

WASHINGTON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

December 4, 2014

Natural Resources Building, Room 172
Olympia, Washington

Washington Invasive Species Council Members Present:

Bill Tweit, Chair	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pene Speaks, Vice Chair	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Ray Willard	Washington State Department of Transportation
Lizbeth Seebacher	Washington State Department of Ecology
Alison Halpern	Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
Kevin Anderson	Puget Sound Partnership
Rob Fimbel	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
Pat Stevenson	Stillaguamish Tribe
Lisa Younger	The Nature Conservancy
Diane Cooper	Taylor Shellfish, Pacific Shellfish Growers Association
Curtis Tanner	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Doug Daoust	U.S. Forest Service
Vicki Yund	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
LT Eric Young	U.S. Coast Guard
Clinton Campbell	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Rob Pedersen	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Guests and Presenters:

Allen Pleus	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Aquatic Invasive Species Unit
Mike Leech	Spatial Development International, LLC

Recreation and Conservation Office Staff:

Wendy Brown	Policy Director
Wendy Loosle	Board Liaison

Opening and Welcome

Bill Tweit, Chair, opened the meeting at 9:08 a.m. with welcome, announcements, facility logistics, safety information, introductions, and a review of the agenda.

Kaleen Cottingham, Director of the Recreation and Conservation Office, provided information about upcoming staff transitions. Raquel Crosier has been hired as the new Executive Coordinator, beginning in

January. Director Cottingham thanked Wendy Brown, acknowledging her years of service and leadership on the council.

Chair Tweit also informed the council that this will be Doug Daoust's last meeting, as he is retiring this December after 42 years of service with the U.S. Forest Service. Mr. Daoust spoke to his positive experiences with the council, noting his esteem for the council's collaborative efforts and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to be a member. He reminded the council of his recommendation that Shawna Bautista assume his position on the council. Ms. Bautista serves the U.S. Forest Service in the Invasive Species Unit, and sits on the Oregon State invasive species council as well.

Hot Topic Reports

Item 1: Ringold New Zealand Mud Snail Update / Allen Pleus

Mr. Pleus of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) updated the council on the recent discovery of New Zealand Mud Snail (NZMS) on the banks of the Columbia River near the Ringold Hatchery. Tests indicate a presence of Mud Snail, although no adults were found during a site inspection. WDFW believes the Mud Snails may have been introduced through cross-contamination. WDFW has protocols to limit the spread of NZMS during hatchery fish transport which are followed by staff at Ringold Hatchery. Thorough tests revealed that the hatchery fish were not contaminated, and WDFW proceeded with stocking lakes. To limit potential contamination, WDFW is strategizing ways to test these fish and establish protocols for testing and release, e.g. filtered transport water to minimize sediment debris that may harbor juvenile NZMS. WDFW continues to strategize ways to decontaminate the hatchery facility.

Ms. Cooper noted that other fisheries in the country are managing similar issues, and contacts at these sites could be valuable informational resources for problem solving. Mr. Pleus agreed, sharing that WDFW collaborates with Idaho (Christina Moffet), observing operational models to ensure facility protection.

Mr. Anderson asked about procedures for other hatcheries. Mr. Pleus explained that the facilities have been notified, but education could be enhanced and protocols could be more consistent.

Jack Havens, citizen, expressed his concern for Capital Lake. Noticed on Blue Slough, near Chehalis, a sign that shared infestation of NZMS but no restriction for access. Mr. Pleus explained that Capital Lake is containable, despite open access surrounding the lake, it is easy to monitor. DES manages the lake, and controls the access points. At other locations, multiple access points are difficult to monitor. WDFW continues to work with DNR to strategize ways to minimize cross-contamination. Chair Tweit added the complications of funding and resources to manage issues; Ms. Speaks also spoke to the enforcement issues that DNR faces.

Item 2: Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) State Watercraft Passport / Allen Pleus

Mr. Pleus shared a prototype of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) passport booklet. Regional discussions were held to discuss the concept, however due to funding limitations other states declined to develop a regional pass. For Washington, the passport also serves as a communication and outreach tool. The passport includes policies, tips, state contact information, and resources for users to easily maintain compliance with state regulations and requirements as they pertain to invasive species. The passport also contains state contact information for easy reference. The initial printing is limited to 20,000, and Mr. Pleus expects them to be ready for distribution by tomorrow. WDFW will begin outreach in boater-heavy locations, focusing on registered boaters.

