

**INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL  
MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING**

December 13, 2012

Room 172, WA State Natural Resources Building  
Olympia, Washington

---

**WASHINGTON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL (WISC) MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Kevin Anderson	Puget Sound Partnership
Chris Christopher	Department of Transportation
Raquel Crosier	Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Doug Daoust	U.S. Forest Service
Rob Fimbel	WA State Parks and Recreation Commission
Alison Halpern	Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
Kathy Hamel	Department of Ecology
Mike Mackey	Chelan County Noxious Weed Control Board
Lizbeth Seebacher	Department of Ecology
Pene Speaks, Vice Chair	Department of Natural Resources
Bill Tweit, Chair	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mary Toohey/Brad White	Washington State Department of Agriculture
LT Eric Young	U.S. Coast Guard
Vicki Yund	U.S. Customs and Border Protection

**GUESTS AND PRESENTERS:**

Paul Bucich  
Sgt Carl Klein  
Jennifer Knauer  
Mike Leech  
Kit Paulson  
Allen Pleus

**STAFF:**

Wendy Brown  
Rachel LeBaron Anderson

---

**CONVENE AND WELCOME:**

Bill Tweit opened the meeting at 9:04 a.m. with welcome announcements and facility safety information, introductions, and a review of the agenda.

**HOT TOPICS:**

**WEED BOARD HEARING AND EELGRASS LISTING**

Alison Halpern reported that the weed board held a public hearing November 6, 2012, to approve the 2013 weed list. All proposed changes were adopted. French broom is now a class A weed and must be eradicated. It is currently only found in Seattle. Hawkweed is now a class B weed. New class C weeds include teasel and common barberry. Eleven class B weeds were changed to class C to give counties more control at the local level. The WAC 16-750 language is now easier to read and becomes effective 30 days after filing. Starting in January, the weed board will take proposals for the 2014 weed list. The weed regions have been realigned so that counties are no longer split; the ten previous regions have been narrowed to six regions.

Japanese eelgrass is now class C throughout the state. Control is not required, but shellfish growers may control it as needed. Pat Stevenson was unable to attend today's meeting, but sent a message of concern from the tribal community regarding the new statewide eelgrass listing. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is also concerned about the statewide listing of Japanese eelgrass and impacts control will have on native eelgrass. There have been some public workshops to discuss the state of the science on Japanese eelgrass, but there remains differing opinions about its role in the ecosystem. The weed board may hold another workshop to allow more communication between the groups.

#### EELGRASS PERMIT MEETING

Kathy Hamel has been hired back part-time at Ecology to work on finalizing the eelgrass control permit. Ecology has also hired Nathan Lubliner to replace Kathy. He comes from Department of Agriculture where he previously worked on sudden oak death. Ecology had limited the permit for eelgrass control to Willapa Bay only. They are concerned about herbicide effects on native eelgrass. The agency does not have funding to write an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on eelgrass control and has asked the shellfish growers to do so. Ecology is continuing to write the permit language, with a heavy focus on monitoring the impacts of the treatment. If the EIS and permit language are not completed in early 2013, they will miss the treatment window of April – June 2013 and be unable to treat until 2014. Kathy thinks it is highly unlikely that the permit will be done before 2014. Without the permit, the only means of control is mechanical, which may not be economically feasible.

#### PACIFIC NORTHWEST ECONOMIC REGION (PNWER) WINTER MEETING

Raquel Crosier reported that PNWER had their meeting in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. They proposed having a stakeholder meeting with Columbia River interest groups, possibly including irrigators, municipal water purveyors, and recreational boater groups, to discuss options for preventing an invasion of zebra and/or quagga mussels. They would also like to have a high-level meeting among the states to standardize decontamination methods so resources are better spent and more consistent. The Northwest Power and Conservation Council, a PNWER member, is planning to develop an updated economic analysis of impacts to assets if zebra/quagga mussels are found in the Columbia River and beyond. The summer PNWER meeting will be in Anchorage, Alaska in mid-July.

