

Columbia River Basin 100th Meridian Team Meeting Minutes
Heathman Lodge
Vancouver, Washington
October 18, 2006

Introductions:

(See attached attendance list)

Review and approve minutes from June 14 meeting and current meeting agenda:

Stephen asked for comments/corrections to draft minutes from last CRB Team meeting – There were none

One change was made to the agenda, combining Bill and Paul's presentation on commercial boat hauler outreach with Bill's presentation on responder training, WIT and the action hotline.

Bill Zook will take minutes of the meeting.

Individual agency updates:

Paul Heimowitz, USFWS – Just completed meeting with other USFWS ANS Coordinators where new agreements were made regarding spending for the remainder of FY-06 funds and allocation between regions of available funding for FY-07.

Paul also mention potential new funding source for ANS projects from the National Fish Habitat Initiative. \$250,000 is available in Region 1 and he hopes to get funding for at least one ANS/AIS project from the regional allocation.

Paul and Kevin are working on an Asian carp risk assessment for the Columbia Basin.

The Nutria Working Group spans Oregon and Washington and currently consists of Kevin, Paul, Pam, Jim, Joan, Robyn, Jacoby Carter (USGS) and Justin Stevenson (USDA).

Paul has been invited to chair a session on ANS at the Northwest Fish Culture Conference in Portland on December 4-6. The session will include presentations on HAACP, New Zealand mud snails, Whirling Disease and Brook Trout.

Fred Partridge, IDFG – Fred reported the first incidence of golden shiners in Idaho found in a reservoir owned and operated by IDFG. It was treated with Rotenone this fall and hopefully there was 100 percent kill.

The Idaho Invasive Species Council was recently reauthorized and a new state ANS coordinator was hired within the State Department of Agriculture (Amy Fretter).

A number of Eurasian Water Milfoil control and removal projects were funded this year from a one-time two-year \$ 4 million appropriation from the state legislature. In total, about \$2.5 million was spent, leaving approximately 1.5 million available for next year

Eileen Ryce, MDFWP – Montana continues to be plagued by illegal introductions of aquatic species. A number of Pacu, red-eared sliders and an alligator were found this past summer. Montana will be adding alligators to the state prohibited species list next year.

Eileen also updated the group on the status of the funding received from the State Legislature last year as part of the Invasive Species Initiative.

Montana and Idaho are participating in the Greater Yellowstone ANS Working Group. They met recently in Jackson Hole with representatives from a number of outdoor equipment manufactures and retailers to develop an approach to public outreach. The group decided that state and federal agencies would help industry representatives “reach-out to their users” as the most effective way to prevent the spread of ANS to the Park and National Forests in the region.

Jim Gores, ODFW – The Oregon State Marine Board will be submitting legislation during the next session to make it illegal to launch a boat with prohibited species on board. This clarifies the authority of Oregon Boating Law enforcement officers to prevent an illegal introduction.

Jim reported that snapping turtles may be in the Lower Columbia River according to reports from ODFW personnel. As a result, he has stepped-up pet shop enforcement in the Portland area with the help of the Oregon State Patrol, Fish and Wildlife Division.

A red-eared slider and snapping turtle removal program has been imitated on the Willamette River with 9 turtles removed so far. He is also involved in nutria and feral swine work groups in Oregon. He also briefly mentioned the lake rehabilitation project on Diamond Lake in South Central Oregon to remove an introduce population of tui chub. Cost of the project: 6 million dollars.

Steve Olhausen, USFWS – Steve has been surveying all hatcheries in the Columbia Basin for the presence of New Zealand mud snails in their water supply. None found so far. He has also been looking at the Willapa National Wildlife Area.

He reported that Skamania County treated Drano Lake, Rock Creek and the mouth of the Wind River to remove dense populations of Eurasian water milfoil and Elodea using Diquat and 2-4D. No fish mortalities were observed in live boxes used to monitor the effects of the application.

Steve has also been involved in a project to remove brook trout from the Wind River Springs hatchery water supply. They are trying to make sure that brook trout are not incidentally transported to other locations with fish stocking.

