



November 19, 2011
New Mexico Bass Federation Nation
Director's Meeting
Location/Time: Hanseatic/10:00 AM
Albuquerque, NM

AGENDA

- I. Call to order, introduction, and roll call
 - a. Steve Ragsdale – President
 - b. Earl Conway – Conservation Director
 - c. Bob Lechel – HCBA Director (1)
 - d. Rick Hipp – Hawg Hunters Director (2)
 - e. Russell Whited – Pecos Valley Director (3)
 - f. John Myers – Cedar Cove – Director (4)
 - g. Barry Stanley – Four Corners Director (proxy for Jack Phelps) (5)
 - h. Ken Ronquillo – Elephant Butte Bass Director (6)
 - i. Brian Stangel – proxy for Southwest Bass Anglers (permission by phone in presence of President and Directors) (7)
- II. Update Clubs and Directors
 - a. Four Corner Bass 2012 Director will be Jack Phelps
 - i. 505.327.2808 - jackphelpsjr@comcast.net
 - b. Southwest Bass Anglers
 - i. Mark Hettinga new Director
- III. Reading of previous minutes
 - a. Motion from Steve for dismissing of reading of previous minutes
 - b. Barry second
 - c. Rick third
- IV. Financial update
 - a. AP being brought current
 - i. Year End Pot
 1. Jeff Aslin won the year end pot for first angler to not make team and qualify by paying in (actually 16th)
 2. Last place angler that was qualified to receive year-end pot money went to Brian Stangel for 26th overall
 3. Draw for random year-end pot went to Bud Hall.

4. Seth Garrison, Franco Vallejos and Mark Williams will not participate in the year-end pot split.
- ii. Club of the Year
 1. HCBA won club competition
 2. Two entries will be awarded for 2012 allocated by HCBA
- iii. Financials
 1. NSF check collected and fee reimbursed – no issues
 2. receipt for plaques verified as paid
 3. Lucy Young was paid \$100 a day for tournament services (\$300 total per tournament)
 4. Weigh-in help was paid \$75 per day (\$150 per tournament)
 5. NMBFN balance is on par with previous year gains
 6. Miscellaneous income/expenses are still due for the year but will net to keep the balance about the same
- iv. Barry will not be accepting another term as Treasurer, but would like to keep accounting responsibilities through the first qualifier
- v. Bob motioned that Barry maintain accounting responsibilities through the end of year to facilitate a smooth transition to the new Treasurer
 1. Rick second
 2. Unanimous
- vi. Four Corners forgot to draw for their second entry for 2011, there will be one more entry reimbursed
- vii. Books have been kept in Quicken and can be transferred to new Treasurer
 1. Barry will look into extra licenses for the Quicken software
- viii. David Herrera has a check for an angler from the Alliance program to go back to the NMBFN
- ix. Jay Salisbury was given \$2200 from the NMBFN (\$1500 from Divisional and \$700 from NMBFN)

V. President's Report

- a. Earl represented NMBFN at BFNC in Alabama
- b. Alliance program is going to be continued
- c. New sponsors
 - i. Simms Fishing www.simmsfishing.com
 - ii. Any BFN member can get their new Gore Tex Pro Dry Suit for \$499 and \$50 goes back to BASS
 - iii. Owner Hooks for the State Team

VI. Conservation Director's Report

- a. BFNC additional info
 - i. Triton Program for President, Conservation and Youth Director in 2012
 - ii. Skeeter/Yamaha is the same deal (Real Money program)
 - iii. Toyota Bucks (program is free)
 - iv. Pure Fishing is the same deal

