

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

**Tuesday and Wednesday, April 17-18, 2007**

**Mobile, Alabama**

Chairman David Yeager called the meeting to order at 9:10 am. The meeting began with introductions of the Panel members and guests. The following were in attendance:

**Members**

Diane Altsman, EPA/GOMP, Stennis Space Center, MS  
Harry Blanchet, LDWF, Baton Rouge, LA  
Mike Brainard, MDMR, Biloxi, MS  
Paul Carangelo, Port of Corpus Christi Authority, Corpus Christi, TX  
Earl Chilton, TPWD, Austin, TX  
Steven de Kozlowski, SCDNR, Columbia, SC  
Pam Fuller, U.S. Geological Survey, Gainesville, FL  
Lisa Gonzalez, Houston Advanced Research Center, The Woodlands, TX  
Scott Hardin, FFWCC, Tallahassee, FL  
Leslie Hartman, AL Marine Resources Division, Dauphin Island, AL  
Ted Hendrickx, Georgia DNR, Social Circle, GA  
Chuck Jacoby, University of Florida/Florida Sea Grant, Gainesville, FL  
Herb Kumpf, At-Large Member, Panama City, Florida  
Roberto Mendoza, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon, Mexico  
Harriet Perry, GCRL, Ocean Springs, MS  
Bob Pitman, USFWS, Albuquerque, NM  
George Ramseur, Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain, Ocean Springs, MS  
David Rice, GSMFC, Ocean Springs, MS  
Lance Robinson, TPWD, Dickinson, TX  
Don Schmitz, FDEP, Tallahassee, FL  
John Teem, FL Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Tallahassee, FL  
Jay Troxel, USFWS, Atlanta, GA  
David W. Yeager, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, Mobile, AL  
Bill Zattau, USACE - Jacksonville District, Jacksonville, FL

**Staff**

Nancy K. Marcellus, GSMFC, Ocean Springs, MS

**Others**

Arpita Choudhury, NOAA/NOS CCEHBR, Charleston, SC  
Mike Eubanks, USACE - Mobile District, Mobile, AL  
Susan M. Hennington, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans, LA  
Ronald R. Lukens, GSMFC, Ocean Springs, MS  
James A. Morris, Jr., NOAA/National Ocean Service, Beaufort, NC  
Scott Newsham, ANS Task Force, Washington, DC

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -2-

**Public Comment**

Yeager provided the opportunity for public comment. No public comments were received.

**Review and Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was approved with the following changes:

- Remove Information Management Work Group from the breakout session and work group reports
- Lisa Gonzalez will give the Galveston Bay Activities Update for Jim Lester
- The SEAFWA Update will be combined with the South Carolina report.

At this time Chairman Yeager presented Ron Lukens with a plaque of appreciation on behalf of the Panel for his many hours of service and guidance of the Panel.

**Review and Approval of Minutes (10/4-5/2006)**

**Steve de Kozlowski made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 4-5, 2006 meeting held in Charleston, South Carolina. Leslie Hartman seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.**

**Membership Considerations**

David Rice, Program Coordinator for the invasives species program at the Commission, was named as the representative for GSMFC. GSMFC is a standing member of the Panel.

Lance Robinson from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in Dickinson, Texas, was nominated as a marine member from Texas. Earl Chilton added that it would be advantageous to the Panel to add a marine member from Texas. Lukens mentioned that the Panel has the disposition to add seats as needed. **Chilton made the motion to add Lance Robinson as a marine member from the State of Texas. S. de Kozlowski seconded the motion and the Panel approved the new member.**

The next membership consideration was for a university representative, a seat which was formally held by Bruce Thompson. There were three nominations for this seat.

**Harry Blanchet made the motion to nominate Marty O'Connell from the University of New Orleans. The motion was seconded by Harriet Perry.**

**John Teem made the motion to nominate Jeff Hill from the University of Florida. The motion was seconded by Pam Fuller.**

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -3-

**Earl Chilton made the motion to nominate Thomas Arsuffi from Texas Tech. The motion was seconded by Leslie Hartman.**

Panel members Blanchet, Teem, and Chilton, spoke on behalf of their nominee. The Panel then took a vote by written ballot. With the majority vote, Marty O'Connell will be offered the university seat.

The At-Large membership formerly held by Jim Kruse was discussed. **Herb Kumpf made a motion to offer the At-Large membership to Ron Lukens. Earl Chilton seconded the motion and Lukens was unanimously offered the membership.**

Next the Panel discussed the Department of Agriculture seat which has remained vacant. Chilton offered the name of John Goolsby as a possibility. Scott Newsham offered his help from the national level. At this time it was decided to try to address at the regional level. Chilton and Schmitz offered to investigate some leads for this Panel member.

Kumpf brought up the vacancy of the tribal member. Lukens mentioned that he had made some contacts with a regional association but received little interest. The Panel asked Newsham to assist with the tribal member through the National Task Force.

**ANS Task Force Update**

Scott Newsham provided the ANS Task Force Update. He presented a "Certificate of Service" to Ron Lukens as the longest standing member of the National Task Force.

The ANSTF met May 24-26, 2006 in Hyannis, Massachusetts. The following decisions were made:

- Approved submittal of a letter from the ANSTF co-chairs in support of a proposed national invasive species merit badge for the Boy Scouts of America.
- Created an ad hoc working group to review the ANS Program document and ANSTF strategic plan.
- Recommended that USFWS funds available for state/interstate ANS management plans be allocated on an equal share basis (such as an equal amount for each plan).
- Approved the Louisiana ANS management plan.
- Supported development of a nutria NMP under the leadership of Steve Kendrot (APHIS).
- If no major problems are identified by ANSTF members during their review, approved forwarding the New Zealand mudsnail NMP to the *Federal Register* for publication for public comment once ANSTF member comments are considered.
- Approved forwarding the Asian carp NMP to the *Federal Register* for publication for public comment once ANSTF member comments are considered.
- Approved forwarding the *Invasive Species Guide to Pathway Definition and Risk Prioritization* (including pathway prioritization tools and methodologies) to NISC for action.

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -4-

- Agreed to incorporate a theme into future ANSTF meetings and devote at least one day to focused discussions on that topic. (Rapid response was selected as the theme for the fall 2006 meeting.)

The next meeting of the ANSTF was held in Arlington, Virginia on November 7-9, 2006. The following decisions were made:

- Approved definition of “rapid response,” pending the addition of qualifying language about economics being part of the assessment.
- Approved cosponsorship of a symposium on genetic methods of biological control of invasive fish as the opportunity presents itself.
- Confirmed Kim Bogenschutz (Iowa DNR) as co-chair of the MRBP.
- Confirmed David Yeager (Mobile Bay National Estuary Program) as chair and Earl Chilton (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department) as vice-chair of the GSARP.
- Authorized Executive Secretary to work as necessary to amend the Intel ISEF rules to incorporate concerns about nonnative species in science fairs.

The next meeting of the ANSTF will be held May 8-10, 2007 in Erie, Pennsylvania. The meeting will focus on state management plans, which seems to be one of the biggest issues for the Task Force. There was discussion about the lack of funding in the southeast region. **Pam Fuller made a motion that a letter be drafted by the chair expressing the Panel’s concerns about the lack of funding in the region for state management plans. There are 5 state plans under development which will be up for review in the near future. The draft letter should be sent the Panel for comments. After Panel approval the letter should be forwarded to the National Task Force. The motion was seconded by Herb Kumpf and approved by the Panel.**

**Status of State Plans/Program Updates**

The following state plan/program updates were provided (due to poor recording quality additional information can be obtained from the individual representatives).

Florida - Don Schmitz and Scott Hardin

Alabama - Leslie Hartman

Mississippi - Mike Brainard and written report from Dennis Riecke

Louisiana - Harry Blanchet

Texas - Earl Chilton and Lance Robinson

Georgia - Ted Hendrickx

South Carolina - Steve de Kozlowski

Mexico - Roberto Mendoza

Galveston Bay - Lisa Gonzalez

# **GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES MINUTES**

Page -5-

## **Data Reporting Process**

### State Program Components

State members of the Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel on Aquatic Invasives Species (GSARP) have either developed or are in the process of developing a state management plan for aquatic invasive species. These various plans and drafts contain a variety of common components, including the following:

- Early (and other) detection
- Rapid (and other) response
- Trends analysis
- Pathways analysis
- Risk (and other) analysis
- Map creation

### Federally Based Program Services

Each of the above program components is heavily data dependent, except for early detection which is a data collection effort. In addition, each of these program components has a need for services provided by the Nonindigenous Aquatic Species (NAS) Database Program and the associated Alert System. The NAS Database program is the national scale database that contains reports of the occurrence of non-native species and their locations, using data from both literature accounts and direct reports. The NAS Alert System uses the data in and reported to the NAS Database to generate alerts on species reported in new locations using point data (in some cases) and U.S. Geological Survey Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) designations to represent the locations. The NAS Database and Alert System should be considered integral program components for each of the state programs. In order to maximize the benefit of these two federal program services to state and federal efforts to prevent and manage/control aquatic invasive species, the GSARP has developed this document to establish a process that outlines steps for reporting new occurrences of non-native aquatic species to the NAS Database Program.

The Experts Database is another national scope service that should be included in the operations of state aquatic invasive species programs. This service, started by a joint recommendation of the Regional Panels, is housed by the ANS Task Force. Data must be put into the system, after which it can be used to assist all programs in identifying experts to provide critical information for prevention and management/control activities.

### Reporting Process

1. A non-native species is reported through the state program;
2. The state agency representatives verify the report;
  - a. Obtain a specimen, if possible. If not, try to obtain a picture,

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -6-

- b. Identify species (either internally or through an identified expert,
  - c. Get location information (try to get latitude and longitude if possible. If not, try to get a geographic reference point to which a latitude and longitude, or at least a HUC, can be assigned),
  - d. Get other pertinent, associated information.
- 3. When verified, immediately report the observation to the NAS Database Program;
  - 4. At the same time, initiate internal program processes to assess the need for rapid response or other program activity.

This process is presented to the GSARP for consideration and adoption. If adopted, state programs should then formally incorporate these three federally-based services into their programs and participate in them through input and use.

If the Panel approves this process, it will be presented at the next Panel heads meeting as a process to adopt on a national level.

**Herb Kumpf made a motion to adopt this process as a recommendation for state plans under construction and to incorporate into state plan revisions. The process will also be presented at the next Panel heads meeting as a process to adopt nationally. The motion was seconded by Ted Hendrickx and approved by the Panel.**

**Work Group Reports**

Education/Outreach Work Group

Chuck Jacoby reviewed the work group's activity of developing a protocol for INTEL on invasive species regarding science fair projects. The guidelines are now posted on the ANS Task Force website "Reducing the Risk of Introducing or Spreading Nonindigenous Plants, Animals, and Microorganisms through Science and Engineering Fair Projects."

Jacoby also mentioned that he attended the ISEF meeting held in Albuquerque, New Mexico on May 15, 2007.

Other efforts include the National Sea Grant project proposal; inventory of databases; and looking at teacher organizations to form strategic relationships to get the issue of invasive species in the classrooms.

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -7-

Research/Development Work Group

GSARP Research Priorities:

1. Long term studies on established nonnative species to understand their effects on other species (or lack of effects), with a particular focus on understanding why a species is invasive in one state and not in another.
2. Increased systematic work on nonnative species that are difficult to identify, with particular emphasis on catfish and channeled apples snails.
3. Multi-state approaches to address current species of concern including *Caulerpa*, hydrilla, Giant Salvinia, green mussels, channeled apples snails, Asian carp, Asian swamp eels, crayfish, and nutria.
4. Rapid assessments in both marine and fresh water systems, to provide a current snapshot of the ecosystem that can be used (1) as a baseline for the detection of nonnative species, (2) for monitoring the movement of species after extreme meteorological events (such as hurricanes), and (3) to assess the effect of land development on the spread of invasive species.
5. Novel chemical, biological and mechanical control methods for the control of nonnative species.
6. Documentation of the current control costs and economic impacts of nonnative aquatic species in the Panel states.

A deadline of Friday, April 20, 2007 was established to submit any changes to these research priorities. After that date, David Rice can forward the list to Scott Newsham.

A deadline of Friday, April 20, 2007 was also established to submit names for the tier 1 level of the experts database.

Other activities include the list of species of concern for the Gulf region. The work group will be taking a closer look at the list and bring in states that were not included in the first list for their input.

A new topic will be to put together a list of research ongoing in the Gulf and how those projects mesh with the GSARP research priorities.

**Species Update**

Pam Fuller provided the Panel with the species update for November 2006-March 2007.

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -8-

**Lionfish Research Update**

James Morris gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Biological and Ecological Assessments of the Invasive Lionfish in the Atlantic.” This presentation provided a broader picture on how NOAA has responded to the lionfish issue.

Future directions include:

- Ecological and fishery impacts
- Coast-wide abundance surveys
- Passive collection methods
- Market development.

**Gulf Coast-South Atlantic & the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian**

Bob Pitman, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator  
Southwest Region - FWS

The goals of this Initiative are to 1) prevent the spread of zebra mussels and other aquatic nuisance species in the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian jurisdictions and west and 2) monitor and control zebra mussels and other aquatic nuisance species if detected in these areas. To achieve these goals, the following components and objectives have been developed:

1. Information and Education: Inform and educate the public about the biology, impact, and pathways for spreading zebra mussels and what actions they can take to prevent their spread.
2. Voluntary Boat Inspections and Boater Surveys: Prevent the spread of zebra mussels in the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian jurisdictions and west through voluntary boat inspections and boater surveys.
3. Involve Those Who Haul Boats for Commercial Purposes: Prevent the transport of zebra mussels on boats and related equipment hauled commercially or for professional fishing tournaments.
4. Monitoring: Establish monitoring sites on waters west of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian to determine the presence or absence of zebra mussels and other ANS in the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian jurisdictions and west.
5. Rapid Response: Eradicate or contain zebra mussels if detected.
6. Other Pathways Identification and Risk Evaluation: Establish study/research program for identification of other pathways which could cause introductions of zebra mussels and other related aquatic nuisance species west of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian. Evaluation of these pathways and development of specific plans of action to address these identified potential risk.



**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -9-

7. Evaluation: Ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian Initiative in preventing the westward spread of zebra mussels and other ANS.

**National Fish Habitat Initiative**

- HACCP planning protects habitat by preventing unintended spread of species and associated pathogens.
- Overlapping HACCP plans developed by agencies and organizations increases national biosecurity for fish habitat.
- Add HACCP to NFHI proposals.

**SE EPPC Invasive Species Mapping Project and Incident Command System Training**

Accurate, comprehensive data on the distribution of invasive weed species can be a valuable asset to assist managers, researchers, and policy makers in prioritizing management strategies, identifying leading edges of actively spreading infestations, and to rapidly responding to detections of new invasive species. Unfortunately, much of the current distribution data for invasive plants in the southeastern U.S. is very incomplete, often available only to a county level and, generally, not available online. In response to this lack of information, the Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council (SE-EPPC) has initiated an invasive species mapping project designed by the University of Georgia Bugwood Network. The SE-EPPC mapping project seeks to provide more complete data on the distribution of selected invasive plant species across the South by: 1. Compiling current data from herbarium records, literature, and current on-going projects; 2. Creation of new data using volunteers from the state EPPCs; and 3. Providing user-friendly access to the data online at the SE-EPPC's website [www.se-eppc.org](http://www.se-eppc.org). These data can be used to aid early detection/rapid response programs and can increase the accuracy of predictive modeling projects.

The project will compile data from existing on-line projects and data collected by the SE-EPPC project to produce species distribution maps. All data collected will be compliant with North American Weed Management Area (NAWMA) mapping standards and can be shared with most major mapping projects. Descriptive features of the infestation, such as habitat, infested area, and abundance are included within the data. To ensure data validity, herbarium vouchers for recorded infestations are encouraged for submission to a local herbarium. Additionally, identification-level images can be uploaded with the infestation distribution data. States in the Southeastern United States with an active EPPC or Invasive Plant Council (IPC) can be involved. Each state is responsible for appointing a state representative that oversees recruiting and training volunteers and reviews the data entered for that state. Invasive species currently included in the project list are from a compilation of each state EPPC invasive species list, state noxious weed list, and relevant (likely to be introduced into the Southeast) federal noxious weeds. This list continues to evolve and additions are easily added to the project list.

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -10-

The data can be viewed via an online mapping program at [www.se-eppc.org/mapping](http://www.se-eppc.org/mapping). Distribution data can be graphically displayed as point-data or county-level maps. This project uses Google Maps web service to allow users to overlay the point data with road maps, satellite images, and topographic maps. With the cooperation of the state EPPCs, this project can help fill in the gaps in the distribution data and provide users with an easy to operate method of retrieving the data.

**FEMA Independent Study Program: IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System, I-100**

Incident Command training is being developed and offered for a variety of disciplines, including Federal Disaster Workers, Public Works, Law Enforcement, and Public Health. All of the ICS training offered through these courses is consistent. However, the various versions include examples and exercises specific to each of these disciplines.

ICS 100, Introduction to the Incident Command System, introduces the Incident Command System (ICS) and provides the foundation for higher level ICS training. This course describes the history, features and principles, and organizational structure of the Incident Command System. It also explains the relationship between ICS and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The Emergency Management Institute developed ICS 100, Introduction to ICS (IS-100) course, in collaboration with:

- National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- USFA's National Fire Programs Branch

Audience: Persons involved with emergency planning, response, or recovery efforts.

**Update on Revision of "Help Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers Brochure"**

Dennis Riecke (MS) submitted a proposal to the Panel for funding to modify a brochure that was developed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and was reprinted with agency specific contact information and agency logos by the Mississippi River Basin Panel ANS.

The proposal specified that brochure would be modified to include the agency specific contact information and agency logos for Mexico and member states of the Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species. The proposal specified that 80,000 brochures would be printed assuming a cost of 6 cents per copy.

The proposal was funded via a Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Subaward for \$4,800.00. The subaward states that "Distribution costs will be borne by the individual agencies and participators." Project is to be completed before December 31, 2007.

Dennis contacted the Minnesota DNR and they granted permission for us to modify their brochure. An authorization form to do so will be sent to Dennis. Dennis secured assistance for making the

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -11-

modifications from the MDWFP printing staff. Minnesota DNR will send a disc containing the Endesign version CS2 file.

Roberto Mendoza has offered to translate the text into Spanish for use in Mexico.

Minnesota DNR staff stated that the cost per copy may be higher than 6 cents, which would reduce the number each state and Mexico receives.

**Future Actions:**

- If the Panel members wish to proceed with this project, Dennis will sign the subaward and mail the documents to initiate work on the modification. Dennis did not want to sign the subaward documents without first obtaining approval from Minnesota and determining whether agency printing department staff could assist to accomplish the modifications.
- All Panel members need to secure permission from their employers to submit contact information (name, address, and phone number) and agency logos for inclusion on the brochure.
- Panel members need to decide if they want to replace some or all of the brochure pictures to show plants and animals more likely to be encountered in the Panel's geographic range. If so, we need to secure permission to use these photos and they need to be supplied in a format compatible with the Endesign file.
- Panel members need to agree to provide funding for shipping their brochure to one location and handle distribution within their geographic area.

Chuck Jacoby, along with the Education and Outreach Work Group agreed to assist Dennis with the brochure revision.

**Next Meeting**

Miami, Florida was selected as the location and the first week in November was selected as the date for the next Panel meeting. A backup location of Houston, Texas was also chosen, as well as a backup date of the first week of October.

**Gambian Rat Eradication in Grassy Key**

Scott Hardin provided a PowerPoint presentation on Gambian Rat Eradication.

2001 - 8 rats escape from captive breeder

June 2004 - USFWS captures first rat

**GULF & SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PANEL  
ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES  
MINUTES**

Page -12-

August 2004 - Preliminary trapping by Texas A&M, FWC, USFWS

March 2005 - Multi-agency meeting to establish eradication plan

June 2006 - Pilot eradication on Crawl Key

January 2007 - Eradication initiated

600 bait stations installed; May completion target; \$150,000 spent; \$50,000 to complete Phase 1.

**Public Comment**

Yeager provided the opportunity for public comment. No public comments were received.

*There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.*