

INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE DRAFT NOTES

Chair: Eric Sutton (FL)

Vice-Chair: Kim Bogenschutz (IA)

Date: Wed Sept. 8th, 2021

Time: 1:00-4:00 pm EST

111th AFWA Annual Meeting Virtual

Agenda

1:00 pm **Call to Order/Introductions/ Review of Agenda**
Eric Sutton, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

*The meeting opened at 1:02 pm. Chairman Sutton introduced the committee vice-chair, Kim Bogenschutz, and thanked Ann Forstchen for assisting with previous meetings. He introduced Kerry Wixted, the new Amphibian and Reptile and Invasive Species Program Manager for AFWA. She previously worked for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.
kwixted@fishwildlife.org*

1:10 **ESRI Opening Remarks**
Michael Bialousz & Sunny Fleming, ESRI

*Michael introduced the Environmental and Natural Resources Agencies website from ESRI:
<https://www.esri.com/en-us/industries/environment-natural-resources/overview>*

Sunny covered several ESRI products such as story maps, hubs, and other products that might be of interest to the group. Links to these projects can be found below:

- *Arkansas Feral Hog Eradication Task Force
<https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/arkansas-department-of-agriculture-services/feral-hog/>*
- *Idaho's Aquatic Invasive Species - 2015 Field Season data
<https://idaho.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=17e491a6685f4ad09b20f4ec9763e2f7>*
- *Hubs place all data in context on Hub. It includes live information imported from Survey 1-2-3. <https://utah-dwr-aquatic-invasive-species-ais-open-data-site-utahdnr.hub.arcgis.com/>; <https://ais-program-lakecountymn.hub.arcgis.com/>*
- *Agriculture example: <https://doc.arcgis.com/en/arcgis-solutions/latest/industries/agriculture.htm>*

1:20

Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) Updates w/ Q & A

Sean Saville, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies ssaville@fishwildlife.org

- Bipartisan Senate bill ([S.2372](#)) introduced by Sens. Heinrich (D-NM) and Blunt (R-MO) on July 20th.
- High-level touches to Senate offices are particularly appreciated and encouraged now to build strong bipartisan support.
- Of important note, the only major difference between the Senate and House versions is the "source of funding" language in the Senate bill. This identifies civil or criminal penalties, fines, sanctions, and similar federal revenues generated from violations of environmental and natural resources laws and regulations as the source to fund the legislation. An important clarifier added means no one else's programs are being harmed, no dedicated penalties monies like those from the Deepwater Horizon settlement or other programs that would also go to habitat restoration projects are being touched.
- Reports show that funding annually averages out to about \$2.9B over past 5-years and \$1.9B over the past 10 yrs.
- The stage is set for full House committee markup this fall and there are 110 bipartisan cosponsors.
- Advocacy and outreach tools can be found under the "More Resources" tab on the home page [HERE](#) ; Partners can be found here: <https://ournatureusa.com/our-partners/>
- View the latest messaging, resources, and other campaign materials, see the Alliance online toolkit [HERE](#)

1:30

RAWA-Ready Projects & Planning Brainstorm

1. **What projects are you considering implementing at your agency?**
 - a. Sean Saville suggested reviewing SWAPs to look at priority projects.
2. **Have you considered match funds? If so, what sources will you use?**
 - a. No DOI or USDA funds can be used as match.
 - b. Iowa might be able to use boat registration fees as match.
 - c. Dept. of Transportation and Dept. of Education funding could be used.
 - d. Volunteer hours can be used, but it would need to be tracked. Sunny Fleming (ESRI) provided an example of Maine's storymap which included the use of Survey 123 to track volunteer match:
<https://maine.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=f16af2cb8bf04934a67ec2c3b30e36e2>
 - e. Kerry Wixted suggested talking to your federal aid coordinator about match opportunities and questions/needs they may have on verifying match.
 - f. Sean Saville mentioned that a match report with ideas will be coming out soon.
3. **How could the invasive species committee help?**
 - a. **Action:** Sean Saville suggested assembling a list of priority projects to anecdotally highlight as well as some talking points that can be used for Congress.