Chair Tweit noted that the passport is a collaborative effort supported by the Legislature, and serves as a key tool for invasive species prevention.

Item 3: Rulemaking to Implement ESSB 6040 (Regional Passport) / Allen Pleus

During the last Legislative session, ESSB 6040 was passed. The bill including mandatory rule-making, and WDFW has been working to complete this process. They are using a phased approach, beginning with Clean/Drain/Dry provisions. During the rule-making process, they are addressing implementation issues and respective policy decisions that can be consistently applied. WDFW is planning discussions with stakeholders, agency representatives, industry leaders and others in January.

Item 4: Zebra/Quagga Mussel Perimeter Defense Initiative / Allen Pleus

A handout with information about this WDFW initiative is included in the council materials. The focus is on keeping the Columbia Basin mussel-free and limiting potential contamination risks. Cross-state contamination is a recognized threat, so policies that resolve inter-state coordination issues are at the fore-front of the discussion.

Mr. Pedersen suggested adding a reference to the WA Invasives app within the Washington Watercraft Passport prior to the next print run.

Item 7: 2014 Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Winter Meeting / Bill Tweit

***presented out of turn.*

Chair Tweit shared that the Pacific Northwest Economic Region's (PNWER) meetings continue to be a good forum for regional coordination. PNWER is an intergovernmental and international collaborative effort to address economic well-being and quality of life while maintaining and enhancing the natural environment. The organization also maintains focus on perimeter and border issues as they relate to invasive species. Goals include coordinating actions and advocacy across various entities and promoting better communication between state, federal, local and sovereign governments as well as stakeholder groups and lawmakers. PNWER will be devoting more staff to support this work, recognizing the need for an investment in prevention.

The next PNWER webinar is open to the public and will be held January 21, 2015. A registration link is available on the Invasive Species Council website.

PNWER will continue to hold a sessions with an invasive species focus at annual/winter meetings, providing opportunities connect with others and engage legislators.

Ms. Cooper shared questions from WISC industry panel. There are several coordinating bodies with individual action plans contributing to overlapping efforts. Where should the implementation occur, and what does coordination of these plans look like? How does the council coordinate with other entities on various issues, i.e. NZMS, dreissenids, etc.?

Shaun Seaman, Chelan County Public Utilities District and industry panel member, inquired about the role and responsibilities of the industry panel, specifically with regards to implementing work plans, engaging legislators, coordinating with other states, and addressing federal guidance measures. Should efforts have a broader reach beyond the industry panel, or be focused on their respective industries?

Chair Tweit responded, stating that this was a topic of discussion at PNWER and shared their suggestion that they coordinate a regional coalition. Also, PNWER suggested convening annually with those that hold enforcement authority over inspection protocols and hold multi-state discussions in order to strategically share resources. Moderate coordination occurs at the regional level, although international participation is lacking.

Chair Tweit sees it as the role of the council to continue to seek collaborative solutions, and looks to PNWER to support this goal. Ms. Cooper asked about the potential leading role of PNWER, noting the importance of clear leadership to the work. Ms. Brown noted that at the federal level, the council has been engaging legislators as an ad-hoc western states group. A single leadership role still needs to be formalized, and PNWER is well-positioned to assume this responsibility. Mr. Pleus agreed that PNWER is better positioned to address multiple levels of policy coordination. There is an emergency notification and response process, which could be coordinated at other levels.

A handout was provided that describes PNWER activities and recent meeting. More information about PNWER is available at <http://www.pnwer.org/>.

Item 5: Ballast Water Program Enforcement Actions / Allen Pleus

WDFW has had the authority to issue civil penalties through the ballast water program since 2009. Staff continue to assess current rules and implementation processes, including penalty issuance and appeals. This is not a common issue, and noncompliance is rare.

Item 6: Tsunami Debris Update / Allen Pleus

Winter season typically brings instances of larger debris to coastline areas. At the June meeting, Mr. Pleus shared information about forty cases of tsunami debris and large skiffs discovered along the shorelines in Washington and Oregon. Mr. Pleus anticipates similar trends this coming winter season, and intends to hire a full-time employee beginning in January. The new staff member will be responsible for responding to debris sightings, identifying potential invasive species, assessing the situation, and cleaning up the site.

