

WASHINGTON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

March 20, 2007

Room 172, Natural Resources Building
Olympia, Washington

INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Wendy Brown	Department of Natural Resources
Kate Benkert	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Joan Cabreza	Environmental Protection Agency
Barbara Chambers	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Tom Root	Department of Transportation
Dana Coggon	Kitsap County
Mark Huebschman	U.S. Coast Guard
Bob Koch	Franklin County
Gene Little	WA Noxious Weed Control Board
Bridget Moran	Department of Fish and Wildlife
Brid Nowlan	Washington Invasive Species Coalition
Melodie Selby & Kathy Hamel	Department of Ecology
Pat Stevenson	Stillaguamish Tribe
Mary Toohey & Dr. Brad White	Department of Agriculture

Call to Order

Bridget Moran opened the meeting at 9:09 a.m. and made welcome announcements.

Member Introductions

Bridget Moran asked everyone, including audience members, to introduce themselves.

Agenda Overview

Bridget Moran reviewed the agenda.

Announcements

Hot Topics: This is an opportunity for Council members to mention essential items.

No hot topic items were mentioned by the Council.

- Clover Lockard will be on leave the first two weeks of May. If needed, members should try to contact her before or after her leave. During her absence they may contact Jen Dial.

Approve Meeting Minutes

Bridget Moran moved to **APPROVE** the January 29, 2007 meeting minutes. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the January 29, 2007 minutes.

Federal Update

Bridget Moran introduced Sara Crumb from the office of Congressman Norm Dicks.

Sara noted her appreciation for being invited to the meeting. Congressman Norm Dicks is interested in invasive species issues and the Council's work. He has been involved with Spartina in particular:

- Initially he focused on Willapa Harbor in southwest Washington, which had a severe Spartina problem. Great progress has been made there.
- He secured funding to support eradication efforts. However, 2007 earmarks went away. They are looking at what this means for the programs. They will make an attempt to put this money back in the 2008 budget.
- Sara will keep the Council posted as she learns more from Washington D.C.

Comment Period

- A comment was made regarding the Army Corps of Engineers' aquatic plant control program. They are interested in getting this program reactivated. The federal dollars would help a lot.
 - Sara will look into it. Many of the programs are getting cut across the board.
- Is the Congressman's office tracking Senator Carl Levin's bill to authorize the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act?
 - Sara assured the Council that she would look into the items raised.

Critical Connections

Presentation made by Stephen Phillips, 100th Meridian Group. Stephen noted that he appreciated being able to come before the Council.

- The 100th Meridian Initiative is a coalition supported by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.
- The 100th Meridian Group began an invasive species program in 1999.
- The group has three commissioners from each state.
- When all states reach an agreement on an issue, they launch a lobbying effort.
- They receive most of their funds from Bonneville Power Administration to help with green crabs, tunicates, and zebra mussels.
- They have 40 projects in nine states.
- They support the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife ballast water program.
- They work through river basin teams. There are four of these teams, including a Columbia River team in Washington. They help prioritize projects that will assist in the prevention of zebra mussels.

Projects

- 100th Meridian Group receives about \$100,000 annually from Washington D.C.
- They look for matching funds.
- A lot of that money goes into education.
- Zebra mussel monitoring is high on the priority list.
- The state of Washington has been extremely proactive with watercraft monitoring.
- Bill Zook was hired to do their outreach work. He talks to marina owners to educate them on the topic. Bill helped with watercraft inspection training for law enforcement, so that people know what to do if they spot a zebra mussel. He also led the effort to make a video called "It Only Takes One," which was produced in Olympia. The video includes information on how to detect high-risk watercraft.
- On January 6, 2007, a media notice was released stating that zebra mussels were found in Lake Mead. In fact, they were quagga mussels and they have been found in the Colorado River as well.

Columbia River Basin Response Plan

- Works as a region to respond to infestations.

- Establishes a communication system, organizes resources, and is an interagency response team.
- There is still a lot of work to do towards this coordination.
- They want each state to sign a letter of agreement, so there is one contact for each state. This Council can be very important for this role.
- A draft of the plan is available at the 100th Meridian Web site. Go to the Columbia River link to find it.
- They are meeting in mid-June to discuss a rapid response plan.
- They will be using plankton tows and then will have the data analyzed at Portland University to look for zebra mussels. This is a priority for funding in the future.
- Bruce Sutherland has put together information on pesticides and chemical control.

