

**INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL  
MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING**

December 2, 2010

Room 172, WA State Natural Resources Building  
Olympia, Washington

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**INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Clinton Campbell	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Chris Christopher, Chair	Department of Transportation
Rob Fimbel	Washington State Parks and Recreation
Alison Halpern	Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
Kathy Hamel	Department of Ecology
Tom McDowell	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pene Speaks	Department of Natural Resources
Pat Stevenson	Stillaguamish Tribe
Bill Tweit, Vice Chair	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Dick Wallace	NW Power and Conservation Council
Mary Toohey	Washington State Department of Agriculture
Lisa Younger	The Nature Conservancy
Vicki Yund	U.S. Customs and Border Protection

**GUESTS AND PRESENTERS:**

Kaleen Cottingham  
Jennifer Knauer  
Kari Stiles  
Chad Phillips  
Marshall Udo  
Teagan Ward  
Ray Willard

**STAFF:**

Wendy Brown  
Lori Lawrence  
Rachel LeBaron Anderson

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**CONVENE AND WELCOME:**

Bill Tweit was filling in for Chris Christopher and opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. with welcome announcements and a review of the agenda.

**HOT TOPICS:**

**FLATHEAD LAKE**

Allen Pleus of the Department of Fish and Wildlife received notice from Montana that there was a possible infestation of zebra or quagga mussels in Flathead Lake. Water samples taken from the lake appeared to contain zebra or quagga mussel veligers, so they sent the samples to other labs for verification. Two labs thought it might be a zebra or quagga mussel veliger but qualified their results, saying they looked smaller than they should. The samples were sent out for genetic analysis, however genetic science is still not exact and can have false negatives or positives. The lake will be re-sampled next July or August when water temperatures allow for spawning. Flathead Lake drains into Lake Pend Oreille and then into the Columbia River, so this is of regional concern. If zebra or quagga mussels are confirmed in Flathead Lake, Washington will offer dive services, and the Columbia River Basin Rapid Response Plan will be activated.

## MAPPING OF INSPECTION STATIONS

Ray Willard from the Washington State Department of Transportation shared a map of regional inspection stations.

### Discussion

- There was concern that if the map is online it might provide people with options to get around inspection stations. The point was raised that we already provide public notice of where inspections will be. Idaho posts inspection station locations on the Department of Agriculture web site.
- If inspections remain random, the public will remain vigilant. We have a uniformed officer at each weigh station, Idaho does not. Oregon is working to change their state constitution to allow mandatory checks. With state patrol currently trained, we have more checks in Washington than the map shows. Some citizens are also reporting fouled boats.
- Most infested vehicles are being caught on the main interstates. It was suggested that we notify the state the boats came from so that they know which areas need better coverage.

## SPARTINA UPDATE

Chad Phillips with the Washington Department of Agriculture gave an update on the statewide Spartina eradication program. The last few years have been very successful; Washington no longer has 9000 acres of Spartina as it did in 2003. It will take multiple years of effort to check and protect all of Puget Sound, but we have many partners involved in maintaining properties, even volunteer kayakers. Now we are trying to find plants instead of acres. More often people just dig up the individual plants, but on larger infestations Imazypr is still being used. This is a success story, but we are not done. With continued funding Spartina can be eradicated here. The West Coast Governors Association has signed commitments to have Spartina eradicated on the west coast by 2018. We had the first infestation found in Pierce County this year because they have stepped up survey efforts. Within a few years, the last infestation should be found. The council suggested this success story be given wider publicity. British Columbia has joined the commitment for eradication, but they have a very large infestation and it is hoped that the commitment will bring them an increase in funding.

## JAPANESE EELGRASS WORKSHOP

Alison Halpern from the State Weed Board reported on the current situation with Japanese eelgrass. Shellfish growers would like Japanese eelgrass listed as a class C weed and will propose it for the 2012 weed list. They feel it adversely affects their shellfish production. Agency scientists believe that Japanese eelgrass provides good bird habitat so it may not be detrimental and may even have benefits with other grasses in decline. A workshop was held in the fall to discuss the state of the science on Japanese eelgrass and how much is known about the ecological services it may provide. The main conclusion from that workshop is that there are not enough data yet to make a definitive 'good' or 'bad' statement about Japanese eelgrass. There will be more discussions in the coming year. Currently, Japanese eelgrass is protected by state and federal efforts, as it is grouped with the native eelgrass in policy. However, California has declared it a noxious weed.

## LAKE WHATCOM RESPONSE PLAN

Teagan Ward from the City of Bellingham said Bellingham has been tracking the situation with zebra/quagga mussels nationally and has realized how vulnerable Lake Whatcom is to an invasion. The lake is their drinking water reservoir and is open to boating. They are creating a prevention strategy and response plan now and working on education and outreach. They do not have funding for inspections and power washing but they are creating partnerships and working with marinas for education. They hope to have the plan out soon. This will be the first PUD invasive species plan in the state as far as she knows. The idea of closing the lake to boating is very controversial with so many homeowners on the lake, but they have looked at limiting the types of motors allowed on the lake. This will continue to be up for discussion. The northwest region of Washington is a popular area for boating.