USFWS – *David Hoskins provided the following update:*

- *Focused on 6 goals of the strategic plan*
- *Increased funding for quagga and zebra mussel plan*
 - *Working w/ USGS to screen mossballs w/ eDNA and to provide after action review to identify strengths and challenges*
- *EDRR- national implementation to detect species at first point*
 - *First step is to inventory Fish and Aquatic Conservation (FAC) program to identify elements to protect US from AIS; 2022 completion date set*
- *American Rescue Act provides \$6 million for fish and aquatic conservation programs to IS species at greatest risk for human health*
- *Invasive carp*
 - *Multiagency effort to support national plan w/ 2020 projects in MS basin and in Great Lakes*

USGS – *Dr. Cynthia (Cindy) Tam provided the following update:*

- *Congress provided the USGS program with just over \$38 million this FY.*
- *The President requested an additional \$5 million for FY 22 to help managers reduce the threats of wildlife disease and invasive species in a changing climate.*
- *Shifted terminology from Asian carp to invasive carp because of the negative cultural association with the term Asian carp.*
- *Invasive Carp Research*
 - *Continue to work with partners in and around Kentucky to reduce bighead and silver carp by improving commercial removal through [modified unified method \(MUM\)](#) and evaluating the bioacoustic fish fence (BAFF). Also are providing technical support to the Tennessee Valley to inform barrier placement.*
 - *USGS continues to expand the list of states with state specific pesticide registrations of carbon dioxide as a control for invasive carp.*
 - *USGS continues to develop methods to reduce grass carp abundance in Lake Erie and tributaries by locating spawning areas for grass carp, improving capture methods, assessing habitats and movements and coordinating research on dispersal barriers.*
 - *USGS is supporting the state of Illinois bounty program for black carp by leading collection of biological data to assess the risks and spread of black carp.*
 - *At Lock and Dam 19, installed and monitoring acoustic deterrent for invasive carp.*
- *Another major emphasis is on providing surveillance information in support of EDRR to new threats. High-level priorities for biosurveillance are guided by the relatively new [DOI Invasive Species Strategic Plan](#). USGS is leading the development of national surveillance network. Examples of this work include continuing to develop eDNA and technology for the early detection of invasive species.*

- Continued to develop additional analytic tools as part of the NAS (non-indigenous aquatic species) database, such as the flood and storm tracker, which are maps that are created after flooding and storm surge events to enable managers to focus efforts appropriately.
- Continued work to get eDNA added to the NAS database. Data will be mapped alongside the traditional species sightings data. Need to establish data standards before admittance of the data into the database.
- [Inhabit](#) is an online invasive species habitat tool that allows managers to view predicted habitat for 150 invasive terrestrial plants to help trigger and target rapid response. It's being used by NPS to find invasive grasses.
- The mossballs with zebra mussels are an example where biosurveillance triggered corrective action.

USDA/APHIS Michael Marlow provided the following update:

- Dale Nolte retired in July 2021.
- Wildlife Services is conducting feral swine damage management in 32 states and three territories through the Farm Bill.
- Wildlife Services has been involved with urban feral swine removal in Puerto Rico and effort has led to the removal of more than 1500 urban feral swine within 16 municipalities. This is important because of the recent discovery of African Swine fever in the Dominican Republic. This work has resulted in 423 pigs being tested for classical swine fever and other diseases while 200 have also been tested for African swine fever.
- In FY 21, Wildlife Services implemented a new surveillance approach which prioritizes counties to account for the risk of foreign animal disease introductions and feral swine. They're currently on track to collect over 6000 samples and FY 21 program collaborations are currently looking at possible dispersal of other diseases including Chronic Wasting Disease and anthrax.
- At the National Wildlife Research Center, they are working towards reaching their research goals and development of the safe and effective feral swine toxicant and maintenance of the feral swine genetic archive.
- Continued quarterly publication of the federal agency federal swine task force newsletter. Also continuing to develop a new video series on feral swine in America which chronicles the impacts of feral swine damage on American livelihoods and ecosystems throughout to personal stories.

ANS Task Force – Kim Bogenschutz provided the following update:

- The Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) was virtually held June 28-30, 2021. The next meeting will be held November 16-18, 2021, in a virtual format.

Control and Restoration Subcommittee – Kim Bogenschutz

- Recommended approval of the Species Management Plan Assessment and Species Management Plan Guidance documents on behalf of the Subcommittee.
- Completion of a survey in conjunction with the Research Subcommittee.
- Summarizing the results of control gaps identified in the survey.

