



Hook, Line, and Sinker

The Official Publication of The New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen

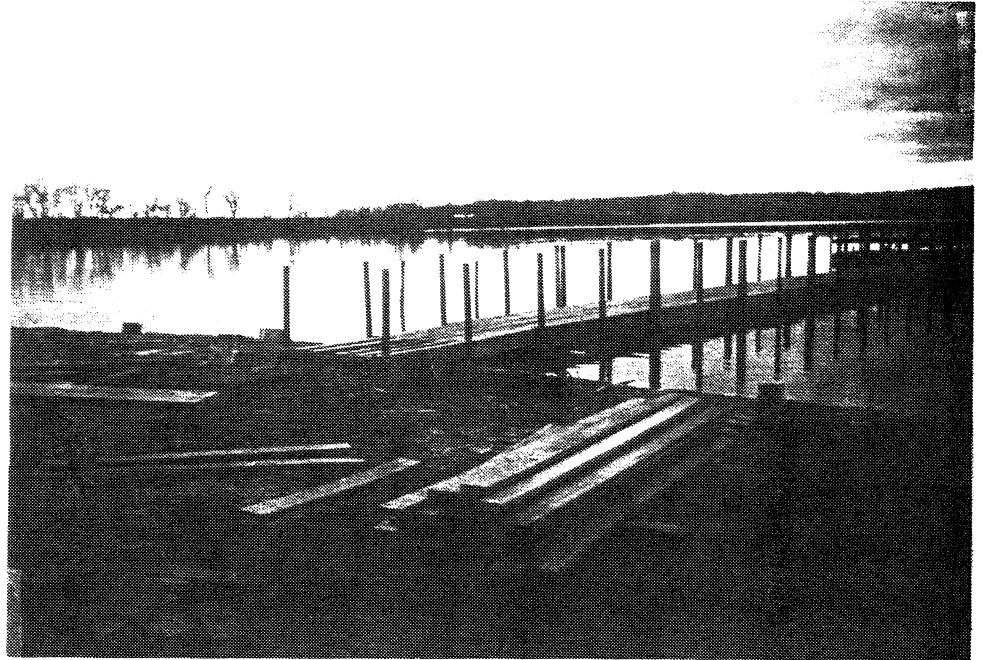
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CLEAR LAKE UPDATE

The walleyes finally decided to make their presence known. In late May and early June, they were quite easy to catch. Maybe they were too easy to catch. Some people thought that they were entitled to all they could catch, and took home several limits. Someone told me this second-hand. If I could have gotten the names of these people, they would not be fishing for some time. Most of you seem to be afraid to turn in these people. Maybe you are afraid that the violators will find out who reported them. The Department of Natural Resources has a toll free number you can call to report violations. You can remain anonymous and you may be eligible for a reward. The number is 1-800-652-9093.

Back to Clear Lake. The new fishing pier has been getting a lot of use. There are quite a few people out there almost every evening, and they have been catching fish. On the downside, some of the fish they have been catching are bullheads. Big bullheads, which probably is better than small ones. It would seem that the game fish are keeping the numbers under control.

We have completed the walkway to the pier, from the top of the bank, making the fishing pier handicapped accessible. The same recycled plastic used for the walkway was used in constructing the pier. Special thanks to all the guys who showed up to build the walkway, especially to Jim Hulke, who coordinated most of the work. Also to Kim Olson who did the leg work in getting the material ordered, and Randy Berg, who stored some of the material in his garage for us.



THE FISH ARE CALLING

Just what is it about fishing that compels a sane adult to leave a bed at o-dark-thirty and wade into the howling maw of a coastal storm? Or to spend a lifetime trying to understand the habits of a creature with a raisin-sized brain? Or to work overtime for months to pay for a fishing expedition two continents away?

Recently, a dozen big thinkers gathered to answer these questions. They made lists a drew charts. They consulted psychographic profiles. They organized, prioritized, and made wild guesses. They ordered out for pizza and though it over some more. In the end, a subcommittee drafted the official summary. The document was brief. Fishing is fun was all that it said. They could have saved themselves a lot of trouble if they had just asked you in the first place.

Author Unknown

FISH AND THE FEDS

How your angling and boating taxes make Minnesota a better place to fish


If you fish, you should know Minnesota's best kept secret unknown to most anglers is something that helps put fish on your line, protects your lakes and streams, and even provides boat-ramp sites and fishing piers. The secret — and it shouldn't be one- is called the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program. That mouthful of words is worth about 7 million a year to Minnesota boaters and anglers as money invested in more than 5000 fishing lakes, rivers, and streams across the state. The Federal Sport Fish Restoration Program is basically a catch and release tax system. First, the US Treasury catches about \$350 million a year from an excise tax on fishing equipment, motorboat fuel, and other angling products. Later, it releases the money to each state based on the geographic size including water area, and the number of people who buy a sport fishing license. Minnesota usually receives the fourth or fifth highest reimbursement, behind Alaska, California, Texas, and sometimes Michigan.

