

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

2/2/99

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Representative Susan Wagle at 1:30 PM on January 28, 1999 in Room 313S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Reps. Edmonds, Mayans, and Ruff, all excused

Committee staff present: Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes  
Russell Mills, Legislative Research  
Judy Swanson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Peggy Long  
Representative Eugene O'Brien  
Steve Williams, Secretary, Dept. of Wildlife & Parks  
Pat Stevenson, Teacher, Olpe High School & Students  
Kori Bernhardt Shelly Schwalm  
Dusty Williams Will Estes  
Anna Trear Tiffany Webb  
Jerritt Turner  
John Way, Emporia, KS  
Harold Klaassen, Professor of Biology, KSU  
Charles Wallace, Wallace Fish Farms, Allen

Others attending: See attached list

Chairperson Wagle asked for bill introductions. Randy Allen, Kansas Association of Counties, requested a bill to increase solid waste tonnage fee from \$1 per ton to \$1.50, to broaden the scope of solid waste programs which can be financed from grant funds financed by the fee, and apply the fee to waste transferred out of Kansas through a permitted transfer station. (Attachment 1) Rep. Peterson moved to introduce the bill. Rep. Gilbert seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Hearing on **HB 2031**, An Act concerning State Fish, was opened.

Representative Peggy Long testified she was reluctant to sponsor the bill until she saw the dedication of Pat Stevenson and Seventh Grade students at Olpe High School. (Attachment 2) She urged the committee to consider the bill

Representative Gene O'Brien testified in favor of **HB 2031**. (Attachment 3) There are 12 kinds of catfish in Kansas.

Steve Williams, Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, testified in favor of **HB 2031**. He felt it was a glaring omission in the recognition of wildlife taxonomy not to have a designated state fish. (Attachment 4). There are 40 of the states out of 50 which already have a state fish. He noted "chucklehead" was the nickname for the channel catfish.

Pat Stevenson, Olpe High School teacher, testified that he and the students were not after press or fame, but that this was an exercise to show eight young people that their voice counts. He introduced seven students who testified in favor of **HB 2031**. (Attachment 5)

Kori Bernhardt testified that the idea came about while the class was doing their normal school work and were asked to do a collage on Kansas. They found there was no state fish.

Shelly Schwalm stated they contacted Rep. Long to see how Kansas could get a state fish. They then did research on why the channel cat would be a good candidate for state fish.

Williams said they found many similarities in the traits of the channel catfish and the traits of Kansans.

Will Estes testified that the channel catfish is a proven survivor and does better than all other game fish in Kansas.

Anna Trear stated that the channel catfish is in all rivers and streams in Kansas. All Kansans should relate to the channel catfish.

Tiffany Webb said that commercial production of channel catfish originated in Pratt County Kansas. Like the catfish, Kansans do not let people boss them around.

Jerritt Turner said that of the 40 states which have a state fish, none has the catfish. He said the State could benefit financially from having the state fish from out of state anglers staying in Kansas, arts & crafts industry by creating knick knacks, and restaurants by serving specials.

Stevenson testified that the catfish is the best seller from all the fish farms they contacted. He reviewed the students' testimony and further said he loved Kansas and had been born on Kansas Day.

Representative Cox congratulated the students on a wonderful presentation. In answer to Rep. Dahl, Stevenson said he thought the channel catfish could still be consumed if it were named the state fish since buffalo may still be eaten, and it is the State Animal. Rep. Vining told the students they were very lucky to have such a good teacher. Rep. Franklin thanked the group and said it may be a much bigger issue than they realize using the example that it could possibly make the encyclopedia.

John Way, Emporia, testified that his grandfather discovered and invented the way to hatch channel catfish mechanically. (Attachment 6) He favored **HB 2031**.

Harold Klaassen, Professor, Kansas State University Biology Department, read an editorial from the Manhattan Mercury discouraging consideration of the state fish bill. He then testified in favor of the bill. (Attachment 7) He felt the state fish should possess a unique feature that is representative of Kansas, be reasonably common, be familiar to Kansans, portray a positive emotion and generate pride. The channel catfish does the above.

Charles Wallace, Wallace Fish Farms, testified. (Attachment 8). He said the Kansas Commercial Fish Growers Association pledges unanimous support for the bill.

In response to Rep. Hutchins question, Russ Mills said that in the past 20 years there had been six or seven proposals for a state fish, and the majority had been the catfish.

Chairperson Wagle announce the bill would not be voted on today. She explained the legislative procedure to the students on how to get the bill passed, and urged them to remain active with the process.

Being no further business the committee adjourned.

