On a national level, invasive species are estimated to cause over 1 billion dollars a year in environmental and economic damages. Almost half of the states in the US have some sort of group addressing all-taxa of invasive species. These groups vary in their composition, level of state support, structure, and activity level. State based organizations can react more efficiently and effectively to areas of local concern.

UAF-CES was funded by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to coordinate the development of an invasive species council.
Addressing All Taxa of Invasives

Alaska experiences fewer invaders than many of the other states. The goal of the AISWG is to help preserve Alaska’s natural environment and economic resources.

Alaska is lucky to be at the beginning of what could become very expensive and deleterious effects from invasive species. Groups have already formed to address plant invaders, marine invasives, and other concerns.

The Alaska Invasive Species working Group aims to coordinate existing efforts, and to protect Alaska from invasives species of all taxonomic groups.

April Meeting Recap

The first meeting of the AISWG was held in Anchorage, in April 2006

- Over 38 participants from State, Federal and Non-Government Groups
- Development of 6 month plan of work and formation of the working groups
- Development of mission statement and goals
- MOU drafted with help of Governor’s office, and currently in signatory process
- Established Marine subcommittee
- Communication network established with newsletter, list serv, monthly audios, website, face to face meeting schedule.
- Second face-to-face meeting after 6 months (October 24, 2006)
Mission Statement

The mission/purpose of Alaska Invasive Species Working Group (AISWG) is to minimize invasive species impacts in Alaska by facilitating collaboration, cooperation and communication.

(as stated in the MOU 2006)

AISWG Goals (as stated in the 2006 MOU)

Non-prioritized

• Clarify the jurisdictional authorities of signatory parties as they relate to invasive species management.
• Share the scientific and technical expertise of the parties related to invasive species management
• Encourage and enable signatory party employees or members to work collaboratively to optimize their respective capabilities to minimize invasive species impacts.
AISWG Goals, continued

- Collaborate in the development of a needs assessment and drafting of a statewide strategic plan for the management of invasive species.
- Consider the formation by the State of Alaska, in collaboration with the other signatory parties, a formal structure for continued collaboration, cooperation and communication to minimize invasive species impacts in Alaska.

Accomplishments: Marine subcommittee

- Greater communication on marine issues

- Discussion of: Strategic Plan vs. Needs Assessments document
  - What will be of most use to the State?
  - What will the AISWG have the resources to accomplish

- Top ten invasive list drafted for Alaska
  - Species selected based on potential damage
  - Broken down by species in Alaska and potential invaders
Accomplishments: Marine Group Top Ten List

Already here
• Atlantic Salmon
• Boring Sponge
• Dead Man's Fingers
• Golden Star
• Rockweed
• Violet Tunicate

Not yet found in Alaska
• Atlantic Cord Grass
• Colonial tunicate
• Green Crab
• New Zealand Mud snail

Accomplishments: Newsletter

Produced Quarterly for the AISWG

• Posted on website

• Focuses on invasive species issues in Alaska
  – Volume 1, May 2006, AISWG formation
  – Volume 2, August 2006, Invasive species research activities

• Updates on AISWG activities
Accomplishments: Communications

Teleconferences
- Monthly AIWSG and Marine group teleconferences
Listserv: aisc-l@lists.uaf.edu
- Over 50 members. Updates of news and activities, provides a forum for discussion

Website
- www.alaskainvasives.org
  - AISWG minutes and documents
  - Contact information
  - Calendar and news

Accomplishments: Second Meeting

The second AISWG meeting: October 24
Developed next 6 month action plan:
- Develop all taxa species of concern list.
- Develop a needs assessment.
- Continue for 6 months the current structure of CES chairing AISWG
- State agencies work together in the next few months to identify a new chair structure.
- Develop an AISWG annual report for the Governor’s Office
- Continue, website updates, monthly audios, newsletters.
- Marine subcommittee continue to meet.
The AISWG was given the go-ahead by the Governors office to sign the MOU. We currently have 12 signatories as of October 23rd. The MOU is being circulated through state agencies, and being signed individually by NGO and federal organizations.

**AISWG MOU Signatories (as of 10/20/06)**

**State Agencies:**
- University of Alaska Fairbanks
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources

**Federal Agencies:**
- US Coast Guard
- National Park Service
- USDA NRCS
- USDA Forest Service

**NGOs:**
- Prince William Soundkeeper
- The Nature Conservancy
- Prince William Sound RCAC
- Alaska Inter-Tribal Council

**USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs**

**US Geological Survey**
Questions?