Each year in Minnesota, federal reimbursement funds are used to:

- enhance or develop fish habitat at 20 to 40 sites
- provide 10 to 20 new boat launch sites
- fund 550 to 600 lake survey and lake mapping projects and 150 stream surveys
- acquire valuable stream and lakeside land and habitat

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- support the MinnAqua aquatic education program
- provide environmental review and planning
- support aeration and lake reclamation

The federal aid program is extremely valuable to the Section of Fisheries and everyone who fish. Unfortunately, it has a low profile. Yet without this revenue, anglers would see less up-to-date information, research, trout stocking, boat access, and quality habitat management. The Minnesota D Section of Fisheries operates on an annual budget of about \$17 million. About \$10 million comes from the sale of fishing licenses. The rest, about \$7 million, comes in the form of federal aid reimbursement. The Federal Sport Fish Restoration Program is an outstanding example of the user-pays, user-benefits philosophy. Every time anglers buy rod, reel, boat or motor, they contribute to fisheries management.

FOR SALE

New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen clothing. Jackets, tee shirts, and hats. All reasonably priced. Contact Mike at 359-9650.



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The Hook, Line, and Sinker is published monthly by Chris Vorwerk and John Vorwerk for the New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the respective writers and not to be construed as the opinion of the NUASF or its Members. Send all correspondence and submissions to: Mike Deinken, Editor, 1022 Spring St., New Ulm, Minnesota 56073

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TAKE A KID FISHING

On June 11 we held our annual Take A Kid Fishing day, this year at Clear Lake. It was a much nicer day than we had been experiencing lately. We had probably our best turnout to date. There were almost 100 kids and adults who showed up to learn a little bit about fishing. Most got to go out in a boat in search of some finny entertainment. Those who didn't tried their luck from the new fishing pier. It was a wonderful day to be out at the lake, the weather was nice, the sun was shining, and the kids were eager to land that lunker. Too bad the fish were not cooperating. A stiff wind kept the anglers in boats confined to a small area on the north shore. This didn't seem to make much difference to most of the kids. After the fishing was done for the day, we enjoyed lunch, and door prizes were awarded to most of those attending. We would like to thank Subway for providing the wonderful meals we were served, also thanks to all the members who helped. I have just one question though. Where was the pop?

DID YOU KNOW?

Largemouth bass are ambush feeders. They skulk in cover, waiting for food to happen by, then attack their prey with a powerful burst of speed. If it's large pan fish they're after, bass will strike head on so that the prey's dorsal fin folds back as it slides into the stomach.

Largemouths have uniquely well developed inner ears, which allows them to sense medium-high frequencies better than most fish. Despite this advantage, bass are not picky eaters. They eat fish, crayfish, insects, salamanders, leeches, mice, snakes, turtles, and even ducklings.

Bass aren't built for the sustained, high-speed runs that long, pliant-bodied fish can achieve. Instead, they rely on the strength of their tails for power, their stocky body for quick maneuverability to feed and escape danger. They can even swim backwards. Bass get quicker as they grow- a 20 inch fish can typically attain bursts of 12 miles per hour, about four to five times faster than we can crank a plug. But their swimming performance decreases with temperature, which is one reason we feel the bass' fight is poorer in cold water. In rare instances, largemouths have been known to live longer than 20 years, but the average life expectancy is closer to 16 years in the Northern US and 10 years in the South. A 10 year old bass in Minnesota would weigh about 5.5 pounds.



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our club wishes to extend our deepest sympathy to the family of NUASF member Paul Kotten. We know in our hearts he's catchin' big fish and havin' the time of his life in heaven.

Well, the walkway is in at Clear Lake and it looks marvelous. To all the members who put time in a big Thank You! The people that are using the park has increased drastically due in part to the whole project of connecting the park to the water.

The Take A Kid Fishing event was a complete success, with 90 participants taking in the day. Prize were given out, everyone had an opportunity to get in a boat, thanks to club members who donated their time and rigs to get the job done. Subway Sandwiches and Salads provided food to all and NUASF member Tom Kannegeisser is to be thanked for arranging all the food.

The membership drive is still going with Dick Peterman holding a slim lead for the free jacket. No to fret, plenty of time, so invite a new member to the next meeting, if he or she is a prospective that will usually clinch it. Anyone who hears what we are up to and all about, has to be moved to help out by signing up

Don't forget the July meeting when we go to Waterville to see the fisheries operation, it should be a great time. We plan to eat there and have refreshments on a lake with a local club from over there. Sounds like it could get interesting.

