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President's Message, *Jim Lamer*

Dear fellow ILAFS members,

This year has flown by but it has been very rewarding. I consider it a deep honor to have served and really enjoyed the people and the process. We had another productive officer retreat at the Kibbe station this past winter and hashed out some ideas, passed down and explained officer duties, and tried to bang our brains together for a while. If nothing else, I learned that we will have a strong Excom for the next few years with some good quality folks in procession. It sounds like Ben will have some good continuing education courses in store for us this year, we'll implement some new ways to evaluate student and professional judging at this year's meeting, and we're taking another crack at rewriting the procedural manual and a how-to guide for officers. Steve has a great venue all lined out for us this year at Pere Marquette, which I'm sure will be a great meeting as always. As we move beyond February, we can all rest assured that the Chapter's in good hands as Greg Whitledge takes over the reins and presides over the 2019 meeting in the East part of the state. I hope 2017 was full of picture-worthy fish, a strong feeling of accomplishment, and personal well-being. As we usher in 2018, I'm sure you have a few

resolutions that you plan to tackle (e.g., fish more often, catch larger fish, catch more fish, improve photoshop skills, etc.). However, if you are without any resolutions this year or you could stand to use a few more, I have a few ideas for you. The gauntlet that lies before you

We do great work here in Illinois and are passionate about our aquatic resources. 2018 is the year to show off some of that good work, especially for those that have been operating silently behind the scenes for a while now. We want to hear what you've been doing! Make 2018 the year you attend ILAFS and decide to give a presentation on the work you've been doing.

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Chapter Objectives:

- Promotes training of fisheries professionals.
- Provides education outreach to the citizens of Illinois.
- Fosters research in fisheries and aquatic sciences.
- Provides sound fisheries policy information.
- Enhances communication and synergistic relationships amongst fisheries professionals.

Chapter Officers and Chairpersons

2018 Sponsors

President: Jim Lamer

President-Elect: Greg Whitledge

Secretary: Phil Willink

Treasurer: Rich Lewis

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IL Wildlife Action Team: Trent Thomas

Membership: Brian Metzke/Josh Sherwood

Newsletter: Brian Metzke/Jason DeBoer

Raffle: Blake Ruebush

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Walleye: Jason DeBoer/Mike Garthaus



President's Message, *Jim Lamer*

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The management section last year was an eye opener with lots of great updates about our resources around the state. Our talks are especially helpful to our student members to learn about research areas and systems other than what they are narrowly focused on and that need to know what types of research and management may be waiting for them as they transition from student to professional. There's still plenty of time to prepare a talk for the February 20th meeting and abstracts are being accepted until January 26th. If you put a talk together on what you do, it will be interesting to someone, I promise – Be bold! (While you're at it, you might as well take your show on the road to National AFS in Atlantic City this year and Midwest in 2019 too!)

Your second resolution: Communicate and let the public (and membership) know what you are doing for them. I'm pretty new to the social media world, but I am starting to realize its potential to engage the public and inform them of some of the fisheries science we're involved in and proud of (If I can do this, anyone can!). In the short time I've been social medializing, we've been able to reach a large number of the public, very quickly, who are generally interested in our research and benefits it provides. It is not a secret that these are divisive times politically and science is seen as the enemy to some. One of the most rewarding parts of our social media platform is the constructive discourse we've been able to engage in with what had previously been some of our biggest skeptics. People just want to be informed and see what we're doing – let's show them! So, in 2018, join the ILAFS Facebook page (or get an account if you don't have one) and share your passion, post pictures, explain, and show off your good work.

Resolution number 3: Engage your fellow ILAFS members. Students – Take a chance, you won't be disappointed. ILAFS members are some of the easiest going and approachable folks you'll meet and among the range of disciplines and experience of our members – there is a wealth of hard-earned knowledge and stories. To our members that aren't living off Ramen and 5 hour energy, our students are looking for their minds to be molded (or warped depending on the member) and are thirsting for the experience and stories you have (despite the parental warnings that may come with them). So at this year's meeting, "buy" each other a drink and let's talk some fish!

Thanks again for the opportunity to serve and see you all next month!