**HOUSE FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS**

**GUEST LIST**

**DATE:** 1-28-99

1 of 2

NAME	REPRESENTING
Dusty Williams	Olpe Jr. High
Shelly Schwalm	Olpe Jr. High
Anna Trear	Olpe Jr. High
Kori Bernhardt	Olpe Jr. High
Tiffany Webb	Olpe Jr. High
Will Estes	Olpe Jr. High
Jerrid Turner	Olpe Jr. High
Carol Wilson	Olpe High School
Xaia W. Kohler	Olpe High School
Josh Stevenson	Olpe Jr. High
Brenda K. Stevenson	Olpe Jr. High
Emily Stevenson	Olpe Jr. High
Edna Smith	Olpe Jr. High
Janet J. Way	Emporia KS
Robert Way	" "
J.K.C. Lein	KS Aquaculture Association
Harold E. Klaassen	a professional Fisheries Biologist
Charles W. Wallace	KS Aquaculture Assoc.
Betty Wallace	Cressedettgen

HOUSE FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS

GUEST LIST

DATE: 1-28-99

2 of 2

NAME	REPRESENTING
Steve Williams	KS DEPT. OF WILDLIFE & PARKS
Bill Bider	KDHE
Randy Allen	Kansas Association of Counties
Vanessa Hukle-Kirk	Lawrence KS
Rebecca Thompson	Topeka West H.S.
<del>Gregory</del>	Don Dahl - his Intern
<del>Cheryl</del>	CHPPKM
Tom Bruno	Allen & Assoc.





**KANSAS**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
**COUNTIES**

**REQUEST FOR BILL INTRODUCTION  
SOLID WASTE TIPPING FEE LEGISLATION**

**House Federal and State Affairs Committee  
January 28, 1999**

The Kansas Association of Counties requests introduction of a bill to 1) increase the solid waste tonnage fee, currently \$1.00 per ton of solid waste disposed at any solid waste disposal in Kansas, to \$1.50 per ton; 2) broaden the scope of solid waste programs which can be financed from grant funds financed by the fee; and 3) apply the fee to waste transferred out of Kansas through a permitted transfer station.

Counties or other local governments with an approved solid waste management plan currently benefit from grants which are financed from these grant funds. We would like to broaden the scope of projects which can be financed from such funds to include *"the implementation of innovative waste processing technologies which demonstrate non-traditional methods to reduce waste volumes by recovering materials and or energy, or by converting the waste into usable by-products through chemical or physical processes."*

The KAC, through its legislative policy process, respectfully submits this for your consideration as a bill. We will work with the Revisor's office to provide suggested language as well as background information.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

The Kansas Association of Counties, an instrumentality of member counties under K.S.A. 19-2690, provides legislative representation, educational and technical services and a wide range of informational services to its 103 member counties. The Association's main office is in Topeka, and the Education Program office is located at 3500 N. Rock Road, Building 100, Wichita, KS 67226.

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785•233•2271  
Fax 785•233•4830  
email kac@ink.org

House Fed & State  
Attachment #1  
1-28-99

STATE OF KANSAS

**Peggy Long**  
Representative, 76<sup>th</sup> District  
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Hamilton, Kansas 66853  
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Room 427-S Capitol Bldg  
Topeka, Kansas 66612  
(785) 296-7671



Topeka

HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**  
Business, Commerce & Labor  
Health & Human Services  
Judiciary

***TESTIMONY REGARDING CHANNEL CATFISH***

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in regard to making the channel catfish the official state fish of Kansas. We have all entered into a situation with a preconceived prejudice about an issue or a person only to find that it was completely unfounded. So it has been for me regarding this issue. I was reluctant to consider the fact that Kansas is behind most of the other states in that we lack a declaration of a state fish - - until I witnessed the dedication, commitment, and work of Mr. Stevenson and his seventh grade class from Olpe. They won me over completely.

All experienced legislators will attest to the fact that there have been times when we have seen several days of testimony about controversial issues in committees and then watched and participated in hours of debates on the House floor - sometimes only to see the issue - "at last resolved in the House" - go to the Senate and have no action taken. Have we ever wasted our time with this process? I dare say, absolutely not; for we have come up here as representatives of individuals from our districts and of the State of Kansas with the express responsibility of addressing their needs, desires, and concerns. In case you are thinking that this issue is an exception, I have brought along the file which holds the letters that I have received from people across the state in support of this bill. Some of these letters are even from Topeka. There are well over 250 signatures on them requesting the channel catfish as the official state fish of Kansas.

With that, I would like to sit down and let the real experts on this issue speak on behalf of why Kansas needs a state fish and why it should be the channel catfish. I will be happy to stand for questions.

*House Fed & State  
Attachment #2  
1-28-99*

Gene O'Brien

"Don't tell fish stories where the people know you, but particularly don't tell them where they know the fish." Mark Twain

The catfish is famous for its smooth, scaleless skin and unshaven whiskers. Nowhere is it unrecognizable. Two of the species weigh over 100 pounds, while the madtoms typically weigh just a few ounces.

None of the species are native west of the Rocky Mountains.

Twelve kinds of catfish occur in Kansas. Some are important food and game fish. The channel catfish, the blue catfish, three kinds of bullheads, and the flathead catfish are species that may be caught in reservoirs or ponds almost any place in the state.

Six of the native catfish, nearly half of the species, are so small and secretive that they are never seen by many people other than biologists whose job it is to know about them. They probably gave them their common name "Madtom".

We in Kansas have 24 federal reservoirs, 40 state lakes, 200 community lakes, countless farm ponds and streams. This provides quality fishing recreation for all.

Two hundred fifty eight thousand fishing licenses were sold in 1995 and that does not include 24 hour licenses or those younger than 6 years old or older than 65 who are not required to have a license. Catfishing in Kansas has something for every angler from large reservoirs to small farm ponds.

