

**Regional Panel Highlights of Activities and Recommendations for the  
Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Meeting  
November 14-15, 2012**

**Regional Panel Name:** Western Regional Panel on ANS  
**Submitted by:** Elizabeth Brown, Chair

**Key ANS Activities from May 2012 through October 2012:**

*Major Panel Accomplishments (bullets):*

- a. Secured a Panel Coordinator
- b. Partnered to offer the successful Attorneys General meeting “Legal and Regulatory Efforts to Minimize Expansion of Invasive Mussels through Watercraft Movements – a Co-Learning Workshop” in August 2012 in Phoenix, AZ
- c. Conducted the Panel’s Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT in October 2012

*Ongoing Work (bullets):*

Coastal

- a. Coordination with stakeholders on Japanese tsunami debris fouled with invasive species
- b. Coordination with many partners, including British Columbia, to resolve next steps on management of breeding population of European green crab (see detailed report attached)

Inland

- c. Provide a forum for communication regarding watercraft inspection and decontamination station operations by a variety of jurisdictions to prevent and contain zebra and quagga mussels, and other ANS, throughout the Western USA
- d. Provide a forum to facilitate the future standardization of both field and laboratory processes and operating procedures regarding early detection of *Dreissenid* mussels
- e. Coordinating research for filtration of recreational ballast tanks for prevention of the further dispersal of *Dreissenid* mussels in recreational ballast tanks
- f. Organization of a condensed Attorney General’s workshop during NISAW
- g. Development of “Guidance to Prevent the Spread of AIS through Field Gear” document (see attached)

**Panel Recommendations to the ANSTF:**

- a. Request the ANSTF provide support to build capacity in marine debris management, specific to AK (see attachment A), **Ways to Support and Build Capacity for Alaska to Respond To Japanese Tsunami Marine Debris Fouled With Potential Invasive Species**
- b. Request funding to support the implementation components of QZAP.

## **Attachment A**

### **Guidance Required from ANSTF:**

#### **Ways to Support and Build Capacity for Alaska to Respond To Japanese Tsunami Marine Debris Fouled With Potential Invasive Species**

**Issue:** The State of Alaska's capacity to respond to potential landings of biofouled Japanese tsunami marine debris (JTMD) is significantly challenged by the fact of its extensive coastline that is largely inaccessible by road and far from population centers. About 65% of the shoreline is under federal jurisdiction. The dock that washed ashore on an Oregon beach complete with living aquatic plants and animals is evidence that nonindigenous organisms can survive on JTMD. Marine environments are at risk by the potential for invasive species to establish and remain undetected with resulting destructive consequences to valued native species on which Alaska ecosystems and economies rely.

**Background:** Like most state governments on the eastern coast of the Pacific Ocean, Alaska has limited resources or structures in place to meet the new challenge of JTMD, including policy level planning, direction and guidance on such issues.

When the risk of nonindigenous species hitchhikers on JTMD became real, the Alaska Invasive Species Working Group, Marine Subcommittee, comprised of state, federal and interested stakeholders working on marine invasive species issues, developed a protocol for responding to debris fouled with Japanese marine organisms. This protocol is available on several web pages, however; more recently a Response Protocol for Biofouled Debris and Invasive Species Generated by the 2011 Japan Tsunami (also known as the Portland Protocol) is now the preferred protocol by state, federal and land managers.

As stated, Alaska has the longest and most remote shoreline of the fifty states. About 65% of the shoreline falls under NOAA fisheries marine protected areas (NMFS), US Forest Service (USFS), US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or National Parks Service (NPS) jurisdictions although Alaska maintains sovereignty over jurisdictional waters. See map.

Surveying this shoreline for the presence of marine debris is cost prohibitive. Mobilizing responses to investigate and manage large marine origin debris is likewise cost prohibitive. Even though Alaska has an active citizens monitoring network, this network would be overtaxed if asked to monitor for and report on fouled tsunami debris for the entirety of the coast.

Following a regional meeting in Portland, Oregon on July 31 – August 1, 2012, NOAA developed draft guidance and protocols (Portland Protocols) for education, reporting, taxonomic identification, response and management of tsunami debris fouled with potential invasive marine species. The Portland Protocols provide guidance and specific resources to assist in a response. Most western states have developed protocols for reporting, responding and managing debris infested with potentially invasive organisms – these supplement the Portland Protocols.

**Request:** The WRP seeks guidance from the ANSTF on the best ways to help build and support Alaska's capacity to monitor and respond to landings of tsunami marine debris fouled with non-indigenous coastal organisms that could threaten the state's marine environment and businesses that depend on it.