Sincerely,

Jim

Snapshot of Graduate Student Research, *Toniann Keiling, UIUC*

My name is Toniann Keiling and I am currently involved in fish behavior and physiology research while pursuing my Master's degree at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in Dr. Cory Suski's lab. The overarching question being addressed in my research is: why do fish hit fishing lures? Recent studies on the topic of why fish hit fishing lures have demonstrated links between angling vulnerability, boldness/exploratory behavior, and stress responsiveness. More specifically, stress responsiveness, quantified by measuring the stress hormone cortisol, is a major factor that influences angling vulnerability, and fish that are captured have a lower stress response than those that are not captured. For example, fish with high stress responsiveness are more likely to display a 'freeze' response when a lure is presented and fish with low stress responsiveness may display no reaction when a lure is presented and be more willing to inspect and later ingest the lure.

Despite our understanding of how stress responsiveness and behavior can influence vulnerability to angling, it is still unknown if these responses are consistent across contexts. For example, food and/or access to prey resources are factors that can increase or decrease foraging behavior and activity for fish, therefore changing encounter and, potentially, capture rates. Also, the relative importance of behavior and stress responsiveness has not been quantified simultaneously, precluding our ability to define which factor is most important. Clearly, context, access to prey resources in particular, has the potential to interact with both behavior and stress responsiveness to influence how fish respond to fishing lures.

To address this, I conducted a study to define how behavior changes across different prey resource availabilities, and how that influences the response of fish to angling. In the first part of my study, I used a lab study to quantify both boldness exploratory behavior, as well as the response to a simulated predatory attack with a plastic great blue heron, using largemouth bass. Next, these largemouth bass were stocked into one of two research ponds, either a pond with fathead minnows for forage allowing the bass to feed, or a pond devoid of any prey items, for one week. Both ponds were then angled to determine if there were differences in capture rates across the ponds, as well as to define the role of behavior in driving fishing vulnerability. Analyses are still underway, but our prediction was that fasted fish would take more risks during foraging and therefore they would be more likely to hit lures than fed fish, regardless of their initial behavioral score.



continued on page 5...

Snapshot of Graduate Student Research, Toniann Keiling, UIUC

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The second chapter of my thesis will include behavior assessments before and after a fasting period to see if/how individual largemouth bass behavior changes under different levels of food availability. Stress responsiveness will also be measured through blood cortisol levels to see how responsiveness changes in relation to food availability. Results from these studies will have several implications for management, and will help define which individuals in a population are vulnerable to angling, how long-term harvest may influence the behavioral traits of a fish population, and how prey resources can drive angling success. Knowing how angling pressures influence targeted fish populations and their prey populations will lead to better-informed management decisions to maintain both angler satisfaction and sustain fish populations.



Toniann holding a largemouth bass

Legendary Fish Biologist Honored, *Jeremiah Haas*

The term “legendary” sometimes can be overused, but this is not one of those occasions. Ken Russell, district fish biologist for west-central Illinois for over 53 years, recently was honored at the annual Fifth Grade Outdoor Education Day for Knox County when they renamed the event in his honor.

This event has been held at Lake Storey in Galesburg each September since 1985. Usually about 30 volunteers present to over 500 fifth-grade students and their teachers from Knox County schools. The students rotate through eight different stations on outdoor and environmental education topics. Station topics include: A Bee’s Life, Aquatics & Reptiles, Renewable Resources Scavenger Hunt, Recycling, and a Fishing Station.

Many of the volunteers have been a part of Outdoor Education Day since its inception.

“Ken Russell has participated in the event since 1987 as part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources,” said Lori Loving, assistant regional superintendent of schools. “Ken’s wife was a local school teacher, so it was natural for Ken to be a part of this program.”

Historically there were three separate fisheries stations at this event, but it dwindled to one as state budgets tightened. Ken was always there teaching, regardless of the size of the group. He invited many state biologists as well as college students to participate over the years. I assisted Ken a couple years while in graduate school at Western Illinois. What I clearly remember was his ability to get down to the kid’s level to teach. Twenty years later, I can still see Ken down on one knee showing the children different fish and encouraging them to touch one if they had never done that before. Like his wife, his passion for teaching was very apparent.

In a press release from their office, it stated, “It is because of his life-long work and dedication to the environment and educating kids that Jodi Scott, regional superintendent of schools, has decided to rename this event in honor of Ken. The event will now be called: Regional Office of Education Ken Russell Outdoor Education Day.”

