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Meeting Summary • May 30-31, 2007
Hilton Mystic, Mystic, CT

Panelists in attendance: Jay Baker, MA Office of Coastal Zone Management; Nancy Balcom, CT Sea Grant Extension Program; Ann Bove, VT Department of Environmental Conservation; Kevin Cute, RI Coastal Resources Management Council; Lisa Drake, US Coast Guard Academy; Karen Hahnel, ME Department of Environmental Protection; Bill Harman, NY State Federation of Lake Associations; Bill Hyatt, CT Department of Environmental Protection; Susannah King, NE Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission; John McPhedran, ME Department of Environmental Protection; Paul Marangelo, The Nature Conservancy; Les Mehrhoff, University of CT and Invasive Plant Atlas of New England; Meg Modley, Lake Champlain Basin Program; Anne Monnelly, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation; Judith Pederson, MIT Sea Grant College Program; Tim Preddice, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation; Robert Reid, NOAA Fisheries, Howard Laboratory; Amy Smagula, NH Department of Environmental Services; Jan Smith, MA Bays Program; and James Straub, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Others present: Linda Auken, University of NH; Thomas Berry, The Nature Conservancy; Jeremy Collie, University of RI; Jennifer Forman Orth, UMass Boston; Larry Harris, University of NH; Nicole Lengyel, University of RI; Leslie Matthews, VT Department of Environmental Conservation; Jennifer, Mehaffey, NEANS Panel contract intern; Nancy Murray, CT Department of Environmental Protection; Scott Newsham, Federal ANS Task Force; James Stahlnecker, ME Department of Environmental Protection; Leslie Suprenant, NYS Division of fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources; Michele L. Tremblay, NEANS Panel ANS Program Manager (naturesource communications); and Robert Whitlatch, University of CT.

Full Panel meeting: welcome, introductions, review of meeting agenda, and updates by Co-Chairs – Jim Straub, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and Kevin Cute, RI Coastal Resources Management Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ANS updates and Panel business:

- The Panelists and guests introduced themselves and their organizations.
- *NEANS Panel Business and November 2007 meeting scheduling* – Michele Tremblay. The November 2007 meeting rotation falls in the State of Rhode Island. Michele will secure a location in Providence. Panelists and invasive friends will be asked to provide any possible date conflicts in response to an upcoming email polling that Michele will distribute via the panel@northeastans.org listserve.
- *Nonprofit status update, saving money and better reporting*
Action: Michele Tremblay will send a polling message to the NEANS Panel listserve asking for November 2007 meeting conflicts.
Action: Michele Tremblay will begin work on finalizing a date and securing a facility for the November 2007 meeting.
- *Invasive Species Advisory Council* – No one was present to provide an update.

Highlights from Connecticut – Bill Hyatt, Nancy Murray, and Nancy Balcom.

ANS Plan finalized with governor signature and submitted to Federal Task Force with approval anticipated over the next two months. Anticipating funding to be used for personnel. Looking at potential funding sources in the state legislature: marine fishing license bill has made it through the House and Senate financing committees but has been held in the House pending discussions with the Governor and the House over budget issues. It could bring \$1.5 million in new revenue to CTDEP for ANS work. The Magnuson Act enables states to implement licensing bills. This was the impetus for the CT bill. Bill is structured so that current license holders benefit from the funded programs. Freshwater angling license owners can buy a license for a small additional charge that provides the ability to fish (marine and freshwater) and hunt.

The 2007 CT anglers' guide features invasive species on the cover and provides information on ANS. Next year's guide will have emphasis on VHS and New Zealand Mud Snails. CT does not currently have VHS. Fish movement in commercial hatcheries, baitfish, and hitchhiker vectors are being studied. Even in states with conservative measures, there was a high degree of movement that regulations did not cover for monitoring and enforcement.

Additional CTDEP staff will be trained and deployed for early detection while conducting other surveys and fieldwork.

Zebra mussels are in two CT lakes. A connecting brook to the Housatonic watershed is being studied to determine if it is a vector.

Nancy Murray added an update about Hydrilla in CT, first found in 1989 and positively identified in 1995. There are three coastal communities affected. Small ponds have used chemical controls. The river system in Fairfield County is infested. Hand pulling has been conducted. Signs are being posted to ask visitors not to draw water and to be wary of transferring vegetation. Connecticut's goal is to eradicate Hydrilla. CT prepared a Hydrilla response plan. The 2007 goals are to conduct a statewide assessment, educate public, publicity blitz including sign posting. Highlights from the Council's work include establishing statute to list invasive species and banned species that cannot be sold, transferred, or planted.