Want to go fishing? What better place to start than the local library - not for reading but to actually get started. In one of the most innovative and unusual fishing programs in Kansas, the Valley Center Library is offering rods and reels and tackle boxes complete with hooks, bobbers, and lures. The program is sponsored by the Kansas Department of Wild Life and Parks.

The International Game Fish Association maintained a 91 pound flathead catfish as the world record until a 121 pound flathead was caught in a Kansas reservoir last summer.

House Fed + State  
Attachment #3  
1-28-99



STATE OF KANSAS  
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE & PARKS

Office of the Secretary  
900 SW Jackson, Suite 502  
Topeka, KS 66612  
913/296-2281 FAX 913/296-6953



MEMORANDUM

**To:** House Federal and State Affairs Committee  
**From:** Steve Williams, Secretary  
**Date:** January 28, 1999  
**Subject:** Testimony on H.B. 2031 - State Fish

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Department of Wildlife and Parks, to support H.B. 2031 designating the channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) as the "state fish". Historically, Kansas has seen fit to designate a state animal (American buffalo or bison), a state amphibian (tiger salamander), a state reptile (ornate box turtle), a state bird (western meadowlark), and even a state insect (honeybee). As a student of biology and the animal kingdom, there is one glaring omission in the recognition of wildlife taxonomy - that is the class of "fishes".

In this time of intense public scrutiny and demand for government accountability, wouldn't we all rest easier if we knew that we did not exclude honoring a class of animals that has played an important role in the settlement and sustenance of the world? Seventh grade students of the Olpe Junior High School have discovered that 40 of the 50 United States proudly established a state fish. How can we hold our heads high when other states boast of their state fish (e.g., the trout, the walleye, the northern pike) when Kansas sits idly by with no designation of our own? H.B. 2031 would remedy that situation and I can think of no better candidate than the humble channel catfish. Please let me explain a few reasons that support honoring the channel cat as the state fish.

Channel catfish are native to most rivers and streams in Kansas. They currently are present in nearly all streams, rivers, ponds, and reservoirs. Channel cats have always ranked number one or two in popularity with Kansas anglers. I suspect that many youngsters, perhaps even members of this committee, learned to fish by trying to hook the wily channel cat. From a beginning as an egg, channel catfish can grow to weights over 50 pounds. The Kansas state record was set in 1993 with a catch of 34 pounds, 11 ounces, caught from the Kansas River. Undoubtedly larger channel cats lurk in this river and in the many ponds and reservoirs in the state.

Kansas was the first state to successfully propagate channel catfish in a hatchery system. The 1925 pamphlet entitled, "Barbed Trout of Kansas" described the husbandry techniques developed at the department's Pratt Fish Hatchery. This hatchery has raised and released approximately 3.5 million channel catfish young each year for the last 15 years. Auburn University has identified the

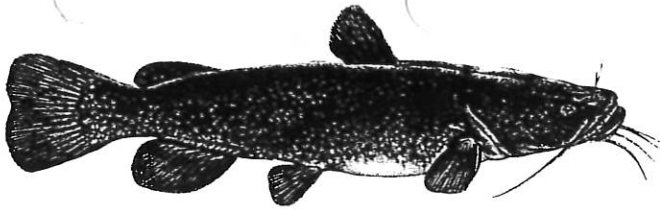
House Fed & State  
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1-28-98



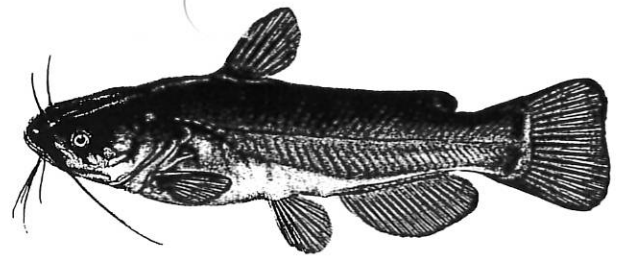
genetic strain of channel catfish produced at Pratt as the "Kansas Strain", known for their high food conservation, rapid growth, and disease resistance. Our efforts to improve and produce these fish is in response to the tremendous angler demand for catfishing. In all seriousness, channel catfish provide hundreds of thousands of hours of fishing fun for the more than 200,000 licensed anglers in the state. A trip to the "Hog Trough" at Lake Perry in mid-summer will testify to the interest and money spent on channel catfishing by hundreds of anglers. The flesh of the catfish is excellent and more than a few fish fries held across the state feature our native channel catfish as a primary menu item.

In closing, I would like to draw an analogy between the characteristics of the channel catfish and the spirit of Kansans. But before I do, I am not referring to any connection between a popular nickname for channel cats, "chucklehead" and any Kansan sitting in this room. However, the following comparisons are appropriate. Channel cats are extremely adaptable and able to thrive in a variety of tough environmental conditions - much like the early settlers of Kansas who faced the difficulties of life on the plains. They are a humble fish, not flashy or brightly colored but they survive and take good care of their young - just like true Kansans. Even though they are known for their fighting ability and good taste, the rest of the country does not fully appreciate them - a view of Kansas from those who have never visited this great state. They provide healthy food for our residents - just as Kansas provides healthy food for the world.