#### ZEBRA/QUAGGA MUSSEL DETECTION IN SPOKANE

WDFW Enforcement Officer, Carl Klein, reported that a commercially-hauled boat was stopped by Washington State Patrol on October 26, 2012, and found to be infested with mussels. The boat had been removed from Lake Michigan two days before entering Washington, and both zebra and quagga mussels were found on it.

The boat, heading to Lake Washington, was decontaminated in Spokane and then twice more in Seattle. This is the third time this hauler has been caught moving infested boats. Commercially-transported boats are required to stop at Ports of Entry, where State Patrol has been trained to conduct inspections. Council staff will forward the incident information to member agencies and contacts in other states to create better awareness of the recent event.

#### GREEN CRAB MEETING UPDATE

Allen Pleus reported that green crab were discovered on the south end of Vancouver Island. Given its close proximity and available habitat, there is significant concern about spread to the Puget Sound basin. Researchers in British Columbia will be monitoring the Vancouver Island population more closely to establish the infestation boundaries. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will determine the feasibility of putting together a monitoring program in Puget Sound. Kevin has been pulling information together from various hydrology studies and found the larvae can last 90 days before they settle somewhere. The hydrology is still in our favor because flow from the south of Vancouver Island mainly flows out to sea, but there are pulses that flow in. Kevin Anderson thinks British Columbia and Alaska

may be able to loan us some green crab traps. Allen requests that green crab be considered in the council's early detection program plan development.

#### TSUNAMI DEBRIS/BORDER ENFORCEMENT

Alaska and Hawaii are being hit with large debris, so we expect that recent storms will bring debris closer to our coast from mid-December onward. The Department of Fish and Wildlife received \$45,000 from the Washington emergency fund and NOAA for rapid response. They are purchasing a closed trailer and other items to assist with cleaning up large debris that is fouled with estuarine and marine species. They are working with the Departments of Ecology and Agriculture to get permits in place for possible emergency applications of chemicals and hot water to clean debris.

#### GYPSY MOTH UPDATE

Brad White followed up on a gypsy moth treatment planned for the Tukwila area in the spring. The Department of Agriculture is going to try a dual approach, a core treatment of BTK and, to cover an additional larger area, application of a pheromone that disrupts mating. The mating disruption only takes one application and lasts 10-11 weeks and would be applied after July 4. The BTK is applied in the spring. Decisions on federal funding will come in April. Sprays will be timed to avoid contact with people as much as possible. Public outreach will begin in January 2013.

#### MANUAL 18 UPDATE (SALMON RECOVERY)

Wendy Brown discussed how salmon restoration work could be a pathway for invasive species to enter streams. A workgroup of council members and Recreation and Conservation Office staff was created to look at the problem. They decided the best way to address this pathway is to add a question to manual 18 that project sponsors would need to answer during the grant process. The council submitted a question to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) for approval at the last meeting. The SRFB approved, and it will now be part of the application process for future grants. Wendy recommends the council continue to identify other processes changes to prevent invasive species. Please submit ideas for council review.

#### OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL (OISC) INVASIVE SPECIES SUMMIT

Wendy Brown gave an update on the OISC summit. She reported that it was well attended with a diverse group of people, which included a panel of the directors from the Oregon Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Quality, Fish and Wildlife, and Forestry and the Oregon State Marine Board. The council provided them with questions how invasive species affect their agencies and what support the agencies needed from the OISC. There were breakout sessions on funding, coordination, and other grants, the results of which will be summarized in a report. Kevin Anderson suggests we have a similar summit here. Bill Tweit asked council members to send summit planning ideas to Wendy.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rob Cavanaugh recommends the council read a book called "Worlds Atlas of Sea Grasses." There is a chapter written by a University of Washington professor about eel grass and the two types found in Washington State. He says studies show many benefits to both, as they both create a nursery for many invertebrates and vertebrates. State law protects them. Japanese eelgrass is a problem for shellfish growers, but only because it prevents them from maximizing profits. He feels that chemical control is not the answer and cites a history of toxicity in our state and past litigation. He proposes that we do not need chemicals to remove eelgrass as shown in California that the most effective way to control eelgrass is hot water. We already have waterfowl eating the eelgrass, and they are already helping to control it. In addition, the mechanical work to harvest clams removes the eelgrass, so there is no need for chemicals. He asks why Willapa Bay clams are poisoned with cadmium. He offered to loan the book to the council.