- *Developing a draft approval process for new control plans.*
- *Discussing plan leads for reporting progress on new and updated control plans.*

Prevention Subcommittee – James Ballard

- *Pathways Risk Assessment Evaluation: A proposal was submitted to USFWS, but it was not funded. The Subcommittee is looking for alternatives to accomplish this work item.*
- *Organisms in Trade Data:*
 - *USFWS has been working on internal agreements to provide information on imports to the Branch of Aquatic Invasive Species*
 - *The joint USFWS/USGS horizon scanning project to develop watch lists is proceeding.*
- *Gaps in Prevention – A proposal was submitted to USFWS for Prevention Funds to work on a gap analysis with University of Florida and it was funded.*
- *Ad-Hoc Committee on ANSTF Roles and responsibilities under VIDA – The Subcommittee is charged with:*
 - *Coordinating review of a Report to Congress, which is forthcoming.*
 - *Formation of an ad-hoc subcommittee to develop a framework for intergovernmental response.*
 - *Recommending the ANSTF adopt the Watercraft Best Management Practices (BMPs). There are four procedures: Entrance, Off-water; Exit – prevention waters (uninfested); Exit – containment waters (infested).*
 - *The Prevention Subcommittee will distribute the Watercraft BMPs for review by ANSTF members and Regional Panels, with a request for comments by September 15, 2021. The BMPs will be on the agenda for review, consideration, and approval at the next Task Force meeting.*
 - *The Prevention Subcommittee will consult with the U.S. Coast Guard and EPA to identify possible actions that could be carried out by an ANSTF Ballast Water ad-hoc committee.*

Early Detection Rapid Response Subcommittee – Wes Daniel

- *Develop 3-year NAS capacity building plan: This is undergoing internal review.*
- *Develop eDNA reporting standards for NAS database: The USGS conducted open house meetings to get stakeholder input. The forms are going through internal review.*
- *Training and guidance for Incident Command System (ICS): The subcommittee is having a hard time getting traction with ICS.*
- *Emergency Response Funding model: The Subcommittee needs to review the NISC report.*
- *Develop Watch Lists: The USGS is conducting a national organism in trade horizon scan.*

Research Subcommittee – Susan Pasko

- *Survey of ANS Task Force, regional panels and state coordinators for research needs*
- *Evaluation of identified needs for applicability and national importance*

Outreach Subcommittee – Doug Jensen

- *Posting Executive Summaries of ANSTF meetings on the website.*

- *Funding for an assessment of the effectiveness of national campaigns including SAH!, CD2, and PlayCleanGo will be awarded shortly.*
- *The SAH! Graphics Portal is set up, and they will start populating the graphics library, marketing showroom, and image library (public domain) soon.*
- *Identifying social science priority needs.*
- *Surveying ANSTF and Regional Panels on existing outreach and barriers.*
- *Working on forming an Outreach Community of Practice (CoP).*

Wildlife Forever – Dane Huinker and Amanda Preston provided the following update:

- *Welcomed Amanda Preston, the new invasive species coordinator, who will oversee the Clean, Drain, Dry Initiative.*
- *Reviewed Access Enhancement program which is being piloted with the USFWS refuge system. They are looking at access areas and incorporating AIS prevention from signs to cleaning stations. They are currently examining users and hope to have a report out by next year.*
- *The Battle of the Bads project was designed to rank the top 25 worst ANS by congressional district from most to least harmful. The project is being organically publicized and has been featured in American Shooter and other magazines.*
- *Quagga and Zebra Mussel Public Outreach*
 - *Using social & digital advertising to reach 1.3 million boaters & anglers; helped reduce confusion between state laws*
- *Engaging industry*
 - *Just signed [MOU w/ Major League Fishing](#) to integrate AIS content and to create new resources; hope to engage ASA & Yamaha Rightwaters soon*
- *[Online Resource Center](#)*
 - *Resource is now live & will contain a compilation of AIS information separated into 3 categories: research, management, and outreach/education*
 - *Could still use some assistance populating with content and will continue to build out this resource.*

Feral Swine Working Group – Dr. James (Jim) LaCour provided the following update:

