

**AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES TASK FORCE:
MINUTES OF THE 2011 SPRING MEETING
MAY 4–6, 2011**

On May 4–6, 2011, the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) met at the Hilton Little Rock in Little Rock, Arkansas. Decisions and action items are listed below, followed by a summary of the two-day meeting.

Decisions

The ANSTF made the following decisions:

- Approved meeting agenda and minutes for the fall 2010 ANSTF meeting
- Agreed to support development of an ad-hoc committee to update the *Strategic Plan* and propose methods to track accomplishments. The ad-hoc committee will include the following members: Al Cofrancesco, Linda Nelson, Stephanie Carman, Adrianna Muir, Susan Mangin, Peg Brady, Cindy Kolar, Bill Bolen, and Meg Modley. James Ballard, Karen McDowell, and Phil Moy will find panel members to serve on the committee.
- Agreed to support the development of an ad-hoc committee to develop, implement, and evaluate a pilot annual awards program. The ad-hoc committee will include the following members: Paul Heimowitz, Michele Tremblay and Susan Mangin. Karen McDowell will find a member from the Western Regional Panel.
- Agreed to work with Marshall Meyers and Mike Hoff to review industry best management practices (BMPs) for water gardens.
- Approved formation of a Lionfish ad-hoc committee.

New Action Items

The ANSTF assigned the following action items:

- (Executive Secretary) Post Incident Command System (ICS) contact information on the ANSTF Web site
- (Don MacLean) Look into posting the state progress reports on the ANSTF Web site

1. Welcome and Preliminary Business

Peg Brady, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Liaison to the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) and ANSTF, was acting on behalf of NOAA Co-Chair Dr. Larry Robertson, Assistant Secretary of Conservation and Management and NOAA Deputy Administrator, who could not attend. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Co-Chair Bryan Arroyo, Assistant Director for Fisheries and Habitat Conservation, and Brady welcomed ANSTF members and observers to Little Rock, Arkansas, and thanked the Mississippi River Basin Panel (MRBP) for organizing the workshop and field trip. Brady briefly discussed National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW) and thanked everyone who supported that event. ANSTF Executive Secretary Susan Mangin, FWS, introduced herself, covered meeting logistics, announced minor changes to the agenda, and thanked everyone for attending.

Mangin reported that the *Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Charter* expires September 2011 and asked ANSTF members to review the briefing books for charter text changes. A balance of geographical and functional membership was highlighted. Finally, Mangin reported that contact information and resumes of new ANSTF members must now be forwarded to the White House liaison for vetting.

Self Introductions

ANSTF members and audience members introduced themselves.

2. Adoption of Agenda/Approval of Minutes/Review of Previous Action Items

Following introductions, the ANSTF approved the agenda for this meeting and the meeting summary for the fall 2010 meeting in Arlington, Virginia.

Mangin reviewed action items from the fall meeting:

- *Have a Federal Advisory Committee Act specialist visit to discuss roles and responsibilities (i.e., Hatch Act)*—This item has been postponed until the ANSTF charter has been revised.
- *Explore the development of an ANSTF database to track strategic plan accomplishments and report at next meeting with a model*—This item is scheduled for session 10. Susan Pasko, NOAA, distributed a spreadsheet to be completed, and a copy of the progress report was emailed to ANSTF members.
- *Review their performance elements and submit to Susan Mangin for consideration when revising the ANSTF strategic plan*—The goal of this task was to synchronize ANSTF member performance elements with the strategic plan to ensure consistency between what members are doing and what the ANSTF is doing. This item is ongoing. Once an ad hoc committee is created to update the strategic plan, all members will be contacted for information.
- *Research their respective agency's incident command system training capabilities and report to the ANSTF at the next meeting*—This item is scheduled for session 13.
- *Consult the National Invasive Species Council about the viability of the Pathways Working Group to address pathways. If the Pathways Working Group is not viable, Susan Mangin will request volunteers to staff this working group*—This item is scheduled for session 14.
- *Conduct an incident command system needs assessment and report to the ANSTF if applicable*—This item can be discussed during session 13 if the panels have input.

