American Fisheries Society

WESTERN DIVISION NEWSLETTER

Volume 4 | February, 1979 | Number 2

DIVISION LOOSES PRES.

John Skinner, 1978-79 President of the Western Div., AFS, died just before Christmas in a tragic home fire from which his wife and children were able to escape. John was an employee of the Cal. Dept. F&G for 20 years. Besides being Western Div. President, John served the AFS as president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer of the Cal-Neva Chapter. The various professional committees he worked on are too numerous to mention.

A John E. Skinner Memorial Fund has been established by the Cal-Neva Chapter. The memorial will be in the form of a scholarship or honorarium for some outstanding contribution to the cause of fish and wildlife enhancement in relation to man-made developments. Chapters and individuals in the Western Div. may send contributions to the John E. Skinner Memorial Fund c/o California-Nevada Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, 1416 Ninth St., Sacramento, CA 95814, ATTN. Almo Cordone.

President Elect, Bob Wiley (Wyo. F&G, Larime 82070) will assume the duties of president for the remainder of John's term.

ANNUAL MEETING IN ANCHORAGE: JULY 22-6

The Annual Div. Meeting will be held on July 22-26, in Anchorage at the Anchorage Westward Hilton Hotel. The theme of the meeting is "Cooperative Fish and Game Management - A Challenge for the Future". The objective of the conference is to deal with the more controversial aspects of state rights expression in the face of what appears to be strong Federal oversight in both the legislative and legal realms. The program will be structured to address biological, legal, social, and economic aspects of the subject. Technical sessions have been reduced in favor of expanded general session topics on cooperative management.

Keynoters will be the Governor of Alaska, Jay Hamond, and the Secretary of the Interior, Cecil Andrus. Both will give their views on Federal and State cooperation. Statutory guidelines for fish and game management will be discussed in a general session followed by technical sessions on the im pacts of recent federal legislation on wildlife and fisheries management and law enforcement. Other general sessions will deal with the question - "What do our user publics expect from us?", and "The Alaskan Experience - model of resource stewardship in chaos". A wrap up session will be held to discuss what most be done to achieve harmonious cooperative resource stewardship.

REPORT LISTS FISHERY NEEDS: Grazing Work High On List

The U.S. Dept. Agriculture in cooperation with State Universities and Land Grant Colleges in 11 contiguous western states and Hawaii have just completed a report on research needs and priorities for research in forest, range, wildlife and fisheries habitat development. The task force noted that the decline of fish populations in the West is attributed to a number of factors. Among them are effects of natural and manmade instream obstructions, chemical pollutants, streamside logging, grazing and siltation. The effects of wild and domestic grazing animals on fisheries have not been adequately measured the task force said. They recommended that the current minuscule research on the effect of livestock grazing on fish habitat be accelerated and expanded. Many western fisheries biologists have said that

(see Grazing, p. 5)

THE PRESIDENT'S QUILL

John Skinner launched the Division well in 1978. Many active programs are underway and I look forward to the meeting in Anchorage. As many know the Society is very actively involved in proposed expansion of the Dingell-Johnson federal aid to fisheries program. Elsewhere in the Newsletter is information pertaining to the division effort in this regard.

Plans for the Division meeting are progressing very well. AFS Program Chairman Dick Logan is working closely with the Western Association towards a good program addressing a theme of cooperative fish and game management. I hope that many people throughout the Division will be able to attend.

The Western Division is now even larger and includes the Yukon and Northwest territories (Canada), Mexico, and the U.S. possessions in the Pacific. This is certainly a large and varied area to coordinate and update Society Activities. Art Whitney--immediate past AFS President--is chairing a committee charged with considering Time and Place and Organization and Structure of the Western Division. All chapter presidents are serving with Art on this committee and have received communication from John Skinner soliciting opinion. Please respond to Art on this important issue. Should you need further information please contact either Art or me.

