

Branch of Aquatic Invasive Species
Update for 2015 ANSTF meeting

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

ANSTF Executive Secretary

The Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program leads the Service's efforts to implement its National Aquatic Invasive Species Program, which includes co-chairing and administering the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF). The Executive Secretary position has been vacant since the retirement of Ms. Susan Mangin at the beginning of March 2014. BAIS has a planned series of rotations for the position until such time as it is filled. Laura Norcutt has been the acting Executive Secretary for the past several months, during which the Spring (May) and Fall (November) 2014 and spring 2015 ANSTF meetings were planned and implemented. Laura will be retiring the end of May 2015. After Laura's departure, Don MacLean will be the acting Executive Secretary until the position is filled.

Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers! (SAH!)

FAC has confirmed with the Department of Transportation that Federal law and corresponding laws in several other States regulate the use of traffic control device images in advertisements. To remedy this issue, we plan on developing new guidelines for using the SAH! brand on large advertising billboards; however, until that guidance is final, we are recommending that: 1) Existing billboards do not have to be immediately taken down, but do recommend that the stop sign feature from the logo be removed once contracts expire on billboard advertisements; 2) Any new or updated billboard signage use the letter "o" rather than an image of a stop sign for "o" in the word "Stop"; and, 3) Campaign partners comply with their State's DOT regulations since using the word "Stop" may be prohibited in outdoor advertisements.

Concerns have been raised by campaign partners with respect to Wildlife Forever seeking a trademark on the "Clean, Drain, Dry" tagline. This tagline has been used since at least 2008 to communicate best management practices for preventing the spread of AIS. Partners are raising concern with how a trademark on the tagline may affect their implementation of the campaign. It is likely partners will challenge the trademark if the trademark application proceeds.

Habitattitude

No update needed: Marshall Meyers will be provided an update to the Task Force.

Summit on Invasive Species

No update needed, Brian Goodwin provided an update to the ANSTF.

Quagga Zebra Mussel Action Plan (QZAP)

No update needed. David Britton provided an update on QZAP and QZAP funding through FWS.

Asian Carp update

No update needed. Kelly Baerwaldt and Sam Finney will provide an update to the ANSTF.

Budget information reiterated:

FY15 Asian Carp Budget Allocation

- In FY14, the Service received base funding in the amount of \$3.5 M to support early detection, rapid assessment, rapid response, containment, and control actions for Asian Carps in priority areas or watersheds. Funds were allocated as follows: \$2.9 M to the Great Lakes (including CAWS); \$400,000 to the Upper Mississippi River watershed; \$200,000 to the Ohio River basin.
- In FY15, the Service received a \$2.0 M base funded add to support efforts to monitor, assess, contain, and control Asian carps, and the majority of this add was allocated to the Upper Mississippi River and Ohio River basins.
- The President's FY16 Budget Request asks for an additional \$2.4 M in Service base funding to monitor and control the spread of Asian Carps.
- If received, this would bring total Service base funding for Asian Carp to \$7.9 M in FY16, which would be allocated as follows: \$5.3 M to the Great Lakes to support existing efforts and to fully wean the Service off existing Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Asian Carp Framework funds; and \$2.6 M to augment existing funding and management efforts outside the Great Lakes as described in the *Management and Control Plan for Bighead, Black, Grass, and Silver Carps in the United States* (National Plan).
- Full implementation of the National Plan is estimated to cost \$20 - \$25 M annually.

INJURIOUS WILDLIFE (LACEY ACT)

Multi-species proposed rule: BAIS has prepared a multi-species proposed rule to list 10 freshwater fish (Amur sleeper, crucian carp, Eurasian minnow, European perch, Nile perch, Prussian carp, roach, stone moroko, wels catfish, and zander) and 1 crayfish (yabby) as injurious species. All species have a high climate match in parts of the United States, a history of invasiveness outside their native ranges, and, with one exception (zander in Spiritwood Lake, North Dakota), are not currently found in U.S. ecosystems. We used Ecological Risk Screening Summaries to obtain climate-matching and other information. This is the first rule we are proposing since we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) in 2013 that outlines an agreement regarding the voluntary refrain from importation of species not yet in trade in the United States. The draft rule, environmental assessment, and economic analysis are under review in FAC. We anticipate being able to publish for public comment in mid-2015. To see this rule move forward expeditiously, Region 3 has offered assistance to FAC HQ to help offset workload and competing agency priorities.

Large Constrictor Snake final rule: In 2010, BAIS published a proposed rule to list nine species of large constrictor snakes as injurious species. In 2012, four species were listed (Burmese and two other pythons, plus the yellow anaconda). In 2014, we reopened the comment period on the five remaining constrictor snakes (reticulated python, green anaconda, Beni anaconda, DeSchauensee's anaconda, and boa constrictor). In March, we published the final rule to list the reticulated python and the three anacondas, but withdrew the proposal to list the boa. As soon as

the second final rule published, the plaintiffs for the lawsuit against the first final rule filed an amendment to add the four newly listed species to their challenge. The plaintiffs also filed an application for a temporary restraining order to keep this second rule from going into effect on April 9. In a hearing on April 7, the judge granted a temporary stay, so the rule became effective on April 9. The judge is expected to rule in the coming weeks if the regulation stays in effect or if it will be vacated. The complaints in the lawsuit are still on the table.

Categorical Exclusion (CatEx) under NEPA for the injurious wildlife listing under the Lacey Act:

The CatEx would allow the Service to list species more efficiently by precluding the need to conduct redundant NEPA analyses. BAIS published the proposed CatEx in the Federal Register in July 2013, reviewed and addressed the more than 5,000 comments, and composed a draft final notice. That draft is with the Solicitors' Office for preliminary questions before moving to surname and for coordination with the Council on Environmental Quality. Efforts continue to complete this important work.

Salamander Chytrid Fungus: An emerging fungal disease with the potential to negatively affect native salamanders may enter the United States through ongoing importations of live, nonnative salamanders, according to a paper that published in *Science* in October 2014. The fungus (*Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* or "Bsal") is related to the already widespread and fatal amphibian chytrid fungus known as Bd. Bsal is not yet known to be present in the United States. The Service is the only agency with the authority to prevent its introduction into the United States. BAIS has been working with the Branch of Hatchery Operations and Applied Science and other partners on options to prevent this fungus from entering the United States, including an Injurious Wildlife listing under the Lacey Act for salamander species susceptible to infection by or carriers of Bsal.

Risk screening tools: FAC (with leadership from Regions 3 and 5) has developed a series of tools to help manage invasive species risks from the live animal trade. The tools include: 1) the Ecological Risk Screening Summary (ERSS) process, which helps to predict the invasiveness of imported, nonnative species; 2) the Bayesian Network analysis, which helps assess the risk of species determined to be uncertain through ERSS; and 3) the Risk Assessment Mapping Program (RAMP), a model that uses international databases of climate, individual species distribution, and other factors to match known species climate requirements with predicted climate regimes across North America (current year, 2050, and 2070). All three tools have recently gone through or are currently undergoing peer review per OMB policies for "influential science." The ERSS and Bayesian Network peer review summaries are now available to the public on the Office of the Science Advisor's Peer Review website

http://www.fws.gov/science/peer_review_agenda.html. The RAMP model is currently undergoing peer review. There is strong interest from partners in using these tools. For example, the State of Michigan enacted Public Act 537 with strong bipartisan support earlier this year. The law establishes new protections to minimize the risk of invasive species in the State and says that the State shall use the risk assessment protocol for aquatic species developed by the Service. BAIS is also in process of completing an updated SOP for use by the agency and State and industry partners when developing risk screens.