• *Restructure committees*—The ANSTF now has three standing committees (Communication, Education, and Outreach; Research; and Prevention) and four ad-hoc committees.

Although not an action item, the Great Lakes Panel (GLP) submitted recommendations to the ANSTF regarding the *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement*. The ANSTF approved the recommendations with minor changes and is developing a letter of transmittal for the recommendations that will be signed by NOAA and the FWS, and then be delivered to the Department of State and Environmental Protection Agency.

3. Informational: Host Presentation—Arkansas ANS Issues and Management Plan Overview

Mark Oliver, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC), welcomed ANSTF members to Arkansas and thanked everyone who organized and attended the evening workshop. Arkansas has a draft aquatic nuisance species (ANS) plan that was written by a task force comprised of 30 different agencies and groups, including the commercial fish farming industry. The plan will be submitted to the AGFC by June for approval and to the ANSTF soon after.

Oliver regretfully announced that some of tomorrow's tour would have to be cancelled because of flooding, including the area where snakehead eradication efforts have occurred. The first snakehead was identified in Arkansas in March 2008. Eradication efforts using rotenone successfully reduced the population—the goal was never to completely eradicate the population. Despite their initial success, spreading snakehead populations could not be stopped. Many invasive species are spreading from the south as winters become warmer. Oliver hopes that finalizing the state plan and obtaining funding will improve education and prevention.

4. Informational: Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association Aquatic Invasive Species Activities

Bobby Reed, Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association (MICRA) Chairman, described the responsibilities of MICRA and its members. Initially, invasive aquatic plants invaded the Gulf Coast. Now, aquatic invasive species (AIS) include fish species in large numbers. MICRA developed a basin-wide action plan to minimize ecological impacts of AIS in the Mississippi River Basin. Reed reported that MICRA states are extremely concerned that the *National Asian Carp Management and Control Plan* has not been implemented. Furthermore, although much work has been done to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, the southern states have not received as much attention, and Asian carp will migrate to the top of the watersheds during flood years.

This spring, a small MICRA delegation travelled to Washington DC during the NISAW. Priorities included the Asian Carp Management Plan and state funding. Reed acknowledged that spending more time speaking to their district offices first and mailing informational packets to Congressional members before their visit would have made the trip more effective. MICRA and a group of stakeholders recently developed a Scope of Work to conduct a national analysis of grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) regulation, production, triploid certification, and shipping and stocking protocol. Inconsistencies between states are a problem. Finally, MICRA continues to work with the MRBP to provide leadership in addressing AIS in the Mississippi River Basin.

Brady asked ANSTF members to provide suggestions for next year's NISAW agenda.

5. Informational: Asian Carp Expansion and Management Actions

Jason Goeckler, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP), reported that four species of Asian carp are causing concern in Kansas: black (*Mylopharyngodon piceus*), grass, bighead (*Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*), and silver (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*). Although each species has its own general negative impacts, these species outcompete other fish, leading to poor growth rates and starvation. The silver carp's leaping ability, and associated damages, is also a problem. Management actions in Kansas include control and prevention.

Fishermen may be accidentally collecting Asian carp and transporting them as bait. In response, the KDWP has increased outreach campaigns to include local television and print and have deployed temporary employees to maintain signs, report violations, and distribute information on proper bait disposal and species identification. Additional outreach is planned.

The KDWP conducted a survey to evaluate the transportation of wild caught bait to new waters and the ability of anglers to identify bait species. Existing regulations prevent bait transportation. However, survey results indicate 71% of anglers purchase their baitfish and 68% release unused baitfish. Furthermore, most anglers were not able to identify common Kansas fish. New regulations to restrict bait movement have been proposed, with planned implementation for 2012. In addition to changes in wild-caught bait regulations, KDWP is also revamping commercial bait rules in Kansas to protect against disease and the sale of non-native species. Goeckler acknowledged that finding the resources to inspect commercial bait will be difficult, but the change is necessary to protect the natural resources of Kansas.