Bill Zook, PSMFC – Bill made copies of the Columbia Basin Marina and water-dependant business report available to those who wanted copies.

Pam Meacham, WDFW – Pam introduced WDFW's new ANS Project Biologist, Jesse Shultz and their new Boat Inspection Officer, Eric Anderson to the group and announced the pending arrival of the new ANS Program Manager (Allen Pleus) to replace Scott Smith next week.

She indicated that WDFW is also experiencing increased problems with exotic species released in the wild by people getting them from the pet industry. She and Eric worked several snapping turtle cases this summer using the internet to contact on-line suppliers of prohibited species. They also worked Pet Shops and made several piranha cases.

They have spent all but \$65,000 of the \$250,000 appropriated from the Governor's emergency budget to address the growing tunicate problem in Puget Sound. The money was used to hire divers to physically remove tunicates from boats and docks at several of the hardest hit marinas, including Pleasant Harbor Marina in Hood Canal. They will need at least a million dollars a year to do all areas, but will be requesting \$425,000 during the next legislative session. The Puget Sound Action Team will be requesting an additional \$300,000.

Washington will propose adding alligators, largescale carp and tunicates to the state's prohibited species list this winter.

Steve Wells, PSU – Steve touched briefly on the mitten crab outreach effort going-on in Oregon which they hope to expand to include Washington soon. They have recently modified boat ramp signs to conform to concerns from Washington which should allow expansion of the program.

PSU field staff have also completed over 100 boater surveys along the Columbia River.

Bruce Southerland, PSMFC – Bruce recently retired from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and has taken-on a new contract with PSMFC to work on permitting portions of the Columbia Basin zebra mussel Rapid Response Plan.

Joan Cabreza, EPA – Joan referenced her recent agency quarterly report (e-mailed to CRB ANS Team members last week) for a summary of projects EPA is currently involved with. Several Team members commented on the quality of that report and thanked Joan for doing such an excellent job. ***If you did not receive a copy of that report, please contact Joan and she will provide you with a copy.***

Joan also briefly mentioned that they are expecting a lot of work involved with climate change issues in the next year and are involved in a green crab economic impact study, a DNA registry for green crab, and the new book on Invasive Species in Washington.

Jill Leary of the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership discussed their group's projects.

Jill Hardiman, USGS – Jill mentioned her involvement with PSU in conducting ANS surveys in Bonneville Pool. They have collected but not processed many samples of crawfish taken from Bonneville Pool and requested help with species identification.

Marla Harrison, Port of Portland – The Port of Portland will be funding a project through PSU to provide training to other ports in the Columbia Basin on ANS issues later this year. She also mentioned that during their annual dredging operations with the USACE they have a boat on the river during all daylight hours. Their water quality monitoring staff has some down-time and offered to collect information for anyone in the work group if it was compatible with their work schedule and location.

Sam Chan, OSU Sea Grant – Sam announced that the ANS “tool kits” he and Paul have been working on for several years will be available very soon. A workshop on how to use the kits is being considered for sometime next spring, probably in Portland.

He also mentioned that a shipment of rusty crawfish for high school science classes was received by the Eugene School District this fall. Sam is also planning to work with a veterinarian professional association on the issue of humane euthanasia of unwanted aquarium species. He hopes to get agreement with some veterinarians to allow drop-off of these species as an alternative to releases into the wild.

Kevin Aiken, USFWS – Kevin reported that they have completed NZMS surveys in Washington and have provided funding and technical support for spartina, knotweed and elodea (Chehalis River) control and removal projects.

Publication on ANS in the Columbia River Basin – Paul

A work group will be formed to help format, write and edit sections of the publication which will cover all the key aquatic invasive species instead of a specific number. Barbara Gleesen from Eugene has been selected to be the illustrator for the project. A time-line for completion of the project will be forthcoming.

Paul asked for volunteers to write species sections and high resolution graphics to use with the text. Printing will be through the Government Printing Office. He asked the group for some recommendations on the number of copies to produce. The group decided that first printing should be the number that can be produced by the currently available budget of \$5,000. Other agencies indicated that they could chip-in with some additional funding to pay for the number of copies they needed once the per-copy cost is known.