Of concern is the financial condition of the Division. We have been asked for contributions toward a number of worthy endeavors; Bioengineering Symposium and D.J. expansion fund among others. Of course, the Division should be involved in all of these kinds of things since the organization is composed of and represents fishery scientists in a very large area. However, we seem in a constant financial vise. Other Divisions have contributed as much as $1,000 to the DJ expansion fund. The issue here is how other, smaller divisions, remain financially afloat, even generate money. Secretary-Treasurer Clare Carlson will be assessing this shortly.

I believe the Division should sponsor or coordinate symposia (there are many things that could be dealt with), the proceedings of which could generate much money. To some, the In-stream Flow Conference, represents a specter the Division should not test again. However, the flow conference is recognized the country-over as a landmark meeting. The proceedings of that gathering will generate money shortly - profit to the Society. Rather than symposia the Division could sponsor, with chapters, much smaller (perhaps regional) meetings or workshops, collate proceedings and offer them at a reasonable price. To me this would do much to provide the active organization members desire. Please respond with your thoughts and comments to me at Route 2, Box 25, Laramie, Wyoming 82070.

I look forward to working in the Division and pray that I can carry on the excellent activities that John Skinner began. I'll appreciate any input members may have.

Bob Wiley
President-Elect Bob

OTHER DIVISION BUSINESS

From the Editor - The last issue of the Newsletter was mailed 3rd class, at a savings of about $200. A cursory survey indicated that Newsletters got to Oregon, New Mexico, and Montana in about 10 days, and to Colorado and California in 13 days. Not too bad! It took 13 days for it to get to the mailboxes in Logan, Utah - the town from which it was mailed.

Abstracts of papers to be presented at the Annual Div. Meeting in Alaska in July will be published in the next edition of the Newsletter. This will be a first and will hopefully get important fishery information to more people. Authors will be receiving forms from the program chairman. Please participate.

From the Sec-Treas. - Will the presidents of chapters within the Div. please send to Clare Carlson (303 Aylesworth Hall, Col. St. Univ., Ft. Collins, CO 80523) updated lists of their chapter officers and the usual dates of meetings at which new officers are elected. The maintenance of an up-to-date list of chapter officers has always been a problem in the Div. so, Presidents, please respond.

From the Resolutions Committee - Chapter Presidents and Resolution Charimen, please forward resolutions passed by your chapter that you wish action on at the Anchorage meeting to Bill Platts, Resolutions Committee Chairman, 1603 Sunrise Rim, Boise, Idaho 83705. Resolutions should be received by April 15, they should have Divisional scope and interest and should be accompanied by a list of persons/agencies to receive the resolution. Please identify if the resolution is to go to the Society for further action.

(see Division, p. 3)

1979 is the 100th anniversary of rainbow trout culture in the U.S. In 1879, the taking of rainbow eggs began at the Baird Hatchery on the McCloud River in California.

DIVISION --

From the Riparian Habitat Committee - The Committee held an informal meeting in November and began work on their two objectives: 1) formulation of a riparian habitat resolution for presentation at the Anchorage meeting and 2) provide the membership of the Div. with the current status on riparian habitat management, research and legislation. The resolution is now in draft form and a manuscript on management, etc. with about 2 pages for each western state is being prepared.

From the Structure, Organization, Time, and Place Committee - Everyone in the Div. who has an opinion on time and place has expressed it at least twice since 1972. Well, maybe the third time around, the Div., lead by the deliberations of the committee, can reach a consensus. The problem has been divided into 2 parts.

First, Structure - The committee has been asked to consider the following alternatives as far as the Div. is concerned: 1) remain as is, 2) split into 2 or more geographic units, 3) divide into state, province or possession subunits of the Parent Society or of the Div., 4) abolish the Div. and depend on Chapters as the functional units, and 5) form inter-regional Chapters within the Division. The problem of course is the large geographical size of the Div. which presents travel, communication and administration problems.

Second, Time and Place - The committee is again analysing the desirability of continuing to meet with the Western Assoc. of Fish and Wildl. Agencies. This problem seems more settled than the first. The Div.'s relationship with the Assoc. was clarified in Sun Valley and the visibility and input to the program at San Diego was excellent.

