

SDAFS RESERVOIR COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
2021 Summer Conference Call Meeting
August 11th, 2021

8:00am– 10:30am; Recorded and submitted by Colton Dennis

Attendees

Sean Kinney, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (*Chair*) (Rep)
Colton Dennis, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (*Secretary-Treasurer*)
Jeremy Shiflet, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
(*Scholarship Chair/Webmaster*) (Rep)
Lawrence Dorsey, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (Rep)
Jeremy Risley, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (Rep)
Michael Homer, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (Rep)
John Hammonds, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (Rep)
John Odenkirk, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (Rep)
Dr. Mark Rogers, USGS Univ. of Tennessee Coop Unit
Reed Green, USGS retired – AR
Dr. Dan Shoup, Oklahoma State University
Cliff Sager, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (Rep)
Patrick O'Rourke, Georgia Power

Introduction - Sean Kinney

Reservoir Committee (RC) chair Sean Kinney called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees.

Financial Report - Colton Dennis

Secretary-Treasurer Colton Dennis gave a brief update on the current RC finances. Since January, account deposits include a \$1,000 donation by Georgia Power Company (Thanks Patrick!) for the 2021 Robert M. Jenkins Memorial scholarships. Account withdrawals included providing two \$500 Jenkins scholarships at the spring meeting. **The RC's mutual fund account balance with Edward Jones Inc. began in January 2021 with \$18,510.45 and as of July 30 was \$20,188.49. One year ago in July 2020 the account balance was \$16,632.29, an increase of \$3,556.20 or 21% over the last year.**

2021 Jenkins Scholarship/2022 sponsor - Jeremy Shiflet

No potential sponsors for 2022 have been contacted at this time. Jeremy asks Patrick if there is an opportunity for GA Power to sponsor scholarship again. Patrick reminds the RC that requests for donations are decision that GA Power determines at the end-of-the-year. **Patrick will request but will not know if it is granted until end of November/first of December. Lawrence mentioned he will provide Jeremy with Will Barron of Mossback Habitat contact info to request donation from Mossback. Jeremy stated he will also contact Jeff Boxrucker with RFHP and see if there is any funding available through RFHP to sponsor scholarship. Dr. Dan Shoup mentioned that one of his grad students received a small donation recently from Bass Pro Shops for some M.S. research and says he will look into grant application and send the Bass Pro Shops contact info to Sean. Jeremy stated he was aware of an on-line grant application through Bass Pro Shops that Jeff Boxrucker has used in the past and will get that info to Sean. Sean mentioned that the Warmwater Streams Committee has been requesting the AFS LA Chapter for scholarship donations successfully the last few years and suggests RC members consider requesting their own state AFS Chapters for similar**

scholarship donation request. Sean will also check with his Pond King contact and see if they are interested in being a sponsor.

Facebook Update – Lawrence Dorsey

Lawrence stated no new developments with our FB page other than the usual postings, but says after this meeting will review some of the stats for our FB page. Sean mentioned that he had to review some of our FB page stats for the RC committee review conducted by SDAFS (Jason Olive) earlier this year and can provide Lawrence that info. We also have 352 “Likes” and 384 “Followers” at this time, which is only slightly less than the SDAFS FB page. Sean mentioned that we had 326 “Followers” back in March according to his SDAFS report, so an increase of 58. **Lawrence says his biggest challenge is to keep content fresh and requests RC members to provide him with any reservoir related activity that they want posted for regional coverage.** He also reminds members if they have any social media questions or ideas on doing things different to let him know and he will look into it.

Website - Jeremy Shiflet

Added the 2021 SDAFS Virtual meeting minutes, 2021scholarship winners, and GA Power logo for being a sponsor. **Jeremy requests members to review the RC contact list and contact info to make sure the state reps info is up to date and to let him know if changes are needed.** Let him know if you want something else on the RC webpage. **Sean suggests changing background of RC webpage from time to time with a big fish, habitat project, etc. so send pictures to Jeremy.**

Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB) Group Discussion

John Odenkirk is currently dealing with this in one of his lakes that has become a major concern. It is a very contentious issue requiring a lot of his time along with partners from the Health Dept. and DEQ. Examples of the difficulty includes informing lakeshore property owners with million dollar plus homes they cannot swim or have contact with the water, owners complaining of dogs getting sick from getting in the water, politicians being called by public, etc. John mentioned seeing a presentation by Reed Green, USGS retired, at the SDAFS in Little Rock two years ago on HAB's and how much of a help and resource he has been for John in dealing with this issue. As a fish management standpoint it hasn't affected any fish stocks or resulted in any fish kills, but has affected angler use of the waterbody. Another issue is balancing the amount of hydrilla in this system that has HAB's. So far they have been successful with limited grass carp stockings and herbicide applications. But now they are having to deal with the anti-herbicide public and trying to get them to understand if they just go with grass carp for vegetation control, then the phosphorous and nitrogen in the system will most likely go straight to the HAB's. Sean related a warning about over stocking with grass carp which took place in a trophy bass lake in northern LA years ago where they still cannot get aquatic vegetation to grow because the grass carp are still alive after 28 years. Lawrence related NC has a couple of lakes dealing with Lyngbya (mat forming blue-green algae). Hasn't affected the fishery, but has affected the fishing as they are getting constant complaints from anglers. Currently there is no clear cut treatment available, and Lawrence says if there were, there is no funding source available such as Fed Aid to spend on it. Not currently identified as a “noxious weed”. **Dr. Mark mentioned that there is a TN HAB Working Group that he will track down and provide contact info to the RC.**

