

REMOVAL AND DISPOSITION OF ROUGH FISH FROM UNBALANCED WATERS: SUMMARY OF PANEL DISCUSSIONS

BARRY O. FREEMAN, Chairman
HUDSON NICHOLS, Panel Member
ARTHUR DICKSON, Panel Member
VICTOR LAMBOU, Panel Member

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The Chairman discussed the methods of removing rough fish in the State of Florida. The principal method was the use of 1,000-yard haul seines. These have been used over a period of years in several lakes providing a check on the effect of the removal of large poundages of rough fish and game fish populations. In some lakes, some degree of success was obtained but in a majority of cases, the effort was not great enough to radically change existing populations. Florida is also experimenting with the use of electricity in controlling rough fish. Wire traps and slat baskets are permitted in certain areas to reduce catfish populations.

The rough fish removed have been sold where possible, however, in most instances no market was found for the large poundages of gizzard shad taken. These were used by local people for fertilizer or for bait in wire traps and crab pots.

Tennessee permits some commercial fishing to reduce rough fish populations. One interesting method brought out by Mr. Nichols was "tubbing." This is a term applied to a method of fishing where they take a wash tub and cut the bottom out. When the carp and buffalo are spawning in the shallows, these tubs are placed around the fish, permitting the "tubber" to capture the fish easily. Tennessee does not operate a rough fish control unit, but does take some out during salvage operations below the T. V. A. lakes.

Mr. Lambou of Louisiana states that they have been successful in reducing rough fish populations, principally gizzard shad in a small lake, by use of seines. They are just getting started in this field. In the past, during salvage operations, rough fish have been destroyed incidental to the main objective. Commercial fishing is permitted to help reduce the rough fish.

North Carolina has been working on some of their coastal streams with modified fyke nets and other types of traps for several years. Mr. Dickson felt that this has been successful since the percentage of rough fish has dropped. In these coastal streams, they were not only concerned with fresh water fish, but had to consider salt water species that ran up the rivers.

In all of the states, except Florida, a major portion of the fish found their way to the market.

A general discussion session, with members of the audience participating, brought out a new tool that has been successful in some instances. Several members gave their experiences with the use of low concentrations (0.04 - 0.07 ppm) of rotenone to selectively kill gizzard shad. This tool will probably become an effective one in the reduction of shad populations after more experimental work has been conducted. Probably one of the major items to consider would be the disposition of large poundages of fish killed in this manner.

The possibility of grinding the fish up and returning them to the water was brought out. Several suggestions were made relative to type of grinder that might be suitable.

In conclusion it was agreed that most every state has a rough fish problem but the solution has not been found.