Water chestnut is under control through work with Fisheries Division, Water Bureau, Long Island Sound ORG, and USFWS. CT river cover has been dramatically reduced. A small and probably source population in a small cove near Hartford has been identified; chemical treatment is planned.

Nancy Balcom reported that EPA Long Island Sound Study has prioritized an interstate ANS Plan with CT and NY. The integration with other state plans is part of the process. Research projects include a study on brown buchia, a red algae; worms and other live bait that take monthly samples to determine sources of algae and seaweed; sticker program for bait boxes; trying to identify Didemnum to the species level; and an attempt to form a regional plan for ocean observing systems that is trying to determine what kind of ANS information would be useful.

ANS Task Force May 2007 meeting – Scott Newsham, Executive Secretary

The Task Force had decided last year to have themed meetings. Last November it was Rapid Response. Task Force Members felt that this format change has been particularly helpful to them with the strategic planning process. It was finalized in March. The Task Force is an advisory body to the federal government. Scott indicated that there is a Homeland Security federal directive to agencies that they shall operate under the Incident Management System (IMS). States and local agencies are also using the system. This system can be tailored for ANS response. The FEMA website has basic IMS training.

The May 2007 meeting was held in Erie, PA and was held in conjunction with the Great Lakes Regional Panel. The Great Lakes Panel and Great Lakes Commission reported on regional plan progress in its region's states. State Management plans were a focus on the plans with a plenary and breakout sessions to explore this issue. A lack of funding was discussed. Right now, there are 21 plans and 25 anticipated in 2008—all sharing the current level of funding. Several options and mechanisms were discussed during the focus sessions as were the prescriptive and lengthy nature of the state plan guidelines document. For the first time, Panels sent recommendations well ahead of the Task Force meeting. This approach can result in a more substantive response between meetings and possibly action at meetings. Scott encouraged the NEANS Panel to follow this model when preparing its recommendations to the Task Force.

The Task Force is asking that everyone continue to populate the ANS database. It has been difficult to find professionals to commit to being listed as Tier 2 experts for the ANS database.

The ANS Task Force approved the New Zealand Mud Snail plan at the May 2007 meeting. The Asian Carp plan has met with some resistance because of conditions regarding interstate transport regulations. The next ANS Task Force meeting is slated for November 6-9. On November 5, the Regional Panel principals are slated to meet.

The 2007 NAISA has been introduced in the House but is not expected to pass.

The Panel discussed the connection between VHS and ballast water as a vector. The IMO has allowances for some degree of pathogen transmission that might allow VHS. The focus on ballast water does not address or regulate other vectors such as Internet trade. The Panel asked if it would be useful for it to write a letter to ANS Task Force to have the issue elevated. It would likely be more helpful if the Panel had a specific recommendation. It might also be helpful to have a Panelist whose agency is an ANS Task Force member to provide input to the TF and his/her agency. In the case of the agencies, it may be helpful when requesting budget funds.

Highlights and news from the International Marine Bioinvasions Conference – Judy
Judy Pederson updated everyone on the Marine Bioinvasions Conference held last week in Cambridge, MA. The Conference is convened roughly every two years. This year, over two hundred participants were there for three plenary presentations and several workshops. Foci included green crabs and viruses. The Conference abstracts book will be posted on the web next week. Hard copies are available for a fee. Other than Dean Wilkinson, there were no Task Force members at the Conference.

Northeast ANS Roundtable

Les Mehrhoff, UConn, reported that IPANE has been working on securing funding and conducting training sessions in the New England states. DOT representatives were at each state's session. The focus has been on early detection. Les circulated a watch list for Panel comment. Most of the listed species are those sold in nurseries.

Paul Marangelo, The Nature Conservancy, indicated that there is a process to determine who will be the TNC representative on the Panel.

Larry Harris, University of NH, reported that he is working with invasive tunicates with graduate students. There is a cooperative effort with DFO and WHOI to develop and test ideas for rapid response efforts of *Didemnum*. It is spreading rapidly and was found in Eastport, ME. Flood events may be an inhibitor of some marine invasives due to decreased salinity of freshwater.

Judy Pederson, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, invited Panelists to visit the MIT website to enter sightings of introduced species into the database at CARTIS.MIT.edu. The data are displayed in real time with mapping capabilities.

Jay Baker, MA Office of Coastal Zone Management, reported that he had protocols for the database. The DRAFT EDRR protocol document is under review. It is not species specific. There is no budget for the effort—it should be adopted next year. Charles Hernick, former NOAA fellow, has moved into the private sector but his position has been posted. Part of the description includes participation in the NEANS Panel. CZM has a new ANS website.