The publication will be completed by the summer of 07 and will also be put on-line at various web locations.

Comprehensive Approach to Preventing Zebra Mussel Introduction on Trailered Watercraft – Bill and Paul

Bill showed a Powerpoint that illustrated the relative importance of trailered watercraft as “the” single most likely vector for an introduction of zebra mussels into the west. He also showed how individual tasks, both on-going and needed, fit into a comprehensive approach to prevention under the 100th Meridian effort.

He suggested that two important elements of this comprehensive approach were in need of more attention; outreach to commercial boat haulers and increased number, geographic distribution and training for incident responders now that WIT and other programs were greatly increasing the number of field reporters.

Paul and Bill discussed a new project for additional outreach to commercial boat haulers funded by USFWS, Region 1. This project will follow-up contacts made in 2000-01 by Kim Webb. Bill is working with Kim to get all of the information gained from her efforts and will build upon them to develop some possible strategies for working with this group more effectively in the future.

A good discussion followed that generated some possible approaches to this group, including the establishment of a “safe hauler” program where vendors could get the seal of approval for meeting certain standards for cleaning and decontamination of watercraft before hauling.

Preliminary Results, Montana TIS Study – Eileen

Eileen reported on the preliminary results from this year's evaluation of two TIS systems in eastern Montana. The two systems evaluated were located on US-2 near Culbertson and I-90 near the "town" of Wibaux. The survey was completed between June and September, Wednesday through Sunday. All boaters were required to pull into a rest stop/weigh station to be interviewed.

Over a period of 424 hours, only 22 interviews were completed, 16 of which were boaters. Of the total (22), 55% of those interviewed reported as seeing the sign announcing the TIS, but only 2 (9%) tuned into the TIS Message. Eileen suggested that the two individual boaters who reported tuning to the message were local residents who did so out of curiosity. With over 19 man-hours per interview, this survey was very labor intensive.

Her preliminary conclusion is that TIS systems are not reaching our target audience and have little value as education and outreach strategy. The good news from her point of view was that other outreach methods were working and that from thousands of boater surveys completed in Montana over the past several years, 73% of boaters and 85% of bank fishermen were aware of the zebra mussel issue.

A good discussion followed focused primarily around the low number of boats contacted during a summer survey on major highways. Eileen assured the group that all boaters passing the two sites were stopped and contacted by her crew.

Status of Zebra Mussel Monitoring Database – Dave Britton

Dave presented via conference call on the current status and upgrades to the centralized veliger sampling database. Dave is currently working on an upgrade of the Google Map interface for the program that should make it easier to use. He has received little information to date on veliger sampling and the database is almost all data from volunteer monitoring w/ Portland Samplers.

He would really like some feed-back from the Team on the database. What do you like, don't like about it and what would you like to see added. He also requested another copy of the PSU database on the volunteer monitoring program as his hard-drive crashed recently.

WIT Video Presentation – Bill

Bill attempted to show the latest and final version of the WIT video during lunch, but was once again foiled by bad equipment. He did hand-out a very preliminary version of the WIT manual that will be packaged with each copy of the video along with 10 copies of the new plastic hotline card.

CRB Emergency Response Plan – Stephen, Paul, Greg Kovalchuk, Jim Athearn, Bruce Southerland

Paul and Stephen have been asked to make a presentation on the Columbia Basin Zebra Mussel Response Plan to the National Invasive Species Commission in January 2007.

Greg presented on the areas and extent of potential impact of zebra mussels at hydroelectric dams and on fish passage in the Columbia Basin.

Comments are being received on the draft plan, go to 100thmeridian.org

New Zealand Mudsail Update – Paul, Steve Wells

Paul and Steve updated the group in Robyn's absence. The discovery of NZMS in the Deschutes River in Oregon has raised awareness of the issue in that state. They are found throughout the system. Robyn is working with fly-fishing groups to develop a program similar to the Clean Marina or Master Gardner programs that encourage equipment cleaning and disinfection of waders, boots and other equipment.