Comment Period

- The Washington Invasive Species Council is required to coordinate and it would like to establish a relationship with the 100th Meridian Group.
- The model 'level of agreement' is of interest to the Council.
- Who does the monitoring?
 - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game have been doing most of the monitoring.
- Most state agencies and tribes will be starting this work in the coming years.
- The 100th Meridian Group Web-site displays monitoring data and enables agencies to feed more data into it.
- Are there a number of labs working together?
 - There are a number of groups working on this. There are new techniques under development in Alabama. There is a lab in Seattle also working on this. They are beginning to focus on techniques that are easier and cheaper than the current techniques, which use microscopes. By 2008 they hope to have this new system more widely available.
- How have you addressed the funding aspect of the rapid response program?
 - In its lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill, the group is asking for emergency funds to be put in the rapid response program.

Critical Connections

Presentation made by Dr. Brad White, Western and National Plant Board.

- The National Plant Board is a non-profit that protects economic development from harmful pests and plants. It strives to protect agriculture and horticulture, and to foster plant health programs with regulatory work. It also fosters relationships between state and federal agencies and provides inspection services.
- There is a need to talk across borders to work with the problem of invasive species.
- The Japanese beetle can consume a lot of landscape and is endemic in the eastern states. These states have tried to regulate this on their own after the federal government pulled out its quarantines.
- The National Plant Board is working to stop regulatory chaos.
- Usually when states want to regulate something, they look at what other states are doing. However, a congruent plan had to be made to centralize one plan to work on this issue. The National Plant Board accepted this harmonized plan.
- Guidelines were put together by the National Plant Board to regulate the exports from infested states.
- It relies on the federal government to help on each domestic issue for funding.

The Western Plant Board

- Is a regional subset of the National Plant Board. If the regional board finds an issue that is significant enough then they will bring those issues to the larger board.
- Nationalplantboard.org can be visited for more information.

Comment Period

- Where is the regional office?
 - They do not have a physical office.
- There are four regional plant boards, which meet once a year.
- Is there an educational or outreach component outside of the regulatory arena?
 - They have a couple of educational documents that include guidelines for making regulations.
- The Council would like to coordinate with the Regional Plant Board.
- How far west has the Japanese beetle migrated?
 - They have reached Palisades, Colorado. There is not a need to show concern as Colorado had taken steps.
- What about selling plants over the Internet? Is there regulation?
 - Sellers are supposed to follow regulations for this, but the Internet is nearly impossible to regulate.

Critical Connections

Presentation made by Dr. Ron Sequeira, United States Department of Agriculture – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

The Plant Protection Act is the service's overall statutory authority.

- Risk Analysis
 - Working with invasive species is not only about restoring but also about preventing.
 - To keep pests out. APHIS does science-based risk analysis and then try to mitigate. Management and assessment go hand in hand.
 - Organism risk analysis is conducted by identifying and characterizing the risk itself.
 - APHIS does pathway analysis and infrastructure projects.
 - APHIS has the largest of internal databases to identify the risks. It uses international databases as well. It is a tall order to begin the process.
 - APHIS looks at probability associated from the host of the pathway.
- Emphasis changes every year. In 2007, focus will be on emergency responses.
- APHIS is becoming more interested in imports, rather than exports of agricultural products. The most important thing is to deal with containers offshore before they ever get here. The global economy forces us to look at this. Commodities that countries want to export to the United States must be analyzed to see if they have a chance to become weeds. APHIS studies commodities for their ability to serve as hosts to other species that could be a problem. APHIS requires specific treatments before allowing a commodity into the country. In addition, ports of entry are inspected.
- APHIS is primarily a regulatory effort. Rules need to be made when a new commodity or a new country is requesting to trade and when a new pest is found. To make a new regulation, APHIS starts with a risk assessment and then a work plan. This information is used to write a proposed rule. Comments and hearings are requested and used to make a new work plan.
- Current appropriations limit what a regulatory agency can do. One problem in particular is resource allocation.
- The biggest problems for them are:
 - Offshore safeguarding

- Risk management
- Poor assessment of baselines
- Deliberate acts (smuggling)
- Expert elicitation (capturing the information in a way that is transparent and credible)
- Uncertainty
- Research.

