

**Missouri River Aquatic Nuisance Species Planning Workshop**  
**Lewis and Clark Bicentennial**  
**March 11-12, 2003**  
**Pierre, SD**

**Meeting Minutes:**

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

The meeting began with a brief round of introductions. Those in attendance included:

Phil Scheffield, USACE, Pierre  
Tina Proctor, USFWS, Denver  
Stephen Wilson, NPS, O'Neill, NE  
Jim Riis, SDGFP, Pierre  
Jeff Shearer, SDGFP, Pierre  
Dennis Unkenholz, SDGFP, Pierre  
Cliff Shore, SDGFP, Chamberlain  
John Wachsmuth, MFPW, Kalispell  
Lynn Schlurter, NDGFP, Bismarck  
Brian Canaday, MDC, Jefferson City, MO  
Wayne Freed, USACE, Omaha  
Craig Fleming, USACE, Pickstown, SD  
Steve Schainost, NGFP, Lincoln  
Chad Tussing, SDGFP, Pierre  
Kim Bogenschutz, IDNR, Boone, IA  
John Lott, SDGFP, Pierre  
Stephen Phillips, PSMFC, Gladstone, OR  
Bill Zook, PSMFC (Chair), Shelton, WA

Dennis Unkenholz, Chief of Fisheries SDGFP, gave a brief introduction and welcome to the group. Mr. Unkenholz briefed the Work Group on the importance of the Missouri River to the State of South Dakota. He indicated that the Missouri River is responsible for up to 50% of the annual outdoor recreational use in SD, generating a total of nearly 500,000 recreational trips per year and accounting for up to \$50 million in annual revenue to the state. Walleye is the most popular game fish in SD with over 800,000 walleyes harvested and over 1.5 million walleyes caught and release annually.

The chairman thanked the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks for their roll in making arrangements for and hosting the meeting. Special thanks were given to Jeff Shearer for his outstanding efforts in coordinating logistics for the meeting.

The chairman laid some meeting ground rules, appointed a time monitor, and asked for the Work Group's consensus on the agenda, time allotments, and the desired outcome of the meeting. The group agreed that the objective of the meeting was to cover the subject material thoroughly and make decisions on specific actions to be taken on each of the key

issues. It was also agreed that at the end of the meeting the group would revisit each agenda topic and to make sure everyone understood what actions were to be taken, by whom and by when.

**Meeting Agenda**

1) Program Funding – Stephen Phillips and Tina Proctor

Stephen Phillips, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and Tina Proctor, USFWS, Region 6 briefed the Work Group on dedicated funding available for 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian/Lewis and Clark zebra mussel/ANS education and outreach efforts on the Missouri River. The **approximate** budget and sources of funding for this program for the next two years are detailed below:

<b><u>Funding Source</u></b>	<b><u>FY 03</u></b> (through December 31, 2003)	<b><u>FY 04</u></b>
USFWS, Region 6*	\$50K	\$50K
USFWS, Region 1**	\$25K	\$25K
BPA	\$54K	\$50K
PSMFC***	<u>\$50K</u>	<u>\$50K</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$179K</b>	<b>\$175K</b>

**\* Determined upon availability of FY2003 funds from Tina Proctor, USFWS, Region VI**

**\*\* Determined upon availability of Fy2003funds from Erin Williams/Kim Webb, USFWS, Region 1**

**\*\*\* Some of these funds allocated in FY2002 from Region VI, USFWS, to be used by FY2004**

There was a discussion on other possible funding sources and the amount of State and other Federal funding or in-kind services that were available to this program. States, and other Federal agencies represented, indicated no direct funding was available, but that each was spending some portion of their current operating budget on zebra mussel/ANS/Lewis and Clark related activities which would benefit this program. Those states with approved State ANS Plans may have some small amount of funding available beginning next fiscal year.

Tina Proctor made the group aware of other grant money that might be available if we wanted to pursue it. She mentioned the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Source book ([www.doi.gov/sourcebook/bicentennial/sourcebook.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/sourcebook/bicentennial/sourcebook.pdf)) which had grant money available for many types of projects related to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Funding from this program is available to federal, state and local agencies. This funding is highly competitive. A number of other private organizations were discussed regarding the possibility of getting some financial assistance with specific aspects of the program, like BASS purchasing a TIS, vehicle, etc.