Ross Barkhurst, Washington Waterfowl Association, lives on Willapa Bay where he hunts, clams, and fishes. He feels shellfish growers should be able to spray their own beds, but not spray public lands. He is concerned that the Weed Board is not showing those limitations. He feels the risk assessment is one sided

and has fatal flaws. Four of the six bird species on Willapa bay are below management numbers. He tried to give the Department of Fish and Wildlife his wigeon sample data but says the data were not included in the information used in the risk assessment. Wigeons and other birds eat Japanese eelgrass. This is the best year in monitoring history, and the numbers are too low. What is going to happen in a bad year? He shared a suggested reading list that he would like the council to review. He says Willapa Bay has not recovered from Spartina spraying. He is concerned about cumulative effects of spray programs and how one has not been reviewed before another begins.

## **BREAK**

### **WDFW INVASIVE SPECIES LEGISLATION**

At the last meeting, Allen Pleus provided draft invasive species legislation to the council. Since then, Allen has met with the Washington Boating Alliance and others to get feedback on it. The only area of significant concern is at checkpoints, with whether an officer has to witness the crime. The authorized representative needs to be able to request assistance in stopping the vehicles that do not stop at checkpoints, which requires legislative authority.

The next step is to send comments and revisions to the Office of the Code Reviser. The bill does not have Office of Financial Management (OFM) approval yet because it is not agency-request legislation. Mike said that we need to find a way to see if the legislative proposals can be supported fiscally as well. Bill Tweit said that statutory authority alone is important to address with the legislature. There are also funding needs that could be addressed by the legislature – if not this year, then next.

### **DISCUSSION:**

- The legislation as written does a good job of classifying species but does not discuss fiscal impact.
- The Legislature has no appetite for new spending, but a placeholder could be put in the request to look at funding later.
- With the current Japanese tsunami debris issue, this is good timing for invasive species legislation. The council may not have that sort of opening in the next legislative season.
- The Washington Boating Alliance is looking at derelict vessel fees to cover things so they are not always footing the bill. The big question is what is fair? If we put a fiscal price on this, cost may become the target rather than the authority language, which is more important.
- The council's role in the proposed legislation has been reviewed and is acceptable.
- Some agencies may not be able to show support until this is vetted by OFM, but the council can say that the bill is responsive to our state needs.

### **RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE (RCO) COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

Susan Zemek, Communications Manager at the RCO, discussed the communication plan she has written for the RCO. It is for the whole agency, but needs more specific invasive species information and planning.

The first goal of the plan affects the council the most. It is the need to address “Why should the public care?” or “Why are invasive species important?” We can take the key messages we want to share and use them throughout our communication strategy. We can also have each agency on the council spread the council messaging through their media outlets too. We might want to create a new Facebook page and other media blogs and social networking tools, and then stakeholders can help us to spread the message. We will ask partners to share information with their constituents too.

Susan's goal is to maintain a brand as an exemplary agency and work with staff to make sure they have all the tools they need and are aware of the current issues. Susan shared a 5-year timeline with the council and asked what 3 to 5 things are most urgent to the council?