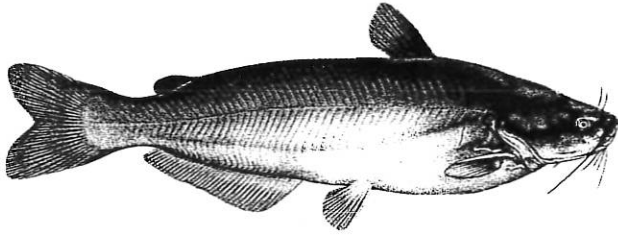
Even though some scoff at the notion of designating the channel catfish as the Kansas state fish, I can think of no better candidate. Finally, students of Olpe, KS have learned a great lesson in public participation and civics by taking time and effort to involve themselves in the legislative process. I salute them and proudly support H. B. 2031. Thank you.



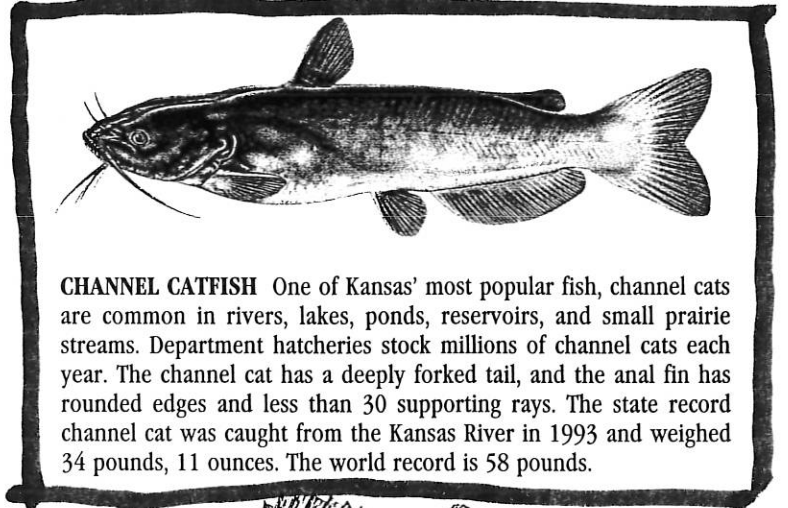
**FLATHEAD CATFISH** Just as the name implies, this catfish has a broad, flat head with a lower jaw that juts out. Also called the calico or yellow cat, the flathead can be mottled brown to nearly yellow in color. Flatheads are caught with live bait and occasionally lures, usually at night. The state record was caught from the Pomona Reservoir spillway in 1993 and weighed 90 pounds. The world record stands at 91 pounds, 4 ounces.



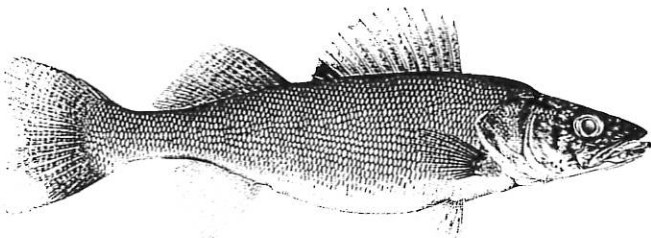
**BLACK BULLHEAD** Smaller than the other, more popular catfishes, the bullhead is brown/green in color and doesn't have the forked tail like the channel cat. Common in many streams, lakes and ponds, the bullhead bites worms and other bait readily, ideal for youngsters learning to fish. The state record was caught from a Montgomery County farm pond in 1985 and weighed 7 pounds, 5 ounces. The world record is 8 pounds, 15 ounces.



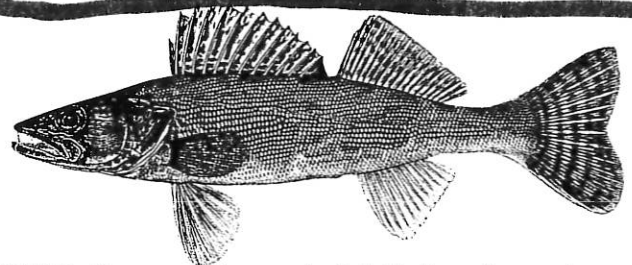
**BLUE CATFISH** The blue catfish looks much like the channel cat, except the blue has a humped back and a longer anal fin with about 32 supporting rays. Blues are native to several rivers in northeast Kansas including the Kansas and Missouri. Blues are usually caught on cut or live bait. The Kansas record was caught from the Kansas River in 1988 and weighed 82 pounds. The largest blue cat on record weighed 109 pounds, 4 ounces.



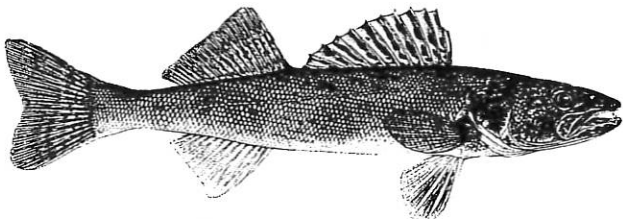
**CHANNEL CATFISH** One of Kansas' most popular fish, channel cats are common in rivers, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, and small prairie streams. Department hatcheries stock millions of channel cats each year. The channel cat has a deeply forked tail, and the anal fin has rounded edges and less than 30 supporting rays. The state record channel cat was caught from the Kansas River in 1993 and weighed 34 pounds, 11 ounces. The world record is 58 pounds.



