

## **ELOSTA Monthly Membership meeting**

Wednesday – March 16, 2005

### **Minutes**

(Also available on [www.elosta.org](http://www.elosta.org))

- Vice President Doug Fuegel called the first 2005 monthly meeting of the Eastern Lake Ontario Salmon and Trout Association (ELOSTA) to order at 7:00 PM. on Wednesday March 16th at the BOCES educational facilities on County Route 64 in Mexico. President Charlie Ames is still dabbling for crappie in the Florida sun. Mac MacKenzie acted in his capacity as Secretary.

- Over 110 persons were on hand to hear NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation and USGS staff present the current “State of Lake Ontario Report”. This was the third in a series of three similar sessions conducted across the State.

- Doug dispensed with the reading of Tom Lott’s Financial Report, closed ELOSTA’s business proceedings , and turned the meeting over to DEC at 7:15 PM. Tom, who is enjoying some late spring skiing in Utah had submitted his written report to the officers and board members as follows. Checks written to PIP Printing, Lowrance Electronics, GLFC & LOSSA dues, picnic door prizes, liability insurance, and other miscellaneous items for the Oct. 20, 2004 to March 01, 2005 period totaled \$2,356.10. ELOSTA’s account currently stands at \$8,588.94 with deposits received from renewals, savings account interest, and tickets for the GPS/Sonar drawing. The Net Pen Account remains at \$1819.59.

- Bill Culligan – Great Lakes Section Head at Dunkirk, opened the meeting with a welcome note and a moment of silence in memory of Hank Cosselman who passed away in Oswego on March 13<sup>th</sup>. Hank was a former president of the NYSCC. Without question, Hank’s untiring efforts will be greatly missed by all. Bill then introduced the speakers for the evening and briefly outlined various ongoing DEC fisheries management programs and fiscal applications.

Brian Lantry – USGS at Oswego, provided a detailed report with graphics that outlined forage fish trends over the past several years. As expected the annual trends are cyclic, reflecting water temperature and other variables. Recent trawls show that alewife in the eastern basin are healthy and numerous and; unexpectedly, there is a slight increase in the smelt population.

Scott Prindle – DEC Biologist at Cape Vincent, discussed the logistics and results of the 2004 fishing boat census which provides a lengthy detailed analysis of boat trips and fish harvested per trip. This information will be made available for public use. He also provided an update concerning the Lake Trout restoration effort and the value of the “slot limit”. This subject resulted in a prolonged discussion from the floor regarding DEC’s statistical graphs and opportunities to shift slot range to provide anglers with larger numbers of harvestable fish. In general the overall numbers of lake trout are down in the eastern basin.

Dan Bishop – DEC Fisheries Manager Region 7, provided updates and an analysis of studies related to salmon growth rates, steelhead stocking in the Salmon River, natural reproduction of salmon in the Salmon River, pen rearing evaluations across the State, and barge

stocking at Sodus and Point Breeze. There is no doubt, pen acclimation greatly enhances returns compared to other stocking methods.

Steve LaPan – Lake Ontario Unit Leader at Cape Vincent, provided an update on the Double Crested Cormorant management program, changes to the bass regulations, and the proposal to increase the minimum size limit of steelhead to 21 inches on a lake-wide basis. All three of these issues resulted in lengthy discussions from the floor.

Briefly, The DEC will continue to employ its egg oiling, non-lethal efforts to reduce the cormorant population in the eastern basin. To date these methods have been effective on Galloo Island. However, the majority of the birds have relocated to Canadian waters which are beyond our jurisdiction. A similar situation is occurring on the St Lawrence River which also includes many refuges on “off- limits” privately owned islands. DEC staff will work with these US owners to obtain permits if they opt to implement control measures.

DEC is still accepting comments concerning a plan to introduce an early “catch and release” season from December through the current opening Saturday. To date it appears that this proposal is not being favorably received by anyone. The proposal to delay the bass season opening day one week on the St Lawrence River is also being challenged. It should be noted that this proposition is based, in part, upon an effort to develop more consistent bass regulations between NYS and Province of Ontario. Specifically, a minimum size limit of 12 inches.

In an effort to cope with an apparent decline in the recruitment of steelhead DEC has suggested a 21 inch minimum size limit on a lake-wide basis. This offer generated several opposing opinions from the floor. Stream anglers continue to insist that the current one fish tributary limit should include the lake; and, lake fishermen think all changes should be deferred pending the performance of new studies. Eastern basin trollers generally concur that the 21 inch limit represents a more significant impact upon possession opportunities in the Niagara River and western basin. It could be assumed from the meeting that some form of management action is imminent.

- Doug thanked DEC and all those who attended for their interest and contributions to this most valuable resource. He called attention to ELOSTA’s new web-site at [www.elosta.org](http://www.elosta.org) and closed the meeting at 11:15 PM. *Mac MacKenzie*

## **For the Classifieds**

**Boat for sale** – 25’ Baha Hardtop Cruiser with tandem wheeled Shorelander Trailer. Both in excellent condition. Accessories include: five Cannon downriggers, Furuno 5 Color Video, Furuno GPS , and many other extras. The package is also complete with all the rods, reels, and tackle boxes needed to fish Lake Ontario. Contact Bob Ranger at: (315) 404-5466