Teagan recently attended the Minnesota/Wisconsin invasive species conference in St. Paul. She gathered contact information from planners who focus on terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. The Washington

Invasive Species Council was mentioned at the conference as a great example for our nation. Teagan brought her conference materials to share with the council.

#### KNOTWEED PREDICTIVE MODELING

Marshall Udo of the Washington Department of Agriculture gave a presentation on his work to predict sites of knotweed invasion. Marshall reviewed that the current cost of control is \$3,400 per year compared to a projected cost of \$150,000 per year in the future if knotweed is not controlled. The council said this is the first time they have seen a specific link between invasive species control and salmon recovery efforts. The tool would be helpful for salmon habitat, showing vulnerabilities and where survey and control efforts should be focused. This tool is cross-referenced with GIS known infestations and could be expanded far beyond knotweed with habitat managers.

#### NEW ZEALAND MUD SNAIL UPDATE

Allen Pleus of the Department of Fish and Wildlife said there is a response group looking at options for controlling the New Zealand mud snail infestation in Capitol Lake. They anticipate more drawdowns and freezes this winter. They are still reviewing data on saltwater in conjunction to the freezes – new data are showing exposure to saltwater may make snails more likely to die during a freeze.

#### DRAFT BASELINE ASSESSMENT REVIEW

Jennifer Knauer and Kari Stiles from Jones and Jones briefed the council on the status of the baseline assessment project. Jennifer brought a paper copy for review by the council. The assessment synthesizes the knowledge we have on the 15 of the council's priority species. They looked at how species were introduced, how they spread, and current knowledge about the species. The draft report includes 17 maps, and a catalog of over 100 maps that can be accessed online as a companion to the report. As part of the project, they created a database to catalog contacts and resources. The database will be provided to the council with the draft report and could be made available online.

Kari reviewed the sections of the report with the council by chapter and then reviewed the information by species, explaining the maps and spatial information. There are not enough spatial data from all the species to allow for a trend analysis among them, and timelines vary by species. Specific information is in the appendixes.

#### Discussion

- Change colors on the maps to allow for people with red/green color blindness.
- The maps support the narrative and should be looked at hand in hand. People will look at the map for a quick visual message, so it should say "more details are provided in the summary."
- Maps could be reviewed by counties. Data may not be included because they fall outside the Puget Sound Basin. Some gaps may remain because of lack of feedback and communication with data providers. Fixing that gap is a recommended improvement.
- How can the Puget Sound Partnership use this product?
- Kari will send invitations to the Google data site. The draft-report documents can be downloaded to your computer or just be viewed through Google.
- Wendy will collect council responses and pass them onto the consultants. Electronic response is best if page numbers are referenced.

#### **BREAK**

#### 2011 INVASIVE SPECIES LEGISLATION

Kaleen Cottingham shared an interesting article she read recently about using goats in parks to clean up knotweed.

#### STATUS OF BILLS, FUNDING FOR THE COUNCIL, STAKEHOLDER LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Our legislation is on hold, which is good when so many proposed bills are being declined by the Governor's office. If the council continues, it will likely be with no general funds. Kaleen has talked to Wendy Brown

about a “pass-the-hat” strategy. The council would likely be funded with donations and grants. The Governor’s budget will be released between December 14 - 17, 2010, so we should have an answer soon about whether or not we are extended and have any dedicated funds. Kaleen has asked if any of the current funding can be carried forward. It cannot. We do have some grants that do carry over. We have a very small budget.

The Governor’s staff advised the pass the hat strategy. It would be by interagency agreement. Many boards are funded that way. Kaleen is assuming any pass the hat commitments would be made for two years. Chris Christopher and Kaleen discussed spending authority.

Will we ask for more fees and funding in the supplemental budget, so pass the hat need only be for one year? Kaleen says we received feedback that our fee request for an emergency response fund was unfair and that we need to target more specific vectors such as ballast water fees. Stakeholders will need to be included in that discussion early on, so that we have support.

If the council gets a green light to continue, we can notify our stakeholders so they can rally for us with the Legislature. Some committee chairs have already offered sponsorship if we get over the hurdle of being continued.

## **LUNCH**

### **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Chris Christopher motioned for the council to approve the minutes. A few corrections were made by the council.

### **ACTION ITEMS: APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES**

Pene Speaks moved to **APPROVE** the September 9, 2010 minutes with the council corrections. Bill Tweit **SECONDED**. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the September 9, 2010 minutes with the council corrections.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT N/A**

### **EMERGENCY RESPONSE MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

Chris Christopher reviewed the handout with the council and made one correction to the wording (WISC changed to ISC principles). He asked the council for feedback on how we would write the MOU.

### **KEY ELEMENTS TO INCLUDE**

It needs to be broad enough to apply to any emergency. We need to have those taxonomies clearly stated enough to know who would take the lead; if it is Agriculture’s critter, than they are the lead agency, if it is Ecology’s algae then they are the lead agency. We need to define what would kick off the MOU response, it would not open for every time a species would be spotted, and only pertain to certain species.