When you consider that Ken has mentored nearly every fish biologist who has worked in northern Illinois during the past half century and he has spoken directly to thousands of Knox County children at this event alone during the past 30 years, his impact on the educating people about the outdoors of northern Illinois is well beyond measure. It would be hard to believe that there is someone more fitting for this honor.

Jeremiah Haas is the outdoors writer for Dispatch•Argus•QConline

This article originally featured in the October 24, 2017 Moline Dispatch & Rock Island Argus



Ken Russell , right, receiving one of his many awards during his 53-year career.

Scientists Track Prehistoric Fish with 21st Century Satellites, *Carin Tunney, Great Lakes Echo*

Scientists are using marine-animal monitoring technology and satellites to reduce human threats to Great Lakes sturgeon. Researchers from the Shedd Aquarium and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service studied lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) in the upper and lower Niagara River, which runs between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. Because lake sturgeon often reach 7 feet long and more than 200 pounds, they used the same technology ocean researchers use to collect habitat information on dolphins, sharks and turtles. It's the first time Great Lakes fish were studied using the technology known as pop-off satellite tags, said Andy Kough, a marine ecologist with the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago. The tags are attached with heavy-duty line, similar to fishing line, that is inserted into the fish's back. The 15-inch tag is then hooked to a swivel on the end of the line, where it floats freely, inches above the animal's back. The size of sturgeon make them good candidates for the technique.

"If you're attaching a satellite tag, you have to make sure that it's not going to interfere with the animal at all," Kough said. "So we knew that it wouldn't interfere with lake sturgeon, but it might if we were to put it on a little bass or something like that." It's not necessarily an easy task to tag the fish. Lake sturgeon are usually docile, but their behavior can change with the weather, said Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Dimitry Gorsky, who was part of the field research team. "When the temperatures get a little bit warmer they tend to get a little more ornery, and you can get tail whipped pretty bad. It hurts pretty good," he said. "If they want to flail around we let them do it, and then when they stop, we will go back to working on them, because they'll always win if you are going to wrestle with them. They'll always win."

The satellite tags send summary information on the fish's behavior to satellites. The tags eventually "pop-off" of the fish and float to the surface. They send a signal so scientists can retrieve them to learn more specific information. Other researchers implanted the fish with microchips, similar to those used on pets, to gather long-term location information. The 25 sturgeon that the researchers monitored were most active between sunset and sunrise. "The information that we were able to collect was not so much on where the animals are, but when they are active, what time during the day, and more specifically, what time during the night that these animals were swimming more actively, and also at what depth they are swimming and what temperatures they are swimming in," Kough said. Gorsky said that information could help protect fish in Great Lakes shipping areas such as the St. Lawrence River and St. Clair-Detroit River system, where ships may kill lake sturgeon. "Those two river systems are interesting because they have commercial shipping traffic," Gorsky said. "We haven't seen a lot of information in the Great Lakes about ship strikes with sturgeon, but it has been talked about with the Atlantic sturgeon in some of the coastal rivers, so it's certainly something that we would be concerned about and wanting to make sure that it isn't an issue."

Limiting the depth of overnight freighter movement by controlling weight load may be one way to prevent collisions between freighters and fish, researchers said. Threats to sturgeon are a significant concern. They have lived in the Great Lakes for millions of years, according to fossil records. But the prehistoric-looking fish is now considered endangered or threatened throughout the Great Lakes basin because of overfishing in the early 1900s. Commercial fishing in Lake Erie removed millions of pounds of lake sturgeon a year, Gorsky said. Dam building also had a negative impact.

The number of lake sturgeon is increasing, said Phil Willink, a senior research biologist with the Shedd Aquarium. "If we had tried to do this project 20 years ago, we probably wouldn't have caught enough to do the project, so it is interesting that they are making a comeback in that harbor," he said. "That's a good sign."

Future research involves acoustic monitoring, which uses hydrophones to track fish movements and locate spawning areas, the researchers said. "The more data we get, the more comprehensive view we have of their life history and that puts us in a better position to protect them, and there's still a lot to learn," Willink said.

The study is published in the *Journal of Great Lakes Research*.