Anyone with thoughts on the matters briefly discussed above should correspond with Chapter presidents, who are members of the committee.

From the Internationalism Committee - Chairman Paul Turner (Dept. Fish and Wildl. Sci., New Mex. St. Univ., Las Cruces, N.M. 88001), has been developing a dialogue with Mexican fisheries workers. A meeting between fisheries workers from the 2 countries was held in conjunction with the Desert Fishes Council Meeting in November. The members of the Council actively embraced the concept of improving international relations with Mexican workers by encouraging future papers on Mexican waters to contain a Spanish abstract.

Robert Rulifson, a committee member is the first president of the Pacific International Chapter, which draws its membership from Washington and British Columbia. Their first annual meeting will be Feb. 20-22 at the Holiday Inn in Bellingham, Washington.

David Lane of the Canadian Wildlife Serv., another committee member, is exploring the possibilities of a new AFS Chapter encompassing Alberta, Saskatchenwan, Yukon and NWT. He envisions future contacts and joint meetings with the Montana Chapter.

Committee Chairman Turner requests that Western fisheries biologists who are interested in participating in future international activities should contact him at the above address, or either of the two committee members (Lane - Can. Wildl. Ser., 5320-122nd St., Edmonton, Alberta T6H 3S5; Rulifson - EPA, 14232 S.E. 23rd St., Bellview, WA 98007).

DJ Actions Taken By Division

In the last Newsletter, you read about the movement to expand DJ funds through taxes on boat, boat trailer and outboard motor prices, and about the role of the Div. in this movement. All Chapters have received a package of material pertaining to the DJ program. This should be an important topic at annual meetings. The Div. has established an account for funds to be contributed to the expansion program. The money will be used to support efforts to have legislation successfully introduced and passed. All Chapters have been asked to contribute. If each member could contribute $1, the Div. could generate about $2000. Contributions should be sent to Sec-Treas. Clare Carlson, 303 Aylesworth Hall, CSU, Ft. Collins, CO 80523.

The Div.'s activities are being coordinated by Bob Wiley (Rt. 2, Box 25, Laramie, WY 82070). Bob reports that a recent AFS survey showed that if the DJ program was expanded, States would build additional lakes and boat launching areas, expand management of present lakes, initiate lakeside construction of recreational facilities, improve stream and river access, improve marine boating and fishing access sites, acquire perpetual fishermen easement to streams and lakes, intensify warmwater stream management, purchase minimum reservoir pools for the fishery, initiate water development projects, and rehabilitate exhisting construction. It should be clear that these improvements will certainly be a boon to the boating industry and increase sales significantly.

Western Div. fishery biologists should be prepared to discuss this issue with local fishermen's groups and be prepared for objections and questions. The facts on 14 major

(see DJ, p. 6)

YELLOWSTONE RIVER WATER RULES FINALIZED

More than half the flow of the Yellowstone River has been set aside for fish, wildlife and water quality protection. The Montana Board of Natural Resources has hopefully settled a five year argument on how Yellowstone water should be shared by riverfront cities, irrigation districts, federal agencies and state departments. Of the average flow of 8.6 million acre feet, 5.5 million will be left in the river to protect fishing holes and water quality. However, during drought, cities get first right to the water. Apparently, the instream flow needs for fish, a hot topic in the West today, have been protected in this famous western river.

Concerning instream flows, methods of reserving instream flows for fish through governmental and institutional actions have been presented in a series of reports for 13 Western states. Through the Western Water Allocation Project, the Fish and Wildlife Service has identified the existing laws, procedures and methods for reserving the flows of western streams to protect fish. Copies of these reports may be obtained from the Technical Information Officer, WELUT, U.S. FWS 2625 Redwing Rd, Ft. Collins, CO 80526. When requesting a report for your state, request "Instream flow strategies for.. ..(State)".

SIKES ACT - WHAT IS IT?

