

SDAFS RESERVOIR COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
2020 Summer Meeting Conference Call
October 28th, 2020

1:00pm– 2:30pm; Electronically Recorded by Jeremy Risley (AGFC) and submitted by Colton Dennis (AGFC)

Attendees

Sean Kinney, Louisiana Department of and Fisheries (*Chair*) (Rep)
Lawrence Dorsey, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (Rep)
Jeremy Risley, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (Rep)
Gene Gilliland, B.A.S.S.
Michael Homer, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (Rep)
Cliff Sager, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (Rep)
Reed Green, USGS – AR
John Hammonds, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Patrick O'Rourke, Georgia Power
Dr. Mark Rogers, USGS Univ. of Tennessee Coop Unit

Introduction - Sean Kinney

Reservoir Committee (RC) chair Sean Kinney called the meeting to order, requested a roll call, and welcomed the nine attendees.

Financial Report – Sean Kinney/Colton Dennis

Sean reported that Colton would join the conference call late and provide a financial update at that time. (See financial report update provided by Sean in Open Discussion section).

SDAFS 2020 Recap - Sean Kinney

Sean reported that he had previously sent the spring 2020 meeting minutes out to the membership and asked if there were any questions. In reviewing the minutes, there were three main topics discussed at the spring meeting. One topic of discussion was the RC hosting a future workshop, but membership could not decide on a topic list therefore discussion ended with the RC not planning one for the near future. Sean stated he is still open to hosting a workshop and invited members to provide him with any ideas they may have for future discussions. Another main topic of the spring meeting was the RC conducting and funding a micro plastic research project. Lastly, the reservoir habitat survey that had been conducted in recent years and Dr. Hunt's (MSU) analysis of those results were discussed at length during the meeting. Lawrence provided a brief update on the status of the habitat survey in which he and Jeremy Shiflet are still in the process of writing it up and submitting for publication in the SEAFWA proceedings. He and Jeremy have not gotten as far as they had hoped after the spring meeting due to Covid issues and their state agencies shutting down. **The plan moving forward is for Lawrence and Jeremy to finish drafting a report and provide to Dr. Hunt who has agreed to review and edit and then submit for publication to SEAFWA by June 2021.**

Website – Sean Kinney/Jeremy Shiflet

Sean reported that Jeremy was absent due to being behind on field sampling but had sent notes. In Jeremy's notes he reported that not much is new on the website but he had added the 2020 annual

meeting minutes from Little Rock, and updated the scholarship recipient info and some of the basic contact info. He also has not had time to piece the old habitat manual back together, but anticipates having more time to work on it, and the fish habitat survey, this winter after sampling season concludes. Sean reminded membership to provide Jeremy with any content they want or need on website and also to provide him with any suggestions on organization of website.

Lawrence reminded membership that he, Jeremy, and Sean are all administrators now on the RC Facebook page and to provide them with any content they want posted. Michael Homer asked if there was a way to make it easier for RC members to post to the FB page? Sean stated there was a way to let members submit a post and then it getting “approved” by an administrator who is designated a “moderator” before showing up on FB. Gene agreed and said that is how his Bass Conservation group FB page is set up and functions. **Lawrence said he would look into setting that function up on the FB page for RC members.**

Jenkins Scholarship – Sean Kinney/Jeremy Shiflet

Again, Sean reported that Jeremy was absent due to being behind on field sampling but had sent notes. In Jeremy’s notes he reported that not much is new. **Jeremy also indicated he had not spoken with American Aquatics or Fishiding regarding the 2021 sponsorship and that the RC request for donations may be better received if they come from Sean or Colton.** Jeremy asks a question for the committee, if the 2021 annual meeting in VA is still up in the air, do we want to put out a call for applications? **Jeremy states he will submit an article to the SDAFS newsletter regarding the scholarship once the committee decides on plans for 2021.**

Sean asks the membership for pro/con feedback about providing scholarship in 2021. Dr. Mark Rogers reminds the group that he is a former winner of the award and suggests proceeding with scholarship funding on the basis that students have continued to work hard throughout the past year on their projects regardless if they can accept the award in person this coming spring. Dr. Mark also reminds members that MS students are also at a disadvantage because they only have their second/final year to apply and be competitive for award. Both Michael Homer and Sean agree. Sean asks members about possibility of funding only one scholarship to make more prestigious? Dr. Mark expressed his concerns with reducing award to only one because MS students would have difficulty out-competing PhD students and is a good reason to fund two scholarships. Sean asks members if we should consider funding one scholarship for each type of student. Lawrence responds that in his years of experience on RC, most applications are from MS students and rarely PhD students. He also supports providing two scholarships in 2021 if funding is available. **Sean will have Jeremy move forward with scholarship announcement and we will just see how many donations are received to support either one or two scholarships for 2021.**

Micro plastic position statement and research - Sean Kinney

Sean reported that he did start writing position statement on micro plastics for RC and that he forwarded on to a few members for review and edits. He has not been able to follow-up since Covid and hurricanes. **Sean plans to have position statement completed by end of January 2021 at the latest.**

Sean reported that he has attended a few conference calls with people at LSU discussing micro plastics and that they are actively looking for research funding. The principal idea behind the research is to investigate micro plastics in the water columns and in fish species of reservoirs where plastic artificial reef habitat is both present/absent. Ideally, reservoirs selected are to include those from several SDAFS states, not just LA, to provide increased credibility of research results.