- b. Don Corchran complained about member numbers and would like to see 10% of BASS members – NM is a 150 NMBFN member state – BASS number to be provided to President
 - c. State Team sponsorships are the same as last year and can be shared among team members
 - d. PRICING AND SPONSORS MUST BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL
 - e. Use BASS database to reach out to old BFN members
 - f. Conservation Director “job description” – NMBFN has one
 - g. Divisional Tournament is May 28 – June 1 at Flaming Gorge, WY (not determined if it is out of Rock Springs or Green River)
 - h. Earl updated several topics that will be appended from his hand written notes from the BFNC at a later date
 - i. NMBFN President can send comments to Don on proposals for National Championship formats prior to first or second week in December
 - j. Steve will sign off on Alliance and send it in.
- VII. Conservation Directors Report attached as Appendix A
- VIII. Tournament Director’s Report (Barry will give update in the absence of Johnny)
- a. The Directors would like to thank Johnny Johnson for his dedication, time and service in 2011.
 - b. NMBFN had 54 total anglers in 2011 – 28 anglers fished 3 or more tournaments – 35 angler average at each tournament
- IX. Youth Director’s Report
- a. Steve spoke for David on the topic of High School fishing in NM
 - b. The Directors did not feel the geography of NM would be conducive to a High School venue
 - c. Russell requested that we follow-up with David on the thank you letters from the Youth or Youth Director from Yuma 2010
 - d. Youth Scholarship update??
 - i. Earl proposed having the Youth focus their efforts on a habitat idea
 - ii. Directors agreed it was a good idea
 - iii. Bob suggested posting on the web and BigMouth
- X. BigMouth and Web site
- a. Brian asked for any suggestions
 - b. Brian wanted to thank Earl for all of his efforts on the Conservation Page
 - c. Brian requested payment now for 5th issue of the BigMouth and website maintenance during the 4th quarter
 - i. Paid for 5th BigMouth and 4th quarter maintenance
 - ii. Amy Stangel will be taking over website duties in 2012 and *BigMouth editing*
- XI. Old business
- a. None
- XII. New business
- a. Confirm tournament schedule
 - b. Barry motioned to move the #2 date to June 23-24

- i. Bob second
 - ii. Unanimous
- c. Proposals for qualification format changes
 - i. Keep the format and dates the same.
 - 1. No Director was in favor of overlapping with the Divisional.
 - ii. Keep the format the same and change the Conchas date.
 - iii. Hawg Hunters suggested 2 – 3day tournaments with no pre fish and doubling the entry fee to avoid the negative impact on the NMBFN funds
 - iv. Steve proposed a 2 weekend format with 2 one day events each weekend at two lakes with the normal entry fees in place. Ute and Navajo were the lakes proposed by Steve.
 - v. HCBA position by vote is to keep the same format and select a new date for the Conchas tournament
 - 1. The second most popular vote was the 2-2-1 format.
 - 2. Lake consideration *may* be limited, but EB and Conchas will be fishable, but small.
 - vi. Hawg Hunters feel the expense has negatively impacted their membership
 - 1. Nonboaters also felt that fishing against solo boaters negatively impacted their chances
 - vii. Hawg Hunters also discussed a modified qualification discussion
 - 1. Alabama model was highlighted – win and your in – do not need to fish all four
 - 2. Hawg Hunters submitted a proposal to go back to clubs for a bylaw change to allow a greater opportunity to qualify on the team
 - a. The proposal is to allow the winner at each tournament to be guaranteed at least a nonboater spot on the team. The remaining 8 spots will be filled by the current points system including the top nonboater qualification. If the winner of the tournament qualifies higher on points, the vacated spot from the win is allocated according to the normal points system.
 - b. Barry added another option that the proposal is to allow the winner at each tournament to be guaranteed at least a nonboater spot on the team if that angler fishes at least 2 events. The remaining 8 spots will be filled by the current points system including the top nonboater qualification. If the winner of the tournament qualifies higher on points, the vacated spot from the win is allocated according to the normal points system.
 - viii. All proposed qualification changes are to be taken back to the clubs for a vote later in the year.
- d. Create conservation line item funded by Berkley Award

- i. Steve proposed setting the \$2k Berkley Award aside to be only used for Conservation to be allocated by Earl
- ii. Discussion
- iii. Brian second
- iv. Unanimous