The Sikes Act dates back to 1960 when the Secretary of Defense was authorized to join the Secretary of Interior and appropriate state agencies in carrying out proposals for the conservation of fish and wildlife on the 26 million acres of federal land contained in military reservations. Subsequently, the Act was expanded to include, first outdoor recreation on military lands, and then, in 1974, improvement of fish and wildlife habitat, range rehabilitation and protection of endangered species on certain other public lands, mainly national forests and public lands administered by BLM. Despite millions authorized by the Act to carryout its objectives, the Administration usually relies on broader agency funding authorities and other means to obtain the money needed to carry out the purposes of the Act. Are the purposes of the Act being adequately carried out by other funds?

Strange that man should make up lists
Of living things in danger.
Why he fails to list himself,
Is really even stranger!

LEGAL BRIEFS

1) COWS AND FISH (birds)

The Audobon Society, through its legal representatives, has notified the Forest Service that a local chapter of the Society intends to bring suit against the Service because of present management of riparian zones along the Salt Verde River System in Arizona. The birders claim that overgrazing in the riparian zone prohibits the regeneration of habitat necessary for eagle nesting. The Forest Service is investigating alternative grazing stratigies to enhance the riparian zone. Perhaps the alternative techniques could be applied to other water sheds where enhancement of the fishery value of a stream is an important goal.

2) FISHING RIGHTS DISPUTE

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to review the fishing rights dispute between Indians and non-Indians in Washington. This controversy has been simmering since the famous Judge Boldt decision that Indians should have the opportunity to catch half of all anadromous fish off their reservations, allowing a safe number to escape for spawning. Although the Court formerly declined to review the Boldt decision, their present review of attending rulings will help clarify the decision. Word should be out by June.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT OF 1973: AMENDED

This Fall, Congress took (and continues to take) a long, hard look at the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Several important amendments resulted. Among these was the defination of species - an endangered one can now be only a vertebrate species. Under the original act, states and federal agencies were required to consult with the Secretary of the Interior relative to proposed developments which might affect endangered species. Now, this is still generally true but the process has been streamlined and provisions are made for applicants to apply for exemption to the consultation requirement. Critical habitat (CH) must now be published at the same time a species is proposed for listing and the economic impact of CH designation must be analysed. Final regulation of CH must be achieved in 2 years from publication of the proposed listing. All listed species and CH must be reviewed every 5 years. Also, funding for implementation

(see Endangered, p. 6)

GRAZING . . .
they know well what damage livestock cause to a stream. However, the task force report disagrees. It states "although grazing by livestock and wildlife is widespread and impinges on nearly every stream and lake in the western U.S., the effects of grazing on aquatic ecosystems are virtually unknown". The report goes on to state "this is a high priority research problem that should not be ignored further. Studies are urgently needed to show how riparian vegetation influences aquatic systems and to show the consequences of altering the vegetation by man's activities. It is also important that the separate effects of livestock and wildlife on aquatic systems be identified. A major deficiency of past research on effects of land use on the environment has been the failure to extend the scope of studies to include impacts on aquatic resources". (This is especially true in range studies on the effects of livestock grazing and various grazing regimes on range habitat.)

The task force saw new and emerging research needs in the following areas: 1) effects of environmental change on aquatic ecosystems, 2) transfer and use of information on aquatic ecosystems, 3) methods for describing and documenting aquatic conditions, 4) identification and evaluation of fish reguirements, and 5) improvement of fish habitat.

In the area of effects of environmental change on aquatic ecosystems, the report cited a need for investigations into grazing effects, instream flow needs and the effects of fire management on streams. As the demand for water increases and water use intensifies, more stress will be placed on aquatic systems because less water -- usually of lower quality -- will be available for fish in streams, lakes and reservoirs. Instream flow needs for fish have recently gained the political limelight, but answers to how best to prescribe and use instream flows are confused by lack of good data on fish requirements. Fire management policies have taken a recent turn from strict supression to prescribed and let-burn fires. Despite volumes written on fire ecology, the effects of fire (wild and prescribed) on aquatic systems is almost nonexistant. It is recommended that proposed studies be extended to include the aquatic environment. Too often has research literally reached a dead end at the water's edge. The task force concluded that the classic paired water shed approach used so often in the past severely restricts the range of conditions that can be studied.