The following Article is reprinted from the March/April edition of the Land Stewardship Letter...

'We need to look at things holistically'

NRCS Chief Paul Johnson talks about the drawbacks to narrowly focused soil conservation efforts.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Last year, Paul Johnson took over a chief of the federal Natural Resource Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service). A farmer from Decorah, Iowa, Johnson gained a reputation as a backer of good land stewardship while serving in the state's legislature. As a lawmaker, he was instrumental in establishment of Iowa State University's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture and the creation of a ground water protection law that's become a national model. Recently Johnson talked to the Land Stewardship Letter about changes taking place within an agency that has had mixed results protecting our nation's soil during the past six decades.

LSL: What's the status of your agency's soil erosion efforts?

Johnson: ...Our last 10 years we've been charged to reduce soil erosion on highly erodible lands [through conservation compliance], so we've had to put a great deal of effort into that. As we look to the future we look at water quality issues, for example. Under the Clean Water Act we're probably going to be working with farmers to connect more things together and not just focus on soil erosion.

There's been fantastic progress within the past 10 years in reducing soil erosion. The numbers are really significant. For 60 years this agency has been working at that and I think there's been more progress within the last 10 years than there was within the previous 50 years. But that is not the only issue and sometimes trying to solve one we cause other problems. I think we need to take a look at things more holistically.

LSL: What would be an example of erosion control methods causing other problems?

Johnson: Well, for example we've moved very, very rapidly into no-till. I think no-till is a very good system but I would argue that we need to take the next step and that's do no-till with as few pesticides as possible. Some people would argue we're using more pesticides [with no-till]. I don't think we are; we're using different ones. But if we put our minds to it, we can till the soil less, grow good crops and introduce less pesticides into the environment.

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If you just look at one thing, soil erosion, you don't worry about the others. But it's important we look at all of it.

LSL: Does the carrot approach to controlling erosion really work?

Johnson: I think the real harm of farming systems can be alleviated through the very first step in sustainability and that's moving towards more efficient systems.

For example, in Iowa we've reduced nitrogen input by 20 percent on corn while obtaining the same yields. So there is this one area where farm and environmental concerns really go hand-in-hand, but we need to move out very aggressively on that.

I would argue that we could use far less pesticides than we are now using if we set our minds to it. Sometimes we're forced to do that by the threat of a regulatory approach down the line and I think we're seeing some of that now especially with nitrogen usage. But also it's more money in the pocket of the farmer when we're done.

Now, to have a truly sustainable system may require going well beyond the economic interests of the farmer and getting into a situation where society and agriculture have a compact that says, 'we will produce healthy food, we will have a healthy environment and we will have a healthy agricultural economy as well.' We need all three of those. Sometimes we work on just a couple of them.

LSL: With conservation compliance, the main incentive for adopting environmentally friendly farming methods is the threat of losing federal crop subsidy payments. There's quite a bit of pressure within Congress to reduce or eliminate those subsidies. What happens when farmers no longer have financial incentives to maintain these conservative practices?

Johnson: ...I think there's been a real shift in agriculture in the last 10 years. I think an awful lot of farmers who are now complying with their systems on the land are not going to go back because they find in many cases they're better farmers than they were before. It's also unleashed a lot of creativity out there.

Sure, there will be some that will go back. I think it's one of those issues we're finding very tough to deal with. What do you do with people who don't care for the sustainability of the land? The vast majority of farmers do but are sometimes caught in an economic bind and any of us who have farmed know what that's like. There are times when I grazed my pasture tighter than I should have and I think a lot of farmers are in that position. That's why I think it's very important we recognize that part of sustainable agriculture and land stewardship is a decent living for taking good care of the land too.

There are those that would say we should just swing a big club and make farmers be good stewards but if they can't have a decent living they aren't going to get there. That's why the [social compact between farmers and consumers] is so important.

LSL: I guess an example of focusing too narrowly on one aspect of the environment would be reducing erosion down to T [tolerable] levels, but ignoring the petroleum-based chemicals within that soil which are still escaping the farmland.

Johnson: Yes. Even talking about T-levels is not really talking about concentrated flows of water, which is where we can get some very bad erosion. There are some places where T isn't good enough. Over the long haul on a large field it would but if you're along a trout stream five tons of soil loss per acre can do a lot of harm. So there are examples where you may allow a certain amount of soil to move but you don't want it to move in certain places.

There's some exciting approaches. Part of our history is draining wetlands and channelizing streams. [Now] I think part of our future is restoring wetlands and doing restoration work on streams. Throughout our agency there are people excited about that. We have a lot of good technical skill and I think we're committed to do that.

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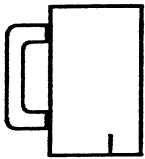
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June 29th- Meeting-Clear Lake County Park-6:30 PM



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