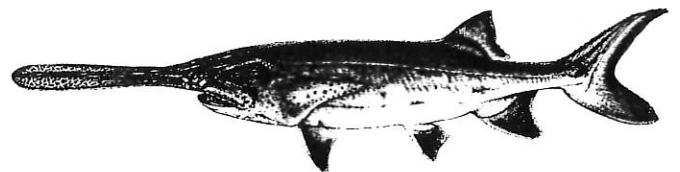
**WALLEYE** Popular with anglers, millions of walleye are stocked each year in most reservoirs and some state and community lakes. The walleye's spiny dorsal has a dark spot at the base, the lower lobe of the tail has a white tip, and dark blotches on the side rarely extend below the lateral line. It's cheeks are smooth (few scales). The state record was caught from Wilson Reservoir in 1996 and weighed 13 pounds, 2.56 ounces. The world record is 25 pounds.



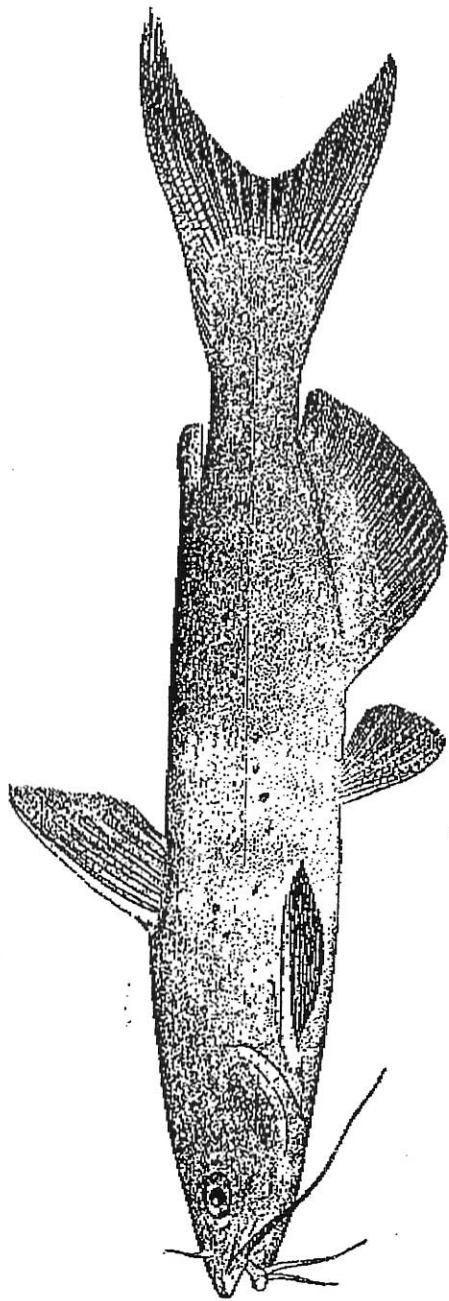
**SAUGEYE** The saugeye is a popular hybrid of a walleye and sauger. It has dark blotches on the side that extend below the lateral line, a spiny dorsal with distinct streaks or blotches and an indistinct dark spot at its base. Its cheeks are rough (scaled), and the tail has white along the lower edge. The Kansas record was caught from Sebelius Reservoir in 1997 and weighed 8 pounds, 9.28 ounces. The world record saugeye weighed 15 pounds, 10 ounces.



**SAUGER** This close cousin to the walleye loves murky water and current and has been stocked in several northeast Kansas reservoirs. The sauger has dark blotches extending below the lateral line, distinct spots on the spiny dorsal, and rough, or scaled, cheeks. Smaller than the walleye, the world record sauger weighed 8 pounds, 12 ounces. The state record was caught from Melvern Reservoir in 1996 and weighed 4 pounds, 1.4 ounces.



**PADDLEFISH** The paddlefish is a toothless plankton eater with a pre-historic appearance. Common only in two rivers in Kansas, the Marais des Cygnes and the Neosho, the paddlefish is taken by fishermen during the special snagging season when it moves upriver to spawn. Recent stockings of paddlefish in Kaw Reservoir in Oklahoma and in Tuttle Creek Reservoir may bring the paddle-snouted fish back to some of its former range. The Kansas record was caught in the Neosho River at Chetopa in 1996 and weighed 81 pounds. The largest paddlefish on modern record weighed 142 pounds, 8 ounces.



Barbed Trout or Spotted Channel Catfish.

