



MATTERS OF OPINION



Terry Steinwand
Director

WOW! That's the first word that comes to mind after a snowy winter and wet spring. I've lived in North Dakota basically my entire life and don't ever remember hearing of or seeing the magnitude of flooding or water-related events across the state that we experienced this spring.

The fallout was tremendous and will remain in our minds throughout summer and likely longer, but we're North Dakotans and we'll get done what needs to get done. North Dakota's fish and wildlife resources seem to have the same attitude. I know that sounds anthropomorphic, but we're concerned about fish and wildlife populations, given the length and severity of winter and associated events. Game and Fish Department staff continue to assess some of the effects, but it's likely not as severe as we originally envisioned.

While there are hardships to endure with the massive amount of water we received, there are some benefits, too. One of those ambivalent areas is Stump Lake in Nelson County. A few years ago Stump connected with the rising waters of Devils Lake and this typically very salty lake became fresh enough to support fish life. It's still saltier than most lakes in the state, but Stump Lake is coming into its own as a fishery, as described in this issue, and will likely remain one for many years.

A North Dakota Game and Fish Department program specifically designed for women interested in learning more about the outdoors

is also featured in this issue. I was surprised to hear that *Becoming an Outdoors-Woman* was turning 15 this summer, but equally satisfied that the program is going stronger than ever.

We're into the summer season when aquatic activities go into full swing. Many of you have likely heard one of our educational campaigns on aquatic nuisance species and the threats these exotics create to aquatic habitats in North Dakota. Then again, nuisance species aren't solely relegated to our waters. This issue speaks to the threat of the emerald ash borer, an exotic invader from Asia, and what the state is doing to repel the threat. These little creatures can wreak havoc on trees around the state, which provide shade to humans and habitat for numerous wildlife. And let's admit it; we don't necessarily have an abundance of trees across the state, so it would be a shame to lose any to an invasive species.

I'm getting older and don't necessarily understand all the new technology that's available to us. But I recently received a text message regarding this magazine and specifically the Matters of Opinion column and how much some individuals enjoyed reading it. Given the author of the message, I'm not sure if it was tongue in cheek or not. I prefer to believe they enjoy the magazine. So, for all you folks on oil rig 161, continue to enjoy. And for everyone, have a safe and enjoyable summer in North Dakota's great outdoors.

Terry Steinwand