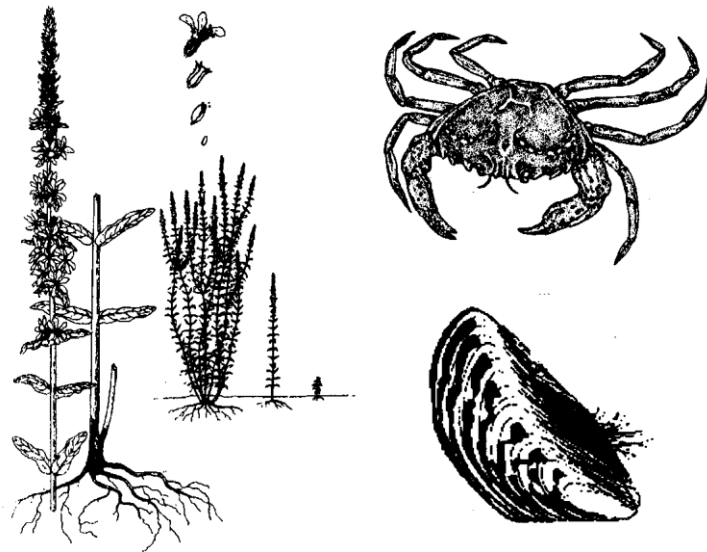


AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE 2002 WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE



prepared by the Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....1

Recommendations to Better Accomplish the Committees Purpose2

Accomplishments.....4

INTRODUCTION{ TC \L1 "INTRODUCTION}

The 2000 Washington State Legislature created the Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Committee (RCW 77.60.130) to coordinate the implementation of programs that minimize the impact of invasive aquatic species. The Committee organizes the management efforts of many state and federal agencies through the Washington State ANS Management Plan. More than two hundred representatives from various agencies, local governments, tribes and industries are invited to participate in the semi-annual meetings. Seven working subcommittees have been created to address various topical issues, including: Imports and Transfers; ANS and Salmon; Education, Research and Risk Assessment; Monitoring and Response Plans; Commercial Shipping; Recreational Boating; and Regulatory Review. The full Committee meets twice per year and the executive committee conducts monthly conference calls to address issues that require immediate attention and to prepare items for review by the full Committee.

The legislation that established the Committee requires a biennial report to the legislature with the first report due by December 1, 2001. The purpose of this report is to fulfill this requirement by reporting to the legislature the Committee's accomplishments and making recommendations for better accomplishing the Committee's purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BETTER ACCOMPLISH THE COMMITTEES PURPOSE{ TC \L1 "RECOMMENDATIONS TO BETTER ACCOMPLISH THE COMMITTEES PURPOSE}

1. Provide a stable, long-term source of state funding to implement core ANS management programs, including prevention, screening, control, monitoring, education, research and rapid response.
 - § Proviso all funds to insure they are used for the intended purpose.
2. Improve programs designed to prevent the introduction and spread of ANS by recreational boats.
 - § Implement regulations that make the transport of any aquatic plant on a watercraft or trailers illegal.
 - § Expand enforcement authority to inspect privately hauled watercraft for the presence of invasive species and aquatic plants.
 - § Provide funding to improve existing efforts to inspect commercially hauled watercraft for invasive species and aquatic plants.
 - § Post educational signs at infested waters and all boat launches in the state, as appropriate.
3. Develop a rapid response plan describing actions to be taken when an invasive animal or plant species is introduced.
 - § Provide Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife with the mandate to create a rapid response plan in cooperation with the ANS committee and its member agencies.
 - § Provide Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife with the authority to designate waters of the state as infested if the department determines that such waters contain a harmful invasive aquatic animal species.
 - § Provide Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife with the authority to designate waters of the state as infested if it is determined that such waters contain a harmful invasive aquatic plant species, in consultation with the Department of Ecology.
 - § Provide authority to post signs and implement management programs at infested water bodies for the purpose of containment and control.
4. Enhance existing and create new monitoring and control programs.

