

INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING

March 14, 2013

Room 172, WA State Natural Resources Building
Olympia, Washington

WASHINGTON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL (WISC) MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kevin Anderson	Puget Sound Partnership
Clinton Campbell	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Chris Christopher	Washington State Department of Transportation
Raquel Crosier	Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Rob Pedersen	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Lizbeth Seebacher	Washington Department of Ecology
Pene Speaks, Vice Chair	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Pat Stevenson	Stillaguamish Tribe
Bill Tweit, Chair	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Brad White	Washington Department of Agriculture
Lisa Younger	The Nature Conservancy
Vicki Yund	U.S. Customs and Border Protection

GUESTS AND PRESENTERS:

Sarah Gage
Mike Leech
Nathan Lubliner
Allen Pleus
Ray Willard

STAFF:

Kathleen Barkis
Wendy Brown
Molly Sullivan

CONVENE AND WELCOME:

Bill Tweit opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. with welcome announcements and facility safety information, introductions, and a review of the agenda.

Bill welcomed our newest council member, Rob Pedersen, from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Rob is replacing Andrea LaTier on the council. Rob's background is in zoology, with extensive experience on EPA's dive team in the Environmental Assessment Office. He works on water resources and permitting issues.

Bill also introduced Molly Sullivan, the council's intern. She is a first year's masters student at The Evergreen State College and a graduate of Washington State University.

HOT TOPICS:

Japanese Tsunami Marine Debris – Misawa Dock and Invasive Species

Allen Pleus reported that he made two visits to the beached Japanese dock on the Olympic Peninsula. At the first visit, the field crew found that wave action had removed about 75% of encrusted organisms on the dock. Oregon State University sampled and identified the species present on the dock. All species were removed, and then it became a large debris removal issue. The dock was demolished on site and then the pieces were helicoptered out.

Funding for the response and dock removal came from federal sources, most likely from the funds donated by the Japanese government. The question was asked if there will be follow up invasive species surveys along the national park coast, and the answer was that nothing formal is in the works.

Marine Biofouling Threat Assessment

Using grant funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, WDFW hired Portland State University to conduct a study of the role of vessel biofouling as a vector for marine invasions in Washington. The first project report will be completed by the end of March, at which time it will be available for review.

Green Crab Update

As was reported at the September 2012 meeting, a population of invasive green crab is growing on Vancouver Island. There is concern that the population will spread into Puget Sound. A workgroup has been formed to look at options for monitoring in Puget Sound. Currently students at the University of Washington are identifying trap locations, but there are not enough traps available for effective monitoring. WDFW does not have funding available at this time to purchase additional traps.

Japanese Eelgrass Permit Update

Nathan Lubliner from the Washington Department of Ecology reported to the council that Ecology is working closely with shellfish growers in Washington to write the environmental impact statement for the Japanese eelgrass control permit. He anticipates that the permit will be available for treatment in April through June 2014. The permit will cover the use of Imazamox on commercial clam beds in Willapa Bay only. There will be a Japanese eelgrass science and policy forum in June 2013 to discuss the state of the science and implications for policy making.

2013 NISAW National Invasive Species

Wendy Brown traveled to Washington, DC in late February 2013 with a team of invasive species experts from Oregon, California, Nevada, and Arizona. The team had a productive week visiting 14 Congressional offices and discussing invasive species threats in our region and a few options for federal policy. One option discussed was the listing of quagga mussel as an injurious species under the Lacey Act. Another was the need for greater source control of moored boats leaving federally-infested water bodies (e.g., Lake Mead).

Science Education Workshop – Seattle Science Center

Wendy Brown and Bill Tweit attended the Science Education Workshop to discuss with science curriculum directors the need for proper removal and disposal of invasive species following their use in the classroom. The information presented was very well received, and a follow-up meeting with material distribution centers managers, who are responsible for receiving and distributing the science kits, is being planned.

Gypsy Moth Control Eradication Update

Brad White updated the council on WSDA's plan for gypsy moth control in Tukwila. WSDA recently completed their SEPA documentation, with the document now out for public review and comment.

Funding is still pending from federal cooperators. Brad reviewed for the group that the cost will be approximately \$300,000 for eradication. Trapping will be continued in this area for three years to make sure negative data is received with a disruption in moth mating.

2014 Noxious Weed Listing

Brad White spoke on behalf of Alison Halpern, who was attending a noxious weed meeting out of the area. The 2014 noxious weed listing process is open for nominations through April 30, 2013. If there are any additions or reclassifications to/of the list, please e-mail a letter with specific changes to Alison who will present at the next Washington State Noxious Weed Board meeting for consideration.

Zebra/Quagga Notification Partnership – WSDOT, WDFW, WSP

WSDOT worked closely with WDFW and WSP to modify their commercial hauler permit such that WDFW and WSP are notified when a boat is being commercially-hauled into Washington. The new permit language will be in place by May 1, 2013. WSP staff are being given advanced training on zebra and quagga mussel identification. Extensive outreach will also take place to all trucking companies.

Border Inspections Update

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) currently does not inspect for zebra or quagga mussel at the U.S.-Canadian border because CBP has no legal enforcement authority. Only the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has enforcement authority. Discussions have been started to identify the roles of each agency and inspection and enforcement procedures.

Vicki also presented a copy of an 11 x 17 poster of gypsy moth identification for distribution and some pocket gypsy moth identification cards. The posters are for ships and have been distributed to Australia officials, New Zealand officials, USDA, CBP. U.S. Customs officials board vessels to review documents, meet with ship captains, and coordinate with ports on the West Coast.

