

Coldwater Resource Steering Committee

September 28, 2016

Jay's Sporting Goods, Gaylord, Michigan

Attendees: Bryan Darland, Walt Grau, Jim Bos, Amy Trotter, Steven Mondrella, Tim Cwalinski, Ray Danders, Bill Labell, Dave Peterson, Neal Godby, Brian Gunderman, Bryan Burroughs, John Walters, Todd Grischke, Jim Schramm, Roger Hinchcliff, Dave Borgeson Sr., Mark Tonello, Scott Heintzelman, Phil Schneeberger, Jim Dexter, Troy Zorn, Nick Popoff, Jim Francis, Jan-Michael Hessenauer (phone).

Welcome and introductions

Troy Zorn welcomed everyone, and introductions were made.

Artificial fly/lure only, year-round fishing update– Troy Zorn

Following up on this item from the previous meeting, Zorn and Dexter asked management biologists to look at opportunities for increasing year-round stream trout fishing opportunities in their units (if such opportunities are lacking). If year-round opportunities were lacking, they were to identify reaches with Type 1 or 2 regulations that could potentially be changed to Type 4. Each unit expressed support for the idea, but did not nominate any stream reaches within their unit, since they felt that well-dispersed, year-round angling opportunities on trout streams in their units were currently being provided through existing Type 3, Type 4, and Gear-Restricted regulations.

Arctic Grayling update –Jim Dexter.

Jim Dexter provided a brief update on Arctic grayling reintroduction efforts in Michigan. Highlights included discussion of the Fisheries Division and Little River Band of Ottawa Indians as Founding Partners, and the formation of core teams for leading efforts in key areas of research, management, hatchery, and outreach. We think another reintroduction attempt is worthwhile given increases in our understanding of Michigan rivers, improvements in grayling rearing techniques, and recent successes with grayling reintroduction in Montana rivers, including some with resident populations of brook trout and brown trout. Jim mentioned the August 18th kickoff meeting among potential partners, which included a myriad of interested and enthusiastic parties. The next partner meeting is planned for early December.

Ten-brook trout bag limit update- Phil Schneeberger

Phil provided an update on this study, showing summary results that had been presented earlier in the month to the Natural Resources Commission. Data from 2012 to 2016 for electrofishing, creel, postcard, and internet surveys were compiled and a couple of questions that had been raised at the NRC meeting were clarified. Contrary to predictions going into the study, it was found that the ten-brook trout bag regulation had potential to negatively affect abundance and size structure of local brook trout populations and the opportunity for higher harvests did not result in increased angler activity. The audience commended Fisheries Division on their forthrightness in conducting the study and sharing findings. Dexter provided additional info on how study results will be incorporated into further discussion of this topic at the December NRC meeting.

Inland Trout Management Plan comments– Jim Dexter and Troy Zorn

Jim and Troy acknowledged receipt of written comments from several CRSC members and organized groups. Jim provided clarification on a goal pertaining to use of artificial lures only regulations. Attendees were then provided an opportunity to verbally express their comments on the draft document in a roundtable fashion. Several of the comments are listed below.

- Are we managing for maximum sustainable harvest or maximum sportfish potential? Stocked vs wild fisheries? Overall management philosophy lacking.
- Aquaculture nutrient loading concerns. Would like more specific metrics and timelines. General funding should be obtained and used for the permit reviews and other environmental issues that benefit the larger public, and license dollars put towards activities that directly benefit anglers.
 - During the comment period Amy Trotter also provided some highlights of the guide registration legislation that is being developed with Representative Zorn (Monroe). They include minimal oversight and monthly reporting of clients, take, etc; \$150 fee for a 3-year permit; recent felons and fish and game violators are prevented from getting a guide license; fines for guiding without a license; NRC would have the authority to potentially regulate use and take via hunter/angler guides. It may or may not move soon due to lame duck session.
- Need to discuss mortality of barbless vs. barbed, flies vs. lures vs. bait.
- Crowding and possibly over-crowding on stream reaches that are gear-restricted (GR), suggesting an attraction to GR reaches, and potential need to expand GR waters to spread out effort. The DNR should promote Trout Trails to draw anglers to quality waters that aren't GR and continue to recruit young anglers.
- Dam issues need DNR involvement to work more closely and proactively with permittees. For example, is the DNR going to adopt the 70° Pledge, which is similar to the "Hoot-owl" closures that Montana is implementing during periods of elevated water temperatures on some trout streams?
- Landscape changes and trout habitat. Water withdrawal issues, drain commissioners and influence on tributaries, and land use.
- Don't limit discussion to what we've done, but question everything we do. Take a look at slot limits. Habitat and instream wood and natural stream design is where discussion is now. Stay current on the science. Hatchery upgrades and nutrient releases. Manage for all trout anglers.
- Some said the report looked good, while others had not read it in detail and had no comments to provide.

Next meeting date: April 27, 2017 from 10:30 to 3:00 at the Hartwick Pines State Park Visitor Center.