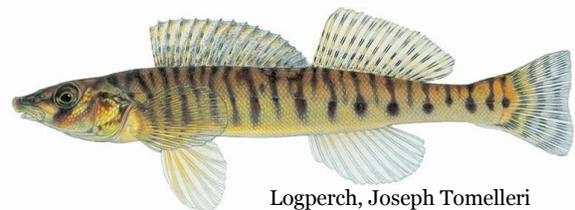
Researchers release a tagged lake sturgeon into the Niagara River.
Image: Shedd Aquarium/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Freshwater Mussel Host Database, Alison Stodola, Sarah Douglass, Rachel Vinsel

Did you know that over 60 species of freshwater mussels reside in Illinois? Mussels provide food for fishes and mammals, habitat for nesting benthic fishes and other macroinvertebrates, and filter contaminants and sediments. Mussels also require a host, typically a fish, to reproduce; some mussels have specific relationships with host fishes and can only transform from larvae to juvenile on one species or family of fishes.

Ever wonder what larval mussels might be encysted on your favorite fish? The Illinois Natural History Survey now serves a database of host and mussel relationships. For example, a quick survey of host relationships with Logperch, *Percina caprodes*, shows us that dozens of mussels (like Creeper or Ellipse) can transform on Logperch!

To access the database or get more information, visit <http://wwx.inhs.illinois.edu/collections/mollusk/data/freshwater-mussel-host-database>. For questions or data acquisition, please contact Rachel Vinsel (rvinsel2@illinois.edu)



Logperch, Joseph Tomelleri



Search the Freshwater Mussel Host Database

You may search any or all of the following fields. Enter as much information as you know. If you do not find any results the first time, try a less specific search

exact match
 greater than
 less than
 range
 literal text

Mussel

Family

Tribe

Scientific Name

Common Name

Host

Family

Scientific Name

Common Name

Other

Citation

Continent

Evidence

- NI - natural infestation
- NT - natural transformation
- LI - lab infestation
- LT -
- NS -
- ZT -

Found 35 / 2575

Mussel Scientific Name	<i>Pleurobema clava</i>	Host Scientific Name	<i>Percina caprodes</i>	Citation	1836, <i>Fusconia masoni</i> (Conrad, 1834), <i>Fusconia flava</i> (Rafinesque, 1820), and <i>Pleurobema clava</i> (Lamarck, 1819). Triannual Unionid Report 13:39.
Mussel Tribe	Pleurobemini	Host Family	Percidae		
Mussel SubFamily	Ambleminae				
Mussel Family	Unionidae	Evidence	LT	Page Number	39
Mussel Common Name	Triangular Kidneyshell	Host Common Name	Logperch	Citation	Haag, W.R., and M.L. Warren. 1997. Host fishes and reproductive biology of 6 freshwater mussel species from the Mobile Basin, USA. <i>Journal of the North American Benthological Society</i> 16(3): 576-585
Mussel Scientific Name	<i>Ptychobranchus greenii</i>	Host Scientific Name	<i>Percina cf. caprodes</i>		
Mussel Tribe	Lampsiini	Host Family	Percidae		
Mussel SubFamily	Ambleminae				
Mussel Family	Unionidae	Evidence	LT	Page Number	579
Mussel Common Name	Creeper	Host Common Name	Logperch	Citation	Cliff, M., M. Hove, and M. Haas. 2001. Creeper glochidia appear to be host generalists. <i>Ellipsaria</i> 3(1):18-19.
Mussel Scientific Name	<i>Strophitus undulatus</i>	Host Scientific Name	<i>Percina caprodes</i>		
Mussel Tribe	Anodontini	Host Family	Percidae		
Mussel SubFamily	Unioninae				
Mussel Family	Unionidae	Evidence	LT	Page Number	19
Mussel Common Name	Creeper	Host Common Name	Logperch	Citation	Walters, G.T., T. Menker, B. Smith, K. Harraman, and K. Kuehnl. 2005. Host identifications or confirmations. <i>Ellipsaria</i> 8(2):8.
Mussel Scientific Name	<i>Strophitus undulatus</i>	Host Scientific Name	<i>Percina caprodes</i>		
Mussel Tribe	Anodontini	Host Family	Percidae		
Mussel SubFamily	Unioninae				
Mussel Family	Unionidae	Evidence	LT	Page Number	8
Mussel Common Name	Ellipse	Host Common Name	Logperch	Citation	Hove, M.C., and J.E. Kurth. 1998. Darters, sculpins, and sticklebacks serve as suitable hosts for <i>Venustaconcha ellipsiformis</i> glochidia. Triannual Unionid Report 14:8.
Mussel Scientific Name	<i>Venustaconcha ellipsiformis</i>	Host Scientific Name	<i>Percina caprodes</i>		
Mussel Tribe	Lampsiini	Host Family	Percidae		
Mussel SubFamily	Ambleminae				
Mussel Family	Unionidae	Evidence	LT	Page Number	8
Mussel Common Name	Notched Rainbow	Host Common Name	Logperch	Citation	Walters, G.T., S.H. O'Dee, S. Chordas, and J. Rieger. 1999. Potential hosts for <i>Villosa</i>