- § Continue to fund efforts to control and monitor for European green crab.
 - § Continue to fund efforts to control and monitor for Spartina.
 - § Continue ongoing baseline monitoring efforts such as the “Puget Sound Expeditions.”
 - § Continue efforts to monitor Washington waters for the presence of zebra mussels.
 - § Continue efforts to monitor and control aquatic invasive plants.
 - § Develop cooperative monitoring programs for Chinese mitten crab in the Puget Sound Basin and the Columbia River.
5. Improve existing efforts to manage ballast water discharges.
- Please refer to the ballast water management report submitted by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.
6. Create a consistent science-based program to maximize the responsible use of beneficial nonnative species and minimize the impact of invasive nonnative species.
- § Provide authority to create a consistent science-based screening and classification system.
 - § Develop and implement a program to screen out potentially invasive plants and animals prior to importation, sale, or release into state waters.
 - § Develop criteria for evaluating, classifying and quantifying the extent of ANS risk.
 - § Collate data and develop maps and reports summarizing the know distribution of ANS.
 - § Track distribution patterns to determine areas and industries at risk of impacts of future invasions.
7. Enhance and develop public education outreach programs.
- § Develop inserts about ANS to be distributed with boating guides, fisheries regulations, fishing license renewals and boat tax statements.
 - § Make assessment programs materials available to agency staff and citizens to be used in identification of ANS.
 - § Develop display materials directed at restaurants, fish markets and bait shops describing how to properly handle nonnative species to prevent unintentional introductions.
 - § Develop display materials directed at pet/aquarium stores to increase awareness of pet buyers and prevent unintentional introductions.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS{ TC \11 "Accomplishments}

The “Washington State ANS Management Plan” serves as a work plan and qualifies the state for NISA funding through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife received \$29,482 in FY98, \$32,000 in FY99, \$126,177 in FY 2000, and \$130,036 in FY 2001 to fund coordination and implementation of the state plan. Our state plan is considered to be a model for other states to use in the development of their state plans, and the Western Governor’s Association has contracted with WDFW to assist other states in developing their state plans. During the past year the Committee has reviewed and revised the state plan. One of the primary goals of the Committee is to encourage collaboration between federal, state, and local entities working on ANS issues. The following accomplishments are part of this comprehensive statewide coordination effort.

- § Washington Sea Grant Program developed educational materials designed to educate the public about the concept of ANS, problems caused, and ways to help. The materials produced included the *Bio-invasions: Breaching Natural Barriers* booklet, a pet store handout on ANS, fact sheets on green crabs and various pathways of introduction for nonnative species, *Handling and Disposal of Nonnative Aquatic Species and their Packaging* booklet for laboratories and research facilities and the *Guide to Least Wanted Aquatic Organisms of the Pacific Northwest*.
- § The Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team, through public involvement and education grants totaling \$44,000, partly funded the production and distribution some of the above educational materials and others designed to heighten public awareness of the ANS issue in the Pacific Northwest and the Puget Sound basin. They also adopted a new aquatic nuisance species program in December 2000, as part of the long-range *Puget Water Quality Management Plan*. This program has a similar goal to the state program but maintains a focus on issues in the Puget Sound and Georgia Basin shared marine waters, and recommends several new management activities to improve the protection of the Sound. Existing programs and institutional structures for coordinating and carrying out management programs are integrated into this program.
- § Washington Sea Grant Program and the University of Washington, Tacoma Campus, have an ongoing project with the Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium to develop a permanent ANS display entitled, Alien Invader, at the aquarium facility. The National Sea Grant Program has provided considerable funding to the project. The Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Noxious Weed Control Board, Washington and Oregon Sea Grant Programs, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have also provided financial support.

