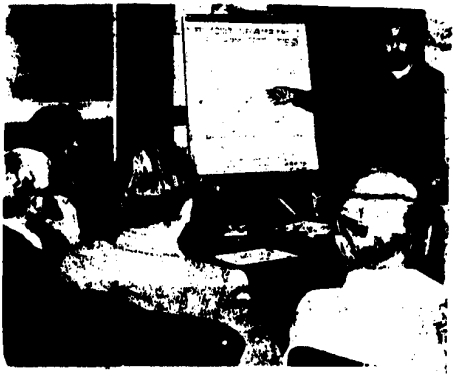


SALMON PLANS- Sandy Schuman of Sea Grant discusses past, present and future plans regarding the salmon fishing program with members of the Sea Grant Advisory Committee which met last Thursday night at the local court house.

Advisory group discusses salmonid projects

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Progress, problems and possibilities relating to the salmonid fishing program in Northern Oswego County were discussed at a meeting of the Sea Grant Advisory Committee on Thursday of last week at the Court House. The committee was formed last March to give suggestions and advice from the private sector to the Sea Grant service which has monitored the development of the salmonid fishing program.

Sandy Schuman representing Sea Grant, chaired the meeting which was attended by the following committee members: Bruce Soule, County Legislator from the Town of Richland; Mike Donovan-News Director at WRCP radio; Dick Brott-President of the Greater Pulaski Chamber of Commerce; Ray Chadro- Oswego County Sheriff; Don Paim of the St. Lawrence-Eastern Ontario Commission and Bruce Wilkins of Rhesa.

Schuman and the board reviewed the salmonid-related programs and projects implemented this year. The men discussed Sea Grant's role thus far in the following areas: adequate harbor and boat launching facilities at Port Ontario, landowners rights, trespassing and stream access, salmon preparation demonstrations, guided tours at the weir, coordination of local and area medical and law enforcement personnel, providing community and business services, and the Salmon Festival held at Sandy Creek in October.

It was generally agreed that while all of these special programs had met with some degree of success, those projects which were information-oriented such as the weir tours and the salmon preparation classes were very welcomed and were beneficial for the entire program. Richard Brott commented that there are still many people who are bitter about the influx of fishermen especially some residents who live on Maple Avenue and others on Lake Rd. Educational programs which are directed at both fishermen and non-fishermen, help show the visitors as well as disgruntled property owners the positive side of the fishing phenomenon, he said.

The committee members admitted that one segment of the population which has not been consulted enough on the salmonid program have been the sportsmen's organizations. It was the consensus of opinion that in the future, outdoor sportsmen's clubs will be called upon to assist in giving recommendations.

Also stressed was the need for the involvement of youth in the program. Schuman informed the committee of a current project being conducted in high schools and through 4-H groups in which the young people are studying all aspects of salmon fishing. Surveys are being conducted by the students, Schuman said, and hopefully this information will be of assistance to the Sea Grant and other groups.

The committee members agreed that three topics are of extreme importance to the continued, planned growth of the fishing industry. The hatchery expected to be built at Altmar and the harbor at Port Ontario are of utmost priority, they agreed and pressure should be put on elected officials to insure the construction of both. Also critical to the program are the controversial PCB chemicals in fish. A final determination on the effects and dangerous levels of contamination has not been made yet by the Department of Environmental Conservation, it was mentioned. Bad publicity from the chemicals in fish are surely a detriment to the program, the committee agreed.

At the end of the meeting, Schuman thanked the committee for their attendance and continual input of ideas and suggestions. It was agreed that another meeting would be held when needed.

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