6. Informational: Asian Carp and Reservoirs—How to Assess the Threat?

Duane Chapman, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), spoke about detrimental effects from carp: grass carp consume vegetation and increase turbidity and silver carp and bighead carp affect important lake species and recreation. Reservoirs connected to long rivers have establishment potential, and recruitment from rivers is likely to occur during high-water years. Bait bucket transfer is the most likely pathway for bighead and silver carp invasion into reservoirs without navigation locks. Escapement of fish stocked into ponds for vegetation control is probably important for grass carp introductions. Direct escapement from aquaculture is possible but not likely a problem for most reservoirs. Asian carp can survive and grow in nearly any reservoir but cannot reproduce in most. Recruitment and reproduction are fundamental for Asian carp establishment. Key parameters influencing establishment are gamete production and maturation, spawning migration and aggregation, egg drift distance and development (depends on temperature, velocity, and turbulence), and access to nursery habitat (newly emergent carp are susceptible to predators). Managers must decide where to focus control efforts. Adult access to spawning sites may be possible to control; early control is always preferred.

The next step is to understand the requirements for carp establishment in reservoirs, including exploring requirements for individual life stages and identifying the conditions with the greatest impact across life stages. Life stage requirements and physical conditions in reservoirs and tributaries can be used to model the predicted establishment potential of individual reservoirs.

7. Informational: Asian Carp Population Control in the Mississippi River Basin

Ron Brooks, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR), reported that carp population control in the Mississippi River basin has been in the planning stages since the late 1990s; primary objectives have been eradication, control, and abatement, as well as prevention and containment. Developing a commercial fishery in new markets, increasing wild harvest using bounties or contests, and developing an approved list of eradication tools will reduce the number of wild Asian carp. Current demand exists for export to China and some European and African markets, but fish handling and processing must be addressed. Existing processing facilities lack flash freezers and fish storage capacity, and new facilities can cost \$3.5 million each. Funding is desperately needed.

To promote a commercial carp industry, MICRA is becoming politically active. Additionally, the KDFWR is in the process of passing an Asian Carp Harvest Program regulation, becoming actively involved with Illinois fish exporters, and is pursuing research options. Brooks believed that marketing carp as a commercial product is the only hope to salvage sport and commercial fisheries at this time. Commercial fishermen know where and under what conditions Asian carp move, and they have the ability to fish the populations down.

An ANSTF member suggested contacting the U.S. Department of Agriculture and inquiring about existing processing facilities in Alaska. Another member recommended contacting the University of Illinois since they recently received funding to conduct an economic analysis of the Asian carp commercial market.

8. Informational: Black Carp in the Mississippi river: A Status Update

Sam Finney, FWS, reported that black carp were listed on the Lacey Act as Injurious in 2007, but State regulations for black carp are varied and unclear. Black carp have similar life history requirements and native ranges to Chinese carp, which have already invaded the United States. Black carp are used in aquaculture to control snail infestations but are also prone to accidental importation. Their likelihood of reproduction and survival is generally highest in areas where mollusks are the most imperiled.

Managing captive populations is an important component to managing this species. Estimates of black carp on farms need to be studied since escapes from flooding are unavoidable. With the recent decrease in domestic catfish farming due to food and fuel costs, facilities may switch to row crops and improperly dispose of black carp. Commercial fishermen have been capturing these fish in the wild since the 1990s; yet, as of 2007, no specific field monitoring has targeted black carp. Black carp were one of the biggest issues when developing the *Management and Control Plan for Bighead, Black, Grass, and Silver Carps in the United States*.

9. Informational: eDNA as a Tool for AIS Surveillance Monitoring

Lindsay Chadderton, The Nature Conservancy, reported that early detection, when AIS are at low densities, is imperative for control and eradication. Yet few monitoring tools are able to detect aquatic species at low densities. Molecular detection using environmental DNA (eDNA) has been popular in terrestrial and marine environments because direct observation is not required and early life history stages can be targeted. However, applying eDNA tools to freshwater systems is novel. Chadderton described the methods for using eDNA to detect Asian carp and reported on past sampling efforts. Chadderton also compared traditional monitoring methods to eDNA monitoring for Asian carp and concluded that eDNA is far more effective than traditional fisheries tools. He argued that available evidence indicates the DNA is coming from live fish because repeated sampling efforts have consistently provided positive results from some reaches, eDNA detection have subsequently been

supported with detections using traditional detection methods, and eDNA detection results are consistent with the dispersal model.