Sean reported that he has researched several places to get approx. \$150K in funding for MS multi-year project. Cabelas has funding mechanism, but they don't provide much info on what exactly they will fund. A proposal will have to be written and sent to them to see what they will or will not fund. Another option is for each SDAFS member state agency provide funding into a multi-state research grant which has been done in the past. Several members spoke up and agreed that their state agency would likely be interested. **Gene suggested Sean send an inquiry to all state agency Fish Chiefs, not just those in SDAFS, to see who has interest in participating in a multi-state research project looking at micro plastics in reservoirs.** Gene also reminded members that during the last multi-state research project (2014?) conducted by Dr. Hal Schramm at MSU on tournament live-wells, that some of the state partners elected to provide donations from State Funds while other state partners were able to use unobligated Fed Aid funds to sponsor the multi-state, multi-year project. A common template was developed and used for those states who elected to provide Fed Aid funds. **Dr. Mark volunteered to assist with development and review of research project proposal and study design. Sean will move forward with investigating research proposal/funding in spring 2021 once he has a chance to visit further with his LSU contacts who have been busy this fall transitioning to virtual classrooms.**

Scholarship Sponsors - Sean Kinney

Sean reported that Jeremy sent notes and reported no new news. Jeremy's notes also requested Sean ask Patrick O'Rourke about possible Georgia Power sponsorship. Patrick indicates not likely this year, but long term sponsorship very possible and will continue to request donation. **Sean asks Colton to check with Fred Heitman (American Aquatics) and David Ewald (Fishiding) to see if they are once again interested sponsoring scholarships.**

SDAFS 2021 meeting discussion - Sean Kinney

Sean asked members if they had a preference for using either *Zoom* or *Microsoft Teams* if the 2021 Spring SDAFS meeting goes virtual. It was mentioned that the Feds could not use *Zoom* for virtual meetings. Patrick O'Rourke mentioned that we might consider what platform SDAFS is using, which he thinks is *GoToMeeting*, and might be already available through SDAFS. Dr. Mark reminded group that *Confex* was used at SDAFS 2018 in Puerto Rico. Mike Homer added that TX is trying to use *Confex*, but not getting good support due to being overloaded and backlogged so suggests other options would be recommended. **Lawrence states that SDAFS will most likely come up with plan to integrate meeting and therefore legwork will be done for RC. If not, he offered to host Microsoft Teams virtual meeting in April. Dr. Mark volunteered as VP elect for SDAFS to find out what SDAFS plans are for virtual meeting platforms.**

Symposium with Midwest RC in future - Sean Kinney

Sean reported that this is moving forward as members from both the Midwest RC and SDAFS RC formed a Working Group and developed and submitted an abstract to host reservoir symposium at 2021 AFS Parent Meeting in Baltimore. If symposium is accepted, Working Group has already met with AFS editor for Fish Mgmt. and plan is to publish the symposium in a special edition like *Catfish 2020*. **Sean asks if there are any members interested in assisting the Working Group?** Michael Homer says he is currently assisting Dr. Sammons and Rebecca Krogman with this effort and encourages participation from other RC members.

Open Discussion

Lawrence opened the discussion up by reporting that AL bass continues to be issue in NC, TN, GA, SC, and VA has potential issues and are waiting on confirmation. Lawrence suggest getting multi-state working group together and his NC Chief of Fisheries was going to bring this topic up with other SDAFS

Fish Chiefs at SEAFWA. Lawrence encouraged those members who think they are going to be impacted by AL bass to mention it to their respective Fish Chief. He also offers members to contact him if they are interested in being in AL bass loop as it develops. Gene reported that VA is doing a big outreach effort and through Bass Fishing HOF awarded a grant to a TBF chapter in VA to work with the VA DNR on this AL bass outreach effort. They are currently in the process of crafting messaging and delivery methods so it is a good time for other states with AL bass issues to join this effort to get message out on broader scale rather than to just VA anglers. John Hammonds agreed with Gene and was aware of his TN Chief visiting with VA's Chief about this topic.

Sean brought up to the group that due to Covid and funding situation in LA, it was likely that his travel to 2021 SDAFS in Arlington, VA was going to be denied. **Sean asks membership if they would be agreeable to the RC paying for his travel costs as RC Chairman if there is an in-person meeting?** He had discussed with Lawrence, as RC post-Chair, and both agreed RC Chair should be present at meeting. Lawrence reminds members that this situation has occurred in the RC past and has been agreed to by the membership at that time. Motion was made by Gene, motion was seconded by Lawrence, and motion was adopted as members agree to have RC pay RC Chair travel costs to in-person 2021 SDAFS meeting if LA DNR does not do so and RC funding is available.

Sean shares RC financial report with members in Colton's absence. Sean refers to the financial report spreadsheet Colton had sent out in August. The RC's mutual fund and money market account balance with Edward Jones Inc. as of the end of July, 2020 was \$16,632.29, of which \$4,728.75 was in the money market account. Account deposits so far in 2020 include \$508.50, and can be attributed to 2020 scholarship donation by Fishiding.com (\$500) and an AFS book sale (\$8.50). Account withdrawals so far in 2020 included providing two \$500 Jenkins scholarships (\$1,000), Dr. Hunt 2020 meeting registration and room charge (\$611.20), commemorative plaque for outgoing RC Chair (\$164.05), and donation to Mike Maceina Memorial endowment at Auburn Univ. (\$1,000.00). Although expenses total \$2,775.25 so far in 2020, RC account is only down \$1,675.19 for the year due to the \$500 donation and approximately \$600 in positive value changes/interest in the investment accounts.

Sean reported that Jeremy sent notes in which he asks the membership to check the website <https://units.fisheries.org/sdafsreservoircommittee/membership/> and make sure their contact info is correct and present on the membership page. He also asks to confirm if GA (Brent Hess) or FL (Jason Dotson) are still the state reps and if anyone has any contact with South Carolina to try and recruit an official state rep back on the RC.

Sean concluded the meeting at 2:30 pm.