Comment Period

- What are you doing about Methyl bromide use? Many risk assessments depend on this.
 - It is central to quarantines as a regulatory fumigant. Its disappearance is going to open the discussion of many other topics. It is a complex issue.
- What help would you like to see from the states?
 - The states already are helping, but the more focused and targeted the help is the better. The state is encouraged to work with them on to identify problems within Washington, especially on maritime containers that travel inland. Without the cooperation of state counterparts, APHIS is not going anywhere.

Inventory Update

Agenda item presented by Bridget Moran

- Two items pertaining to the inventory are being brought before the Council: The questionnaire and the list of recipients.
- Anyone who has additions to the list of recipients can send them to Clover Lockard. Bridget also offered the audience an opportunity to add names to the list.

Discussion and review of questionnaire

- Allow people who are filling out the survey to list names they think should be added to the list of recipients.
- A multi-dimensional drop down was suggested to determine if the invasive species is terrestrial or aquatic and would then go to the kingdom.
- Consider a drop down for the most common invasive species and then a blank box for respondents to enter in items they are interested in.
- The Council needs to identify what they want to do with this information. Every item asked for needs to have an established reason for why it is being asked.
- Reducing the text boxes as much as possible is important so that staff is not inundated with organizing data.
- The text makes the information richer, rather than having only drop down menus.
- The questionnaire could be handled in tiers, with a simpler questionnaire to begin with.
- Include a question to discover the Revised Code of Washington that each group operates under.
- What about adding species to the front page rather than looking for project information? This might provide a way for organizations to network with others who are working in the same way.

Discussion on purpose and use of questionnaire information

- Interest in specific projects is not necessary now.
 - The project information is necessary to know where the gaps and duplications are.
- The start and end dates will help staff know when to update information.
- The mission could be broken out more to see if each organization is a regulatory authority or if they focus on aquatics, terrestrials, or others. This would be helpful if the Council has a new problem arise, as this would allow them to see who could best address the issue.

- The question referring to the areas where state projects are conducted could include eastern, western, and an all of the above options.
- This new format seems to determine what organizations are out there versus what projects are underway.
- Instead of asking for a brief description with the budget, include a box to type the total annual budget. It might be nice to know the total money an organization spent, versus how much money is being spent on each project.
- Council members expressed concern with the broad layout of the new questionnaire.
- Include a cover letter when the questionnaire is sent out to let respondents know that there will be more questions sent later for recipients to include more details.
- Council members voiced approval of question 136, which asks organizations' feedback.
- Council members agreed that they would prefer a thinned down version of the questionnaire. An e-mail with a scaled down version of the questionnaire and a cover letter will go out to the Council for review before sending it to the list of recipients.
- The Council agreed upon a three-week time frame for recipients to return the completed questionnaire.

Strategic Work Session

Agenda item presented by Bridget Moran and Clover Lockard.

- The prime mission assigned by the Legislature is to work on a coordination plan. The Council must keep this in mind when moving ahead.
- The Council is required to coordinate with the Washington Biodiversity Council, which is on a different schedule than the Invasive Species Council, so how we coordinate with them is to be determined. Bridget will be meeting with the Biodiversity Council next week to determine more of the issues that could be discussed.
- Bridget asked if there was anyone who would be interested in being the liaison between the Invasive Species Council and the Biodiversity Council.
- Staff talked to experts and other states to get information for the strategic plan and work group. This information was compiled to provide structure for conversations today.
- Many of these topics are fundamental and might not appear new to the Council, however it is important to have a strong foundation from which to begin, otherwise there could be problems in the future for decision making, etc.
- Long-term and short-term goals, mission, and vision were discussed as items to consider for review.
- "Why are we here?" and "Who are we?" are foundational questions to remember during the beginning stages of the Council.

Work Session

To ensure the Council has a unified understanding of its purpose, members discussed why the Council exists.