Chadderton displayed the strengths and weaknesses of eDNA. Strengths included greater detection sensitivity and wider spatial coverage, but weaknesses included false negatives and a lack of management confidence in results. Strict quality control measures, including independent audits, need to be implemented to reduce risks of false positives. Next steps include developing a Great Lakes Asian carp eDNA surveillance program and applying the tool to additional species, such as snakehead and black carp in Mississippi.

Following his presentation, Chadderton further explained his sampling methods and described possible future laboratory tools.

10. Decisional: ANSTF Strategic Plan

Brady reported on efforts to update the *Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan)*. Pasko, and Anne Marie Eich, Knauss Fellow with the FWS, have been compiling a progress report with data from federal agencies and panels regarding their accomplishments under the *Strategic Plan*. Brady asked ANSTF members to review the progress report, correct any errors, and populate any gaps. This progress report will be an important tool for updating the *Strategic Plan* and writing a Congressional report.

Mangin reviewed past work prioritizing *Strategic Plan* objectives and action items completed for those objectives, including collecting survey and monitoring data, Habitattitude™ and *Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!* campaigns, and the ANS Hotline.

The ANSTF agreed to support development of an ad-hoc committee to update the *Strategic Plan* and propose methods to track accomplishments. The ad-hoc committee will include the following members: Al Cofrancesco, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE); Linda Nelson, ACOE; Stephanie Carman, Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Adrianna Muir, Department of State; Mangin; Brady; Cindy Kolar, USGS; Bill Bolen, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and Meg Modley, Lake Champlain Basin Program. James Ballard, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission; Karen McDowell, San Francisco Estuary Partnership; and Phil Moy, Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute, will find panel members to serve on the committee.

11. Decisional: ANSTF Award Discussion

Paul Heimowitz, FWS, reviewed his proposal to revive the ANSTF award program. Heimowitz noted that an award program could recognize those who are working behind the scenes who may not always have their efforts publicly recognized. An awards program would also publicize these activities, encouraging others to take action as well as enhancing visibility of the ANSTF.

Heimowitz suggested forming a workgroup to develop nomination forms, a nomination process, award selection, award categories, and an award presentation process. Although he did not recommend a timeline, Heimowitz suggested the pilot program begin at the fall 2012 meeting. Brady suggested speaking with Laurie Williams, NISC, about possible collaboration and announcement of the awards during NISAW.

The ANSTF agreed to support the development of an ad-hoc committee to develop, implement, and evaluate a pilot annual awards program. The ad-hoc committee will include the following members: Heimowitz, Michelle Tremblay, Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species (NEANS) Panel Coordinator, and Susan Mangin. McDowell will find a member from the Western Regional Panel.

12. Discussion: National Ocean Policy Update and AIS Issues

Brady provided an update on the National Ocean Council's (NOC's) strategic action plan (SAP) development to increase awareness about this process as it enters the public comment phase. The National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, our Coasts, and the Great Lakes prioritized nine objectives to address some of the most pressing challenges facing these resources. The NOC is overseeing development of SAPs for each of the nine objectives. The NOC will release the SAP outlines for a 30-day public comment period on June 1, 2011. Public listening sessions are scheduled around the country throughout the comment period. Draft plans should be released in October 2011; final plans in February 2012. Several public involvement opportunities are available throughout the SAP development process, including several workshops.

Arroyo added that ANS need to be addressed in all nine SAPs, including the specific impacts of ANS on these ecosystems. These plans will be dynamic and updated regularly, so the ANSTF must provide input to support regional efforts, and then the ANSTF must hone in federal tools and expertise to support the ongoing regional efforts. Arroyo asked the regional panels and state representatives to provide input on the actions and how ANS issues could be further addressed.

More information about the NOC and SAPs is available at the following website:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/oceans/about>.