Paul has a grant for \$15,000 and has put-up an additional \$10,000 from the Region 1 ANS budget for NZMS prevention activities in Oregon and Washington. Considering setting-up wash stations and providing something other than scrub brushes to help the states prevent the spread.

Paul is contacting wader manufactures to get them involved in a solution since waders and boots are considered the most common way in which NZMS are moved between watersheds. West Virginia has had success treating water supplies to remove NZMS using CO2 and cyclonic separators

Eileen mentioned that they have seen populations of NZMS decline and even disappear from some stream systems in the last couple of years. They are now gone from the Madison River and from a private hatchery water supply, two of the first Montana systems to become contaminated in the 1990's.

Mid-Columbia River ANS Survey – Steve Wells

Steve passed-out a map showing all sampling sites for the MCRANS survey which included the area from Bonneville Dam to Priest Rapids Dam on the Columbia and from the mouth to Lower Granite Dam on the Snake River. All sampling was completed last summer but samples and data have not been analyzed yet. It may take up to a year to complete the report.

Plan for Muskie Brood Stock Development in Washington – Pam

Pam indicated that there was a plan by her agency to use Newman Lake near Spokane to maintain Muskie brood-stock. The proposal was withdrawn for further analyses, but could resurface next year. The problem is that Minnesota, their regular source of tiger Muskie to maintain a small stocking program in Washington, is infected by a virus and can no longer be used.

If your agency is interested in receiving a copy of the SEPA document when it comes-out next year, the group suggested that you contact WDFW to request a copy be mailed to you during the comment period. Most agencies represented on the Team did not get a chance to review the earlier proposal.

Ten-Minute Updates

06-07 Sport Shows – Stephen/Jim/Susan

The following Sport/Outdoor shows will be “worked” during 06-07;

The Fly-fishing Expo in Denver - Jim

Outdoor shows in Bozeman and Billings Montana – Eileen

Sacramento Outdoor show – Jim

Bellevue – Jim

Redman, OR – Jim

Spokane – Jim

Children’s sunglasses, key chains and sunglass cords will be this year’s handouts. Contact Jim, Stephen or Susan if you’re interested in helping-out with a show this year.

Idaho ANS Plan – Fred

Phil Bandy has moved to become the Deputy Director at the Idaho Department of Agriculture. IDFG has hired a local contractor (Jim Hinson) to write the plan and hope to have a draft ready by spring of 2007. PSMFC is providing some additional funding to complete the plan.

Eileen said that Montana planned to revise its plan by May 2007.

PNAMP – Paul and Stephen

The Pacific NW Aquatic Monitoring Program has held a meeting recently to find out what types of monitoring are being done for ANS in the Region. Several members of the CRB ANS Team attended. Paul and others will continue to work with this group to add ANS to on-going monitoring programs.

Goby Update – Paul

1st and only confirmed sighting of the Amur Goby has been in an E.F. Lewis River backwater area in 2004-05 and in the Crims Island area of the lower Columbia River in 2006. Genetic material from the E.F. Lewis was sent to Japan for analyses and matched those found in the Sea of Japan.

WDFW did extensive sampling in the E.F. Lewis backwater this summer and could not find any gobies in 2006. We are currently looking for information on impact of the Amur goby on salmonid populations. Some USFWS funding may be needed for control/eradication if population increases or we find that impacts are serious to native fishes.

Next meeting was scheduled for February 28, 2007 at Heathman Lodge Vancouver, Washington

To Do List – 10/18/06 CRBANS Team Meeting

1. Everyone should visit a pet store between now and our next meeting to see for themselves the variety of exotic ANS available there.
2. Let Paul know if your agency has money to contribute toward the printing of the new Columbia Basin ANS publication.
3. Paul will continue to track the goby issue.
4. Steve Wells will to send copy of volunteer substrate sampling database changes to Dave Britton.
5. Pam will keep the group updated on Washington's Muskie proposal.
6. Send any success stories on control/eradication of ANS to Joan
7. Pam will forward the aquarists blob website to the group.
8. The Port of Portland may have room for another sampler on a dredge monitoring boat in the lower Columbia River or may be able to collect data. Contact Marla at the Port of Portland for further details.