## DISCUSSION:

- The biggest message is the impact of invasive species on our natural resources and how it affects the things people value. This is good timing with current tsunami and flying carp headlines. Once we show why we care, it is important to show that the council is working on it.
- The council needs to talk about the impact to agriculture and maritime industries. We also need to discuss impacts to infrastructure (e.g., dams for energy).
- We should emphasize the variety of stakeholders represented by the council. Currently the council has a website, hotline, and giveaway materials, and members willing to go out and address the public as part of outreach. We need a clear strategic message when attending PNWER and other events so we have a more clear voice and can attend more functions.
- This board has much more need to engage with the public, but with only one staff member in the office you can only do so much. If other council members assist with spreading the message, we use more websites and do much more.
- We could do more public service announcements out of Seattle stations. Susan says there is opportunity, but they are not often viewed by many because they are aired late at night.
- One main message is that we are a hub of information and that we are also a main source to raise concern if a group feels it is needed.
- Two key points are “why it is important” and “creating a culture of caring” in industry. We are also fighting the fatalistic question of “why bother” when these things seem to happen anyway. We need to find a way to address that fatalistic attitude.

## MANAGEMENT OF NEW ZEALAND MUD SNAIL INFESTATIONS IN KING COUNTY

Kit Paulson and Paul Bucich, shared a presentation about the New Zealand mud snail infestations in King County. Mud snails were first found at Thornton Creek and are now found in Kelsey Creek. The current populations are well established and appear to have been there for some time. Kit and Paul have worked with Dr. Olden’s lab at University of Washington (UW) and learned that the mud snails are in Lake Washington, as well.

Seattle started decontamination procedures with pumps, brushes, and formula 409. Where they are finding mud snails are in places where they have been transported by people. Kit’s first response was “is it hopeless?” Kelsey creek is their number one salmon recovery area and they have spent more than \$3 million of public funding on recovery alone in this area. There is \$12 million in salmon recovery funding in Lake Washington, and the match funding is \$40 million.

How can we prevent the mud snails from spreading even further? Paul says they checked and no one else is monitoring the King County infestation. There was a huge lack of understanding by water system organizations. He spent time working with public and private sectors and asked what people knew about New Zealand mud snails. Currently the professional communities that should know about these things and be using decontamination procedures have little knowledge and are only working to prevent weeds. The larger groups have decontamination procedures but not for mud snails.

Kit and Paul reviewed our 2008 Invasive Species Council Strategic Plan. They were glad we recognized that local agencies cannot handle this alone, and that it is a critical issue in our state. The council has access to resources that local agencies do not. They feel we need to take another look at the New Zealand mud snail on our priority plan. They want the council to look at gaps and find efficiencies. They showed a slide show of the process they are going through since they have found mud snails, and the steps that have happened up to the present. One troublesome finding is the amount of field visits that happen throughout the process. By the time anyone gets to the permit process, it is too late to prevent the spread of mud snails because several field visits have already happened. HPAs are only on streams with known infestations. Contractors (without training) begin coming in for field visits before construction begins, then at the beginning of construction fieldwork the HPA kicks in. There are no rules about where

equipment and supplies come from and decontamination that should happen in between transit. Long-term monitoring involves fieldwork again. We need people to act as though every stream is infested.

Kit and Paul also think that code language for every city and county needs to be created to have consistency on all public and private projects. Outreach must go out to professional organizations and consultants. Decontamination procedures need to be finalized for every agency and municipality. They would like to see standardized equipment for decontamination. Stopping the spread is our best tool. We do not have good methods to eradicate mud snails once they are here, and they are a problem in stream restoration for salmon recovery. They ask that WSDOT look into the mud snail problem specifically because so many groups look to WSDOT for direction. King County has already had to turn equipment away from clean streams because it was dirty or had been somewhere else previously. They feel it is wrong that professionals do not have the information needed to know how to prevent the spread of invasives. It is time to change the norms for working in streams. Education is the key.