13. Discussion: Incident Command System Training

Bolen, reported that the EPA has a training module and funding available to provide ICS training. ICS is an emergency response system that was used to bring together multiple states, federal organizations, and Canadian provinces with jurisdiction authorities delineated in advance to create a successful Unified Command in response to Asian carp detections in the Great Lakes basin.

Greg Conover, MICRA, described his experience with online ICS training and implementation during the Asian carp responses. Conover reported that a lack of ICS training within scientific staff, senior managers, and executives can impede the process. Additional interagency communication is necessary, and projects need consistent messaging and clearly identified leadership and jurisdictional authority. Modley shared her online training experience, and Moy discussed the December incident response and his role in demobilization, which is not always included in the training exercises.

Arroyo reminded ANSTSF members that training is not enough, and the panels should organize opportunities for practice. Mangin reported that many ANSTF members may not know when training is available, so the ANSTF agreed to provide ICS training information on the ANSTF website.

14. Discussion: Prevention Committee Update

Stas Burgiel, NISC, explained that the joint Prevention Committee and its working groups support the ANSTF and NISC in implementing the Non-indigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control act of 1990 (as amended) and Executive Order 13112. Specifically, the Prevention Committee oversees active working groups; coordinates committee activities; provides communication and decision-making links between working groups, the ANSTF, and NISC; and addresses issues arising between meetings. Burgiel described the past outputs and products from the Pathways, Risk Analysis, and Screening working groups.

As the new Prevention Committee chair, beginning November 2010, Burgiel began soliciting input from working group members, agency representatives, key States, and others. These inquiries led to several conclusions specific to the Prevention Committee and the Pathways and Risk Analysis working groups. Burgiel provided the following conclusions: a forum to discuss and provide expertise on issues related to prevention, pathways, and risk assessment is needed; potential priorities for work

have been proposed but lack consensus on where and how to move forward; activities should be integrated into both the ANSTF strategic plan and NISC management plan; and positive participation depends on a process that is flexible enough to be responsive, while providing a broader benefit to the ANSTF, NISC, and both group's constituencies.

15. Decisional: Proposed Development of Pet Industry Best Management Practices

Marshall Meyers, PIJAC, provided the history and purpose of Habitattitude™ as well as sample promotions. Habitattitude™ began as a collaborative initiative between the FWS, PIJAC, and NOAA Sea Grant. PIJAC and the Department of Interior (DOI) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), agreeing to collaborate on education and public awareness, develop and implement a work plan, support involvement at all levels within respective communities, and other actions. To implement the MOU, Meyers and Mike Hoff, FWS, are recommending that a series of BMPs be developed for pets, water gardens, and avians, using PIJAC resource manuals as source material. These BMPs could serve as models for other pathway-specific BMPs. Meyers displayed a suggested process for developing and implementing the BMPs.

ANSTF members reminded Meyers and Hoff that the ANSTF has an aquatic focus. The ANSTF agreed to review the industry BMPs for water gardens.

16. Informational: Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters Update

Mangin reminded participants that she had presented a *Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters* (QZAP) and Western Regional Panel (WRP) Coordinator position statement at the fall ANSTF meeting. Mangin is still hopeful this position will receive funding in 2011 even though quagga mussel (*Dreissena rostriformis*) and zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*) funding will decrease this year. The QZAP Coordination Committee also agreed to participate in NISAW next year after seeing MICRAs success.

17. Informational: Recreational Guidelines Committee Update

Mangin reported on the Recreational Guidelines Ad Hoc Committee that was created to update the recreational guidelines. Laura Norcutt, FWS, and Doug Jensen, Minnesota Sea Grant, will be the committee coordinators. Mangin displayed a list of committee members and organizations that still need to be contacted.

Mangin also displayed a proposed timeline, which included an initial conference call in June where the committee will review the guidelines and divide the workload into subcommittees. The subcommittees will update and develop new components for the guidelines from June through August and submit their final updates and additions to the coordinators for compiling in September. Once the updates are compiled, they will be submitted to the committee for review and comment. A committee member will provide an update at the fall ANSTF meeting. A third draft will be disseminated to ANSTF members for review and comment in February 2012. Comments will be due in March 2012. A final draft will be presented for discussion at the spring ANSTF meeting where the ANSTF will decide whether or not to approve the final draft. If approved, the guidelines will be published in the Federal Register for public comment.