Item 8: Changes to the 2015 Weed List and New Outreach Materials / Alison Halpern

Alison Halpern, Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board, provided updates on the board's activities. Effective January 2, 2015, new additions to the 2015 Weed List include Ravenna grass (*Saccharum ravennae*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), jubata grass (*Cortaderia jubata*), and Italian arum (*Arum italicum*).

The board received funding to prepare and distribute non-invasive pollinator-friendly seed packets which will be available to the public within the next few months. The board is excited to provide seed packets during education and outreach with the general public and relevant industries.

Chair Tweit noted that the seed packets would be useful for burned areas, even at a small scale. The Washington Department of Agriculture is coordinating with other agencies to determine restoration efforts in the recent Carlton complex of fires, as well as in Okanogan County. To support this work, the agency requested funding approval from the Office of Financial Management for recession on private lands.

Item 9: State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Checklist / Lizbeth Seebacher

Lizbeth Seebacher, Washington State Department of Ecology, shared information about recent updates to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist (a copy was included in the council materials). A new addition and rule change was added to checklist for invasive species (Item 4-E).

While it is the responsibility of the affected agency to address reported issues, recent experiences have demonstrated the need for coordinated efforts and broader awareness of the checklist. Pat Stevenson added that there is a public appeal process for those that would like to address a project or issue.

Chair Tweit explained that the checklist is shared in programmatic areas across agencies, demonstrated to be effective in distributing information. He proposed that the checklist addition of invasive species be included in the council's annual report.

Item 10: Western Regional Panel (WRP) Meeting / Kevin Anderson

Kevin Anderson, Puget Sound Partnership, provided an update from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, sharing a [map of the regional panels](#) of the U.S. Federal Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Task Force. The regional panels coordinate among states and advise the ANS Task Force, which is comprised of federal natural resources agencies and tribal representatives. Washington State is part of the Western Regional Panel (WRP), along with 19 other states and industry representatives. In some cases, states may overlap and participate in multiple panels.

In September, the WRP joined the Gulf and South Atlantic Panel (GSAP) in Texas. The two-day meeting provided an opportunity for state caucus and agency members to participate in program coordination. The first day focused largely on state and federal issues. The second day focused on the business aspects of the ANS Task Force and WRP.

The WRP's main issues dealt with funding shortfalls that affect travel and meeting participation, and they submitted a request to the ANS Task Force for financial support.

The WRP quagga/zebra mussel action plan (QZAP) also lacks sufficient funding. WRP recommended that federal partners of ANSTF support the following high priority actions to prevent and control the spread of quagga and zebra mussels: 1) increasing state and interstate capacity to address invasive mussels; 2) prevention such as mandatory inspection and decontamination, effective protocols for these, establish strong, consistent law enforcement programs in each western state; 3) early-detection monitoring programs for all western water jurisdictions and creating a rapid response fund; 4) focus on containing and controlling existing populations; and 5) adopting consistent outreach messaging and enhance coordination of education and outreach efforts.

The WRP and GSAP also requested that the ANS Task Force update the economic impact study of aquatic invasive species by 2020, as it was last updated in 2000. They proposed seeking out alternative funding strategies to provide additional support for state ANS plans. Ultimately, Congress will need to reauthorize funding for these efforts.

The final request came from both Mississippi and the WRP, proposing that the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) continue to fund and maintain a database for ANS.

Mr. Anderson also shared that the WRP recognized the need for clear leadership to coordinate the work, and are interested in assuming this role. However, they acknowledged the capabilities of PNWER and agreed that their inclusion of Canadian provinces is important. Although they are part of the WRP as well, it is often difficult for the international representatives to join meetings in the U.S.

Item 11: National Invasive Species Council (NISC) Climate Change Report / Kevin Anderson

Mr. Anderson provided an update on the December 2014 [report](#) prepared by an ad-hoc working group for invasive species and climate change for the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) and the ANS Task Force: *Bioinvasions in a Changing World: A Resource on Invasive Species-Climate Change Interactions for Conservation and Natural Resource Management*.