- Legislation put the Council in place.
- To keep the Legislature aware of the gaps.
- To provide information to keep the strategy going.
- Many of the previous committees that have been formed only reach a certain level of policy, and the Council provides a higher level for policy.
- To be an advocate for other groups already working on these projects.
- To be proactive rather than reactive.
- Other states have formed invasive species councils. It is important for Washington to be a part of this network.

- To facilitate some type of baseline and set priorities from there.
- It was suggested that the Council could serve as a place for organizations who are disagreeing to come and find solutions. With the variety of players that the Council has, it could provide this type of advice.
- The Council needs an agreed upon process to determine threat.
- The Council needs to develop an educational component and a coordinated message to the public.

Vision

Three vision examples were provided by staff to stimulate discussion and help with the strategic plan.

- A favorite example was the one that gave the impression the Council is working towards something.
- This vision needs to be readable to the general public. The word ecosystem might need to be removed. Leaving the term non-native and invasive together educates people on what invasive species are.
- Include a piece for economic impacts to the vision.
- Ensure it's not too generic.
- Healthy and sustainable are useless words, the Council needs to be more specific.
- A vision statement should be like a bumper sticker, for instance "Washington species in Washington."
- Is the Council's charge "harmonious cooperation" or "eradication of invasive species?"
- Once the Council is working towards coordination and cooperation, who does that leave to be working towards eradication?
- The term proactive needs to be included.

Council members want more time to look these options over.

Work groups

The suggestions provided by the Washington Invasive Species Coalition were handed out as suggestions for this segment of the presentation.

- This information came from research done on other councils. It includes what they have found to be successful.
- The coalition first looked at what is needed for the strategic plan.

The Council agreed with consensus that each work group will have Council members and will be able to invite other representation and expertise both public and private. There is valuable information that other parties can provide. They should be invited as experts to present to the work groups.

Suggested work groups for development of the strategic plan

Key Components

- **Program Coordination**: Statewide coordination and regional collaboration, prevention of new invasions, and "decision tools" were added to the coordination group.
- **Technical**: Inventory and monitoring, early detection, rapid response, and research. Control, management, eradication of established populations, and re-vegetation following eradication. Add "technical tools" to the technical group. (Suggested that perhaps early detection and rapid response should go to the coordination group instead of the group it is in. Control and eradication could be added to the technical section, but it might overwhelm this committee.)
- **Funding**: Adequacy of funding, current funding tools, recommend measures to improve funding. Need to develop a triage cycle of funding for disaster and prevention. All of the groups will need to funnel information to the funding group. Some will have to do the foundation work and then others can add on to that. Develop a coordinated message for funding.

- **Education/Training:** Information management, communication and outreach, and tools for volunteers and citizen activists.
- **Legal/Regulations:** Review of existing regulations, suggest new legislation and regulations, enforcement, international and intrastate agreements.
- **Projects:** Projects that can be implemented and funded. A work group for projects will be formed at a later date.

Other Discussion:

- Parts of the Council's tasks are to do annual reports. That must be remembered during planning.
- The common goal of the work groups is to work on needs agreed upon by the Council so that no one starts working in a direction that is different than the others.
- Need an agreed upon process for the evaluation of threats.
- After discussion, Council members decided that as an initial strategy to organize and develop the strategic plan, the work groups suggested by the Washington Invasive Species Coalition were appropriate.
- Work groups can meet and determine which items of the strategic plan should fit into their groups and then report on which topics they selected.

Bridget Moran moved to **APPROVE** the work groups formed as suggested by the Washington Invasive Species Coalition (program coordination, technical, education and training, regulations and legal, and funding). The Council **APPROVED** the work groups with consensus.

Work Groups

Work groups need a central outline, with a lead for each group. These leads would meet to flesh out an outline determining how they will work with the strategic plan. The leads will bring their recommendations to the Council before they go forward with their group's work.

Technical Group Members

Mary Toohey - Lead

Dr. Brad White, Barbara Chambers, Joan Cabreza, Wendy Brown, Kathy Hamel, Brid Nowlan (with additional assistance from the Washington Invasive Species Coalition).