17a. Informational: Summary of Top 40 Priorities for Science to Inform U.S. Conservation and Management Policy

Maria Boroja, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), wanted to present the article, “Top 40 Priorities for Science to Inform U.S. Conservation and Management Policy,” to the ANSTF. Gordon Brown, DOI, coauthored the paper and added that the article was written by several policy people who used to be scientists and who wanted to inform science research from a reverse angle. The authors first polled resource managers about the research questions they would like answered. The paper covered a variety of topics and approaches research differently because science is rapidly changing.

Public Comment

No public comments were submitted.

Adjourn

Mangin reported the field trip would leave at 9:00 AM but only last half of the day. Brady offered to host the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee in the meeting room at 3:00 PM, and Meyers offered to share sample BMPs at 4:00 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 PM.

Introductory Remarks/Housekeeping

Brady reported on the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Group. The group agreed the progress report must be populated first. This spreadsheet will be used to develop a Congressional report and inform the Strategic Plan revision process. The committee would like to present a plan at the November meeting. The committee set the following goals for revising the plan: complete the progress report by May, request recommendations from associations and panels, and develop a revised plan. The revised plan will have the same framework but it will be modified so that it can be operationalized.

Meyers reported on the water garden draft BMPs. The small group who met decided to ask the entire ANSTF, instead of a smaller ad hoc committee, to review existing draft BMPs and provide input. Meyers and Hoff will draft an email for Mangin to distribute that will explain how they will be gathering information and expertise for the draft BMPs. A range of opportunities exist to examine other pathways. Marshal will provide a list of other themes and sectors so the ANSTF knows what BMPs they are considering. Panel members will review and return the draft BMPs within 3 months. Brady also suggested agencies that might have some guidance or information on these issues.

18. Discussion: International AIS Issues

Muir reported on past, present, and future international approaches to invasive species policy. A case study revealed that non-natives have increased 76% over the past 40 years in Europe, over which time significant international and national policy adoption has occurred. However, measuring actual progress is difficult, as is forecasting new approaches to invasive species prevention and management. Present mechanisms for international policy development include various ways to directly engage other countries.

One approach to invasive species prevention that might be used more frequently in the future is risk assessments of international trade. Some information has been mapped globally, allowing the detection of trade routes of concern. However, regional analyses may be more effective. Regions, such as the North American region, have similar ecosystems, often trade with each other, have some shared regional governance, and may share similar threats. Yet, even in the North American region, the three countries have different policies, approaches, and priorities, as well as different international agreements and plans. Muir reviewed the national ANS plans of the United States, Mexico, and Canada and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, which is being updated.

Muir noted the Department of State will benefit from knowing the international activities of the ANSTF regional panels in order to facilitate information exchange. Panel members reported how they have been including other countries, such as Mexico and Canada, and how each country has benefitted from the work other countries have been doing. The ANSTF suggested including a presentation from the Canadian Aquatic Invasive Species Network (CAISN) during the fall meeting.

19. Panel Updates and Recommendations

Agency updates can be found at the ANSTF website. ***Great Lakes Panel (GLP)***

Moy reported the GLP held their December 2010 meeting where they discussed EPA and FWS funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), funded GLRI projects, heard State AIS management plan updates, and heard from the new Ballast Water Collaborative. Asian carp discussions included the control strategy framework, the risk assessment, and separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin. GLP committees reported on recent activities, and a GLRI proposal was submitted to hold a workshop to help Great Lakes states conduct a multijurisdictional rapid response. The spring meeting will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and will focus on the following: citizen monitoring and reporting, preimport screening, and Asian carp issues.

Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel (GSARP)

Ballard reported the GSARP is funding three projects: the Invasive Species Travelling Trunk, Trojan Y chromosome eradication of invasive fish, and reproductive sterility as a tool for prevention and control of invasive aquatics. The GSARP Rapid Response Work Group has drafted a new rapid response plan that incorporates the ICS. During their spring meeting, the GSARP decided to establish an invasive species risk assessment clearinghouse, agreed to hold a risk assessment workshop at the fall meeting, and formed an ad hoc work group to draft an informational document on *Tubastraea* spp. for the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Councils.

