



ALASKA INVASIVE SPECIES WORKING GROUP

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Inaugural Meeting

Invasive species issues are a major concern in the United States. Thus far, seventeen states have formed State Invasive Species Councils as a mechanism to coordinate their efforts and to increase the effectiveness of their invasive species management programs. These councils operate under a variety of structures in terms of organization, funding, and participation. Each state must work to find its best solution to its invasive species concerns.

Much work is already being done in Alaska in regard to invasive species, and the state is lucky to be at the beginning of what could become very expensive and deleterious effects from invasive species. In recognition of this situation, the Alaska Invasive Species Working Group was formed to address and prevent impacts from invasive species.

On April 26th and 27th, 38 individuals from around the state met at the US Fish and Wildlife Service building in Anchorage. Among the attendees were representatives from state, federal, university, citizen, native, conservation, and military organizations. Opening the meeting were remarks by Gary Edwards (Deputy Regional Director, USFWS) and Tony Nakazawa (Director, University of Alaska Fairbanks-Cooperative Extension Service).

This meeting established the Alaska Invasive Species Working Group. Its mission: **To minimize invasive impacts in Alaska by facilitating collaboration, cooperation and communication.**

Following the creation of the draft mission statement, goals for the Working Group were drafted to provide guidance for members in the following months.



Tony Nakazawa Gives the Opening Remarks to the AIS Working Group Meeting

Please see *Goals for the AIS Working Group* on pg. 2

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"...Idaho's programs have been likened to a "patchwork quilt", where each "patch" represents an individual program or effort. So long as the patches connect, the quilt is useful, but if they do not, then there are gaps in the coverage through which undesirable species can enter."
-- Idaho's Action Plan for Invasive Species



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Goals Drafted for the AIS Working Group

- Coordinate the use of resources & activities to optimize invasive species management
- Integrate invasive species prevention & management activities with other management objectives across jurisdictions (e.g. Dept. of Transportation non-native grasses on right-of-ways)
- Develop a statewide invasive species management strategy & action plan
- Develop a system to identify & prioritize potential & existing invasive species threats in Alaska
- Support the development of a clearinghouse of educational & training materials and activities, information & data, expertise and the dissemination of information to the public
- Endorse scientific research on invasive species and its application to adaptive management
- Advise public officials, resource managers and land owners on invasive species issues.

Draft MOU

In addition to forming a mission and goals, members of the working group have developed a Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for further review. Over the course of the next couple months, this document will be presented to state, federal, and other entities. The MOU outlines goals and duties for the workgroup, and acknowledges that participation of time and resources to the AIS Working Group is voluntary.

*MOU :
A Memorandum of
Understanding.*

Subcommittees

At the inaugural meeting of the AIS Working Group, subcommittees were formed to act on needs identified at the meeting. These subcommittees are:

Education
Research Needs
Management Needs
Data Management and Clearinghouse
Marine Invasive Species Management

Over the course of the next six months, the subcommittees will work to accomplish tasks, and to

further the goal of strengthening and fully establishing the Alaska Invasive Species Council.

Currently, funding for the council does not exist, outside of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Grant obtained and administered by Michele Hebert of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service. This grant provides funds for the formation of an Alaska invasive species council.

Leadership and membership of the subcommittees will be determined via teleconference meetings of the Alaska Invasive Species Working Group.

Please see *Subcommittee Goals* on pg. 3

Subcommittee Goals

Education

Goals

- Increase communication of subcommittees.
- Identify critical species
- Educational outreach
- Provide a conduit for citizens

Management Needs

Goals

- Assessment of agency programs, priorities, funding, issues and needs
- Develop rapid response plans
- Share existing Best Management Practices, Standard Operating Procedures, and Mitigations
- Survey existing risk assessment systems



Research Needs

Goal: Address the research needs for Invasive species management in Alaska. General concerns:

- Apply to all taxa
- Identify data gaps
- Adopt methodology of CNIPM
- Identify/contact expertise in scientific/management communities
- Available funding for research

Data Management & Clearinghouse

Goal: to work with other subcommittees and independently to coordinate and compile useful information for Invasive Species concerns in Alaska. Distribution of information via: listserv, emails, documents, and possibly a website.

Marine Invasive Species Management

Informal forum to discuss marine invasive species issues



Photos from the Breakout and Subcommittee groups from the Inaugural AIS Working Group Meeting

AIS Working Group in Motion

Activities have already begun; further actions will be carried out by the subcommittees: Education, Research Needs, Management Needs, Data Management and Clearinghouse, and Marine Invasive Species Committee.

To facilitate communication among interested parties, a listserv has been set up at UAF. Members are added to the list by subscription, and it is not open to the general

public. Options in subscriber accounts determine how often you will get updates from the list.

Generally, postings from the list are digested once a day, and sent out to all subscribers. This forum will be used for announcements, updates, coordination, and to conduct subcommittee and working group business.