Robert Reid, NOAA, reported that he has received funding to continue collaborative surveys on George's Bank where *Didemnum* is common, especially about 100 miles off Cape Cod. The study is addressing effects on benthic communities and identifying predators of the ooze. Lionfish have been sighted in the Northeast and determine trends to see if they are breeding. The Shedd Aquarium had a good display on ANS.

John McPhedran, ME Department of Environmental Protection, Courtesy boat inspection is running for the season. DEP is conducting invasive plant controller training. Maine hosted a HACCP training in Augusta that was well attended and including bait dealers and fisheries agencies. They were concerned about Maine's waters becoming infested with invasive weeds and other species. There is a proposal to merge the sticker program for motorized watercraft funds ANS programs with the licensing program. This will redirect \$1 per registration fee and combine stickers (one instead of two for in-state users). The change will go into effect in 2008. The angling community has been concerned about benthic barriers as an impediment to fish passage and determine effects on habitat. The barriers are meant to have a limited time use and in relatively small areas. The DEP is close to getting a general permit for herbicide treatment. The comment period closed May 30. DEP has allocated \$5,000 of its state management funds toward marine efforts.

Jim Stahlnecker for ME Department of Marine Resources reported that Maine contracted with Shannon Weigle to write a report. The Department of Transportation is conducting diving training for piers, pilings, etc. The Maine Marine Invasives Working Group has been meeting regularly. Elizabeth Stephenson is coordinating the group and was recently at the Maine Fishermen's Forum, commercial marine fisheries with Judy Pederson and Elizabeth presenting.

Susannah King, New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission, reported that the Long Island Sound efforts continue with a strategic planning effort that includes ANS elements.

Jan Smith, Massachusetts Bay Program, reported that he, Jim Carlton, and Judy Pederson will continue their survey work, this summer from Cape Cod to Penobscot Bays. New Green Crab species have been identified. Sea Grant has had some of its funding renewed so Jan is working on diver training with Salem Sound Coastwatch. Jan is involved with a plate sampling effort to identify colonizing species.

Kevin Cute, RI Coastal Resources Management Council, announced that the third draft of RI Invasive Species Management Plan. The June 12 meeting is set to review agency and public comments. The plan is slated for completion in 2007.

Anne Monnelly, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation, is working on the ramp monitoring program with six boats and is entering the fourth year of weed watcher program. There has been an increase in Water Chestnut in western MA. The Department is looking at why there are no Zebra Mussels in the state: have they not been introduced or is that they cannot survive? The Department installed two solar powered water circulators to impede the growth of submerged macrophytes. The circulator drifted away but was recovered.

Bill Harman, NYS Federation of Lake Associations, reported that some other lake groups have been advocated herbicides whereas the NYSFLA has not. The groups have achieved a consensus on using more conservative management techniques. There are three small populations of Water Chestnut in the upper Susquehanna Lake system. Hand pulling and chemical controls are being employed.

Tim Preddice, NY State Department of Conservation, introduced Leslie Surprenant who is the Invasive Species Management coordinator at the NYS Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources. Two additional staff are anticipated. New York State has allotted \$3.25 million to begin to address invasive species. The money has been allotted for updating the management plan, outreach, information management (database development), research, and other demonstration projects. Two more staff will be hired. The State is receiving applications for its second \$1 million grant to eradicate invasive species.

Ann Bove, VT Department of Environmental Conservation, reported that legislation to enable the Department to deal with emergency ANS invasions relative to private property. It has Governor support but did not pass this year. It will be introduced for the 2008 session. Live fish can no longer be lawfully moved around the state due to a new rule. Lake Morey treatment is planned. This is the 20th anniversary of the ANS watch program. The program will get a “face lift” Vermont Invasive Patrollers (VIPs) that will be launched this year.

Meg Modley, Lake Champlain Basin program, reported that the program was cut \$800,000 this year. Water chestnut has \$69,000 for a VTDEC staff to work on the species. The Steering Committee is piloting a boat steward program on Lake Champlain with six individuals deployed on the lake. Uniformed stewards will be at launches asking a variety of questions including where the boat has been before in was launched on Champlain. An outreach package is being prepared and will be distributed to canal travelers. Troopers are also being trained. The issue of barriers is being explored. Two work groups are completing their tasks; Rapid Response is finishing the plan. Spread Prevention is working on a guide, law enforcement training, and a PSA with angling groups. Meg will send the information to the Panel listserve. The new pathogen, VHS, is a concern to VT and NY.

