

El Dorado Zebra Mussel Response Team Meeting
November 19, 2003
Wichita, KS

Meeting hosted by Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. These meeting notes were prepared using the agenda as a guide. Please let me know about errors, omissions and bad memory on my part and I will send out those corrections and edits as soon as possible. Some basic meeting objectives; identify materials and methods to contact boaters and prevent further spread, monitor and document downstream spread of zebra mussels through the Walnut and Arkansas Rivers and into Kaw Reservoir in Oklahoma, establish points-of-contact for media news releases and status reports, create an action team list with contact information, outline procedures to collect boater information using handhelds with electronic data transfer to the 100th Meridian database, identify a time frame for focused boater surveys and the evaluation process to implement specific actions to block high risk pathways by fall 2004.

Quick list of actions (more specifics and details in the narrative section)

- ? Pan Chaffee needs outreach & education material before Jan8
- ? Tom Mosher is temporary point-of-contact (POC) to monitor spread in KS
- ? Dr. Joe Bidwell, Oklahoma State University, may be POC to monitor Kaw & Arkansas River in OK (Joe has practical experience from Great Lakes monitoring)
- ? Bob Pitman will coordinate boat ramp sign order using Stop Aquatic Hitchhiker for OK. Artwork and materials located at (www.ProtectYourWaters.net)
- ? Tina Proctor will coordinate similar signage along with zebra mussel infestation notice with Doug Nygren in KS
- ? David Britton and Jason Goecklers will find out if the 100th Meridian boater surveys can be added to Kansas Dept of Parks & Wildlife (KDPW) existing PDA electronic creel survey
- ? David Britton and Bob Pitman will coordinate with others to setup a mini workshop on how to use the Dell PDA's to collect boater surveys. Possible dates Jan 19-23 or early February. Pam Chaffee, Coast Guard Auxiliary, and Craig Johnson, KDPW, are possible POC's for PDA use.
- ? PDA boater surveys set for March – July with assessment by David Britton by end of July and a meeting to develop collaborative strategies in Aug, 2004 and begin implementing by fall, 2004.
- ? Tom Mosher will develop and maintain a “standard” status message for KS which will be available on the 100th Meridian website for use by everyone.
- ? Jeff Boxrucker, Oklahoma Dept of Wildlife Conservation will develop similar for OK
- ? Next meeting – August 2004 - Wichita

Review and evaluation of population in El Dorado – Tom Mosher

- how long have zebra mussels been there?
- how did they get there?

Estimated that zebra mussels have been in El Dorado 1-2 years. First identified near a jet-ski launch area by a person that knew about them from information provided with boater registration which is staggered three years in Kansas. The Coast Guard Auxiliary, represented by Pam Chaffee, also connects to Kansas boaters with boater safety training.

- Pam needs zebra mussel/boater outreach & education material (such as the “Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers” stickers to distribute at scheduled training by Jan. 8.
- Pam also needs the boat inspection video being produced by Washington Dept of Fish & Wildlife. This should be ready for distribution to Pam in December and will be added to the 100th Meridian website.

Monitoring zebra mussel spread out of El Dorado and recording impacts

- keeping track of where they are and the densities
- who will survey and where will it be reported so all can access the information
- collecting data in a clearing house fashion for consistent message

Monitoring this population so far has been presence/absence and only in El Dorado. Surveying procedures downstream in the Walnut River, Arkansas River and Kaw Reservoir at the OK/KS border were discussed. A Kansas Zebra Mussel Action Team has been operational for several years with several monitoring sites established although these sites did not appear to be situated to track spread from El Dorado downstream. Other options to address this question were discussed. Next year (2004) a survey of native mussels in the Walnut River is scheduled and zebra mussels will be added. A couple of options for sampling including fine mesh net to collect veligers and a length of PVC pipe suspended in a good location.

Who will collect the information? Could enlist any or all of the three Colleges downriver as a project. Kansas Departments of Health & Environment and Parks & Wildlife conduct routine aquatic sampling. Doug Nygren pointed out that a State Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator would accumulate this information but only 75% of the funding for this position is in place.

- Tom Mosher will be the temporary Point-Of-Contact to set-up a network to monitor spread downstream from El Dorado
- Kim Erickson pointed out that Dr. Joe Bidwell, Oklahoma State University, is monitoring veliger densities in Oologah Reservoir and would be a good contact for this information. (Joe is being added to the response team.)