Freshwater Mollusk Workshop



FMCS Workshop Freshwater Mollusk Health and Disease Assessment La Crosse, Wisconsin March 12-15, 2018

Health assessment and diseases of freshwater mollusks are important concerns for propagation, relocation, and conservation programs. FMCS will hold a 3-day Mollusk Health and Disease Workshop that will provide a basic understanding of aquatic disease organisms and tools for assessing the health of freshwater mollusks. The first morning of this Workshop will include a lecture overview of disease organisms, the current state of knowledge on freshwater mollusk diseases, and lessons learned from marine bivalve culture. The afternoon session that day will include small panel presentations on health assessment tools, mollusk die-offs and kills, and risk assessment of disease in mussel conservation activities. During the following two days, participants will rotate in small groups among three sessions:

- 1) laboratory techniques, mussel histology, and necropsy [held at the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) La Crosse Fish Health Center],
- 2) case studies on mussel and snail die-offs and development of response protocols, and
- 3) risk assessment of mussel and snail propagation and relocation activities.

The Workshop also will include a poster session, evening mixers with a jam session one night, and a separate opportunity -- on Thursday, March 15 -- to tour the USFWS Genoa National Fish Hatchery Mussel Propagation Facility.

<http://molluskconservation.org/EVENTS/2018Workshop/2018Workshop.html>

NCD Rivers and Streams Technical Committee Conference**March 27 and 28, 2018****ROCK ISLAND CONSERVATION CLUB / MILAN, ILLINOIS
CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS**

This is a call for agenda items and presentations for the **30th** Annual Spring meeting of the Rivers and Streams Technical Committee (RSTC).

We welcome and invite presentations on topics related to the river and stream systems across the North Central Division. It is a wonderful informal setting with 100's of years of professional experience in the room to share and exchange ideas with. Please consider attending and presenting!

The meeting will be held at the Rock Island Conservation Club in Milan, Illinois (near Rock Island Illinois). The address of the Rock Island Conservation Club is 2421 Big Island Road, Milan, Illinois 61246. We will begin at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 (registration starts at 12:00 noon) and usually conclude around noon the second day - Wednesday, March 28, 2018. We may go a bit later on Wednesday to accommodate presenters (leftovers for lunch!). Posters are encouraged for the evening social to be discussed over beverages and fried catfish - the evening social session is a great opportunity to discuss your research.

There will be a registration fee of \$40.00 for refreshments, dinner, and transportation. We have made arrangements for the group to stay at the Best Western Airport Inn (**CHANGE FROM YEARS PAST**) (\$76.46 + tax) for the evening of March 27, 2018. Please phone (309) 762-9191 to make reservations. There is a block of 12 rooms held under the name "Rivers and Streams" until March 1st. The address of the Best Western Airport Inn is 2550 52nd Avenue, Moline, IL 61265, near the airport at the junction of I-74 and Route 280. Given the tight budget situations we all face, if you wish to share a room to save travel costs, please email Aleshia (address below) and she will put folks in contact with each other.

As in years past, we have rented a bus to take us from the hotel to the Conservation Club for dinner. (If you have trouble getting into the Best Western Airport Inn there are other options nearby. In addition to presentations, we will hold our regular business meeting with State Reports provided by State Chapter representatives. **Please provide suggested agenda items and/or the title and short description of your presentation or poster to Aleshia Kenney by March 15, 2018. Chapter Reps should put together a brief State Report to be given at the meeting. State Reports should be sent to Megan Thul for inclusion on the website.**

As usual – we look forward to a great meeting in our traditional low- key, informal setting. See you in Milan.