A brochure was handed out on the Conservation Assistance Tools or CAT that highlights sources of funding for community based natural resource projects. ([www.sonoran.org/cat](http://www.sonoran.org/cat)) The National Park Service indicated that funding could be available for Lewis and Clark events through “Challenge Grants”. The question was raised but not answered whether Sportfish Restoration Act funds could be used to support any portion of this program. Tina Proctor also notified the group of the fifteen signature events that will be held over the course of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, and suggested that these events afforded an excellent opportunity for zebra mussel/ANS public outreach and education.

## 2) National/Regional Advertising Strategies

The Work Group discussed ways to reach people planning a boating trip to the Missouri Basin for Lewis and Clark, or for any other reason, with information that would reduce the risk of them unintentionally bringing zebra mussels with them. The group brainstormed important contacts and various methods of getting the zebra mussel/ANS/Boat-washing message to these people at the trip planning stage. The following organizations and publications were identified for a concerted effort to broaden the public’s understanding of the ANS issues and exclusion strategies:

- Bass Anglers Sportsman Society BASS and BASS Pro Shop catalogue
- Cabelas catalogue
- National, regional and local Lewis and Clark Bicentennial groups and their publications and web sites
- State and local Chambers of Commerce
- State Parks Departments, publications and web sites
- State and local tourism groups, publications and web sites,
- Walleye Federation
- Outdoor life and Sports Afield publications
- Kayak and canoe Associations
- Top 5-10 Lewis and Clark web sites
- ESPN, Outdoor Channel
- Recreational boating publications

There was also discussion on the Crime Witness Program and “Zap the Zebra” brochures and posters that have been developed by the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian group which has printed some 400,000 brochures and 5,000 posters. This information is currently being distributed throughout the western United States and Canada at visitor centers; fish and wildlife agencies, Corps of Engineers offices, BLM offices and a number of public and private Missouri River access areas.

The opportunity for public outreach through advertising on web sites (such as [www.lewisandclarktrail.com](http://www.lewisandclarktrail.com)), radio, TIS systems, and TV was also discussed. Since zebra mussel exclusion will benefit many groups (irrigation, power, water intakes, anglers, boat dealers, marinas etc.) an attempt should be made to coordinate outreach efforts and explore funding opportunities from these interests as well.

Lynn Schlueter briefed the Work Group on the recent finding of “Salt Cedar” in the upper Missouri River downstream to Garrison Dam. This relatively new aquatic nuisance species has a large taproot allowing it to survive along dewatered shoreline areas. It transpires a highly saline solution that kills all native plant species in the area. It has no value for wildlife and is thought to be toxic to some. Flooding the plant for 6-8 months can eliminate it.

Bill Zook agreed to coordinate this effort by contacting as many of the listed groups as possible and by asking for help from other Work Group members and from Joe Starinchak USFWS where a working relationship has already been established with a group or individual. The Work Group’s objective is to get free or reduced advertising or to place feature articles at all of these sites. The theme of this information would be to make the public aware of the potential for transporting zebra mussels or other ANS on boating equipment if boats are not inspected, properly dried or washed. This is especially true when moving from an ANS infested area like the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to the Missouri River like many boaters are expected to do during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial celebration. This element should be on-going and completed prior to the summer of 2004.

### 3) Traveler Information Station (TIS) status and site planning

John Wachsmuth presented information about current and proposed ANS Traveler Information Station (TIS) sites in Montana and reviewed the success and many uses of TIS systems by showing a video produced by Oregon State University and Oregon Sea Grant. He also provided each group member with a workbook on everything to know when planning for a TIS system. He indicated that Oregon State University and Oregon Sea Grant had conducted a study to evaluate the relative effectiveness of TIS systems used by the National Park Service on the Oregon Coast. The study revealed that 25% of the vehicles (measured by traffic counts) tuned in to the TIS station to listen to the message.

TIS systems are low power radio stations that broadcast informational messages to vehicles within a ¼ to 4-mile range of the transmitter. They are most commonly used at visitor centers, parks, points of interest and rest stops. Their relative effectiveness depends on adequate signage directing the public to tune their radios to a specific frequency to hear a message. Several types of systems are available, varying in range from ¼ to 4 miles and in cost from \$1,000.00-\$25,000.00 per unit. TIS systems can be a very cost-effective way to reach a large

number of travelers with minimal expense. Today's TIS systems can be programmed remotely to change a message, broadcast 24/7, and when sited properly, can reach millions of travelers over a single boating season.