Brad affirmed a fantastic “first response” towards gypsy moth early detection and removal. Bill agreed that this is huge progress with kudos going to U.S. Customs officials.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

Action Item: Approval of December 2012 Minutes

Pene Speaks moved to **APPROVE** the December 13, 2012 minutes. Vicki Yund **SECONDED**. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the December 13, 2012 minutes as written.

WISC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Sarah Gage shared the Council’s draft social media communications plan. The plan is designed to direct attention to the council through all avenues of appropriate social media in order to heighten awareness for prevention, coordination, and engaging the public. Initial steps include using existing outlets such as member agency Facebook pages and blogs and then developing our own social media presence.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2013, AIS BILL

Senators Honeyford, Pearson, and Ranker have introduced SB 5702, Concerning aquatic invasive species. The bill requires out-of-state boaters to have documentation showing that their boat was inspected and cleaned before entering Washington. The bill sets up Washington to be part of the regional passport system and partner with Idaho, Oregon, and other western states. If the bill passes, WDFW will go through a rule-making process to work out the details of operation.

The bill moved out of the Senate and is currently in the House, with a committee hearing scheduled on March 21, 2013.

BREAK

PNW IPC EARLY DETECTION PROGRAM

Lizbeth Seebacher presented the details of the PNW IPC's citizen scientist early detection program. The program was initiated in the spring/summer 2012 and will continue into the 2013 field season. Additional trainings will take place in May. The goals of the program are to: train citizens to identify and report on 30 invasive plant species, increase support for this work and bring in additional funding, and decrease the threat of invasive species in Washington.

In 2012, six trainings were held statewide – five in Western Washington and one in Eastern Washington with a total of 93 participants. A total of 56 surveys were completed, with 3 species identified. These data are shared with county noxious weed boards.

Challenges identified by this first year's work include: the program began late due to funding delays, the geographic scope of the project was too large, need to better motivate volunteers to conduct the surveys, need to provide students with credit for project participation and completion of surveys, and WSDA needs to be better informed of Class A weed identification.

EARLY DETECTION PLANNING PROJECT

Molly Sullivan gave an overview of her early detection project – researching specific habitats, completing a listing of flow charts, and identifying groups to contact. The purpose of the project is to develop an effective early warning system to detect a minimum of five priority, high-risk invasive species in Puget Sound and its tributaries. The species and species groups included in the project are the New Zealand mud snail, green crab, invasive tunicates, invasive knotweeds, and Asian kelp (*Undaria*).

Molly outlined the project approach and will report back to the council in June on progress made. The flow charts that she developed for each species and species group will be provided to council members for review and comment.

REPORTING APPLICATION UPDATE

Wendy Brown reviewed the conceptual design for the invasive species report app that is being developed, and council members were asked for comments. The App will be developed for both iPhones and Android phones and will be ready for use this summer.

LUNCH

WDFW's tsunami debris response trailer was available for viewing.

BASELINE ASSESSMENT PHASE 2 UPDATE

Mike Leech presented an update on the baseline assessment project. He reported that the survey to identify existing data has been completed, with some targeted outreach still ongoing. They have conducted quality assurances on the data collected and are still importing the data into a relational database. Two workgroup meetings have been scheduled for next week – one for priority animal species

and one for priority plant species – such that experts will come together to identify any major gaps in data.

In June 2013, there will be another round of small workgroup meetings, and map drafts will be available for review. The project will be completed in December 2013.

PROGRESS ON INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION SPECIFICATIONS AND CONTRACT LANGUAGE

WSDOT met with King County, the City of Seattle, and the City of Bellevue to discuss prevention specifications for construction operations and transportation-related activities. Their conceptual plan involves

- Trainings for city and county staff on how to check for the presence of New Zealand mud snails and other aquatic invasive species.
- Checking all water crossings around Lake Washington and other areas known to contain invasive species populations.
- Developing basic protocols for cleaning gear and equipment following any in-water work with a priority to implement with any work in the vicinity of known infestations.
- Requiring cleaning of gear and equipment following all in-water work.

For construction projects, further work will be done to draft standard prevention/decontamination specification language for contracts, followed by outreach to regional construction offices regarding their use.

BPA LETTER

As a continuation to our work getting prevention language into the salmon recovery manual, Manual 18, the council is identifying other organizations to partner with for prevention specifications in their guidance manuals and contracting process. The council wrote a draft letter to the Bonneville Power Administration acknowledging that BPA's contracts do have language on preventing the spread of invasive species, but expressing concern that the language was not comprehensive enough in its scope. The letter recommended that BPA consider adopting language similar to that being adopted by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in Manual 18.

The council was asked for comments on the BPA letter. Staff was directed to incorporate any changes and send out the letter.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment today. Public comments will continue to be at the end of the agenda so the public respond to what the council has discussed.

NEXT STEPS

Consider submitting *Arundo donax* for listing on the 2014 weed list.

Council to write a letter of support to U.S. Customs and Border Protection on their plans to conduct zebra and quagga mussel inspections at the U.S.-Canada border and letters of support to granting agencies for the PNW IPC early detection work.

Council to submit an amendment request to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council for zebra and quagga mussel prevention enhancements.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. Bill thanked everyone for attending.

Next meeting:

June 20, 2013

Natural Resources Building

Room 172, Olympia, WA

Invasive Species Approval:

Bill Tweit, Chair

Date