Toxicants

- *USDA Sodium nitrite bait Hoggone-2® in final tests now; up to 90+% efficacy first night after pre-baiting*
- *LSU AgCenter sodium nitrite bait and dispenser; patent applied for*
- *Wild Pig Feeder has developed a system to release sodium nitrite solution and malic acid simultaneously onto feed as triggered by feral swine*
- *New contraceptive hog bait manufactured and produced in Texas.*
 - *TDA indicates EPA considers HogStop® by Hi-Pro Feeds as an FIFRA 25 (b) pesticide (Minimum Risk Pesticide)*
- *Proposed Legislation in TX which could revise previous legislation:*
 - *Allows for implementation of an experimental use program of pesticide products containing warfarin (for controlling feral hogs)*

- *Appropriates funding for said experimental use program*
- *Directs Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to cooperate with the “Department of Agriculture” in implementation of the program*
- **Disease**
 - *African Swine Fever found in the Dominican Republic*
 - *First time in the western hemisphere & would be dire to domestic swine*
 - *Increased surveillance by USDA Wildlife Services and state biologists for unexplained feral swine mortalities*
 - *Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) swine research*
 - *Moore (2017)- Intracranial inoculation of domestic pigs: 4/20 were positive and developed brain lesions.*
 - *Brown (2019) USDA; examined free-ranging feral swine in a CWD-endemic region; 2/102 samples were positive for CWD and had brain lesions as well as prions in lymph nodes*
 - *SARS CoV-2/ COVID 19*
 - *Pigs do possess the ACE-2 receptors in the lungs necessary for SARS CoV-2 virus invasion*
 - *Early studies showed pigs to be resistant to SARS Cov-2*
 - *Pickering (2021) indicates that pigs are somewhat susceptible to SARS CoV-2 and are capable of shedding virus at least at low levels.*
- **Technology**
 - *Pig Brig® feral swine trap- easily transported net trap*
 - *Reports of good success with this trap from field personnel*
- **National Wild Pig Task Force (NWPTF)**
 - *Updated research articles on website & are documenting visitors perusing presentations from the 2020 International Wild Pig Conference.*
 - *2022 International Wild Pig Conference*
 - *April 17-21 Sheraton Music City Hotel in Nashville, TN*
 - *Chair-elect John Tomecek will present at the 18th Annual National Assembly of Sportsmen’s Caucuses Sportsman-Legislator Summit*
 - *December 8-11, 2021 in Little Rock, AR*
- **Botstiber Institute for Wildlife Fertility Control**
 - *3-part webinar “Mitigating Wild Boar Conflict Around the World: The Potential for Using Fertility Control” provided on June 10, 17, and 24, 2021*
 - *9th International Conference on Wildlife Fertility Control on May 23-25, 2022*
 - *Cheyenne Mountain Resort, Colorado Springs, CO*

Action: Topics for AFWA Committee to Consider:

1. *Since AFWA has a congressional presence, are there additional actions that can be taken to make advancements in reducing wild pig numbers, instead of just “holding the line”. In other words, is there anything more that can be done to assist states in moving from control to eradication?*
2. *There is a need to enhance efforts to educate the hunting industry on the negative effects of pigs and pig hunting*

3. *The resistance and lack of cooperation by some landowners continues to be an obstacle to eliminating wild pigs. Some of these uncooperative landowners are also recipients of State and Federal incentives for conservation practices or easements, such as WRP, CRP, or EQIP. There is a need to require these landowners that receive government payments to allow wild pig removal on properties under government contract.*
4. *Need for AFWA support, either white paper or political presence, etc., for state agencies experiencing political pressure to perpetuate wild pig hunting, including hunting within high fence operations.*

3:05

Status of the Lacey Act

Brian McManus, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Brian mentioned that Senator Rubio introduced S.626 - [Lacey Act Amendments of 2021](#) which would close the loophole on the shipments clause and would introduce presumptive prohibition on importation. The committee has not taken a position yet. In addition, the Big Cat Public Safety Act and [H.R.3135 - Captive Primate Safety Act](#) have been introduced. The Big Cat Public Safety Act passed the House last Congress but no action has happened this session. The Rubio S.626 bill is being opposed by the United States Association of Reptile Keepers and the aquaculture industry.