XIII. Officer elections for 2012

- a. Nominations for President
 - i. Brian Stangel nominated
 - ii. Elected by acclimation
- b. Nominations for Treasurer
 - i. Ed Derr nominated
 - ii. Elected by acclimation
- c. Nominations for VP/Secretary
 - i. Bob Lechel nominated
 - ii. Elected by acclimation
- d. Nominations for Tournament Director
 - i. Rick Hipp nominated
 - ii. Elected by acclimation
- e. Nominations for Youth Director
 - i. David Herrera nominated
 - ii. Elected by acclimation

Meeting Adjourned 4:00 PM

Appendix A

2011 Conservation Report to the New Mexico Bass Federation Nation Directors

November 19, 2011

Earl Conway, NM Conservation Director

The goal of our conservation program is to provide conservation leadership by developing and supporting actions to protect, improve and sustain quality aquatic resources and user access. As role models, we must continue to improve fishing through education, partnerships, communication and strong advocacy for sport fishing and sound natural resource management. To that end, I report that:

2011 was good, bad and ugly

Good

In spite of severe heat and drought, Navajo, Ute, Conchas and Santa Rosa fish populations are healthy and have a good distribution of age classes. In spite of the drastic drawdown at Elephant Butte, the fish population is actually pretty good and will recover if water levels stay constant or rise next year.

We had one of our best years ever when it comes to keeping our tournament catch alive. It is hard to know if our frozen water bottles at the Ute take-off had any effect other than raising awareness, but for whatever reason, we did much better even when water and air temperatures were extreme.

We won the 2010 Berkley Conservation Award and will get \$2000 from Pure Fishing, hopefully to be re-invested in our conservation program at Elephant Butte. [THANK YOU EARL!]

Mike Sloan, Fisheries Chief at NMG&F, gave me three hours of his time and listened to our recent efforts, concerns and plans. I believe he sincerely cares about our concerns and appreciates the improved relationship and partnering with their warm water biologists. He understands that we are anxious to see benefits from the warm water hatchery whether it be in the form of bass fingerlings or baitfish stockings.

The Albuquerque Hawg Hunters became an official chapter member of the Friends of Reservoirs Partnership and received a \$10,000 grant to work with the Pecos Valley Bassmasters and several other partners on new methods to control golden algae blooms in the Pecos watershed. The first goal is to restore the Roswell Zoo Spring River Pond to a viable youth fishing area. Then, the goal is to develop methods to protect the Carlsbad municipal lakes and begin restoring Brantley. This project may have major national implications and is the first attempt to deploy new methods based on the latest scientific research. New Mexico has the opportunity to show what we can do in a national leadership role!

The Kids of the Southwest continue to quietly demonstrate great conservation stewardship. They held multiple events at Elephant Butte that ranged from placing artificial structure and Christmas tree piles to shoreline cleanup efforts. Although there wasn't much needed for the spawning platform, they are ready to take charge of the project next year and plans are underway for some major modifications.

[Earl] got a call from Casey Harthorne to ask me where we wanted to stock some excess bass fingerlings from Montana. [They went to Elephant Butte.] The fingerlings were brought to the Santa Rosa hatchery to add to the largemouth bass brood stock. The fact that NM Game and Fish gave us that opportunity is AMAZING and demonstrates the improved relationship.

[Earl] met the Deputy Secretary for the Bureau of Reclamation while at Lake Havasu, attending the Friends of Reservoirs annual meeting. He expressed his desire to help us get a habitat project moving forward at Elephant Butte. While I was at Lake Havasu, I saw demonstrations of how hundreds of fish habitat structures are being deployed and personally witness how the carrying capacity of this fishery has been substantially improved over the last five years. We need to seriously consider a large-scale effort at Elephant Butte, based on the Lake Havasu project.

Bad

Another organization with members associated with NMBFN openly criticized the NM Game and Fish in front of the Game Commission and the State Governor. [Earl] got the call from the Fisheries Chief and had to explain that the organization was not speaking for the New Mexico Bass Federation. It shows how fast things can go south if we do not speak with one voice. [Steve Ragsdale will draft a letter of support to go to the G&F and cc the Governors office.]