The Work Group discussed the utility of using various TIS systems in the Missouri River Basin to alert boaters traveling from east to west of the need to inspect and clean boating equipment before launching in order to avoid spreading zebra mussels and other ANS. The consensus of the group was that TIS systems should be established at strategic locations along major cross-country highways east of the Missouri River to broadcast the zebra mussel/ANS/Boat-washing message.

There was a good deal of discussion about potential locations of TIS sites using a map of the basin and major highway systems. The relative priority of sites was discussed, but it was decided that traffic counts and the location of other TIS systems available for message sharing would be needed before ranking could be completed. The need for the TIS systems to be located near an off-ramp with easy access to power washing equipment was considered to be an essential criterion for siting.

The Work Group agreed to take the following steps leading to the eventual establishment of up to four new TIS systems in the Missouri River Basin:

1. All State ANS Coordinators would obtain current traffic count information from their respective Department's of Transportation within the next two weeks.
  2. Bill Zook would obtain a list of all existing TIS systems in the Missouri River Basin, their owner and the name and phone number of the person responsible for managing each TIS, within the next two weeks.
  3. State ANS Coordinators would then contact all appropriate TIS site managers and negotiate for message sharing that would allow a 1-2 minute zebra mussel/ANS/Boat Washing message to be "tacked-on" to the current message. This task would be completed by the end of April
  4. State ANS Coordinators would then submit proposals for new TIS systems that would fill in the gaps in message coverage by May 15. Bill Zook would provide a standard application format to be used in completing TIS proposals within the next two weeks.
  5. The entire Work Group would review all proposals and select which proposals will be funded this year with the available budget.
  6. Once selected, new TIS systems would be established as soon as possible and before the spring of 2004.
- 4) Marina/Portage Operator Partnerships - Bill Zook

Bill Zook briefly described the marina/portage operator outreach effort that he and Stephen Phillips have been actively involved with since September 2002.

This outreach involved mailing a packet of information about zebra mussels to each marina/portage operator between Bellevue, Nebraska and Fork Peck Reservoir. This mailing was followed by a site visit during early October of 2002 by Bill Zook. These contacts resulted in a report that included seven recommendations for cooperative projects with marina/portage operators and the creation of a formal partnership between water resource managers and these water related businesses to prevent the introduction of zebra mussels into the Missouri River.

Bill Zook also reported the results of a survey of marina/portage operators conducted in February 2003. A total of 37 surveys forms were mailed and only 13 returned. Marina/portage operators were asked whether or not they would take advantage of the following seven offers.

1. Provide each operator with a brochure display case in exchange for a commitment to place it in a prominent location and keep it stocked with at least two ANS brochures of our choosing. Yes – 13 No - 0
2. Provide each operator with a bulletin board in exchange for the commitment to place it in a prominent location and display the zap the zebra poster. Yes – 11 No – 2
3. Provide a postage subsidy of \$50 to each operator agreeing to include a zap the zebra brochure with each customer mailing. Yes – 9 No - 4
4. Provide a 10' X 3' banner advertising Power Washing Available Here to all operators who will provide this service. Yes – 11 No - 2
5. Pay a sign rental fee in exchange for the ability to place some zebra mussel information on existing highway signs advertising the operators business. Yes – 9 No - 4
6. Establish a Lewis and Clark lottery that would have the operator provide entry forms that would include a boater survey. The entry forms would be used to collect additional information on boater movements. The cash lottery would provide the incentive for providing information and increase the “buzz” about zebra mussels. Yes – 9 No – 4
7. Provide power wash rebate cards to operators to hand out to high-risk boats to encourage washing. Yes – 7 No - 6

The Work Group discussed the seven recommendations and decided to move forward with three. The Work Group approved the following actions.

1. Provide Plexiglas counter-top or wall-mounted brochure display cases will be purchased for each marina. The type of display case that has a back plate will be used so that a poster can be displayed with the brochures.
2. Provide power washing advertising banners will be purchased for each marina offering power wash service.
3. Provide a mailing subsidy of \$50 will be given to each operator who agrees to include a Zap the Zebra brochure with all customer mailings (on a one-year trail basis).

