

Idaho Chapter AFS - Water Quality/Stream Hydrology Committee Annual Report for 2007

2007 Accomplishments

Two projects were pursued in 2007, one, to organize a fish passage workshop and two, to evaluate the fish contaminant advisory program in Idaho and make recommendations or inform the chapter as appropriate. The fish passage barrier workshop evolved into a short course, "Designing for Aquatic Organism Passage at Road-Stream Crossings Continuing Education Workshop." The workshop was held in conjunction with the Annual Chapter Meeting in February, 2008. Ed Lider led organization of the workshop and recruited speakers from the US Forest Service and private consulting firms to address passage objectives, stream simulation, evaluation, design, and installation. The workshop was maxed at approximately 100 participants from agencies, consulting and engineering firms, and a diversity of disciplines including biologists, hydrologists, engineers, foresters, and program administrators.

Progress was made on the Fish Consumption Advisory assessment in obtaining agency documents and interviewing agency staff involved in the program. A significant monitoring effort on mercury and arsenic in fish in lakes was implemented by a joint project of Idaho DEQ and Idaho Fish and Game. The results of the study will be released in 2008. The committee felt it was necessary to review this report, and continue the assessment into 2008.

2008 Committee Objectives

Fourteen people attended the lunch committee meeting at the February ICAFS meeting. Three different action items were discussed for 2008.

1) TMDL Temperature Methods

Purpose: Review current methods used in developing temperature TMDLs. Enlist experts with experience in temperature modeling to review current procedures that use solar pathfinders to delineate stream temperature. In addition, research alternative methods that could be used. Produce a report that summarizes findings and gives recommendations that could be used in future TMDL development. Make this report available to state and local agencies.

2) Panhandle Stream Flow Data

Purpose: Based on the predication that Rain on Snow (ROW) zones will experience changes in peak flows and the Coeur d'Alene River Basin is in the sensitive climate region for ROW, it is important to retain stream gages and make existing flow records readily available. The possible action is for the committee is to lay out the importance of retaining existing gages and send a letter to USGS Chief in Idaho to retain existing gages. Secondly, the approx. 15 gages maintained by the Panhandle Forest needs to be

maintained and the resources secured to make this data available to other agencies and users. An “Adopt-a-Gage” program was also suggested.

3) Fish Advisory Task Group

Purpose: A subgroup of ICAFS Hydrology/Water Quality Committee is gathering information on the state of Idaho's program on fish consumption advisories. The questions are: What program is in place to monitor fish tissue contaminants? How are fish managers, fisherman, and interested public kept informed on safe/unsafe waters from which to consume fish.

Stephanie Hallock was nominated as the new chairperson of the committee. Shanda Dekome volunteered to be a Co-chair.