In the area of transfer and use of information, the task force found that current systems of storage and retrieval of aquatic research data are not sufficiently comprehensive in their coverage of the published and unpublished literature (DJ reports, MS and Ph.D. work, agency reports, etc.). A second problem in information transfer is the age old lack of communication between researchers and resource managers. It was recommended that an amalgamation of the various abstracting and research reporting systems be carried out - probably by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Also, more reliance on field or onsite research involving researchers and land managers, together, as a substitute for dependence on the centralized research laboratory, should be helpful in bridging the communication gap between researchers and resource managers.

In the area of describing and documenting aquatic conditions, the task force thought that fishery scientists lack good techniques to carry out their research. Most methods do not permit acquisition of data with acceptable levels of accuracy and precision. The principal reason for this is the lack of funding for methodology research.

The identification and evaluation of fish requirements was thought to be an important problem. Although some information on fish requirements is available for many game fishes, it is lacking for most species over the full genetic and geographical range. Requirements for nongame species are virtually unknown. More information is needed on the difference in environmental requirements between anadromous and resident populations, within populations, and between wild and hatchery stocks. The rearing habitat of salmonids is the least understood part of their habitat, yet, the most affected by land use activities. Because of this lack of knowledge, rearing habitat often is inadequately considered in land use planning and decision making. The task force suggested that before research in this area was initiated, state-of-the-art papers should be developed. Emphasis should be on studies in natural environments as opposed to artificial laboratory conditions.

In the area of improvement of fish habitat, the task force thought that many projects for improvement on aquatic habitat have been failures because of the lack of knowledge of proper procedures for improvement and failure to understand the consequences of improvement on other elements of the aquatic system. They thought the fisheries research community should try what has been successful for EPA, i.e. demonstration projects to devise realistic methods of rehabilitating polluted waters.

(see Grazing, p. 6)

GRAZING . . .

Copies of the report can be obtained from the Information Officer, Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, U.S. Forest Service, 507-25th St., Ogden, Utah 84401.

ENDANGERED . . .

of the Act has been extended for only 18 months (FY 79 and half of FY 80).

If anyone is interested in reading the original language in the 1973 Act, and other important natural resources acts, the following publication is very useful: "A compilation of federal laws relating to conservation and development of our Nation's fish and wildlife resources, environmental quality and oceanography". This 933 page document has every word of every Federal law relating to fisheries up to 1977. It is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

HIGH MT. WATERSHED MGMT. WORKSHOP HELD

A high mountain watershed management workshop was recently held at Utah St. University. Papers of specific interest to fisheries biologists were "Stream habitat and physical-chemical factors" and variables for evaluation of stream ecosystems".(write D. Jones, Ut. Water Res. Lab, USU, UMC 82, Logan, UT 84322)

Western Division Newsletter
c/o Utah Coop. Fish. Res. Unit
Utah State University, UMC 52
Logan, Utah 84322

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objections voiced by, or questions anticipated from the manufacturers concerning the proposed tax have been sent to each chapter president or are available from Bob Wiley.

INFORMATION TRANSFER

Instream Flow Briefs is put out by the FWS's Coop. Instream Flow Service Group, 2625 Redwing Rd., Ft. Collins, CO 80526. If you know of recent or upcoming instream flow studies, please inform the Group so the study can be included in their reference system. You may request a literature search by writing.

Journal of Soil and Water Conservation is interested in publishing more articles on fish and wildlife research and/or management. Think of the Journal if and when you develop papers.

Fish and Wildlife Reference Service makes available all reports and publications from the Federal Aid Program. A recent review of the Service concluded that it was widely used and provided satisfactory service. Most services are free to agencies receiving federal funds. To have a literature search conducted, write FWS Ref. Ser., Denver Public Library, 3840 York St., Denver, CO 80205.

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