

Elosta Monthly Membership Meeting

Wednesday August 19, 2006

Minutes

(Also available at www.elosta.org)

- President Charlie Ames called the sixth monthly meeting to order at 7:05 PM in the Lodge Room at Gander Mountain's Cicero store. Tom and Sharon Lott treated the thirty two members and guests in attendance a tasty treat of their smoked salmon dip, crackers, and soda. Mac MacKenzie acted in his capacity as Secretary.

- President Ames motioned to accept the minutes of the July 19th meeting as they appeared in the Newsletter. His motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

- Tom Lott read the Treasurer's Report for the period July 19 – August 16, 2006. Deposits received from membership dues totaled \$37.50. Checks written to Libby Lougnot (editing the Newsletter), Gander Mountain (door prizes), Bee Tee Enterprises (plaques), Encompass (printing), Northeastern Sport Show (booth), and Charlie Ames (picnic supplies) totaled \$1,098.44. Elosta's current balance in the checking and savings accounts is \$11,209.84. The net-ten remains unchanged (no activity) at \$1566.25.

Tom noted that, although we had fewer people at the picnic, we broke about even with last years returns. The motion to accept the report as read was seconded and accepted.

- At 7:25PM Charlie turned the floor over to Elosta member Jeff Lantiegne who spoke about salmon rigging and trolling techniques for small boats on Lake Ontario. He often referred to his 20foot open bowed SportCraft "Miss-Em" for comparison purposes. In general Jeff started his presentation by outlining the disadvantages of a smaller boat.

- *Storage room for rods and tackle is limited.

- *Space to mount electronics is limited.

- *No room to permanently mount more than 2-3 downriggers.

- *Not enough deck space to handle unwieldy downrigger and dipsey rods.

- *Fewer lines in the water (requires constant re-rigging).

- *It is much more difficult to maintain a consistent speed with a smaller boat.

With this in mind he explained the use of a "Thumper Rod" to determine the ideal speed for salmon. The reel is loaded with relatively heavy copper line attached to an 18" drop sinker rig and a dodger/fly combination. This presentation will run about 135 feet deep with 600 feet of line out. As boat speed increases to around 2.6 MPH the rod will start to jump in response to the erratic action of the dodger. At 2.7 MPH the rod will pulsate or thump indicating the dodger is rolling and the desired boat speed has been reached. This speed can be compared with an electronic speed indicator for quick reference.

Jeff uses three downriggers on his boat. The center is dedicated to the thumper rod. His two outside riggers are mounted on gimble mounts that can be easily slipped in and out of flush rod holders without the need for bolts or wing nuts. This is an exceptionally handy system for boats that are utilized for other types of fishing or water skiing.

His preferred rods are custom seven footers wrapped by him and his dad Ernie. They are medium relatively slow one piece rods and, the dipsey version is equipped with roller guides to

facilitate the wire. The thought of using short rods to handle the hard hitting fast running salmon raised a few eyebrows. One of our more seasoned members held the rod while Jeff demonstrated his point with a scale. The shorter rod is quicker and easier to hold and, it requires 30% less effort than an 8.5 foot rod. The only over the counter rod available in a seven foot length at this time appears to be an “Ugly Stik”.

One of the major disadvantages of two downriggers is the inability to put down a whole array of lure/bait presentations to test the waters. You have to constantly change color/types etc. and hope that you hit the right combination. Jeff had a box of his favorite Pro-chip and dodger/fly color combinations to show the group. He emphasized the fact that not all dodgers etc are created equal. Some will consistently produce fish while others in the same color and pattern will be duds.

There were a number of questions from the floor regarding Jeff’s personal preferences. Perhaps the most notable tip of the evening was his recommendation to use low light colors when the lake’s surface is flat – regardless of the time of day or intensity of the sun.

- Jerry Lougnot shared some experiences from his recent trip to Michigan. In a discussion with participants involved in a local derby he learned that they were green with envy when they heard the size of the salmon that were turned in during the Oswego Pro-Am. A large fish for them is around 20 pounds.

He also said that he had fished the “dead zone” in Oneida Lake and they took (C&R) 24 walleyes out of 38 feet of water. He didn’t go into specifics.

- Dan Bishop reported that the construction of the weir and channel realignment in the Salmon River have been completed and should improve upstream fish passage to the hatchery.

Reports continue to come into the DEC regarding various species of dead fish dead birds washing up on Eastern Basin shores. Analysis has been a major task for Cornell’s biologists. However, on the bright side, the VHS does not appear to be a strain that is going to affect salmonids. Birds and live wells are believed to be two common methods of transmittal.

The study to determine the approximate numbers of naturally reproduced Chinooks returning to the lake has been released. The numbers are quite impressive but, Dan emphasized that additional studies are need to determine the carrying capacity of the lake and recruitment levels. In other words, it will be awhile before we know what effect wild spawning will have on future stocking programs.

The 12 million dollar Occidental settlement is final and the money, to be paid over a four year period, will be used for fishery programs applicable to Lake Ontario and the upper St Lawrence River. Programs would include fish marking and hatchery functions etc. DEC will be hiring a body to oversee the proposed uses and a draft plan will be prepared. This plan will be subject to public review and comment before it is implemented.

- Fran Verdoliva said the work on the Redfield dam is completed. The boat launches are useable and the bass fishing has been great. He also produced a recent underwater video of several beautiful Atlantic salmon that have moved up the Salmon River to the hatchery. Obviously, there are still some nice Atlantics out there.

- Doug Fuegel reported on the Coalitions walleye program. It appears that significant numbers of young fish are being caught indicating that the stocked fish are surviving and growing.

- Bill Lefancheck reported on various ongoing Federation programs. Fulton has received a substantial grant to address an alga problem and resultant loss of habitat in Lake Neatahwanta. It is believed that the problem is related to non-point sources of pollution in the drainage shed.

Of particular interest is the 4H shooting sports program and their hands on target and fly-fishing exhibits at the NYS fair.

The NYCC is also trying to increase its political clout in Albany. However, they do not have sufficient funding to lobby full time. No-one is pushing the funding problem; but, a motion was made from the floor regarding the possibility of some financial support from Elost. The question was tabled pending an inquiry into the need and further consideration by the Board. The Council will be asked if they wish to participate in a future membership meeting.

- Charlie invited the members present to share their experience regarding current fishing conditions along the lake and made a motion to adjourn the meeting. That motion was seconded and carried. The next monthly meeting will be at Gander Mountain at 7PM on September 20.

Mac MacKenzie