

Western Regional Panel

Annual Report

A Report to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force for (2005-2006)

1. Summary

The WRP completed a strategic planning process to identify priorities for 2006 and 2007. The five priorities identified by the members include: 1) work with Canada to develop a program/message for to give to travelers with recreational boats at the US/Canadian border, 2) identify risks and threats to the region and ways to address them, 3) work with the Western Governors Association and the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to do outreach to decision makers and promote program development, 4) developing communication strategies for the region, and 5) identify WRP research needs and long term funding to support them.

The key strategies to carry out these priorities include: 1) requesting proposals from the membership to implement them, and 2) forming work groups around each to develop action plans

Status of state programs in the WRP since 2005:

- a. Approved state plans: Washington, Oregon, Montana, Alaska, Hawaii, North Dakota, Kansas
- b. Five state plans in development: California, Arizona, Texas, Idaho, New Mexico
- c. States with no action: Nevada, South Dakota, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Oklahoma, Nebraska
- d. No existing plans were revised or updated.

2 Major Accomplishments

- Updated the WRP web page. **EPA**
- With \$10,000 of funding from NOAA, contractor Mike Fraidenburg with Dynamic Solutions Group, created a draft Rapid Response Plan for Zebra Mussels in the Pacific Northwest. Stephen Phillips from Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) and Paul Heimowitz, US FWS finished the product with the help of state, federal and private partners. It was released on August 31, 2006. **CM**
- The WRP, through Susan Ellis and John Chapman, collaborated with the Desert Fishes Council to fund an additional day of their meeting in Cuatro Cienegas, Mexico in November, 2006. The day-long session covered ANS impacts on desert fish in the U.S. and Mexico. Funding covered a translator and travel costs for eight Mexican scientists. **EPA**

- In a project funded by the WRP to establish collaboration with Mexico to prevent hull transport of ANS, principal investigator, Leigh Johnson, California Sea Grant, worked with faculty of Autonomous U. of Baja CA, environmental staff of the Port of Ensenada, the director of ProEsteros environmental organization and the owner of Baja Naval boatyard and marina and developed a mailing list of 40 Mexican contacts. With this new partnership, she created a bilingual, educational poster: “Stop Aquatic Invaders on our Coast!/Detanga el Transporte de Especies Invasoras Acuaticas en Nuestras Costas.” Based on the modest grant, they have leveraged this project to include the development of a white paper on *Managing Hull-Borne Invasive Species and Coastal Water Quality for California and Baja California Boats Kept in Saltwater*. **EPA**
- A workshop was held December 13-14, 2005 in La Jolla, CA to develop research priorities for invasive aquatic plants in the west. WRP funds were supplemented with funds from CA Dept. of Food and Agriculture, CA Dept. of Fish and Game, and Portland State University’s Center for Lakes and Reservoirs. The leaders of this workshop were Mark Sytsma, PSU and John Madsen, Mississippi State University. A report that outlines the current state of the field, describes the present and emerging management considerations, and presents a short and long term research agenda will be available fall, 2006. **R**
- The WRP funded a project with Portland State University to produce a searchable database on ANS educational materials in the West which will be available on the Internet. Mark Sytsma and Robyn Draheim are overseeing the development. There has been discussion with other regional panels about making this a national database. It is expected to be available in the fall of 2006. **EPA**
- The WRP had a joint meeting with the Mississippi River Basin Panel on Sept. 7-9, 2005 in Wichita, KS. There were presentations on issues of mutual concern and opportunities to co-mingle and get to know each other better. WRP Chair, Susan Ellis and MRBP Vice Chair Mike Hoff, presented a list of suggested projects at the end of the meeting that the two panels could work on together. **Partnership Building**

3 Recommendations to ANSTF

Key outstanding regional ANS/AIS issues and recommended course of action by ANSTF to address these.

- The WRP requests that the ANSTF provide clear guidelines on each ANSTF Committee. This includes the mission of the committee, the make-up of the committee and where and how the committee will meet. How can the western states become more involved with ANSTF committees. Are there travel funds available? Is there a schedule of meetings?
- The WRP requests that the ANSTF coordinate an inter-panel and international project to provide ANS materials to recreational boaters at border crossings with Canada. An initial report on western border state and provincial regulations regarding requirements for hand-out materials was funded by the WRP.

- The WRP would like the ANSTF federal agencies to consider how to create consistency and equity in ballast water technology funding between the Atlantic, Pacific, Great Lakes and Gulf Coast.

¹ P = Prevention; DM = Detection & Monitoring; CM = Control & Management;
EPA = Education & Public Awareness; R = Research