*Wednesday, March 12, 2003*

#### 5) Missouri River Access Area Signs

Each State ANS Coordinator and the USACE were asked to bring a current inventory of the number of Missouri River access areas, the status of ANS signing for each access and an example of the ANS sign being used for their respective states or area of responsibility. All six states and the USACE provided the requested information summarized as follows:

- Montana has approximately 120 access sites on the Missouri River. There is no ANS signage.
- North Dakota has approximately 53 access sites on the Missouri River. An ANS sign is posted at each access.
- South Dakota has approximately 67 access sites on the Missouri River. Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) signage for zebras, purple loosestrife and milfoil are posted at about 30% of these sites.
- Nebraska has approximately 31 access sites on the Missouri River. Most areas are currently signed with “Stop Aquatic Exotics” sign
- Iowa has approximately 18 access sites on the Missouri River. Iowa uses a large orange and red sign that target ANS, principally milfoil.
- Missouri has approximately 56 access sites on the Missouri River. They are currently using blaze orange 8.5” by 11.0” paper ANS signs.
- The USACE has approximately 65 access sites on the Missouri Rive. Many of these sites are probably already accounted for in the individual state inventories. It is currently up to each State to use any approved ANS sign at USACE boat ramps.

The group unanimously agreed to adopt a common sign for the Missouri River access sites. A zebra mussel/ANS sign sub-committee was created and charged with making recommendations on a sign design to the entire Work Group within 30 days (April 12, 2003). The Committee was asked to review existing ANS signs utilized by the Colorado and Columbia River 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian Working Groups in an effort to standardize western state signage. The committee was also asked to evaluate all of the individual ANS signs currently being used in the Missouri River Basin. This sub-committee is comprised of John Wachsmuth (Montana), Brian Canaday (Missouri), Lynn Schlueter (North Dakota), Wayne Freed (USCOE) and Stephen Phillips (PSMFC).

The PSMFC will pay for the signs and any other materials needed to install them. The individual states agreed to install the signs as soon as possible without financial assistance. It is estimated that approximately 500 signs will be needed. The Work Group generally agreed that signs would be replaced every three years and that different colors may be used in future sign orders

A brief discussion on sign placement followed. It was discussed that signs should be posted near boat ramps and should be put up in such a way as to be visible to users coming and going from the area.

6) Zebra Mussel Monitoring

A handout was provided on the Volunteer Zebra Mussel Substrate Monitoring Program based at Portland State University (PSU). Many of the states represented at the meeting discussed the various “monitoring” efforts they have. Lynn Schlueter (North Dakota) has already set-up a monitoring program in coordination with PSU for Lake Sakakawea. For the remainder of the states, monitoring was primarily in the form of “presence or absence” determined by surveys and/or citizen reports.

The Work Group agreed that monitoring should be expanded to all six Missouri River Reservoirs and some areas in the river channel. Stephen Phillips will contact PSU monitoring coordinator and ask them to contact each State Coordinator to set-up the additional monitoring sites. The group considers this extremely important as an early detection tool to trigger an emergency response. The need for some coordinated first response plan for the Missouri River was briefly discussed. While everyone agreed that a program should be established, the group preferred to work on it at a later date due to time considerations.

7) Other Considerations or Actions

The team discussed the make-up of the Missouri River Work Group and decided that representatives from the following groups should also be invited to participate in current and future ANS planning efforts:

- US Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary
- A representative of the marina/portage operators
- Native American resource managers (Brian Canaday recommended we contact the Native American Wildlife Association)
- Power company representatives
- Tourism industry representatives

The Work Group agreed that communication would be key and that the group should meet on an as needed basis, possibly before or after the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian Meeting in Kansas or next Fall to evaluate the outcome of implemented actions for the 2003 boating season.

8) Review Actions, Time Frame and Responsibility

All decisions, assignments, work products and financial decisions were reviewed at the end of the meeting for confirmation and reinforcement. To everyone's surprise, all participants were in agreement with decisions made and actions to be taken.

Draft minutes respectfully submitted by:

Brian Canaday  
Policy Coordinator  
Missouri Department of Conservation

Bill Zook  
ANS Outreach Consultant  
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission