



Newsletter

July 15, 2004

President's Message

Hello Michigan Aquaculture Association and aquaculture enthusiasts. I hope that everyone has had a productive season so far!

As an elected official of MAA, I made a commitment to accomplish the following goals:

- to continue to develop a stronger union between MAA members,
- to provide support in protection of property rights,
- to help address issues concerning environmental sustainability,
- and to help build public and political support for the industry.

Some headway has been made in a few of these areas, mainly out of necessity arising out of the political arena. I would like to acknowledge Dan Vogler, Russ Allen, Rob Anderson, and Bob Baldwin for their active roles in support of the industry. I would also like to congratulate Steve Hallberg at Green River Trout Farm for his resolve in pursuit of his rights as a property owner. Good job Steve!

In the spring newsletter I described the importance of public support to MAA. I wish again to emphasize how much support we already have. For starters, if we simply tallied up our immediate customer base we would be well into the thousands and possibly more. Also imagine how many people in this state would be directly affected in absence of the industry. Yes the support is there! In order to gain ground, however, we need to determine how to harness this support and utilize it effectively. The means of our pursuit may not be totally clear at this time, but the method is. Deep down we all know that MAA, as a collectively functioning group, can make a big difference in the way that aquaculture is perceived here in Michigan.

There are a number of exciting aquaculture related projects beginning in Michigan. A few new commercial activities are either underway or under development. There are also a number of pond and lake management seminars taking place. Steve Nelson (Iron County Extension) and Ron Kinnunen

(Sea Grant) have been active in pond extension activity throughout the UP. Oakland County will be presenting a seminar on pond and lake management beginning August 11th (contact Matthew Dykstra, 248/858-0895). Mathew and Dr. Don Garling, MSU, will both be presenting speakers. These programs are extremely helpful in identifying and solving problems in aquatic communities. I extend regards to Steve, Ron, Matthew, and Don as well as all the participants in these programs.

The next Michigan Aquaculture Advisory Council is scheduled to meet in early August. The MAAC is made up of members of the industry, extension, NCRAC, MDA and MDNR, established for addressing concerns related to the industry. I am looking for topics to bring to the table and encourage anyone with specific industry related issues to contact myself or Jerry Kahn before the next meeting August 2, 2004.

In closing, I extend an open invitation to all MAA current and prospective members to discuss with me any question or concerns you might have. I can be contacted at 517/353-5453 during the day, 517/745-1562 for emergencies, or by email at weekschr@msu.edu. I know these are busy times, but maintaining an open dialog is extremely important. I'd like to hear about any suggestions, problems, successes, failures, fish recipes, newsletter articles, etc. Also, it's time to start thinking about the 2005 conference, and I'm looking for a number of good ideas (some help as well).

Best Regards to All,
Chris Weeks

EPA releases final rule

The Environmental Protection Agency final ruling on aquaculture effluents is now available. This rule specifically affects facilities producing 100,000 pounds or greater annually in flow-through, recirculating, net pens, or submerged caged systems. The final rule is available on the web: <http://www.epa.gov/guide/aquaculture/> or by contacting the Office of Water Resource center at 202-566-1729

News from MDA

For those of you who haven't heard, Dr. Joan Arnoldi has left her position with MDA. Dr. Nancy Frank will be taking on her aquaculture related responsibilities. I met with Dr. Frank recently and was very impressed with her commitment to fulfilling this role. The contact number for all aquaculture questions for MDA (including emergency fish health concerns) is 517/ 373-1077. Dr. Frank did say that MDA will soon be hiring a full time State Veterinarian to replace Dr. Arnoldi.

Legislative Update

No doubt we will see additional environmental regulation legislation targeting the industry. Governor Granholm's executive order to stick cervid management into DNR control stuck an arrow very close to home. Members of the agriculture industry made a strong argument against the order, and a majority ruling by State Representatives to rescind the order resulted in a compromise from the Governor's office. The result was a promise by the Governor that if no chronic wasting disease is found in a MDNR audit of cervid farms, cervids will remain under MDA authority.

MDNR held public hearings on June 29th to receive public comments concerning Natural River Zoning (Rules 2004-009 and 2004-10) for the Pine and Upper Manistee Rivers. The original language exempts most agriculture practices, but singled out expansion and development of aquaculture facilities as restricted activities. While existing aquaculture facilities located within the boundaries of these proposed rules are grandfathered in, further expansion would not be allowed. For these and other reasons, some of us at MAA have voiced opposition to the current rules as written. Efforts are currently underway to find some sort of compromise between the MDNR and the industry, specifically in the language pertaining to aquaculture.

