marsh.
- \$5,000 to buy a cab for a rubber-tracked vehicle that the DEM uses to restore salt marshes and make them less hospitable to mosquitoes.

The council also approved a list of contingency projects should some of the primary ones not proceed as expected. If there is extra money, the council has agreed, in the following order: \$50,000 for the Ten Mile River Fish Passage, \$15,000 for the Blackstone River Fish Passage, \$20,000 for the Shannock Falls Fish Passage, \$50,000 for Gooseneck Cove salt marsh restoration and \$30,000 for work on South County's coastal ponds.

The advisory committee did not recommend money for proposed artificial reefs in Narragansett Bay, an eel-restoration project proposed for the Hunt and Annaquatucket rivers, a demonstration project on the Woonasquatucket, restoration of South County salt ponds, salt marsh restoration in Newport and a landfill closing in East Greenwich.

John Freida

Source: The Providence Journal



## AFS Northeastern Division Leaders

Sept. 2007 - Sept. 2008

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**Continuing Education** 

VACANT

Environmental and Resource Issues

**VACANT** 

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Committee Ron Essig

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