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President's Blog

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## Appreciating the North Central Division Technical Sections



I am choosing this month to highlight an important part of the North Central Division (NCD) that not all members may appreciate. Many of us are active at the state chapter level and may interact at the division level by attending the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference. Another active and vital part of the NCD are the technical sections. Within the division there are eight technical sections: centrarchid, ictalurid, esocid, salmonid, walleye, rivers and streams, reservoirs, and urban and community fisheries. I hope to tell you why our technical sections are important to the mission of AFS, and perhaps pique your interest in participating.

Technical sections provide a venue for in-depth sharing of information with other experts who work in specific aspects of fisheries management and research within the NCD. Each tech committee strives to have members from all chapters within the division. They typically meet one to four times per year, once at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference and often another in-person meeting during summer. Some committees hold additional meetings virtually. At meetings attendees share relevant happenings within their respective chapters, and at summer meetings there are often guest speakers as well. The centrarchid, esocid and walleye tech committees typically hold a joint summer meeting to allow for cross pollination between the groups.

Technical committees also often organize symposia at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference or the parent society meeting. For example, in 2021 the walleye technical committee organized a symposium at the Midwest conference that focused on the effects of lake system change on walleye populations across the Midwest. The proceedings of that symposium were published in a [special section of the North American Journal of Fisheries Management](#). Members of the ictalurid committee have collaborated with the Southern Division's ictalurid tech committee to organize the international catfish symposiums that have been held every ten years since 2000, with proceedings published in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management.

Through these activities, the technical committees are a great venue for AFS members to learn from others and bring that knowledge back to their own work, and to share their own knowledge with others. If you are interested in getting involved with NCD technical committees, there is more information under the "committees" tab on the [NCD website](#). Everyone is welcome to participate, so feel free to contact the committee chair listed on the website if you want to learn more.

Have a great November and Thanksgiving,

*Brian Nerbonne*