WASHINGTON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

December 10, 2020

Online--Zoom

Invasive Species Council Members Present:

Ray Willard, Chair	Washington State Department of Transportation
Joe Maroney, Chair-Elect	Kalispel Tribe of Indians
Blain Reeves, Vice Chair	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Adam Fyall	Benton County
Shaun Seaman	Chelan Public Utility District
Steve Burke	King County
Kendall Farley	Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Todd Hass	Puget Sound Partnership
Pat Stevenson	Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
Luca Furnare	U.S Customs and Border Protection
Clinton Campbell	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Heidi McMaster	U.S. Department of Interior
Theresa Thom	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Karen Ripley	U.S. Forest Service
Brad White	Washington State Department of Agriculture
Lizbeth Seebacher	Washington State Department of Ecology
Allen Pleus	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mary Fee	Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
Andrea Thorpe	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
Todd Murray	Washington State University

Guests:

Rachel Gregg	EcoAdapt
Paul Heimowitz	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ben Thompson	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Ryan Lothrop	Washington State Department Fish and Wildlife
Chris Looney	Washington State Department of Agriculture

Recreation and Conservation Office Staff:

Justin Bush	Executive Coordinator
Julia McNamara	Interim Board Liaison
Alexis Haifley	Community Outreach & Environmental Education Specialist

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Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Ray Willard, Department of Transportation (DOT), opened the meeting at 9:00am. He welcomed council members, guests, and reviewed housekeeping items.

Following, **Julia McNamara**, Recreation and Conservation Office, reviewed webinar instructions and etiquette, and called roll to determine quorum.

Motion: Approval of December 10, 2020 Agenda
Moved by: Member Mary Fee
Seconded by: Member Andrea Thorpe
Decision: Approved

Motion: Approval of September 2020 meeting minutes
Moved by: Member Steve Burke
Seconded by: Member Blaine Reeves
Decision: Approved

Item 1: Executive Coordinator's Report

Justin Bush, Recreation and Conservation Office, provided an update on events staff have attended on behalf of WISC, end of the year summary of WISC's social media accounts, as well a summary of invasive species reports and sightings.

Mr. Bush highlighted the virtual events that have taken place throughout the last quarter, noting that they have all been different compared to typical years due to pandemic precautions—but the focuses on collaboration, information sharing, and communication have stayed the same. Mr. Bush closed the event update by reviewing the largest, and most successful event of the quarter which was the Washington Weed & Invasive Species Conference. This event provided WISC the opportunity to partner with organizations that are furthering invasive species response, management, and research. The collaboration concluded with over 1,100 people attending this virtual event over 4 days—nearly doubling the amount of people who have attended in person in past years.

Mr. Bush continued his presentation by giving a high-level overview of social media reach over the year, as well as sightings reports. Over the past five years the council has been able to reach more than 2.6 million people, and he expects that number to keep growing. He noted although this year looked a bit different due to COVID-19, the council outreach portfolio has continued to steadily grow. Lastly, he closed by noting that sightings reports have been down this quarter, but that that's on par with past years as we are moving into winter and there is less to report overall.

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Council members asked clarifying questions and discussed benefits of events and social media outreach. Member Fee noted that a WISC social media post about the Bee-u-Tify seed packets garnered over 9,000 requests for seeds from their board. In addition, acting council member Theresa Thom wanted to thank the council staff for providing support and information during the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Facebook Live Halloween event.

Council members then discussed the role of the council during the upcoming legislative session. Council staff noted they typically track bills and would be happy to provide updates to members. Mr. Bush noted that each state agency has a legislative liaison and bill tracking, suggesting that the council form a working group to connect and share information. Chair Willard provided direction to create a working group tasked with bill tracking and member legislative updates. Member Seaman and Member Farley asked to be included in the working group. Council staff encouraged any other interested members to reach out to them if they wished to be included in this group.

Mr. Bush finished his presentation with an executive decision to place development of 2021 outreach plan on hold due to COVID-19 gathering uncertainties. Staff will continue forward with social media, virtual events, and other outreach—placing a council discussion and approval of the 2021 plan on the March 2021 meeting agenda. Continuing, Mr. Bush briefed the council on 2019-2020 biennial report status, and that the Governor's Office and Office of Financial Management had signaled that the agency request legislation to reauthorize the council until 2032 had been approved.