Water levels dropped dramatically at Elephant Butte in spite of average runoff. The spawn was almost non-existent and shoreline habitat is high and dry. The City of Albuquerque has begun taking water from the river for domestic use. Drought was also a major contributor to the problem. Population growth, increased irrigation demands for dairy hay, and releases for the willow flycatcher also are threats to our ability to maintain a recreation pool, no less a successful fishery.

The pipeline to divert water from Ute to Clovis and other communities is installed. It is only a matter of time until we see the impact there.

We were not successful at getting the support needed from clubs to do more habitat projects. We are missing a great opportunity to do something major to help Elephant Butte and Conchas recover. There is no better time to have a major habitat improvement project than when the water levels are way down. It is clear that without more membership and incentives for conservation activities, the burden will continue to fall on a few dedicated NMBFN members and the youth clubs.

Ugly

Lake Sumner was closed Memorial Day weekend on reports of quagga mussels. Now it isn't clear whether it wasn't an erroneous identification but at any rate, the lake was later drained and declared free of quagga mussels. While I believe the NM G&F and State Parks did a great job of handling a really bad situation, they were not as well prepared to deal with the news as they could have been. It was a wakeup call for them and an example of how our ability to access public waters may be impacted when these mussels do take hold of a reservoir.

The fires near Cochiti Lake led to the closure of that lake, contamination of the water and extreme siltation. It isn't clear yet how much the fishery was damaged, but the siltation is irreversible and destroyed the inlet wetland areas that had developed over the last decade.

Next Year

The Kids of the Southwest are ready to do some major modification to the Spawning Platform at Elephant Butte based on what we have learned so far. The adult clubs need to step forward and organize a major fish habitat project as well. The Friends of Reservoirs partnership leader, Jeff Boxrucker is anxious to meet with local groups and help organize a local Partnership that is willing to help with the effort. Getting the local groups identified and informed will be a major objective over the winter.

The Conservation Officers are holding a summit at the Classic in February. The agenda is packed with good information, sponsors have signed up for almost all of the meals and BASS is paying for the rooms. Best of all, the Berkley Conservation Award will be presented at the awards banquet to New Mexico!!!

The project at Roswell may be the most significant project in the southwest to prevent future major fish kills in the Pecos, Rio Grande, Canadian, Brazos and Red River drainages. Shawn Denny and a lot of interested biologist and fisheries groups are very interested but somewhat skeptical. Managing peoples expectations will be as challenging as of controlling the algae blooms as these are small scale experiments with chemical-free methods that have not been tried before. We will need volunteers for this project in February and possibly later in the year to help plant aquatic and shoreline vegetation. We will also need help in Carlsbad greasing the skids for some aquatic vegetation efforts there. There are grass carp and landowner issues in Carlsbad that may take some finesse to overcome.

Conchas is a real mystery. The fish population has stabilized and adjusted to the new water levels. The size distribution is better than most of our lakes, but the numbers are limited because of the water levels. The vegetation along the shoreline is substantial near the Conchas, Trimentina, and Canadian inlets. A four-foot rise in the lake has flooded these areas and with some good snowfall and a little rain next spring, we could have a very successful spawn. At this point, an area biologist is recommending we just sit back and study what is going on. We may learn more by just paying attention to what happens when a lake level drops dramatically but then stabilizes for a few years.

I have been successful in getting commitments from companies to supply materials and build prototypes but they are far away from New Mexico. I will either need financial support to pay for transportation and/or somebody willing to make a road trip to Montana and South Carolina to pick up the items. Right now, I have about 20 artificial "reef" structures sitting in a South Carolina warehouse but no way to get them to Roswell.

Summary – It has been a pretty good year, but we must kick up our club membership and involvement to have the impact we need, especially at Elephant Butte and in the Pecos River valley.