#### DISCUSSION:

- Unfunded mandates are a big problem in counties. The funding needs are huge.
- There are some simple things we can do, avoid going in streams when possible. Do basic cleaning after and look for snails while you are there.
- Prevention is very important, as is changing professional behavior. It is time to incorporate prevention as common sense regular procedures.
- With enough education, we can contain the problem. The U.S. Forest Service is already addressing invasive species in all projects.

#### **LUNCH**

#### **BASELINE ASSESSMENT PROJECT, PHASE 2**

Mike Leech discussed progress made on Phase 2 baseline assessment. At the last meeting, the online survey was discussed. Since then it has been developed and sent out to the chosen list. A 3-page fact sheet was also created to give the informational background. The factsheet told about the 15 priority species. We are still in the information gathering stage but 75 people have already responded to the online survey, which is a good response. Most people said they have data, but did not readily hand it over. Mike has had a lot of work following up. He is following up with weed boards and groups that are known to have information. Mike shared a slide show of his findings so far and shared the ESA website showing the project and where data will be stored. In March 2013, and again in June or July 2013, they will have workgroup meetings. They expect to have results for the council in Fall 2013. Mike will be posting information about species on web mapping tools so we can look for data gaps and areas of concern.

#### **FUTURE PROJECTS**

##### PILOT EARLY DETECTION PROJECT

Wendy Brown is working to hire an intern from Evergreen to look at what is monitoring efforts are already happening in Puget Sound and how an invasive species piece can be added into existing efforts. After hiring the intern, she wants to pull together a workgroup to help scope and plan the project. This could lead to a lot of future tools and help with much broader issues, like response. Perhaps we could integrate citizen science for early detection.

##### APP DEVELOPMENT

Wendy plans to hire a developer to create a mobile app that would create easier invasive species reporting, and would be a way to keep our data up to date on the baseline assessment. It will help with many other detection needs and would help with plant, animal, and insects. It would contain Class A weed information. It would be similar to EDDS maps, but not the same as WSDA is because they did not want to modify theirs to add animals.

DISCUSSION:

Alison is concerned that it may be confusing having two apps. Wendy has had little cooperation in combining the apps and felt it is was better to continue on our own. Lizbeth says the Pacific Northwest Invasive Plant Council has a contact that worked on the WSDA maps, and she will contact him to give Wendy feedback on creating the app. She would like to see more funding for a “strike team” for rapid response. Bill was concerned with the accuracy rate from citizen science work.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Pene Speaks moved to **APPROVE** the September 27, 2012 minutes. Kevin Anderson **SECONDED**. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the September 27, 2012 minutes.

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

The 2012 annual report was submitted to the Legislature. A copy is included in today’s council meeting packet.

INTEREST IN ADDING NEW MEMBERS

Bill Tweit shared that there have been people voicing interest in joining the council, especially from industry. We have been adding a seat about every other year, and so far everyone has brought real value to the council.

DISCUSSION:

- The council has long believed that it would be very valuable to have an industry representative on the council. When the weed board brought the nursery industry to their board it brought more balance to the process, and many positive changes were created because of it.
- There is a lot of industry out there; which industry are we talking about? There are many water-based industries alone. It would be valuable to have a PUD represented.
- There are space limitations to having us all sitting around one table, and there may be limitations to the size of the group for TVW recording too. It may be time to find a way to represent other groups in other ways, perhaps a second advisory group. This goes back to our communication plan and having good communication with stakeholders. Workgroups could be geographic or industry-specific. We could have multiple workgroups for different issues.
- We could get more of our information out on interest groups blogs or follow Oregon’s model, which has two master mailing lists – one for the council and one for the entire advisory group. Their advisory list is a very long list including many industry people. Oregon also has terms on their council and membership rotates often. You get more communication on issues when you are more inclusive. We could come up with a good list of why and how to broaden our group. We may be able to add a seat or too, as well as an advisory group.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m. Bill thanked everyone for attending. Next meeting is March 14, 2013, in the Natural Resources Building Room 172, Olympia, WA.

Invasive Species Approval:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Tweit, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date