**Some options for the ANSTF to consider:**

Strengthen coordination among federal agencies that have shoreline management or stewardship responsibilities, the state AIS program and tribal entities to respond to fouled debris.

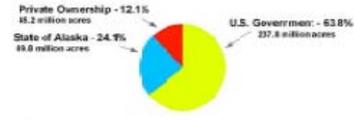
Leverage existing resources of federal programs to respond within their jurisdictions – NMFS, NPS, BLM, USFS, USFWS, USCG, etc.

Leverage existing resources of responsible federal agencies to survey shorelines and provide initial response, investigations and management of infested debris using the Portland protocols.

Strengthen the state's program to survey, investigate and respond to fouled debris deposited on state and tribal land.

Fund/support an evaluation of the potential for species typically known to occur in Japanese marine and estuarine waters to survive in Alaskan waters. The purpose is to assess the level of risk to Alaska and to modify federal and state response strategies according to the level of risk.

# Who Owns/Manages Alaska?



Russian traders arrived in Alaska in the mid-1700's and established small, seasonal trading posts and settlements. Alaska Natives, the Eskimo, Indian, and Aleut peoples, combined with the primary landowners during this period of Russian occupation. On October 18, 1867, Russia sold Alaska to the United States government. As a result, the federal government owned the Alaska Territory, approximately 373 million acres—about one-fifth the size of the rest of the U.S.



**State of Alaska - 89.4 million acres**

Under the terms of the Alaska Statehood Act of 1958, the federal government granted to new state 25% ownership of its holdings, approximately 18,500,000 acres to be divided under three types of grants:

- 1) Community - 600,000 acres
  - 2) National Forest Community - 600,000 acres
  - 3) General - 100,000,000 acres
- Additional territorial grants for schools, alcohol, and mental health facilities, totaling 1.2 million acres were combined with statehood.
- All grants combined gave the State of Alaska approximately 187 million acres. To date, 30.9 million acres have been granted with the balance to be granted by 2020.

**ANCSA Native Corporations (Private) - 29.3 million acres**

On December 11, 1971, P.L. 91-602, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was signed into law. The purpose of ANCSA was to regulate the terms by which Alaska land was sold to private landowners. This act had two purposes: first, to give 100 million acres of the United States' purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867, and to divide private lands. ANCSA established the creation of regional and village native corporations to manage all village lands and provided a one billion dollar fund to assist corporations in conducting the distribution of ANCSA land. Treaties of these lands in return of 11 million acres, the statehood corporation, Lower 48, received a cash advance of \$1.25 billion, contributions of 20 or more residents, shared 20 million acres. The remaining acres, which include historic and other existing federal lands, were divided into parcels to be sold to those of less than 25 people. To date, 30.3 million acres have been sold to ANCSA corporations.

**Non-ANCSA Private & Local Government - 5.9 million acres**

and to divide ownership (other than village lands) comprises a number of parcels of land in Alaska. Such other land used for development around Alaska communities is, in part, privately owned. Private land development needs people to build housing, roads, schools, other uses and needs. It also provides a tax base for cities and communities to help support public services.

Because local governments in Alaska have individual methods of landholding and the public ownership, land currently owned by them is categorized into categories.

Alaska is one-fifth the size of the conterminous 48 states.



- Bureau of Land Management - 82.5 million acres**  
In Alaska, BLM's focus is on conserving land, habitat and the management, including the joint National Oil and Gas Lands Accounting with the other federal agencies, to manage responsibly, offer the Alaska Pipeline, and responding to the public demand for use of the land through leasing.
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - 78.8 million acres**  
The USFWS manages 15 million acres of public lands. The six largest are the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) which are approximately 10 million acres.
- National Park Service - 52.4 million acres**  
There are eight national parks in Alaska, including the two largest in the contiguous United States:  
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve - 13,175,000 acres  
Denali National Park & Preserve - 6,070,000 acres  
Katmai National Park & Preserve - 4,850,000 acres  
Lake Clark National Park & Preserve - 4,000,000 acres
- U.S. Forest Service - 22.3 million acres**  
The USFS manages four National Forests in Alaska: The Tongass NF, 100 million acres, and the Chugach NF, 5.5 million acres are the two largest national forests in the U.S. The USFS manages these lands for a wide range of goods and services while conserving and protecting them.
- Department of Defense - 1.7 million acres**  
Dept. of Defense lands in Alaska include a unique training environment, most notably at the Fort Belknap, using terrain in the Tundra Valley in the interior.