The report assesses integration of climate change, invasive species, and natural resource management, identifying available models for general use and database/information sources with great emphasis on realistic goals.

Mr. Anderson shared that advocates are hoping to align the report's goals with White House priorities on climate change as the intended audience is national, state, and local natural resource and AIS managers.

Break 10:32 a.m. – 10:43 a.m.

Item 12: U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Update / Vicki Yund

Vicki Yund reported that cases of H5N2 (highly pathogenic avian flu) virus were confirmed in southern British Columbia. Although the authorities are unsure of virus sub-type, it has already led to poultry death. The CBP remains vigilant while awaiting guidance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Ms. Yund shared news that Governor Bullock of Montana signed an [executive order](#) to establish the Montana Invasive Species Council. Chair Tweit responded positively, noting that he would ask the new council's executive coordinator, Raquel Crosier, to lead outreach and engagement efforts.

Through a formal request from the Seattle Field Office, CBP headquarters has added wood packing materials used in international trade to a checklist for the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT), a program that grants certain privileges to trusted importers. Wood packing material such as pallets and crates, commonly used in international trade, is supposed to be fumigated or heat-treated to eliminate pests, but often is found to be infested by wood-boring pests and the cargo must be returned to the country of origin. The added checklist measures call attention to this issue for some of the largest importers to the United States.

Ms. Yund provided information about a recently published article that is available on the CBP website: [CBP vs. Forest Prime Evil](#). The article addresses invasive insects often found in wood packaging material that are detrimental to timber and forests,

Previously, shipments from Canada were considered low risk for invasive species, but recently high volumes of Asian cargo have been coming to British Columbia by vessel, then entering the U.S. by rail at inland locations such as International Falls, Minnesota. Targeting rail shipments to find invasive species is tricky for CBP, because the information about products and time to inspect them are limited. The Prince Rupert Port Authority of British Columbia and CRB resolved this issued by agreeing to share the ocean manifest information, which includes greater detail than the rail manifest and is available well before the cargo arrives at the border. The success of this effort at International Falls has been shared with other northern border rail ports, resulting in increased interceptions of noxious weeds and invasive insects.

Item 13: Final AIS Decontamination Protocol, WSDOT / Ray Willard

Ray Willard provided an update on the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) maintenance operations as they related to AIS prevention (a handout was included with the council materials). The prevention guidelines mainly serve as a strategy for highway projects, focusing on New Zealand Mud Snail, and educating staff on potential AIS threats. The guidelines include a checklist and lay out protocols for addressing issues as they arise in the field or when preparing for projects.

Business practices are changing at WSDOT due to ongoing challenges. WSDOT is facing an upcoming loss in staff due to retirement in the next 3-5 years. Unfortunately most are positions of leadership in maintenance ranks. With regards to vegetation management and noxious weeds, WSDOT updated mowing policies which reduce and redirect energy to long-term integration of plants that control growth

of weeds. The new goal is weed-free maintenance, and not necessary clean cut roadside. This may require letting some roadsides grow while the paradigm shift takes place, including some public outreach and education. Lastly, field staff will receive iPads with enhanced tracking apps for real-time reference data.

Mr. Pleus commended Mr. Willard and WSDOT for the work accomplished.

Briefings

Item 14: WDFW 2015 Proposed Legislation / Allen Pleus

Mr. Pleus provided a history of the proposed legislation, originally intended to include a number of user fees with the implementation of ESSB 6040. After discussing alternate funding sources and conducting stakeholder visits to assess feasibility, the request was submitted to the Governor's Office and ultimately withdrawn.

WDFW need funds to maintain its services in the 2015-2016 biennium. WDFW has received opposition to proposals that include user fees and needs support to move forward on their recommendations. WDFW is considering the establishment of a funding task force to be operated under the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and through the council. WDFW is seeking assistance developing a "fair" budget proviso that will help bridge funding and maintain state rights while aligning with other state, regional and federal initiatives.