Amy Smagula, NH Department of Environmental Services, reported that she and Jody Connor co-authored a new guidebook on native and non-native algae and plants (available for purchase for \$5). A plant zip-top plastic bag has been developed including information on how to collect and preserve plants. The cost was \$1,400 for 10,000 bags. There were twenty-three herbicide applications; most on Lake Winnepesaukee. Long-term (five-year) management plans are needed for each waterbody. Amy wrote nineteen this winter. There are 50 more. Weed control diver class where participants receive certification for hand pulling aquatic weeds. This certification enables individuals to circumvent the need for a Wetlands Bureau permit for these activities. The Lake Host program entered its sixth year with 67 waterbodies (75 public access sites) and over 400 participants. There have been between 4-50 cases where invasive species were caught. The Early Detection – Rapid Response approach is expanding

and the Weed Watcher program is continuing training. There were four “saves” last year and only one has experienced re-growth. New Hampshire’s ANS Management Plan is close but the focus has been on the long-term management plans for the waterbodies. House Bill 15 was introduced to enable a sticker too raise revenues. The fee is \$20 to out-of-state boaters with revenues to the Department of Environmental Services, Fish and Game Department, and Department of Safety with \$200-400,000 expected annually.

Committee updates (committees will be preparing and submitting detailed work plans. Please visit northeastans.org for further details).

Communication, Education, and Outreach (CEO) Committee - Michelle Robinson and Karen Hahnel, Co-chairs

Karen updated the Panel on its meeting yesterday. They plan to develop a webpage for Hydrilla that will be coordinated with the Science and Technology work item. The CEO would like to create more key chains. Michele questioned the use of the key chain and can the behavior change effected by the key chain be measured. Karen feels that in Mane, the key chains are a gift for those who allow their boats to be inspected. The CEO is considering creating a regional modular Internet guidebook for ANS in the region. A format or template would be developed so that it could be downloaded and used by states, provinces, and others who wish to create their own documents.

Policy and Legislation (PL) Committee - Susannah King and Anne Monnelly, Co-chairs

Susy and Anne reported that Tom Berry and Paul Marangelo, both of The Nature Conservancy, have joined the PL Committee. The Committee presented version 7 of the Governors and Premiers proclamation, which was revised to broaden the focus beyond Hydrilla. The PL Committee also added an acknowledgement of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premier resolution that recognized the ANS is a regional issue of concern and language that Governors and Premiers will charge their agencies with four specific actions. The PL Committee will prepare briefing packets to accompany the resolution. The Panel should work with agencies to determine if they are supportive of the level of specificity with the four actions.

Action: The Policy and Legislation Committee will finalize the proclamation, create briefing packets, and work with NEANS Panel region agency contacts to execute the proclamation.

Science and Technology (ST) Committee - Jan Smith, sole Co-chair

Jan reported that the ST Committee meeting was well attended yesterday. Last October, the volunteer monitoring workshop held at the New England Aquarium was well received. The S&T is planning a follow-up workshop for the autumn of 2007. Other ideas for projects include adding a half-day session for freshwater groups to discuss plant identification and control protocols. The ST will develop a proposal for the session. Goals include EDRR efforts continuing, including increase coordination and collaboration efforts, and working within watersheds and using the watershed approach. Scott Weber has moved to California so another co-chair is needed to serve with Jan. Jennifer Forman Orth provided an update on the Panel’s regional coordinated Hydrilla effort. One of the challenges with early detection efforts is access and private property rights that circumvent regular monitoring.

Shipping Committee (SH) - Kevin Cute and Andrea Locke, Co-chairs

Kevin is seeking a co-chair to replace him on the SH Committee. Andrea Locke will continue as a co-chair. Kevin reported that he would like to see the NEANS Panel draft policy on ballast water and forward it to ANSTF. The committee is reviewing comprehensive ballast

water guidelines and developing management recommendations. Kevin introduced Jennifer Mehaffey who presented the current situation, policy, and recommendations for ballast water and invasive species in the Northeast. She has been contracted by the Panel to conduct a survey and study of ballast water policies.

Action: All committees will submit their completed work plans and budgets to Michele no later than June 25.

Spotlight on Species: Didemnum

Linda Auker, University of NH, Nicole Lengyel, University of RI, and Robert Whitlatch, University of CT presented the physiology, history, and background of Didemnum and its invasion in the NEANS Panel region.

Other business and public comment period

There were no comments from the public.

Working lunch for Panelists – Strategic Plan

The Panel reviewed the Strategic Plan draft. Michele Tremblay provided an overview on using needs assessments and logic models (from NOAA Coastal Services Center) in planning efforts. The Panel is considering modifying its current Strategic Plan draft to follow the logic model approach so that its results might be more measureable and time sensitive.

Meeting summary prepared by Michele L. Tremblay, ANS Program Manager, NEANS Panel