Funding Group Members

Wendy Brown - Lead

Dana Coggon

Education and Training Group Members

Dana Coggon – Lead

Kate Benkert and Tom Root

Regulations and Legal Group Members

Melodie Selby would like to be on the regulations group but cannot be the lead at this time due to the current legislative session. She will try and find someone at the Department of Ecology to help with the lead until she can assume the responsibility.

Melodie Selby – Lead

Bob Koch and Bridget Moran

Program Coordination Group Members

Gene Little – Lead

Allen Pleus and Pat Stevenson

Other Discussion

- A cover letter going out with the questionnaire could be used to solve other issues. For instance, it could be used to introduce the Council to the public. It could also be used to invite the public to be apart of these groups.
- Council members requested a list-serve or a link on the Web site that people can join or find out more information about the Council if they would like.

Work Group Charter Template

- Will be decided upon at the next meeting after all of the groups have had a chance to meet and discuss how they would like to report to the Council.

Next Steps

May 17th, 2007 Meeting Agenda

- Item number three includes the inventory results. This means that we need to get it complete and sent out in a timely manner.
- Bill Brookerson has been working with groups that have done eradication efforts and will present a report to the Council.
- Work group reports should be changed to include what came out of the strategic plan outline suggested by the leads.
- Make sure that everyone is content with the groups that they are in.
- Is there anything coming out of the legislative session that will affect the Council?
- The Aquatic Nuisance Science Committee would love to talk about the Committee's "watch list" but may need to wait until the Council is farther along.

Staff Assignments

- Call the lead members to set a date for their first meetings and prepare materials.
- Draft vision and mission statements to be sent for Council review separately from the minutes.
- Make revisions to the questionnaire and the recipients list.
- Develop cover letter for the questionnaire.
- Make revisions to the May 17th, 2007 Council meeting agenda.

Public Comment Period

Herb Curl, representing his own views, stated that the Council needs an ecological approach in its deliberations. It is urgent that at some point all of the invasive species be categorized, including rate of spread and the amount of effort and money that is being spent on eradication. You also need a report card that every five years gets updated to determine if the efforts are working. This would tell you if there is one species that is doing the most damage. People are not eradicating species, but rather controlling them. The environment is going to be changed overtime, especially when considering global warming and the economic impacts of this. The Council needs to locate where landscapes are the least affected by invasive species rather than just being reactive to the areas that are already infested. Building a defense around them is needed for them to stay protected. An adaptive management team needs to plan how the landscapes are going to look in the future.

Tracy Fuentes, United States Geologic Survey, reminded the Council to consider universities, state agencies, and non-governmental organizations for invasive species information. Species do not behave in the manner people expect them to behave. Birds and beavers are moving knotweed around. The human factor includes species delivered by people dumping their yard waste in the national forests. It gets on people's shoes and is placed in a new location when they go out to recreate. Consider what happens if re-

vegetation is not the issue. Fort Lewis was badly infested with Scot's Broom so the military spent a lot of time cleaning up the area, but five to ten years later the problem returned. The Council must remember to follow up with projects after they are implemented to ensure they don't come back. There needs to be more than the regulatory agencies working on the issue.

Diane Cooper, Pacific Growers Shellfish Association and Taylor Shellfish, noted that they are founded on non-native species. The public uses many of these terms without thinking what that could mean from a regulatory board perspective. The organizations that she works for have non-native species, but they are established species, that are not invasive. The model that the National Invasive Species Council uses would be helpful to review. She invited the Council to look at that plan, which is on its Web-site. She did not hear about science-based decisions being made and she would like to emphasize this. She would like several scuba diving clubs to be included on the list serve and into the work of this Council. She invited the Council to come to them with questions.

Clover Lockard was asked to e-mail the link for the National Invasive Species Council Web-site to the Council members. Diane said she would e-mail Clover with a list of the scuba diving communities to be added to the list.

Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

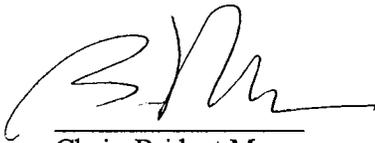
Next meeting

May 17, 2007

Natural Resources Building, Room 172

Olympia, WA

Washington Invasive Species Council Approval:



Chair, Bridget Moran

May 17, 2007
Date