Please see *Listserv Address* on pg. 5

April 26th and 27th AIS Working Group Meeting Participants

Judy Alderson (contact Jeff Heys); Regional Wilderness Specialist , USDI, National Park Service, Alaska Region-Natural Resources Team, Anchorage

Brian Allee; Director, USDC, Sea Grant, AK Sea Grant College Program, Fairbanks

Paul Andron, LTJG; Ballast Water Management Program Coordinator, USCG, Juneau

Susan Banet; Supervisory Geologist, USDI, Minerals Management Services, Alaska Region, Anchorage

Josh Buzby; Ecologist, US Army , Fort Wainwright

Josh Carlson; Ecologist, US Army , Fort Richardson

Jeffery Conn; Research Agronomist, USDA, Agricultural Research Service, Subarctic Agricultural Research Unit, Fairbanks

Matt Cronin; Governor's Office Representative, UAF, School of Natural Resources and Agriculture Science, Palmer

Larry DeVilbiss; Director, State of Alaska, Dept. of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture, Palmer

Alex Engman; Senior Associate, The Growth Company, Anchorage

Ann Ferguson; State Plant Health Director, USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Wasilla

Joy Geiselman; Deputy Chief, Biological Science Officer, USDI, Geological Survey, Alaska Science Center, Anchorage

Dan Gilson; Project Manager, Oil Spill Prevention & Response Operations, , Prince William Sound Citizens Advisory Council, Valdez

Gino Graziano; Statewide Coordinator, Alaska Association of Conservation Districts, Wasilla

Michele Hebert; Land Resources Program Chair, CES, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks

Caitlin Higgins; Outreach Organizer, Alaska Conservation Alliance (Alaska Conservation Voters), Anchorage

Steven Howell; Director of Public Outreach, Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council, Kenai

Deena Jallen; Invasive Species Program Assistant, CES, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks

Larry Johnson; Integrated Vegetation management Coordinator, State of Alaska, Dept. of Transportation, Operations and Maintenance, Fairbanks

Anne Jourdan; Environmental Coordinator, Alaska Intertribal Council, Anchorage

Lisa Ka'aihue; Project Manager, Environmental Monitoring, Prince William Sound Citizens Advisory Council, Anchorage

Keith Kahklen; Natural Resources Coordinator, USDI, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau

Denny Lassuy; Invasive Species Coordinator, USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Region, Anchorage

Rosemarie Lombardi; Environmental Specialist, State of Alaska, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Pesticide Program, Wasilla

Jeffrey Mason; Range and Training Land Assessment Program Coordinator, US Army , US Department of Defense, Fort Greely

Shelley Morgan; Executive Coordinator, The Nature Conservancy, Alaska Field Office, Anchorage

Tony Nakazawa; Director, CES, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks

Rachael Petro; Special Assistant to the Commissioner, State of Alaska, Dept. of Natural Resources, Anchorage

Robert Piorkowski; Invasive Species Program Coordinator, State of Alaska, Dept. of Fish and Game, Sport Fish, Juneau

Gene Schock; Soil Conservationist, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Palmer

Steven Seefeldt; Research Agronomist, USDA, Agricultural Research Service, Sub-arctic Agricultural Research Unit, Fairbanks

Linda Shaw; Wildlife Biologist, USDC, National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region/HCD, Juneau

John Sheahan; Agricultural Inspector Supervisor, Homeland Security, US Customs and Border Protection, Anchorage

Michael Shephard; Vegetation Ecologist, USDA, Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Anchorage

Jeanne Standley; State Vegetation Specialist, USDI, Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage

Calvin Steele; Rangeland Management Specialist, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Palmer

Kate Troll; Executive Director, Alaska Conservation Alliance, Anchorage

Chris Garner; Natural Resources Specialist, US Army, Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands, Fort Richardson

Invasive Species in the News

Parasite Seen as Likely Cause of Starfish Kill North of Vancouver

April 28, 2006 — By Associated Press

VANCOUVER, B.C. — Hundreds of starfish have been found dead on a beach on British Columbia's Sunshine Coast, and a scientist says a nonnative parasite is likely to blame.

Purple sea stars began washing up last week in Trail Bay at Sechelt, north of Vancouver. The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans has been unable to determine why they died, agency spokeswoman Michelle Imbeau said.

Bruce Leighton, a marine parasite expert at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, noted Wednesday that the die-off coincided with the peak of the starfish reproductive cycle, when the creatures are most vulnerable to *Orchitophrya stellarum*, a protozoan that feeds on sea stars' sperm.

He said the parasite is believed responsible for wiping out purple sea stars in North Vancouver's Indian Arm and eliminating much of the male population of the species in other areas of British Columbia, altering the balance of species.

The parasite is native to the Atlantic but is now found along the British Columbia and Washington state coast, possibly after arriving in ship ballast water or with seafood. East Coast starfish usually survive infestations, scientists said.

Sea stars feed on mussels and barnacles, making more room in the intertidal zone for other creatures that support other marine and bird life and thus helping to maintain biodiversity, Leighton said.

Source: Associated Press on ENN website

www.enn.com

<http://www.enn.com/today.html?id=10356>



Purple Sea Star (*Orchitophrya stellarum*)

Upcoming Events

Audio conference 9am to 10 am Tuesday, May 23rd

Will discuss the MOU, meeting summary and attendee list, monthly newsletter, subcommittee activities and coordination.

To connect, call the NRCS Bridge number: 907-271-1405, allow phone to ring until another party picks up. Long distance charges apply.

AIS Working Group Meeting October 24th, Anchorage

Subcommittee updates, further discussion of council activities and goals

Listserv Address

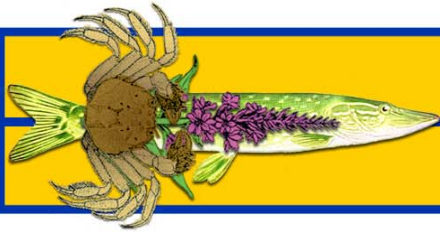
To subscribe to the listserv, contact either:

ffmah@uaf.edu or fndm@uaf.edu

Visit the list and sign in at:

<https://lists.uaf.edu:8025/mailman/listinfo/aisc-l>

Submit list postings to: aisc-l@lists.uaf.edu



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"Alien species" means, with respect to a particular ecosystem, any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem.

"Invasive species" means an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

Executive Order 13112, Feb 3, 1999



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