Chairperson: Aleshia Kenney, USFWS, 309-757-5800 x218, aleshia_kenney@fws.gov
Secretary/Treasurer, Megan Thul, Iowa DNR, 563-927-3276, megan.thul@dnr.iowa.gov

Candidate for IL AFS Secretary — Blake Ruebush

Blake Ruebush is employed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as a District Fisheries Biologist located in Pittsfield, Illinois. Blake manages state and public waters and serves anglers in central and western Illinois counties.

Prior to taking the District Fisheries Biologist position, Blake served as the Aquaculture Project Specialist for the IDNR Aquaculture Program in Springfield, IL. He began his career with IDNR in 2012, with the Aquatic Nuisance Species Program assisting with Asian carp management and harvest on the Upper Illinois River. Before joining IDNR, Blake was a Long-Term Resource Monitoring Program Fish Specialist for the Illinois Natural History Survey on the Illinois River in Havana, IL. He has a BS and MS in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Blake started attending IL AFS meetings as an undergraduate in 2006. He has remained active with the Chapter since then and has contributed with presentations on alewife early life history on Lake Michigan, Asian carp deterrent research, and IDNR fish importation and aquaculture regulations. Blake has taken an active role in the annual raffle in the past few years and is currently serving as the IL AFS Raffle Committee Chair. Blake resides in Pittsfield with his wife, Amy, and children, Brantley (3) and Addilyn (2).



Solicitation of Raffle Items

The American Fisheries Society (AFS) was founded in 1870, and is a nonprofit professional and scientific organization of approximately 10,000 international fisheries scientists. The AFS is the oldest and largest organization dedicated to strengthening the fisheries profession, advancing the fisheries science, and conserving the fishery resources. The mission of the AFS is to promote scientific research and enlightened management of fisheries resources for optimum use, and encourage comprehensive education of fisheries scientists and continued on-the job training.

The Illinois Chapter of the AFS (IL/AFS) is holding the annual meeting February 20-22, 2018 at the Pere Marquette Lodge and Conference Center, Grafton, IL. We are expecting about 100 fisheries professionals including researchers, managers, culturists, and students from across Illinois. The meeting is one of the largest gatherings of outdoor enthusiasts in the state. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to support our annual fundraiser. We greatly appreciate your donation last year. Proceeds from the fundraiser are used to assist the IL/AFS in promoting our fisheries resources and provide scholarship funds for deserving students. For example, the IL/AFS annually gives several hundreds of dollars in awards for travel to scientific meetings, best paper/poster presentations, and outstanding undergraduate and graduate students. Your donation is tax deductible, and recognition of your support will be gratefully acknowledged during the meeting and in the Illinois Chapter newsletter, which is read by over 250 people. Ways to donate include merchandise contributions for the annual raffle/auction (e.g., Chicago Bears T-shirt, fishing equipment, clothing, outdoor gear, etc.) or cash contributions. All donations greater than \$35.00 may be accompanied by a literature display at no additional charge. Checks should be made payable to the Illinois Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. We thank you for your assistance and concern about the future of our fishery resources. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 309-357-0939 or blake.ruebush@gmail.com.

Thanks again for your support.

Blake Ruebush, Fisheries Biologist, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

The Illinois Chapter of the American Fisheries Society
Federal Identification Number 23-7226683 - Tax Exemption Number 54-0683803

Please mail donations to:
Blake Ruebush
Illinois American Fisheries Society
IDNR Fisheries
1252 West Washington Street
Pittsfield, IL 62363

2018 ILAFS Annual Conference Information

The ILAFS annual conference is just a few weeks away and several deadlines are approaching.

Conference Details

When: February 20-22, 2018

Where: Pere Marquette Lodge, Grafton

How: Visit <http://illinoisamericanfisheriessociety.weebly.com/annual-meetings.html> to register for the meeting or submit an abstract.

The deadline for abstract submission is January 26th and February 2 for early registration. A block of rooms is being held at the Lodge.