# BARBED TROUT OF KANSAS

OR

Propagating the Spotted Channel  
Catfish in Kansas Ponds



ISSUED

## BULLETIN No. 8

OF THE

### KANSAS FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

J. B. DOZE, Warden

JULY 30, 1925

PRATT, KANSAS

PRINTED BY KANSAS STATE PRINTING PLANT  
J. P. WALKER, STATE PRINTER  
TOPEKA 1925  
11-257

*This document is the testimony to the Federal State Affairs Committee concerning the adoption of the Channel Catfish as the Kansas State Fish. This testimony is being provided by Mr. Stevenson's 7<sup>th</sup> grade Kansas History class from Olpe, KS USD #252 on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 1999.*

*Miss Kori Bernhardt*

*Miss Shelly Schwaln*

*Miss Tiffany Webb*

*Mr. Will Estes*

*Miss Anna Trear*

*Miss Michelle Stueve*

*Mr. Ferritt Turner*

*Mr. Dustin Williams*

*Teacher*

*Mr. Patrick F. Stevenson*

Our 7<sup>th</sup> grade Kansas History class had been on a typical pace during the fall 1998 semester until Mr. Stevenson planned a collage project. The students were instructed to display what they had learned about Kansas by drawing concepts on a large outline of the state. After working on the project for a length of time a student asked Mr. Stevenson, "What is the state fish?" Mr. Stevenson responded, "We do not have one."

This question sparked an interesting discussion in our classroom. The class debated about what the appropriate state fish should be if the state did have one; and openly discussed our thoughts about what someone would have to do to elect a state fish. The students seemed very dissatisfied with the lack of a state fish. Because their dissatisfaction appeared sincere, Mr. Stevenson decided to call the district State Representative, Peggy Long. Mr. Stevenson contacted Representative Long and scheduled her to speak to the class concerning the process involved in electing a state fish. While the class waited for the scheduled engagement with Representative Long, they initiated research to determine the best choice of fish to represent all of Kansas. The students were required to provide support for their choice of a state fish.

Our school library contained the book, Fishes in Kansas, by Frank B. Cross and Joseph T. Collins. (C. Museum of Natural History University of Kansas, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1975.) The class researched the book for ideas and discovered that many fish that are native to Kansas can only be found in certain regions of the state. As mentioned earlier, their goal was to find a fish that would represent the entire state well.

In the classroom, the finalists were the Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) and the Channel Catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*). These were popular for two reasons: they were fun to catch, and they were abundant. Through this research the students discovered many similarities in the traits of the Channel Catfish and the traits of Kansans. These similarities could not be

*House Fed + State  
Attachment #5-1  
1-28-99*



found with the Largemouth Bass and the people of Kansas. Research provided the class with the following analogy of the Channel Catfish to the people of Kansas.

\* **Channel Catfish vary in size and color** / Through Kansas History studies the students learned of the various immigrants which came to Kansas from all over the world. Kansas has a wide variety of cultures and ethnic backgrounds in this great state. This is one of the characteristics which make the state *great!*

\* **Channel Catfish are proven survivors; doing better than most game fish in turbid lakes and ponds** / Kansans are known as survivors and hard workers because of the labor it took to rid slavery from the state - to survive the great Depression - to pioneer the beef industry - to build a railroad system so the state's population and economic system could grow - to till up uncultivated land and lead the country in wheat production - to place a Kansan on the moon and in the White House.

\* **Channel Catfish inhabit all large streams in Kansas** / Selection is based on a fish that all Kansans can relate to. This fish is not just on the eastern side nor the western side of the state. It is the **most prevalent** fish in the state. The book, Fishes in Kansas, was printed in 1975. At that time the Channel Catfish was found in **all but 8-10** counties. It is now 1999 and we are sure you would agree that since the Channel Catfish is the **#1** seller of all Kansas commercial fish farms, this fish can probably be found in almost every body of water in our state.

\* **The commercial production of Channel Catfish originated in the State of Kansas** / Pratt, Kansas in the 1930's. Kansas is the leader here! All those catfish farms in Mississippi and other states learned how to do it from **KANSANS!**

\* **The Channel Catfish has great defense mechanisms which keep it at the top of the food chain in its environment** / Kansans too are tough individuals who are full of pride for their state and would rather die than give in to a battle they believe in. (that's why we are here today)

Several students searched on the internet and found that forty of the fifty states have adopted a fish as a state symbol. None of these states chose the Channel Catfish as their state fish.

Financial gains would be made by the Kansas commercial industry if the state adopted a state fish. Out-of-state and in-state anglers already prefer to catch the Channel Catfish because of the tough fight it puts forth. Having it as the state fish may attract more anglers to stop in Kansas and fish with a temporary permit. Anglers may even spend an extra night in a Kansas motel because the Channel Catfish is so fun to catch. The arts and crafts industry would benefit by creating knick knacks modeling the new state symbol. These symbols can be seen frequently

## **Channel Catfish**

In 1928, my grandfather, Mr. Seth Way, at the age of twenty-five, discovered and invented the way to hatch Channel Catfish mechanically. By observing the Channel Catfish in streams, he learned that the catfish would lay its eggs in a hole and then fan them with his tail. By getting the fish to lay their eggs in cream cans, he would gather and place them in wire baskets where they would be slowly fanned by a paddle, ran by a waterwheel. His supervisors would not purchase an electric motor for the waterwheel because of its cost of five dollars, and they also doubted this project's chance of success. The project did succeed, and in turn, started a whole new industry.

In the 1940's, Seth met W.E. Hartley, originally from Kingman, who wanted to raise and sell catfish. They formed a partnership that lasted a lifetime, hatching millions of Channel Catfish each year. The fish not only went into the farm ponds of Kansas, but all over the United States. They also worked closely with Vernon Krehbiel, from Pretty Prairie, who had also in the 1940's started raising catfish. He had worked hard to get state laws changed, in order to keep fish farming as a growing industry.

