

100th Meridian Initiative Meeting
Aksarben Aquarium, Nebraska
May 21, 2002
Minutes

Note: Next annual meeting will be in Atchison, Kansas the first week of June, 2003 in conjunction with the Missouri River Conference.

Darrell Feit welcomed the group to the Aksarben Aquarium, operated by the Nebraska Parks and Wildlife Commission. The Aquarium contains native species of fish, frogs, turtles and other aquatic wildlife and has an active education program for students from all over the state.

The meeting was chaired by Tina Proctor, US Fish and Wildlife Service.

1. State/Member Updates

Kim Webb - USFWS-California– Kim didn't have all of the details yet, but apparently several boats have been identified as carrying zebra mussels into California in the past few months. The California border inspections stations do not inspect all boats coming into California, so this is not an effective filter – may just be the tip of the iceberg. The border stations have been asked to use the 100th Meridian reporting forms when they inspect, but have not done so to date. Susan Ellis is the new ANS coordinator for the state and she is starting to work with the inspection stations. Hopefully this elevated level of interception will bring a greater level of action. Bob M. suggested that they use the 100th Meridian forms and they could be entered into the database. Transporters and marinas have reported that many Great Lakes boats are being sold on the west coast because they can get a higher price and this is a possible source of zm's.

Steve Schainost - Nebraska Game and Parks - Last year two interviewers in the summer. Very few nonresident boaters. Checked Missouri Rivers sites - 80% of the boat ramps get very little use. That allows the state to concentrate on 12 sites - will put up information kiosks.

Steve Adams - Kansas Wildlife and Parks - Sent out information with boating registrations - about 35,000 a year. Information is available at all parks and park offices. Department of Health and Environment is adding zm monitoring of streams around the state. Game and Parks is focusing on lakes. Shells found again at Quantaro Power Plant on Missouri River this spring. Have looked extensively in the vicinity and haven't found any populations. Found one zm in a holding tank at a fishing tournament near Junction City. No other zm's found in the reservoir. Bob M. suggested that there

should be a section on the website for this kind of sighting.

Lynn Schlueter - North Dakota Game and Fish Department's campaign to prevent the introduction or the spread of ANS will continue to focus on the education of outdoor recreators. Efforts include:

Mass media - an early summer article to all newspapers in the state, concentrate on major publishers with in-depth information and an interviews; local and regional radio spots to remove the hitchhikers; articles in local and regional magazines on the ANS problem and its prevention

PC presentation developed - used by field staff at sportmen's club meetings, boat shows and similar events

ANS signs - large signs are being placed at boat ramps to encourage boaters to clean equipment before leaving the area

North Dakota Guide - updated information in the 2002/2004 fishing guide to include curly leaf pond weed and salt cedar

Other activities:

Fishing Tournaments - requirements for tournament officials to inspect boats for vegetation and that livewells and bilges be disinfected prior to launching of boats

Inspecting water bodies - field staff will check water bodies for absents or presents of ANS plants during visits to the systems

Train USACOE, State Parks and Department staff - recognize Zebra mussel infestation on buoys, docks, etc when these are removed in the fall

North Dakota now only permits licensed bait vendors to import live bait which must be collected from ANS-free areas. Licensed anglers cannot bring live bait (including, but not limited to, fish, leeches, frogs, crayfish, worms, insect larva or other live animals) into the state for use in North Dakota waters.

Mike Hoff - USFWS - Region 3 -Lake Superior population of ruffe- did research to show that one influence is rainfall. May be able to control by increasing flow. This is another IPM strategy.

Bob McMahon - University of Texas at Arlington - Received a Sea Grant to research marine brown mussel, a sub-tropical species. Also working on green mussel in Tampa Bay, where they affected every power plant. Both are notorious macro-foulers. These could cause huge problems in S. California. They are inter-tidal and can spend time in the open air. Intercoastal barge traffic is an important pathway. Bob is looking at salinity tolerance and other parameters for where they can live.

Bob Pittman- USFWS - Region 2 - Received a report that there are zm's in the Central Arizona Project (CAP). Not a credible report. Highlights the importance of

stopping rumors early. Be suspicious also of zm's in estuarine conditions - they don't live there. There is a striped mussel that lives in these conditions that looks a lot of zm's. Native on Texas coast but sometimes there population explodes.

Stephen Phillips - Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission - The Portland State University Center for Lakes and Reservoirs has initiated a voluntary substrate program using PVC tubes. There are 188 sites now where volunteers attached the tubes to docks and check them monthly for the presence of zebra mussels.

The hotline number for Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) crime witness program is now up and running. BPA will be doing a press release on the crime witness program. The Zap the Zebra brochure has been edited and is ready to be printed. Will reproduce between 300 to 400 thousand to be distributed to marinas and boat launch areas along the Lewis and Clark Trail. Can easily get rid of these in one year. Also have a poster that will go out with the brochures. No 100th Meridian surveys this summer.