Item 2: Pacific Northwest Regional Invasive Species and Climate Change Network

Rachel Gregg, EcoAdapt, and **Paul Heimowitz**, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), provided a briefing on the climate change networks accomplishments and tasks.

Paul Heimowitz, USFWS, thanked the council for including this topic in the meeting, and started his report out by providing a quick history of the project—as well as its scope and details. He noted that through his work with other invasive species partners, climate change and invasive species seem to be working together against natural resource managers. This project seeks to bring in partners and collaborators to create a network in the Pacific Northwest, to share information and best practices. This type of knowledge exchange has been successful in the northeastern region of the United States; the northwest network emulates that model but applies it to the unique challenges faced in the Pacific Northwest. He closed by thanking the council staff and members who have been involved in the project advisory group.

Rachel Gregg, EcoAdapt, reviewed responses and statistics of the survey thus far. She noted that the first part of the survey solely focuses on invasive species management, while the second part moves into invasive species management and climate change questions. She noted that the goal of this survey is to be able to use the information

gathered from the responses to form an action plan for activities including workshops, webinars, and other various types of outreach and information sharing opportunities.

Council members discussed the results of the survey thus far and asked Ms. Gregg clarifying questions. Chair Willard offered to email the survey to his staff at the DOT, and Mr. Bush offered to email the survey link out to all council members again.

Blaine Parker: provided public comment

Item 3: Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry State-Level Equity Approach

Ben Thompson, Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), reviewed the tasks and challenges of DNR's urban and community forestry program for the benefit of the council. He noted that this program initiative kicked off with renewed focus in 2017 due to the election of a new Commissioner of Public Lands who understood the premise and importance of urban forestry and was interested in seeing the program address issues of equity, diversity, and climate resiliency in urban areas around Washington State.

The program thus far has been tasked with researching the most at-risk and high-need urban areas that will be impacted by the increasing climatic events such as heat waves, fires, invasive species, and more. This program has been utilizing GIS data pertaining to urban forestry, as well as GIS data compiled by the Department of Health's Environmental Health Disparities Map to create a map that shows high-need/high-risk areas around the state where urban forestry investments and activities can help.

Mr. Thompson continued his presentation by giving an overview of the funding that comes from the U.S. Forest Service, filters through their program, and ultimately into local communities across the state. The goal of these grants is to promote the building of more environmentally stable communities for those folks who are disproportionally affected by climate change and urban growth. Mr. Thompson then noted agency request legislation to reinvigorate the Evergreen Communities Act, which may be considered in the 2021 Legislative session.

Council members asked clarifying questions about the analysis and data used in the creation of the maps and discussed the details of Mr. Thompson's presentation.

Item 4: BREAK— 11:05am-11:15am

Item 5: Fiscal Year 20 and 21 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Aquatic Invasive Species Funding

Heidi McMaster, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, reviewed the aquatic species funding for Fiscal Year (FY)20 and FY21. She reviewed many of the successful projects from the FY20 grant round and gave a brief update on upcoming FY21 projects. While there are many

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projects coming in for funding during the FY21 session, the majority of them are looking to increase capacity, response, and monitoring. Member McMaster noted that like many of the other agencies presenting today, the bureau is facing a challenging fiscal year due to COVID-19, budget restrictions, and a change in federal administration. Member McMaster closed her presentation with an overview of regional priorities and projects.

Council members discussed the ramifications of the upcoming fiscal year and potential budget shortfalls and asked what, if anything, they could do to lend their support. Member McMaster said the best course of action would be to keep in touch with congressional delegates and federal agency leaders and let them know that aquatic invasive species management is a priority.