- **Action : Reach out to Congress in support of closing loopholes.**

3:10

Feral and Free-range Cat Toolkit Update

Grant Sizemore, American Bird Conservancy

The toolkit can be found here:

<https://www.fishwildlife.org/application/files/1616/1919/5138/Cat-Toolkit-v7-Web.pdf>

- *Working group established in March of 2016.*
- *Discovered 1997 AFWA resolution and conducted a review of relevant state laws and regulations and published the document on the AFWA website. The resolution was updated and will be considered at the 2021 annual meeting.*
- *Conducted a survey of states, conducted a literature review, and developed the toolkit.*
- *The final tool kit was published in April 2021 and is available on the AFWA website.*
 - *Contains case studies on current, real-world examples of free range and domestic cats for wildlife conservation and management practices. These examples include disease transmission to wild felids, a successful partnership with the cat sanctuary in Hawaii, and standardized terminology for different types of domestic cats.*
 - *Includes integrated management solutions and model regulatory and legal language.*
 - *An addendum to the toolkit will be considered at the 2021 annual meeting.*
- **Action items for AFWA Committee members:**
 - *Read the toolkit. It's available online and has been sent around to all of the state agencies to the directors. Please reach out to Grant if you need a copy.*

- *Distribute to colleagues and to staff who might have an interest or are charged with managing invasive predators*
- *Develop educational signs for public lands outreach and engagement strategies and tools to alert the public to the need for preventing the establishment of invasive domestic cats on wildlife conservation lands.*
- *Review and recommend updates to existing policies within your agency or in an important legislation that might be relevant.*
- *Formally recognize feral cats, as an invasive species.*
- *Partnership opportunity:*
 - *To help remove domestic cats from wildlife conservation lands, ABC will provide materials such as live traps and camera traps for the purposes of removal from public lands.*
 - *Partnership is in place with Carolina National Wildlife Refuge complex and has been successful. In Hawaii, trapping efforts over the last 9 months has resulted in the removal of 63 feral domestic cats from key habitats for endangered wildlife.*
 - *Please contact Grant at ABC to learn about more opportunities.*

3:25

State, Federal & Partner Roundtable

One representative per state agency highlights a couple of legislative and policy initiatives or issues

Robert Stroess- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Lieutenant/Administrator – Commercial Fishing, Wholesale Fish Dealing, and Charter Fishing Program

*Robert mentioned the issue with marbled crayfish (*Procambarus virginalis*) which is being distributed throughout the country. The marbled crayfish has two biological factors that together make the species a uniquely high risk: In 2018, it was described as a new species that came from a mutation and has only been in existence for approximately 25 years. Also, it is parthenogenic, so that only a single female is needed to start a population. Although there is some trade of marbled crayfish in the United States, the species is not found in LEMIS data (2005-2018), and the crayfish is not known to be established.*

- *Illegal trade and distribution networks on the internet seem to be large problems*
- *Not on injurious list*
- *Iowa does not have it on their AIS list, but it is being imported*
- *Craig Martin mentioned this likely needs to be examined for risk management*
- *Action: review what states have listed/ regulate marbled crayfish and determine next steps*

Mark P. Gaikowski - USGS

USGS and USFWS have been collaborating to transfer a point-of-use DNA detection technology for use by USFWS Law Enforcement Officers conducting port-of-entry screening of animal/plant imports to the U.S. This presentation covered both the technology development and

implementation status by USGS and the policy approach that USFWS has now taken to the detection of, for example, dreissenid mussel eDNA in mossballs being imported to the U.S

- *COVID has presented a challenge for testing*
- *Any referred mossballs will undergo testing once it has been validated*

Tammy Davis- Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Tammy brought up concerns over Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (VIDA). VIDA establishes a framework for the regulation of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under a new Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 312(p). Through VIDA, EPA performance standards would supersede state regulations and vessel discharges

- *Many Great Lakes and East Coast states had concerns about the proposed standards from the EPA, and it is primarily because the EPA standards supersede any state regulations and authorities.*
- *Under the new administration, the EPA has been asked to re-ignite conversations with states, tribes and other stakeholders from comment letters during the public process under the previous administration.*
- *Recently, EPA has hosted meetings for states to provide comments on those three main areas of discharges. At AK DFG, the Department of Environmental Conservation has been participating in meetings. Alaska does not have specific regulations or policies regarding discharge standards. However, Washington and California both do so they have really provided the most insight on how important it is that the standards that EPA comes up with under VIDA are to protect state waters.*

3:45 Committee Workplan Discussion

1. *Given today's topics, what action items would be best for the invasive species committee to pursue? Due to time constraints, we will revisit this topic in the future.*

4:00 pm Adjourn