Kevin Aitken- USFWS - Region 1 - Washington is getting signs out. Because of new legislation, on June 1, a highway patrolman can pull over a trailered boat if vegetation or mussels are obvious. WA Game and Fish staff have been educating officers. Also they are attending boat shows, fishing shows, and schools. Working with fishing tournaments to make sure boats are clean.

Jean Nauss - Army Corps of Engineers - Inland waterways conference every year - it would be good to get 100th Meridian presentation at this conference. Jean will send Tina and Bob information about the next meeting and it will be posted on the website.

Don MacLean - USFWS - Washington Office Update

Listserv is functioning - let other people know if they want to be on it. Be aware that it is best not to attach messages - ask people to request a document from you. Don reminded people that it needs to be more utilized. He handed out a list of all the people on the listserv.

Don described the National Public Awareness campaign called Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers that has been created by the ANS Task Force. Designed so that anyone can use the graphic for anything. You can download from the www.protectyourwaters.net website. Joe Starinchak (703) 358-2018, in the FWS office in Washington can send out a CD with all the logos. Our goal is to get it used ubiquitously. Get these on every FWS boat. Memo sent to conservation organizations explaining the campaign. Jean suggested that state tourism people be contacted. Joe is attending outdoor writers meetings and letting them know about the campaign.

Don worked on a 100th Meridian logo and handed out examples. He also handed out

business card ideas. He will send out a message to the listserv and ask people to look on the website and give Don comments with a deadline.

Don is working on a conference display. He handed out a prototype. Cannot put a lot of text on these displays. He needs impact photos. That's what people want to see. Bob McMahon has a huge library of zebra mussels pictures. Minnesota Sea Grant also has lots of photos on their website.

2. **100th Meridian Data base - Bob McMahon and David Britton, U. of Texas at Arlington**

During the PowerPoint presentation, Bob M. informed us that the 2001 survey data is all in the database except for data submitted from Manitoba. Most contributors simply send photocopies of survey forms that must be entered manually. UTA has completed this process for all contributors who have sent photocopies. Manitoba, however, takes an extra step by entering data into an Excel spreadsheet themselves. This format is easier to incorporate in to the database and it was arbitrarily decided to do this last. Incorporation of the MB data should be completed by early summer.

The boater interview part of 100th Meridian Initiative is expanding as intended. The database is growing exponentially, with the number of boaters interviewed more than doubling each year since 1998. We had boaters interviewed in more states in 2001 than in any of the previous years. UTA has hired students (paid hourly) to assist data entry in order to keep up with the amount of data we are now getting. Kansas and South Dakota, in particular, have contributed the most surveys and are doing an excellent job. He emphasized some identifiable hot spots where many boaters are coming from known zebra-mussel infested states. These are now accessible from the internet on our database page.

David Britton walked us through the current version of the website. He showed how we can get database summary information for individuals states or provinces. He recently added a query that points out hot spots within a state. He demonstrated an early version of a graphical interface to second database being maintained by Kevin Aitkin. This database will allow users to access zebra mussel monitoring information from the web. An interactive graphic of Western North America will allow a user to select a state. Then, that state will enlarge and allow a user to select a specific county. Once this is done, monitoring information stored in the database can be retrieved. Available data includes who is monitoring, what they are monitoring for, how they are doing it, where they are doing it, etc. David hopes to have this completed by the end of this summer. David will begin recording website server information regarding how many hits the site is getting and perhaps where these hits are coming from (domains). This should be in place within a few weeks.

3. **Asian Carp in the Missouri River - Wayne Stancil, US Fish and Wildlife Service**

Wayne gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Asian Carp in the Missouri River, the bighead, silver, black and grass carp species. The silver, black and bighead all escaped from aquaculture facilities in the Southeast and are making their way up the Missouri River. He focused on life histories and impacts on native fish. Wayne is doing research on bighead carp below the Gavins Point Dam in South Dakota.

4. **Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Update - Jean Nauss, Army Corps of Engineers**

Federal agencies put together a brochure which tells about the key L&C sites; most of which are on river systems. The brochure has a paragraph about invasive species and how people can keep from spreading them. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) has navigation responsibilities or fee title to a great deal of the L&C trail. The agency goals regarding the commemoration are to:

- Accommodate the anticipated increased visitation associated with the commemoration
- To ensure a safe visitor experience
- Provide information on the role of the Army in the Lewis and Clark Expedition
- Protect natural and cultural resources

Jean handed out two publications from ACOE; the Missouri River Traveler's Guide & Journey, which includes information on water safety, exotic species, endangered species, cultural resources and tribal nations. Also the Missouri River Boater Information Guide which gives information on gasoline stops and portages. Stephen will get Zap the Zebra brochures to the private portage providers. Could also stick them into the back of the Information Guide.