The GSARP has been closely monitoring lionfish (*Pterois volitans*). Lionfish, which are venomous, have expanded their range and density estimates are as high as >200 fish per acre. As the number of lionfish sightings increase, GSARP and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission members have distributed lionfish “Wanted” signs across all Gulf States. Lionfish are generalist carnivores, consuming over 60 species of fish, including ecologically and economically important species, and a number of crustacean species. As reported during the GSARP’s spring meeting, many agencies and several Caribbean countries have initiated programs to actively remove lionfish from sensitive areas and have begun discussing management documents for this species.

After much discussion, the ANSTF approved the formation of an Invasive Lionfish Control Working Group as recommended by the GSARP.

Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel (NEANS)

Nancy Balcom, Connecticut Sea Grant Extension Program, reported that NEANS held its spring meeting in Québec City, Québec, hosted by its Provincial partners. The meeting coincided with a conference of the CAISN, enabling Panel members to attend some of the CAISN sessions. Prior to the Panel meeting, Mike Goehle, FWS, conducted Invasive Species Risk Assessment and Planning (ISRAP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) training. The meeting included presentations from many NEANS members and Provincial partners and a spotlight session on *Corbicula*. Balcom reported on many other accomplishments, including the “Online Guide to Aquatic Invasive Species in Northeastern North America,” which has gone live and is being enhanced and expanded; development of an Asian Clam Watch Card; partial financial support for the Marine Invader and Tracking and Information System; and continuation of the Hydrilla Initiative Pilot.

Modley welcomed a new NEANS Panel member from Nova Scotia, which will help strengthen their collaboration with Canada. Modley reported that Vermont has instituted a felt-soled wader ban. In addition, the preliminary rapid response Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*) work at Lake George is available if anyone is interested.

Western Regional Panel (WRP)

McDowell, reported the next WRP meeting will be held in Oakland, California, in October. A half day will be dedicated to marine issues and an update on the ballast water program, and a half day will focus on quagga and zebra mussels. Unfortunately, Region 6 of the FWS may not continue as the panel coordinator so McDowell has been assuming that role. McDowell hoped money from the *Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters* would fund this role. Arroyo offered to help find a Region 6 panel coordinator.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Panel (MARP)

Sara Whitney, Pennsylvania Sea Grant, reported MARP held a meeting in Oceanville, New Jersey, in November. Topics included AIS issues in New Jersey, reports from funded projects, and a discussion of the panel awards program. The New Jersey Conservation Foundation was presented with an award because they had purchased an aquaculture facility that contained bighead carp. The foundation took the initiative to eradicate the population only to discover a Chinese pond mussel (*Sinanodonta woodiana*).

The next MARP meeting will be held in Laurel, Maryland, in May. A portion of the meeting will be spent reviewing the 13 proposals MARP received in response to their request for ideas for researching live bait as a vector. The meeting will also include learning about invasive catfish in the Chesapeake Bay, discussing MARP’s species of concern list, and hearing State and organization updates.

Mississippi River Basin Panel (MRBP)

Eileen Ryce, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, thanked the ANSTF for attending the annual MRBP meeting earlier this week. The MRBP has a standing recommendation to get the *Asian Carp Management Plan* fully implemented. Ryce hoped this ANSTF meeting has helped emphasize the importance of implementing that plan. During the annual MRBP meeting, committees reported they are still working on recommendations to present at the fall ANSTF meeting. The MRBP also decided to invest in eDNA testing for northern snakeheads (*Channa argus*) and is exploring a protocol for removing zebra and quagga mussels from contaminated fish hatcheries. The MRBP has completed a rapid response plan; the next priority is to complete the aquatic plans appendix of the plan. The MRBP has been very interested in receiving ICS training and will be contacting the EPA for training opportunities. Finally, all member information is posted on the MRBP website, which has been updated and improved.