Pat Stevenson suggested modeling the funding strategy after Idaho. Chair Tweit added that Washington states marine invasive species issues make it unique and not comparable to Idaho. Mr. Pleus replied that in previous sessions there were funding options through AIS non-motorized vehicles and watercraft, but there were issues with a three-year implementation plan and general fund gaps. WDFW continues to hear opposition from boating industry which feels that alternate funding options should not disproportionately target boaters. To resolve these challenges, WDFW would like to establish a forum where various options can be considered by the appropriate state, federal, local and sovereign government agencies as well as non-profit and industry representatives.

Chair Tweit informed the council that RCO is open to suggestions, but any solution will be dependent upon resources available. The proposal to support WDFW is open to council consideration. Chair Tweit agreed to send periodic updates to the council regarding funding challenges.

Item 15: WA Invasives 2.0 App Upgrades / Mike Leech

Mike Leech provided an update on the upgrade to the WA Invasives app, and the companion web app. Some updates to the web app were demonstrated, including feature and functionality updates.

The greatest challenge was integrating the baseline assessment data. The solution will include two phases that involve collection, identification, and tabulation of the data to prepare a report and express the information accurately in the web app. The web app will include a user authentication module, and include crowd-sourced and baseline assessment data. Some data points are missing, and optimization testing is underway to ensure browser compatibility. The app will allow Washington counties to self-assess the data reported in various timeframes. The goal is to create publically accessible data that users can tailor to their individual needs.

Further enhancements of information and tracking features include the ability to change to different base maps, allow import to GIS programs, turn on/off baseline assessment data versus new site observations,

and sort the newest reports to the top of the list. By the end of December, the filter and reporting tools will be enhanced by adding "Select All" and "Remove All" buttons (which will reduce time in filtering). Enhanced features will allow ease of import into GIS programs.

LT Eric Young noted that adding decontamination stations would be helpful. Mr. Leech acknowledged this, stating that contextual data is easy to add.

Updates to iOS app include a new design format for iOS 8, incorporating the priority invasive species, larger images and texts, enhanced photo selection feature to access phone photos or take new photos, and the ability to select "Unknown" from the report siting selection lists. The GPS pin placement in the app was also updated, and users can even move the pin to be more accurate. The data is supported offline, so users can wait to submit reports.

Mr. Leech shared that the team is targeting the iOS first, and the Android release for v2 by the end of December. Both apps will be available in the Apple store and Google Playstore, respectively.

Chair Tweit inquired about the necessary resources that the council should be prepared for to maintain app. Mr. Leech recommended a balance between his team and RCO IT staff during the transition, and when RCO IT can assume the full responsibility then they could continue to manage the app. On-call support and maintenance would be a good idea for administrative users to address issues.

Chair Tweit asked about long-term utility of the app. Mr. Leech suggested that user analytics be available through the app to provide information about the number of users, visits, etc. The success of the app may need to be supported by public outreach and awareness.

Chair Tweit suggested a work session to discuss outreach and dissemination strategies. Ms. Brown agreed, noting this as a future agenda item for the March 2015 meeting. Information about the app may also be a resource for Margaret Tudor of the Pacific Education Institute, as her presentation at September's meeting included a request to remain apprised of updates. For text/feature updates, scheduled maintenance is recommended.

Discussions and Decisions

Item 16: Council Business / Bill Tweit

No additions or corrections were requested for the previous meetings minutes from the September 11, 2014 meeting.

Action Item: Approval of September Minutes

Pene Speaks moved to APPROVE the September 2014 minutes. Vicki Yund SECONDED. The Council unanimously APPROVED the September 2014 minutes.

Chair Tweit provided an update on the new executive coordinator, Raquel Crosier, who will begin on January 2, 2015. The council website and contact information will be updated at that time.

Public Comments

Mark Taylor, Trout Unlimited, shared his gratitude for the work of council and expressed interest in holding a seat. Chair Tweit agreed to consider his proposal with the executive committee during their next meeting and bring their recommendations to the council.

Next Steps

The council discussed potential dates for meetings in 2015. Proposed dates included the following:

- March 12
- June 18
- September 24
- December 3

RCO will send Outlook reminders to council members.

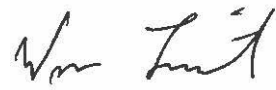
Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Next meeting

March 12, 2015
Natural Resources Building, Room 172
Olympia, WA

Minutes approved by:



Bill Tweit, Chair

March 12, 2015

Date