The National Council has 14 signature events identified during the years 2003-2006 and all but three are on the water. Most will have boating regattas, fireworks over the water, which will bring masses of boaters. The first one with water impact is at the Falls of the Ohio in October, 2003. St.Louis/St.Charles will be in May, 2004. Check out the others at www.lewisandclark200.org. Select Signature Events.

Corps of Discovery II is a traveling exhibit on two exhibit-semis. It will be at the Signature Events. The St. Charles reenactment group will be at the water events. They have the replicas of L&C boats and attract lots of attention. Many regional events and festivals, e.g. 4 consecutive weekends in August this year over a distance of 50 miles in Nebraska and South Dakota.

We still don't have visitation estimates on water. We may not know until everything gets started. Expect 15-20 % increase, but it may be much more at big events.

Stephen Phillips - Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC)

Press release to 250 media outlets: story about L&C Bicentennial invasives threat; pictures; procedures for stopping aquatic hitchhikers; FAQ sheet. Stephen did an interview with ND public radio. NY Times and Wall Street Journal have expressed interest. PSMFC will continue to get the message out. They sent a press packet to the L&C Bicentennial Commission. Three Traveler Information Stations will be set up in Montana: 1) near Yellowstone National Park; 2) Highway 2 and 3) Highway 94 near the ND border. Will give zebra mussel, eurasian watermilfoil message.

There was a discussion about power wash systems. Where would be a good place to have these? Do we need them? It might work at a place like the California border where people are stopped and checked. Or areas where people have to pull out to portage.

5. Live Bait Concerns - Lynn Schlueter, North Dakota Game and Fish

North Dakota no longer allows anglers to import live bait. One problem is that you can order these critters by Internet or catalog. No regulations about what comes with the bait that is ordered. Montana did a similar regulation - sent letters to Internet sites and advertisers in magazines. Arizona doesn't allow importation of crayfish. California - you need a permit to import live bait. Study shows several million dollars worth of live bait comes in. Lynn handed out an article about Heterosporis - microsporidian parasite which infects the flesh of fish can be spread through live bait.

6. Zebra Mussels and Barges - Steve Adams, Kansas Game and Fish

This issue has come up because of shells found at intake screens at a power plant in Missouri River outside of Kansas City, MO. Commercial barge used by the power company but Game and Fish doesn't have the authority to inspect. The power company found that it would cost \$15,000 to have the barge inspected. They hired the same barge this year. Shells found again this year. Bob M. thinks that there needs to be an impoundment area to get zms established.

7. Fishing Tournaments - Bob Pitman, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Bob P. got information from Pam Meacham in Washington about the regulations and letters they send to fishing tournaments in the state. Bob will make sure the information is on the 100th meridian website. Will also get information from Minnesota

and North Dakota and Kansas. This is an important pathway that we need to pay attention to.

8. State Departments of Transportation - Bob Pitman

Bob suggests that we bring DOT's into the 100th Meridian. Need to partner with them, make sure they understand the issues; perhaps sponsor more Traveler Information Systems at points of entry into states. Signs at truck weigh stations could read signs that have an ANS message. The Baird Bill, introduced in this Congress, asks the DOI to establish check points for commercial haulers.

Action Plan for 2002/2003

1. **Lewis and Clark - continue with educational activities.**
2. **Complete logo and business cards by August 1, 2002.**
3. **Contact 100th Meridian DOT's to get them involved. Or may need to involved Departments of Public Safety. Pam Meacham has done training and can help us put information together.**
4. **Bob will investigate the costs of getting PDA's which have the surveys on them so that people can enter the information from creel surveys.**
5. **We will put states that have fishing tournament regs or permits - information on the 100th Meridian website.**
6. **Bob M. will make sure that we can measure activity (number of visits) on the web site.**
7. **Don will synthesize the information about billboards and send it out on the listserv.**
8. **Don will find places to broadcast the PSA's that have been developed. He will talk to External Affairs in FWS.**
9. **Invite other organizations, such as US Forest Service to participate. Send letters from ANS Task Force. Tina and Don will work on this.**
10. **Kevin will get the Washington law which requires state highway patrol to be able to stop boats which are unclean, etc. - on the web site.**
11. **Steve will contact portage operators identified by ACOE on Lewis and**

Clark information guide and will provide ANS outreach information.

- 12. Tina will follow up on the Action Plan in six months to remind people to keep moving forward.**
- 13. Dave and Bob M. will set up queries on the web site that will give states the information they need to help make decisions about where to put their resources. They will send out summary tables.**
- 14. Don will work on need for economic study.**
- 15. Review WRP rapid response plan for adaption for 100th Meridian**
- 16. Kansas will host Missouri River Conference at Atchison which will be in first week in June, 2003. (Sunday - Wednesday) We could plan our meeting at the same time. Steve is planning a session on ANS.**

Tina thanked Kim Webb for her work on the 100th Meridian Initiative. Kim has a new job as the deputy project leader for the USFWS office in Stockton, California. We'll miss her knowledge and enthusiasm.