Are boat ramp signs effective? Do boaters respond and take action? – Doug Jensen, MN Sea Grant

Doug Jensen provided valuable information on how to reach audiences we want to take specific actions. Doug reminds us that information does not change behavior but if they understand why, then they will want to know how they can take action. Doug has already provided some of his information through an email message. That is included again attached with the minutes and will be added to the El Dorado Team “button” on the 100th Meridian website (www.100thMeridian.org). Also, the Minnesota Sea Grant website (<http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/>) has a wealth of information on this and other aquatic invasive species subjects.

Signs at ramps in Kansas and Oklahoma

- using the stop aquatic hitchhikers sign in OK along w/Infested sign from MN Sea Grant
- maintenance and sign upkeep, who pays?

The “Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers” boat ramp sign is part a national campaign with a brand and tagline that is widely supported and recognized. Information describing the free artwork and related material can be found at (www.ProtectYourWaters.net).

- Bob Pitman will coordinate with Oklahoma Dept of Wildlife Conservation, and US Army Corps of Engineers to establish consistent boat ramp signage at Kaw and Keystone Reservoirs in Oklahoma. A sign order is being developed so signs can be in place for the 2004 boating season.
- Kansas will use this sign in combination with a specific zebra mussel infestation signs from MN Sea Grant

Increasing and concentrating the 100th Meridian Boater surveys

- What assumptions can be made based on data from the present survey data? -
- increasing boater contacts using PDA field data units. – David Britton Distributing for most efficient use. Prepare a plan describing where they will be used and who should make the contacts. Lake Rangers for Corps of Engineers, Law Enforcement Officers for Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Kansas ? ,any others that may be collecting data?
- identify points-of-contact for handheld data collection units (Kansas, El Dorado, Corps of Engineers, Oklahoma, ?boater groups, other federal or state agencies)

David Britton, University of Texas-Arlington (UTA), provided a review of the handheld PDA's that will be used to collect boater information using the 100th Meridian survey forms. David has adapted these forms for the Dell PDA so that they are easy to use in the field. Collected surveys will be downloaded to a desktop and electronically sent to the 100th Meridian database at UTA or the removable storage disk will be sent for data transfer. This concentrated survey collection is being initiated in an attempt to identify high risk pathways for spread to other waters, such as west of the 100th Meridian, so that effective blocking strategies can quickly be developed and put in place. Pam Chaffee, Coast Guard Auxiliary, suggested that the boating traffic will change at El Dorado from March through summer from angler to recreational boaters. Doug Nygren pointed out that KDWP is using PDA's to collect creel surveys and that the 100th boater surveys could be added to their units to increase coverage. Jason Goecklers, KDWP, point-of-contact for the creel survey recommends putting the PDA's in plastic protective containers from otterbox.com.

- A couple points-of-contact for distribution of PDA units were identified as Craig Johnson, KDWP, at El Dorado Reservoir and Pam Chaffee, Coast Guard Auxiliary.
- David Britton and Jason Goecklers will find out if the boater surveys can be added to creel surveys. If possible they will develop standard procedures to transfer surveys to the 100th Meridian database.
- Bob Pitman will coordinate with David Britton, KDWP and others for a mimi-workshop on how to use the PDA surveys and develop standard user guidance after the units are setup for field use. This training will probably be scheduled for January or February.
- Bob Pitman will coordinate boater survey collections with Corps of Engineers for reservoirs Kaw and Keystone in Oklahoma.
- Surveys will start in March and run through July. Information will be compiled for the next meeting of the Team which will be scheduled for August, 2004. Survey data will be used to collaboratively develop actions targeting highest risk pathways to prevent further spread, such as; targeted education to a specific group of anglers/boaters, boat ramp signs, messages to marina operators, television spots, closing or controlling access points, inspections, etc.

Informing the media and the public.

Establish points-of-contact on both ends of the media connection so we know who to call to report changes and they know who to contact to get accurate and up-to-date information and status reports.

A consistent message is important for control actions. Tom Mosher has developed a message for Kansas and is considered the point-of-contact for future updates.

- Tom will provide updated versions of the message which will be posted on the 100th Meridian website for Team use.
- Jeff Boxrucker, Oklahoma Dept of Wildlife Conservation, will develop a similar message for Oklahoma and will be the point-of-contact for updates. Oklahoma's message will also be posted on the 100th site for team use.

Stakeholder groups

Meeting had run down by the time this agenda item came up. Generally, not many negative stakeholder groups (those against doing zebra mussel control) or concerns had surfaced yet and those that do will be addressed as needed.

Establish action items, assign responsibilities, time lines and a reporting format

- use the 100th Meridian webpage for an El Dorado Action Team

Meeting minutes, assignment of actions and responsibilities and the reporting format will be the 100th Meridian website.

For more information contact; Tom Mosher (630-342-0658), Bob Pitman (505-248-6471) or Tina Proctor (303-236-4515)