



*From the Desk of the NCD President
Ramblings by Sandy
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Hello all,

I'm a little slow on my monthly blog but time seems to slip away and before I know it, it is the start of another month.

I'm sure many of you are looking forward to the upcoming AFS meeting next month. National meetings are always exciting and enjoyable and the Tampa location can't hurt either. Looking at the continuing education course offerings, there are several that look very interesting. Several that jumped out to me are the facilitation, leadership and human dimensions training. For me, any workshops or trainings that help me develop skills that assist with people management and interactions are exciting.

When people ask if college prepared me for the workforce, I answer "no way!" In college, I was provided a good basis on fisheries management. But as I talk with other biologists, and mature in my own career, I have realized we don't management wildlife; we manage people. Everything about management comes back to people. We can implement a regulation to try and increase harvest of a species. But if people practice catch and release, the regulation will have no effect. Much of being a successful manager is understanding human emotions and motivations. I feel like that is where I could have used more background in human dimensions and psychology to gain a better understanding.

The other human aspect is interacting with coworkers, supervisors, the general public, and subordinates. There are no college classes on how to supervise. This knowledge only comes with experience. This is where summer internships and jobs give you a general idea of just how difficult it is work with challenging personalities.

I personally developed my idea of what being a "good" supervisor is by having some really good supervisors and some really bad supervisors. I easily figured out what I didn't want to be like, but I still struggle everyday with the challenges of maintaining a happy, productive work place.

So where am I going with this ramble? If you are a student reading this, look to fill your electives or any spare hours with classes about psychology, human dimensions, and working in groups. Look for work or intern experiences that allow you to gain an understanding of different supervising styles. Keep mental notes of things you liked or disliked about how you were supervised and start developing your own style of supervising. If you are already a professional, look for opportunities like those provided at the AFS meeting or Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference to increase these skill sets. I know many of us gravitate towards continuing education classes that we feel comfortable with and are geared towards more traditional fisheries management. However, as I made the argument earlier, even the best management recommendation is only successful if the user group participates.

Stay safe,

Sandy