Debates continue regarding Governor Granholm's bills requiring groundwater mapping and permitting. As you will recall this issue was discussed at our last annual meeting. We were informed then that groundwater withdrawal of 100,000gpd (~70gpm) or more for 30 days (pumped of artesian) requires either a permit (with fee) from

DEQ, or voluntary reporting to MDA. Obviously this is an important issue for MAA.

State fish transport regulations

NCRAC has a new addition to their website that provides current information about state aquaculture contacts and aquatic animal transport/import regulations for 12 North Central Region States and 9 surrounding states. This information can be accessed at <http://ag.ansc.purdue.edu/aquanic/ncrac/> bullet "State Importation and Transportation Requirements for Cultured Aquatic Animals". This website is particularly helpful to anyone considering transporting fish across state lines.

Michigan State University Research

Ongoing research being conducted at MSU include

- Soy bean diets for Atlantic salmon
- Yellow perch intensive fry production (indoors)
- Steel head BKD egg vaccination
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For more information contact Chris Weeks, 517/353-5453

Aquaculture Interest Column

In every newsletter we would like to add at least one article written by a member of MAA. This could be something about your farm, experiences, concerns you may have, a study you might have done, or just about anything you feel would be worth passing on (aquaculture related please). If you have something you would like to contribute, send a copy to either Bob Baldwin or Chris Weeks.

Join the MAA discussion email listing

Anyone with internet capabilities is encouraged to join the MAA mailing group through yahoo. **Michaqua** has proven to be an effective way to exchange current and important information pertinent to the aquaculture industry. To join Michaqua visit:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michaqua/>

News from NCRAC

Aquaculture Outlook 2004:

Domestic aquaculture production is expected to increase in 2004 due to a stronger domestic economy as well as higher process for livestock and poultry products. Higher catfish production is expected to constitute the majority of this increase. For a complete report visit <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/erssor/livestock/ldp-aqs/2004/aqs19.pdf>

NCRAC Regional Aquaculture Facilitator Project:

UW Great Lakes Water Institute has launched a Regional Aquaculture Facilitator (RAF) Project designed to assist the region aquaculture industry by building improved relationships and interaction between aquaculturists and regional aquaculture research and extension programs. The RAF website can be found at: <http://www.ncaref.org>

Available proceedings and guides:

Proceedings, Aquaculture Effluents Workshop (\$10)

Proceedings of Percids III Workshop (\$5)

Aquatic Invertebrates: An Identification Guide (\$10)

CDs available and NCRAC Publications Office, Iowa State University, 124 Science II, Ames Iowa 50011-3221. 515/294-4622 ncrac@iastate.edu

Have you checked out the Michigan Aquaculture Web site yet?

One of the features you will find on michiganaquaculture.com is a series of linking logos near the bottom of the Michigan Aquaculture Info page. The displayed logo's in this region take the viewer around the Aquaculture world with resource information. Each logo links you to its Home page and opens their resources for your reading interest. So take the time to delve into these various corners of our Web site and you will be pleased in what you will find!

From the Editor's Notepad

New Membership Category?

For several years, I have been suggesting that we expand our membership base to include private pond and lakes owners. As an association, we are considered politically minuet whenever we face challenges to our industry. We can and have joined other agricultural groups (Michigan Farm Bureau, National Aquaculture Association) but anymore Michigan Farmers are becoming the minority in the political arena. We have an opportunity to broaden our membership by making room and a place for our neighbors and customers who own and control private waters. There are many in Michigan and they are willing to join with us if we can in turn provide basic information about pond/lake culture and maintenance of their waters.

During the recent Pond Management Workshops held in the Upper Peninsula during June, surveys were conducted after the end of each meeting, the results indicate that 65% of the participants would like to see a regional pond association be formed. They would like a quarterly newsletter and internet support and they were willing to pay a membership fee in the range of \$10-\$25 per year. To me - this is opportunity!

Our association could easily provide them with this type of service and it would give us the additional members that would improve our political strength. I believe this is could be achieve with just a little more work and support from the current membership. So I am proposing that we modify and update our By-Laws to reflect a new member class that would be non-voting, add a pond and lake information section to the newsletter (already listed), increase internet support information and invite these owners into joining with us on Michigan Aquaculture Issues.

What do you think?

Bob Baldwin, Editor

Visit MichiganAquaculture.Com for late breaking news and information resources.