Some council ideas included:

- Use the Columbia River Basin emergency response plan, look at legislative mandates and work from there.
- Use our strategic plan to decide what would trigger the MOU and use our priority species tool to define which species require rapid response.
- Use the incident command system as a starting point.

### **DRAFT INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE**

#### **DESIGN REVIEW**

Lori Lawrence introduced the information clearinghouse draft design. There is an inviting image on the front page that reminds people of the beauty of Washington and what we are looking to protect, but they also

considered adding pictures of kids pulling weeds or having multiple images running. They have been working with a consultant to develop content for the site and are working with DIS to create the design.

Wendy Brown clarified that the audience is the general public. The name WISE (Washington Invasive Species Education) came from students in a marketing class at The Evergreen State College that used our council as a case study for their class. The class shared many great ideas with Wendy, but since the council is in limbo right now, we are not sure which ideas we can move forward with it. The name WISE is something we can immediately move forward. We can also use it in catch phrases, "Get WISE, Be WISE."

### Discussion

- It is better to use a picture of a giant insect infestation or something like that will really get people's attention.
- A picture of what we are protecting needs to be tagged clearly with "Protecting Washington."
- Having people in the pictures makes a bigger impact of why we should care.
- The council liked the name "WISE" and likes having the technical information about the council and council activities separate from basic information for the general public.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is incorporating social media into their work, and Tom McDowell shared some good ideas about how it might be best used. It was recommended that we have a cell phone application that allows people to take a picture, record GIS coordinates, and send it to the council.
- With Twitter it is possible to "re-tweet" your last message if you do not have an update.
- Social Media can create workload because it creates an obligation to respond.
- News stories should be on the clearinghouse site not just on the council webpage.
- It is valuable to have the public be the eyes and ears, but we need a certain basic amount of information to avoid lookalike reports. Puget Sound Partnership is training volunteers so sightings and locations are more accurate. If you ask for reports, you have to follow up.
- There is value in getting people to begin looking. Even if they do not give accurate reports, at least they are aware of the problem. It provides a great educational opportunity.

## OTHER COUNCIL PROJECTS

### DECONTAMINATION PROTOCOL FOR AGENCIES

Ray Willard from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) reviewed the draft protocol, and Wendy Brown explained what the Natural Resource Cabinet was asking for in regards to a decontamination protocol. The Cabinet has asked the council to create a template so all agencies would be doing the same thing. Each agency has their own issues so we are creating more of a template of the obvious things to be done to prevent spreading invasive species when people are working out in the field. It is a delicate line between how much detail should be included without interfering with crews' work. The handout starts with basic gear and equipment and gives general guidelines. There are specification and standards for contract workers. One issue for WSDOT is certified weed free gravel; which should be mentioned in the protocol. They will send the draft out for review and work to incorporate any comments; this should be reviewed by field staff for feedback. Mowing crews are concerned that if the protocols are too stringent it will limit their ability to get the job done. There was concern with requiring hot water in places where it may not be available. The protocol should be at a level that makes sense but still allows agencies some flexibility in applying the rules. WSDOT is creating a new training manual for crews.

### Discussion

- Lysol is listed as a pesticide so we need to look at all decontamination with Ecology's rules in mind. The list is the best of what was found in the literature available.
- Should the protocols be a guideline or a requirement? The target of what we are trying to accomplish should be stated on the protocol.
- There should be better direction for seed management in the protocols.

- HACCP, (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Protocol) started for food control but is expanding to invasive species. Our protocols should go hand in hand with HACCP.
- The protocol should give agencies a starting point if they do not have one, but not take away from agencies that have something much further along in place.
- Remember this is a snapshot in time, the chemicals and uses are always evolving.
- Some guidelines need to be clear for example if you do not freeze it for 4 hours it will not die.
- This would help some tribes as long as it did not go overboard in dictating what must be done.
- It would go to county weed boards and likely be passed on from there.
- Cities would appreciate some guidelines too.
- We should call them “minimum best practices” and allow agencies to adopt them, or add to them.
- This document could be put on the information clearinghouse website along with the protocols. A decontamination selector tool on the website would be more useful than asking that people look through forms for protocols.
- We must build in some sort of accountability so that at least training goals are met, and that decontamination stations are being used.

INVASIVE ANIMAL FIELD GUIDE

Wendy Brown showed some samples of the new field guide that Lori Lawrence has been designing. These field guides will go out to county weed boards to carry in trucks and out into the field. They are thinking of printing 200, these should be available in about a month. Lori Lawrence asked for feedback from the council members:

- These can also be available for printing on the website.
- The field guides could also be adapted into a phone application.
- More forest insects should be included so that forestry has more coverage in the field guide.
- The council likes that we are ordering a specific amount for a specific audience so these will not just get stored somewhere.

NEXT STEPS

Wendy Brown announced dates for 2011 council meetings. Bill Tweit says the February 10, 2011 meeting needs to be moved to Feb 17.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m. Chris Christopher thanked everyone for attending.

Next meeting:

February 17, 2011

Natural Resources Building

Room 172, Olympia, Washington

Invasive Species Approval:

  
Chris Christopher, Chair

3/14/11  
Date