The people of Kansas probably don't realize that during the 1960's and 70's, Kansas traded Channel Catfish for the first Walleye, Stripers, Trout, and Wild Turkeys, which have all done very well. Millions of dollars in hunting and fishing licenses have been sold to the general public in order to pursue these species in sport.

*House Fed & State  
Attachment #6  
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Today, the Channel Catfish can be found in all lakes, streams, and rivers in Kansas. They reproduce well and provide excellent fishing anywhere in the state. The fish grow to a large size of fifteen to twenty pounds. They will bite on any type of bait, artificial or natural, and being a hard-fighting fish makes them a lot of enjoyment to adults and children.

In the 1990's, the southern states of the U.S. produce more Channel Catfish due to the longer growing seasons and more availability of the waters, but everything they now know was first, and I stress the word first, thought of, tried, and engineered right here in Kansas. These three men: Seth Way, of Murdock, KS, W.E. Hartley, of Kingman, KS, and Vernon Krehbiel, from Pretty Prairie, KS, pioneered Catfish Farming for Kansas and for the nation.

*Submitted by John L Way  
902 Dove Run  
Emporia, Ks 66801*

PROPOSAL TO DECLARE THE CHANNEL CATFISH THE STATE FISH OF KANSAS

by  
Dr. Harold E. Klaassen

Work:

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Kansas State University  
Manhattan, KS 66506  
ph: 785-532-6654  
E-mail: heklaas@ksu.edu

Home:

9323 Baldwin Creek Rd.  
Leonardville, KS 66449  
ph: 785-293-5650

I have taught the Fisheries related courses at Kansas State University for the past 32 years. During this time I was involved in a variety of Fisheries Biology research projects including the management and culture of channel catfish. I am also a member of the Board of Directors of the Kansas Aquaculture Association and a member of the American Fisheries Society. I am testifying as a professional Fisheries Biologist and not as a representative of Kansas State University.

The **Channel Catfish**, *Ictalurus punctatus*, is a worthy candidate for the state fish of Kansas. In considering the adoption of an animal, plant, or object as a symbol of our state, several criteria need to be critically evaluated. Among these criteria are:

- The entity should possess some unique feature that is representative of Kansas.
- This entity should be reasonably common (now or in the past) in the state.
- The typical Kansas citizen should at least have some knowledge about it.
- It should portray a positive emotion when viewed or thought of.
- It should generate a feeling of pride in Kansans when viewed by out of staters as a symbol of our state.

There are about 135 species of fishes in Kansas and of these, 116 species are native to the state. The channel catfish is a common native fish of Kansas that is found in all counties. Originally a stream fish, it is also found in most of our ponds, lakes, and reservoirs. It is an attractive fish with smooth, streamlined contours and a forked tail. It is one of the most popular sport fish and a favorite food fish of many Kansans. It is now widely managed in most Kansas waters. It is also highly respected outside of Kansas. Nation wide it is among the top five most popular fishes sought in recreational fishing.

The channel catfish has historical significance in Kansas. It was in Kansas where the technical management of the channel catfish had its beginning. During the 1930s and 40s, Mr. Seth Way, of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (then known as the Kansas Forestry, Fish and

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Game Commission), worked out the hatchery propagation (spawning, hatching, and care) of the channel catfish. During those early times some of the first catfish farms were developed in Kansas. During the 1940s Mr. Bus Hartley together with Mr. Seth Way established a private catfish farm. Mr. Vernon Krehbiel also developed a large catfish farm during that time. Then during the 1960s and 70s, Dr. Otto Tiemeier and Dr. Charles Deyoe, both at Kansas State University, conducted early fish nutrition research with channel catfish using formulated feeds. Also in the 1960s the Kansas Commercial Fish Growers Association (now the Kansas Aquaculture Association) was formed to serve this growing industry. Those pioneering activities formed the foundation for the present day advanced technologies used in the culture and management of the channel catfish in Kansas and in much of the United States. In Kansas private aquaculture is a small, but significant industry. Presently the channel catfish is the main species of fish that is produced in this state industry. Nationally most catfish aquaculture occurs in the southern U.S. due to the more favorable climatic conditions. Because of this most people think that the industry originated in the South. The channel catfish accounts for over half of the nation's aquaculture production.

There is no doubt that the channel catfish meets the criteria to be a symbol of Kansas. Kansans can identify with it since it is so abundant and wide spread. It is one of the most highly favored fish by many for both sport and food. The wide spread present day culture and management of this fish have their historical roots in Kansas. By adopting the channel catfish as our state fish, we will establish the claim to this significant part of our history. This is a species that we Kansans can be proud of to have as a symbol of our state.

I thank the Committee for allowing me to testify on this important issue.

January 28, 1999



## Kansas Commercial Fish Growers Association



January 28, 1999

### CHANNEL CATFISH: STATE FISH OF KANSAS

My name is Charles W. Wallace. I own and operate Wallace Fish Farm, which is located near the small town of Allen, in northern Lyon County. As secretary/treasurer of the Kansas Aquaculture Association (formerly Kansas Commercial Fish Growers Association) and spokesperson for the board of directors we pledge our unanimous support in favor of this proposed bill. We applaud the efforts of the Olpe seventh grade class as well as their teacher Mr. Pat Stevenson. This action is long overdue. No other fish in the state can equal the combined qualities of popularity, economic importance, and last but not least, historical significance.

