



FISHERIES AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY

Chair: J.D. Strong (OK)

Vice-Chair: Larry Herrighty (NJ)

Thursday, March 7th, 2019

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Plaza Ballroom D

**84th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference
Denver, CO**

Draft Agenda

8:00 am Call to Order/Introductions/Review Agenda – *J.D. Strong, OK - Approved*

- *Action: Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda/September 2018 minutes - Approved*

8:10 Subcommittee and Working Group Reports
Subcommittee on Water – *Jason Olive, AR/ Jon Sjöberg, NV*

- *Motion - Business meeting request for an AdHoc WOTUS working group with representatives from all regions required*
 - *President selection of working group to investigate the potential to submit comments on proposed WOTUS rulemaking – Bonds made motion and Whelan seconded*
 - *Motion approved*
- *Challenges recognized to AFWA providing comment*
- *Provided overview from meeting*
- *April 15 deadline for comments and group must work quickly*
 - *March 22nd provide comments to Devin*

Drug Approval Working Group - Devin DeMario, AFWA

- *National aquaculture survey on therapeutants needed by state agencies*
 - *National Aquaculture Association collaboration*
 - *Broad range needed*
 - *Opportunities to streamline drug approval process with FDA*
 - *10 – 12 year process right now*
 - *Fish and Wildlife Health Committee– Working group on fisheries looking for participants*
 - *AADAP - \$1.2 million budget*

- USGS – USFWS – AFWA – MOA on drug approvals is in progress
- Bird & Fish Related Conflict Working Group – *Craig Bonds, TX/ Jim Fredericks, ID*
 - Joint group with Bird Conservation Committee – Cobb and Anderson, NC from bird side
 - Report
 - Focused on goals and key areas
 - Communications
 - Science Gaps and Needs
 - Recommendations to Committee on management
 - USFWS Coordination meeting – March 26-27 – USFWS, AFWA, USDA-APHIS
 - Special Symposium – AFS-TWS Meeting submitted
 - In person meeting in summer to develop workteams
 - State Fish Chiefs survey
 - Presentation of State Survey Results
 - 13 states added
 - Non-responses does not = do not care
 - Sportfish hatcheries – Most states
 - Free swimming – Most states
 - Key species – DCCO was by far the most with American White Pelican second
 - Reservoirs and small impoundments had the most affected with Great Lakes, natural lakes and rivers
 - Stocked and game fish were most affected with prey, ESA listed and SGCN also affected
 - Bird take permits on free swimming fish – Many were not but 1/3 were going to - Issue with question because of timing
 - Bird take permits on aquaculture – Most states will apply
 - Number of bird species - >5 was the most
 - First bird species on permit – DCCO with large range of permits with Great Blue Herons second
 - Quantitative data on effects – 20 states with data on DCCO and White Pelicans
 - Broad range of fish species
 - Piscivorous Bird Range data – PW and Great Lakes and gaps in south
 - Willing to collect data on bird distribution and abundance – Most states
 - Publication of bird effects on fish – Great Lakes and PW along with TX, OK and AR – Clearly more needed
 - Economic impacts effects of bird effects and fish – OR, MI and NY – Many gaps
 - Flyway consultation on effects – about 50% with most showing no with fisheries interests
 - Loss of order effects – Most states
 - Was state in Aquaculture EA – Most in the east
 - Time to get permit – Varies from 10s – 5000 allowed to take with 5 month delay
 - Private lake issues – About 50-50 for states
 - Conflicts with private lakes discussed with USFWS – Most did not respond

- 9:00 Update from AFS Fisheries Administration Section – *Joe Larscheid, AFS/IA*
- Section will be involved with a range of symposium at AFS-TWS meeting
 - Highlight success of SFR program – 12 nominations and 3 awarded
 - Will highlight monthly SFR in a monthly publication with Hal Schramm, MS
- 9:10 American Fisheries Society – *Doug Austen, AFS & Jesse Trushenski, AFS President*
- Update on Standard Sampling book proposal and Grey Literature clearinghouse proposal
 - Funding coming on the March 21
 - Grey Literature
 - Clearinghouse of grey literature – Ask Tina if she handled our requests
 - Advisory Committee – Each Regional Association
 - TWS briefed on opportunity to partner
 - 6-9 month development cycle
 - Standard Sampling and web tools – Starting process and scoping
 - Will engage with fish chiefs
 - Survey went out – AFS standards being used – going well and being use
 - MI did not respond – Ask Dexter – Send Bonar a note to get it to me
 - AFS/TWS 2019 Reno
 - 68 AFS + 44 TWS Symposium and 27 Workshops
 - Paper abstracts – Closes on April 27, 2019
 - Special virtual issue of JWM and NAJFM
 - Registration in May - \$550 for members
 - AFS Bluebook Standards – Will be looking for 2020 MSCG funding in future
 - Needed for certification, stocking and trading
 - Want standard results no more where
 - Bible for testing
 - Used by USFWS and many states in their regulations
 - Adhoc FHS Committee is looking at gaps currently
 - Ask states for available expertise, particularly for amphibians and reptiles
 - Some states have expertise that are not FHS members
 - Critical for regulation development
 - Out of date
 - New pathogens and tests missing
 - Shellfish, amphibians, reptiles and inverts missing
 - PARC would be a resource for amphibians and reptiles
 - Revision process – Oversight committee in past so behind and missing many partners like states, NOAA and USDA-APHIS
 - Committees – State agency input at this time
 - Currently USFWS and FHS members with a few state members in past
 - Moving to Society level and additional designated positions for state agencies
 - Looking for input to put more state membership
 - Looking for other MSCG opportunities for fisheries and AFS can facilitate organization
 - AFS Book Review
 - Evaluating the future