20. Informational: Risk Analysis Working Group Update

Kolar reported on the Risk Analysis Work Group workshop held in 2010. During the workshop, the group discussed species screening, risk assessment, risk management, and risk analysis; drafted a risk analysis framework; reviewed the risk assessment framework developed by Reuben Keller, University of Notre Dame; assigned writing tasks; and talked about how to move forward. The work group will meet again in July and complete a document for presentation at the fall ANSTF meeting.

The risk analysis framework developed by the work group is a hybrid of existing frameworks. In their framework, problem formulation and scoping is the most important step since the risk assessment will include different levels and depths depending on the scoping results. Once the risks are identified, they must be characterized. Risk calculation will depend on the amount of information available and risk characterization will depend on communication between managers and the regulated public in order to adapt an operational plan. Finally, risk management entails finding ways to move risk from higher to lower levels.

21. Informational: New Zealand Mud Snail Update

Heimowitz provided an update on the New Zealand mudsnail (*Potamopyrgus antipodarum*). The *National Management and Control Plan for the New Zealand Mudsnail* was adopted in 2006, and a series of conferences were held until quagga mussels were detected in Lake Mead in 2007 and attention shifted away from the New Zealand mudsnail. The 6th National New Zealand Mudsnail Conference was held in Moscow, Idaho, in March 2011. Although mudsnail efforts have declined in the West, many of the conference attendees are interested in revitalizing and updating the plan and establishing an overall coordination group. The conference proceedings report is being compiled by the University of Idaho and will be posted on their website.

Conference attendees discussed research; outreach; web-based data and information, including bridging the Montana State University website with the USGS invasive species website; and developing eDNA detection methods. The FWS Region 6 Office has been the coordination lead for the *National Management and Control Plan for the New Zealand Mudsnail* and will work with other FWS Regional AIS coordinators to consider the next steps for assembling an implementation team.

22. NISAW

Burgiel reported on NISAW, which was held in late February and early March 2011. For NISAW 2011, organizers included more agencies, added more events and locations, and relied on the efforts of different partners. Major themes included tribal and island issues, funding, federal leadership, and developing communication tools between States and the federal government. The week included multiple evening receptions, multiple stakeholder events, webinars, and engagement with lawmakers and federal agencies. One day focused on state and regional activities, including keynote speakers on Asian carp and lionfish and gaps in regulations and policies around ANS. Other highlights included an international workshop and an island regional workshop, an awards ceremony for the U.S. Forest Service, and discussions about creating markets for invasive species.

For 2012, discussions have included clearly defining goals for the week, organizing more briefings, and finalizing agendas and securing funding earlier. Organizers are still looking for topical focuses, and suggestions have included organizing events elsewhere in the country during the same week.

ANSTF members expressed interest in further ANSTF involvement, including sending members to the meeting and what message should be brought forward. Kathy Glassner-Shwayder, Great Lakes Commission, expressed interest in being on the NISAW planning committee, and McDowell asked how the WRP could have a presence at NISAW.

23. Informational: FY10 State/Interstate ANS Management Action Plan Annual Report and FY10 ANSTF Report to Congress

Don MacLean, FWS, reported that of the 38½ approved state ANS management plans (Alabama is not 100% approved), the ANSTF received funding proposals for 36. All 36 states will receive funding as soon as the FWS receives a final budget approval. A state plan accomplishment report will be prepared this summer. Arizona has a plan under development and the Arkansas plan should be arriving soon for approval.

MacLean reported that state reports are available to anyone who requests them. Next year, the state reports could be posted on the ANSTF website, but the states should be told they will be posted online first.

24. Informational: Lacey Act Tiger Team Update

Arroyo reported that one billion animals are imported every year, so the Lacey Act must be updated. The Lacey Act Tiger Team includes a wide range of expertise and are examining regulations and outreach and working with States, non-governmental organizations, and industry representatives. The listing process is a primary concern since listing a new species can take years. A lot of information must first be manually collected. Of course this is a very political issue with economical impacts, and it will require conversations with agencies, States, tribes, non-governmental organizations, and industry before entering into the regulatory process with a proposed rule and public hearings. The team hopes to work as a partnership and receive input. They want to target vectors and prevention, and then look at eradication and control efforts.

Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00.