Since the discovery of naturally occurring Channel Catfish in 1877, the popularity of this fish has increased steadily. When the state agencies today request fish from the private grower to be used in supplemental stocking programs throughout Kansas, Channel Catfish is the most requested. The Channel Catfish insignia has been a trademark of the Kansas Commercial Fish Growers since our inception in 1964. Now although our name has changed the Channel Catfish is still representative of our group. Our growers also supply numerous private ponds and lakes where Channel Catfish are the primary fish requested. Channel Catfish are far and away the number one species marketed by our growers who are scattered across 19 counties in Kansas. Encouraged by the health and nutritional benefits of fish and more competitive prices, consumers have been adding fish to their diets steadily over the past 30 years. Consumption of seafood, of which Channel Catfish ranks fourth, is expected to increase to approximately 20 pounds per capita by the year 2000. Kansas is well positioned to participate in the future growth of aquaculture expected in the next decade and beyond.

What an incredibly well kept secret, the history of the development of the Channel Catfish industry has been. It is a little known fact that commercial catfish production was pioneered in Kansas. The benefit of this production touched not only Kansas, but the nation as well. The culturing of Channel Catfish actually began in the 1920's by Mr. John Murphy of the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. In 1926 Mr. Seth Way ~~and~~ an

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employee of the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, was recognized as the first person to successfully artificially hatch Channel Catfish. In 1996 he was inducted into the Aquaculture Hall of Fame in Spearfish, SD. The period of the 1950's was the ground floor for full scale commercial Catfish production. It was during this time that the partnership of Mr. Seth Way and Mr. W. E. "Bus" Hartley was formed. Mr. Hartley went on to be acknowledged as "Catfish Farmer of America" in 1974. Mr. Vernon Kriehbiel, also involved in the commercial production of Catfish, was instrumental in liberalizing Kansas laws which restricted aquaculture development at that time. In the early 60's Kansas State University professors Dr. Otto Tiemeir and Dr. Charles Deyoe, through grant money supplied by the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, began formulating commercial pelleted fish food. This pioneer work in nutrition formed the foundation for the expansion of the Channel Catfish industry nationwide.

I believe that Kansas should make the Channel Catfish the state fish. It is my understanding that 40 of the 50 states presently have a state fish. Lets bring all of these "little known facts" surrounding the Channel Catfish out of the closet once and for all. Let's make a stand for our state.



# Kansas Fisheries

December, 1998

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## 1999 ANNUAL MEETING INVITATION AND CALL FOR PAPERS

You are cordially invited to attend the KS/AFS annual meeting, to be held at Emporia State University in Emporia, Friday and Saturday February 19-20, 1999. We hope all members will be able to attend. This is also the (first and probably the last) call for posters or papers to be presented at the meeting.

Registration will begin at noon on Friday in the Schmidt Natural History Museum in the bottom floor of Science Hall on the ESU campus. Free parking is available along Highland Street on the north end of campus, to the northeast of the Wildlife & Parks office (see map). The business meeting will commence at 1:00 p.m.; please come and take part in the business of your society.

We are pleased to announce a Friday afternoon technical workshop on the use of rotenone. Jim Fajt, Ph.D., Auburn University, will be with us to talk about current research on rotenone, its effects on fish, and how to use it. Jim works for Prentiss, Inc., the company that developed the rotenone-impregnated feed Ron Marteney used to kill-off El Dorado carp, and is planning a true workshop in which he hopes to hear questions, comments, and experiences from the audience. This should be an excellent chance for students and professionals to learn how to use this fish toxicant, especially in the face of increasing public scrutiny.

The Friday evening social and raffle will be held at the Best Western Hospitality House Motel, 3021 West Highway 50. A block of rooms has been set aside for us; rates are \$40 (single) and \$50 (double). Reservations can be made by calling (800) 528-1234 or (316) 342-7587. Other motels in Emporia include: Budget Host Inn, 1830 East Highway 50, (800) bud-host (\$27 & \$36); Comfort Inn, 2511 West 18th, (316) 343-7750 (\$38 & \$44); Days Inn, 3032 West Highway 50, (316) 342-1787 (\$40 & \$55); Motel 6, 2630 West 18th, (316) 343-1240 (\$32 & \$38); Fairfield Inn, 2930 Eagle Crest Dr., (316) 342-4445 (\$59 & \$69); Super 8 Motel, 2913 West Highway 50, (316) 342-7567 (\$41 & \$51); and University Inn, 1839 Merchant, (316) 342-8850 (\$37 & \$43). Tax is additional on all of these.

The paper session will be held on Saturday. Please submit presentation titles (oral or poster), along with a brief abstract, plus name, address, e-mail, affiliation, and audiovisual needs to: David Edds, Division of Biological Sciences, Campus Box 4050, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS 66801-5087 by January 15. We urge everyone who has something to say to send in an abstract. Let us all hear about what's up with your area waters, whether formal projects, regular activities, or brain-storming ideas!

We hope to see everybody in Emporia. Let's party like it's 1999!

The Newsletter of The Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

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