Micro plastic position statement and research - Sean Kinney

Been working with three professors at LSU to develop research on microplastics and how it relates to biologists using plastic material to build artificial reefs in reservoirs. One did get a student who is on an Assistantship for Teaching. We developed a proposal for sampling on Toledo Bend reservoir as a preliminary study to work out methods and processes. We will be sampling quarterly for invertebrates,

fish, water, and sediments throughout the reservoir. We applied for a grant through a non-profit organization called the Toledo Bend Lake Association and was denied. Contacted the Sabine River Authority of Texas and they think some of their research money may be used to pay for this preliminary study on Toledo Bend. This is the current status and we hope to fine tune the research and sampling protocols so that if we can find the funding, project can be expanded to other RC states who are willing to cooperate.

Sean reminded members that he began working on a Position Statement over a year ago on this subject and sent it out recently to the RC and received edits back from several including Jeff Boxrucker. Also received positive comments back from several RC members urging to move forward with this process. Sean asks members if there are any other discussion, edits, issues, etc. about the Position Statement before sending it to the SDAFS as a Resolution from the RC. No comments were given and Sean asked for a Motion to move it forward as an RC Position Statement. All RC members voted in favor and motion passed. Sean asked for discussion on moving Position Statement forward as Resolution to SDAFS. No comments were given and Sean asked for a Motion to move it forward as an RC Resolution. Lawrence asks if it might be better to wait before sending to SDAFS for Resolution consideration by them. In his experience, this RC Resolution will need to be expanded to meet criteria that he has seen from other SDAFS Resolutions. He also understands there is a deadline that Resolutions can be submitted for review and approval by SDAFS at the spring meeting. Sean agrees as he had spoken with Dennis Riecke and is aware of expanding the RC Resolution to include current research, harmful effects, etc. and formatting it to SDAFS resolution standards. Sean agrees it will take time and effort to get Resolution ready, reviewed and edited by RC before SDAFS submission but, Dennis also let him know the SDAFS can now review and approve resolutions virtually now, so no need for submission deadline or waiting for spring meeting. Dennis also let Sean know if SDAFS approves Resolution, they will then vote on whether or not to submit to Parent AFS for approval. **Dr. Mark agreed as member of the SDAFS EXCOM to discuss the Resolution with them and get their feedback.** Sean asked members if we should consider getting letters of support for our Resolution from state AFS Chapters and Fish Chiefs. Mike Homer agreed that more diverse support would help this effort as he discussed his current role on SDAFS Habitat Section which will likely review the RC Resolution. **Sean says he will start formatting Resolution and will schedule time at Spring SDAFS RC meeting for us to work on it. Sean asks Jeremy Shiflet to post RC Position Statement/Resolution on website and for RC members to provide a copy to their respective state AFS Chapters and Fish Chiefs for review and letter of support before our Spring meeting.** These letters of support will be needed for inclusion in the Resolution we submit to the SDAFS.

Open Discussion

Lawrence expressed concern over lack of state reps appointed to RC from some of our SDAFS states like SC, GA, FL, etc. **Sean will contact state agency Fish Chiefs (Jason Olive from AR has list of Fish Chiefs) and see if he can recruit some RC members from these states.**

Sean reminded members there is a Reservoir Symposium at upcoming AFS meeting in Baltimore, MD this fall. Michael Homer and Jeremy Risley will be attending and Dr. Dan and Patrick are a maybe.

Patrick wanted to share with RC members that GA Power is working on dam removal plans/FERC surrender on Chattahoochee River along GA/AL border. These are old, mill dams, run-of-river projects with very low megawatt capacity (obsolete) and already situated below a big USCOE project at West Point. Expect this dam removal to be a positive for the Shoal Bass population. However, GA Power is getting push-back from conservation groups who are requesting dam removal on a much larger

hydropower project that is currently being modernized. Request is totally different than what GA Power is doing on Chattahoochee River. Patrick is seeing more of a public movement to take out dams that may have significant reservoir fisheries and wanted the RC to be made aware.

Sean concluded meeting at 10:30am.