Item 6: Pacific Salmon Commission Okanagan Work Group, Northern Pike

Ryan Lothrop, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, reviewed the transboundary efforts to protect and increase output of the spring and primarily summer stock of the transboundary Okanagan River Chinook. Due to the importance of this stock the workgroup has been tasked to compile and report back to the Pacific Salmon Commission on efforts to suppress and stop northern pike. Northern pike would have a substantial negative impact on the mortality rates of this unique population of fish and would further threaten this species should they get into the Okanagan River. Mr. Lothrop noted that while COVID-19 has impacted the work of the group this summer, they are hoping to host a virtual workshop with the purpose of collaboration and information sharing for those who are involved in northern pike suppression in early 2021. He closed his presentation by requesting council assistance in planning, hosting, and invitations to collaborators to participate in the workshop.

Council members stated that they are firmly in support of this project, as the topic of northern pike. Council members asked clarifying questions, noted that they would be willing participants in this upcoming northern pike meeting, and asked to be kept updated with this project as it evolves. Staff and Chair Joe Maroney will represent the council in the northern pike workshop.

Item 7: Moran State Park Firewood Vending Machine

Andrea Thorpe, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, reviewed the firewood vending machine currently in use at Moran State Park through a concessionaire. This vending machine is the first of its kind in Washington State, but these units have been used widely in Idaho and other areas before. The concessionaire has been very happy with the machine so far and noted that it serendipitously has helped campers during the COVID-19 pandemic as it is a no-contact way of getting locally sourced firewood. Member Thorpe noted that all the wood in the vending machine is from Orcas Island, or other nearby areas—which prevents the movement of invasive species and plant diseases through firewood. She noted while this is not an agency sponsored machine, they would be happy to see this program grow.

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Council members asked clarifying questions about the machine's operations, and several members voiced their opinion that the vending machine would be an excellent place for outreach posters on the dangers of moving firewood.

Item 8: LUNCH— 11:50am – 12:20pm

Item 9: Recognition of Ray Willard and Passing of the Gavel

Outgoing Chair Ray Willard called the meeting back to order and passed the gavel to Incoming Chair Joe Maroney, Kalispel Tribe of Indians. Chair Maroney thanked Ray Willard for his hard work over the past four years noting that the council wouldn't look the same as it does today if it wasn't for his guidance and leadership. Chair Maroney and Mr. Bush recapped some of the council's successes through Chair Willards leadership and remarked at how they will miss working with him as chair but are thankful he will remain an active member and participant of the council.

Council members discussed their time working with Chair Willard; reflected on successes, memories, and the unique qualities that Chair Willard possessed that made him such a successful leader of the council.

Item 10: European Green Crab Status Update

Allen Pleus, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, oriented the council on the issue of European green crab management by providing a brief history of the issue, as well as the response of the WDFW over the last few years. Member Pleus reviewed the results of the trapping efforts of the past two seasons, noting that this year's trapping season was particularly challenging due to COVID-19, staffing, and budget issues. Trapping took place this summer in Drayton Harbor, Lummi Bay, Makah Bay, Grays Harbor, and Willapa Bay.

Council members asked clarifying questions about the trapping efforts and inquired as to how the council could support this effort. Member Pleus noted that aside from making it clear to policy leaders how important this issue is, not much can be done until the Governor's budget is released—that will give WDFW a better idea as to how much outreach and advocacy may be needed for the upcoming biennium. Council members asked follow-up questions as to what WDFW was doing to ensure that they are working with our Canadian neighbors and shellfish growers on this issue.

Item 11: Vessel Incidental Discharge Act Rulemaking Update

Allen Pleus, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, provided the council with updates to the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (VIDA). Member Pleus noted that this act mainly focuses on ballast water and biofouling, or the substrate that accumulates on the hull of boats. Member Pleus reviewed the combined efforts between the WDFW and the Department of Ecology to ensure comments made in response to this complex document were heard. He noted that the main issue for both of the

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respective state agencies was the consultation process. Basically, there is disagreement as to whether or not the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate biofouling. Member Pleus noted that at this point it is unclear whether the rules will be finalized before the new administration is sworn in.

Council members asked clarifying questions and discussed the complicated process and quick turnaround deadlines that both state agencies had to complete in order to get the comments in on time.