- § The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service worked with Oregon Sea Grant to obtain National Sea Grant funding for the design, development, and production of outreach and education boxes for invasive species. The boxes will include preserved specimens, guides, fact sheets, classroom activities, and other items. Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team, the University of Washington, Washington Sea Grant, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife are providing educational items and financial support.
- § The Washington Department of Ecology is currently working with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and The Department of Parks and Recreation to develop signs to be placed at all boat launches in Washington warning boaters of ANS animals and plants and encouraging them to clean their boats, trailers and fishing gear. New multi-species “infested water body” signs will be developed to replace old milfoil signs.
- § The Washington Department of Ecology maintains a web site containing technical and non-technical information about ANS weeds, and has developed brochures and flyers on several exotic freshwater species. Last year they evaluated 22 aquatic plants for potential quarantine by the Washington State Department of Agriculture and fact sheets were created and distributed to weed board members and field staff by the department. Of the sixteen plants considered highest priority, fifteen were listed. Planned research projects into the development of biological control insects for Brazilian elodea and parrotfeather milfoil did not materialize due to a lack of funding. However a paper evaluating the effectiveness of 2,4-D on Eurasian watermilfoil has been submitted to a peer reviewed journal.
- § The Department of Ecology updated their Aquatic Plant Management Environmental Impact Statement that will allow the use of more tools to manage problems associated with noxious weeds. The department spent \$1.2 million on aquatic freshwater nonnative weed management and monitoring over the last biennium and anticipates spending the same amount next biennium. The department also worked to raise awareness of ANS and issues surrounding their control via 4(d) rule comments to National Marine Fisheries.
- § A green crab monitoring and control program, funded by legislative proviso, has been developed in implemented. The coastal monitoring program began in 1998 in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor to control a newly established population. To date more than 1,000 crab have been collected in Willapa Bay, and 150 in Grays harbor – including females with eggs and juveniles. Shellfish growers have been active participants in the program, having captured or killed many crab and provided the department with good information as to what sort of habitat they were found in. Over 9,000 copies of a green crab identification card, created by Washington Sea Grant Program, University of Washington, have been distributed in the Pacific Northwest.

- § The Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team Work Plan requested that Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife received proviso funds to monitor for the presence of green crab in Puget Sound. Volunteers from numerous organizations, under the direction of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, monitor over 100 sites. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service collaborates with WDFW and a nonprofit environmental group to fund volunteer training workshops.
- § Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife¹ worked with the University of Washington to design and conduct a zebra mussel risk assessment and implement monitoring programs. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife hires temporary staff to organize volunteers, distribute sampling supplies, collect samples and send them for analyses, and maintain a database. In addition, the department contracted with Portland State University Center for Lakes and Reservoirs, to implement a regional substrate-monitoring program. There are now more than 44 volunteers checking substrates across the state and reporting their findings to the center.
- § Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife¹ contracted with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to conduct 100th Meridian boater surveys at 21 boat launch sites in Washington during the summer of 2001. As a result, educational information was provided to 698 boaters and anglers.
- § Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife¹ entered into a partnership with the Washington State Patrol to develop and implement an inspection program for commercially hauled boats at ports of entry into the state. Over 50 boats have been inspected, two contaminated vessels have been identified and cleaned, and several others have been cleaned and flushed as a precautionary measure.
- § The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service developed a Mitten Crab Watch card. One hundred thousand watch cards have been printed by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, with direct financial assistance from Bonneville Power Authority and Oregon Sea Grant. The cards have been distributed along the west coast from Alaska to California (including British Columbia).
- § U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service worked with Portland State University, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the Bonneville Power Administration to produce and post laminated mitten crab signs along the Columbia River. Efforts are underway to develop a collaborative monitoring program.

¹ These WDFW efforts, and ballast water management, are directly funded by pass through funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- § The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hosted an **Atlantic Salmon Identification Workshop** in June of 2000. The workshop focused on field identification and ecology of introduced Atlantic salmon in the Pacific Northwest. Educational materials for the 70 participants representing Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies, the aquaculture industry and environmental groups were provided by Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team.
- § The Department of Agriculture has worked with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Natural Resources, Noxious Weed Control Boards, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other agencies and stakeholders to **develop six regional management plans for the control and eradication of *Spartina***. All told, over 1,150 solid acres, 800 of which were in Willapa Bay, were treated. The Department of Natural Resources has also developed GIS layers using infrared photography to use as a management tool.
- § The Department of Agriculture, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and County Noxious Weed Boards worked with landowners to **treat 2000 acres of purple loosestrife and 300 acres of other noxious weed species**. Bio-control efforts initiated in 1991 have resulted in large areas of purple loosestrife being prevented from seeding, and in many cases killed. However, many of these areas are now being invaded by other invasive species.
- § Twelve federal, state and local agencies partnered to conduct control efforts on **600 acres of saltcedar** infestations in SE Washington.
- § Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has given **informational presentations on ANS to the recreational boaters associations** of Washington and British Columbia, and to Marine Enforcement Officers who are responsible for boater safety education classes.
- § Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has **purchased and disseminated ANS educational materials** via boating and fishing associations, schools, and a variety of state and federal programs.
- § Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has been **working closely with the shipping vessel industry and ports to educate them on ballast water issues**, to pass and implement ballast water legislation, and to develop a ballast water research pilot project.