

Mississippi's ANS Update
Gulf and South Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species
April 2010 Meeting – Gulfport, MS
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New Activities since November 2009

The State Management Plan for Aquatic Invasive Species has undergone state review and public comments were received. It was sent to the National ANS Task Force in January 2010 for their review. Once it is revised with comments received back from the National ANS Task Force we plan to resubmit it to them for final approval at their Fall 2010 meeting. We began working on the plan in the spring of 2003.

Sent objection letters for the culture of Red Claw Crawfish to the aquaculture permitting agency, the Mississippi Dept. of Agriculture & Commerce and the applicant.

Responded to Nicole Furlan with SeaGrant concerning state “white list” of species for AIS Database.

Sent letter to Aquascape Online (online pet store in Bellville, NJ) informing them since 1969 it has been illegal to ship piranhas into the State of Mississippi. We received a report from a citizen that he had purchased piranhas from this firm. Agency employees took possession of these fish.

Ongoing Activities

Represented the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks on the Mississippi Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force. Last meeting was Nov. 2007.

Continued distributing “Stop Aquatic Hitchhiker” cards along with all boat registrations or renewals that are mailed out.

Continued printing The Stop Aquatic Hitchhiker logo and bullet list in the annual regulation guides --- *Mississippi Outdoor Digest* and *Guide to Mississippi Saltwater Fishing*.

Links to the Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species and the Gulf and South Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species, Stop Aquatic Hitchhiker and Habitattitude websites are on the department website.

The Mississippi Museum of Natural Science has a permanent exhibit on exotic species.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources has been monitoring and treating Giant Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) in the Pascagoula River system.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resource has secured Mississippi Coastal Impact Assistance Program funding authority to hire a Conservation Resource Biologist under a 4 year contract to form an Aquatic Nuisance Species Advisory Council and begin implementation of action items contained in the Mississippi State Management Plan for Aquatic Invasive Species. We hope to fill this position soon.

Future Activities

Implement the activities specified in the Mississippi State Management Plan for Aquatic Invasive Species.

Compose freshwater fishing bait regulations to specify what bait can be legally, sold, possessed, transported and used in Mississippi.

Amend administrative Public Notice to prohibit the possession of live snakeheads and Asian swamp eels in Mississippi. Currently only live walking catfish and piranhas are prohibited in Mississippi. We plan to prohibit the stocking of any nonnative fish except triploid grass carp and goldfish into private waters. (People want to stock tilapia for largemouth bass forage).

Adopt list of approved, restricted and prohibited species as specified in MS Code 49-7-80. Amend list of approved, restricted and prohibited species as specified in the public notice that regulates aquaculture activities in Mississippi.

Pursue licensing of retail bait outlets selling live freshwater fishing bait.