Item 12: Asian Giant Hornet Research Update

Chris Looney, Washington State Department of Agriculture entomologist, provided an update on some of the ongoing research taking place in response to the discovery of Asian giant hornet in North America. He reiterated that whenever a new pest is discovered, one of the first things researchers want to know is information about that species existing range—which helps to predict suitable habitats in the new area. Mr. Looney noted that much of the research being done on Asian giant hornet is exploring this very question, as this will help scientists determine 'normal' versus 'new' behavior of such an insect. This knowledge will help scientist predict its behavior and movements which will aid in the eradication of the species.

Mr. Looney finished his presentation by briefly reviewing the eradication of the Asian giant hornet nest that was discovered and removed in October of this year. He noted that the nest yielded findings consistent with what they know about this wasps behavior and life cycle, and that based on the success and growth of this one nest there is every reason to believe this insect could continue to colonize the Pacific Northwest without intervention.

Council members discussed the data that were presented and asked clarifying questions. Council members commended WSDA for their outreach and communication efforts in sharing trapping information, tracking, and eradication efforts.

Item 13: BREAK – 1:44pm – 1:50pm

Item 14: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fiscal Year 20 and 21 Updates

Theresa Thom, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS), provided both a national and regional update for some of the projects and priorities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She noted that at the national level a new memorandum of understanding on rapid response to invasive mussels in western waters has been created and executed. She continued by providing updates on the FY 20 projects that have focused on containment, prevention, outreach, early detection and research. The next round of financial awards for FY 21 are being processed now and will continue through the end of January 21, although there is much uncertainty around what the next round of funding capacity will look like. She closed her presentation by highlighting the priorities of the

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U.S. FWS in the Pacific Northwest which includes identifying future invasive species through climate change matching and pathways.

Board discussed budget challenges and asked clarifying questions.

Item 15: 2020-2025 Strategic Plan

Justin Bush, Recreation and Conservation Office, updated the council on the status of the statewide strategic plan. Mr. Bush began by outlining the strategic planning process that started in the December 2019 meeting. He highlighted many of the various working groups and individuals that ultimately were responsible for the successful creation of the strategic plan. Once the content was finalized, a graphic designer was enlisted to make the report easy to understand for a wide audience, while keeping the necessary accomplishments, goals, and content developed by the council.

Motion: Move to adopt the Council's 2020-2025 strategic plan with the intention of making this document public, with the caveat that there may be small minor edits to address errors or clarifications by staff and the Chair

Moved by: Member Ray Willard

Seconded by: Member Todd Murray

Decision: Approved

Council members asked clarifying questions and discussed next steps. There was consensus about moving forward with a press release and/or social media campaign in order to get the word out about the completed plan.

Item 16: Future Meeting Planning and Closing Remarks

Chair Joe Maroney, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, opened the floor by asking council members for ideas and feedback for agenda topics for the upcoming March 2021 meeting.

Member Willard wishes to invite the Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council to the March 2021 council meeting with the goal of learning more about their work and with the hopes of collaborating with them in the future.

Council members discussed how they would like to learn more about the DNR Natural Heritage Program—Environmental Protection Agency funded assessment for invasive plants. It would be nice if a representative from the National Heritage Program could present about their work.

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Member Campbell offered to give an update to the council about the work of US Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Plant Protection and Quarantine.

Chair Maroney would like Asian giant hornet update if there is new or interesting information to share. The council would like to know more about the research they are doing, what lessons they learned from the spring and summer, and what we can expect to see this coming year.

Member Stevenson suggested that he and Chair Maroney develop a combined presentation on what tribal nations east and west of the Cascade Mountains are doing in regard to invasive species response and management. Although he noted the topic and timing may be better suited to the June 2021 meeting.

Member Willard suggested that a speaker review the Public Lands Inventory map that the Recreation and Conservation Office has been tasked with creating. Council members agreed they would like to learn more about the creation and development of this project as it concerns public lands in Washington State.

Mr. Bush reviewed the process for putting together ideas for an upcoming agenda. He encouraged council members to get in contact with him should they think of other ideas for future meetings.

Public comment: no public comment at the time.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM

*The next meeting will be March 18, 2021. *Location and venue subject to change based on COVID-19 restrictions and guidance.*

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