- Started in 1948 with 185 titles and largest publisher in this area
- Produced inhouse
- Try to be affordable, given the limited 800 book runs, and members receive 30% off
- New audiences
- Looking for Committee feedback on ideas
- AFS Policy work
 - 2018 - RAWA, WOTUS, Mag-Stevens Acts
 - 2019 – WOTUS with new headwaters paper to support
 - WOTUS – 90 day comment period right now
 - KC input from AFS
 - Regulatory letter assistance available
 - Congressional briefing with TU, NWF for connectivity issues along with headwater systems
 - Modern Fish Act – Movement not likely on Mag-Stevens
 - How to engage is being worked on with the following key issues right now
 - Pebble Mine EIS – Narrow analysis of fish
 - Aquaculture briefing to Congress – Offshore bill coming so science available to inform decision
 - Climate direction – New policy statement – Jesse T is looking for assistance – Kevin Wehrly
 - Ocean Acidification – Looking to develop information for future legislation
- 150th Anniversary
 - Starting at Reno
 - Fisheries history and where we are going
 - New challenges – Socially, technically and biologically
 - Chapters and Sections being develop
 - Entire volume will focus on history and future with June issue
 - 1870 Society Foundation being development

9:30 AFWA Government Affairs Update – *Devin DeMario, AFWA*

- Legislative update has been provided
- RAWA – 115 cosponsors last session
 - Did not make the final cut for passage
 - Many partners – CSF, AFS, TWS, NWF...
 - Bill not yet introduced this session but expecting one
 - Looking for support and assistance
- WRDA – Reauthorized late 2018
 - Using every two years with many opportunities for natural resources
 - ACOE focus on decontamination stations, invasive species
 - Lower MS River and Everglades work
 - ACOE must include soft engineering
 - Will be coming up again in 2020 – Working group will be developed to evaluate next bill opportunities – Devin looking for help
- Large changes in Congress so education is needed
- Land Package Passage

- Regional land transfers
 - Permanent reauthorization for Land and Water Act
 - \$15 million in public act
 - WILD Act – Invasive species and FWCA required on federal lands
 - Upper CO and San Juan River fish restoration - \$10 million
 - Access provisions include opportunities to improve public access to federal lands
 - Frank Moore Steelhead Refuge in OR on the North Umpqua River on USFS lands was authorized – Look at the TED talk
 - Other bills
 - ACCESS Act – HR 1326 – Thompson – Includes NFHCTPA
 - Appropriation comments in the next week for AFWA
- 9:40 Wallop-Breaux Reauthorization Discussion - *Jen Mock Schaeffer/Devin DeMario, AFWA*
- Handout provided
 - Working hard to keep fuel tax in SFRBTF
 - Many wish to take these funds
 - Working group of Directors has been formed
 - April – May position will be rolled out
 - SFBC has not been operating with funds not being used
 - FACA pause – SFBC
 - Charter and membership expired
 - Requested nominations last summer
 - Charter reauthorized and appointments require White House vetting
 - Expecting something this spring
- 10:00 Health Break
- 10:10 USFS Update – *Dan Shively, USFS*
- Notes attached*
- Handout reviewed
 - Biodiversity Project will be announced to states soon
 - Research planning discussed
 - Coordinate with AFS on getting more input from states and NGOs
 - Family Fishing National Forest will be selected in each USFS Region
 - FW Snorkel Program
 - Developing a mid-level mentoring guidance effort
 - Will not be a specific program but part of their work effort
 - Pairing is a key part
- 10:25 FWS FAC Update – *David Hoskins, FWS*
- Notes Attached*
- Budget
 - Program up by \$2.6 M - \$660k Asian Carp, Klamath River and Delaware River
 - AADAP
 - Guppy Blair has taken the position with 2 positions being hired to support
 - INAD – 228 enrollments in 44 states with 777 treatments
 - Fish-Drug need surveys out to states and USFWS facilities
 - July 30-Aug 1 next

- 22 most expensive programs
 - 6 programs done
 - 4 advance stage
- Orders
 - Implementing 3356 – Increase access on Refuge and Hatcheries with a focus on refuges to start
- Applied Science
 - Fish Health
 - Tier 1 – 5 Centers done with 1 in progress
 - Tier 2 – ME will do next
 - Data Management System in Centers working
 - AIS - \$2 million for states - \$45K each
 - 44 plans with NV the latest
 - Feb 22 Grants posted – 30 days period
 - NS Task Force
 - New strategic plan
 - Reports 2016-17
 - May 7-9 – South Lake Tahoe, CA – Implementation each task with key outputs
 - 6 regional panels - \$40K for operational support
 - Invasive Species Program
 - Pet store focus
 - Boating focus to reduce AIS through activities – Tech information report
 - \$50K provide to promote
 - Zebra and Quagga mussel – Containment in SW US - \$960K
 - Ecological risk screen summaries completed
 - Habitat and Species Comm
 - Eric McMillian hired for NFHP and Fish Passage
- Sikes Act
 - Integrated plans – Joint Air Force meeting - \$12 million provided to USFWS
 - Army is interested in doing similar
 - ESA work is included while not impairing readiness
 - Award given to Ft. McCoy – Dam removal and 6 miles of stream rehab with CB Butterfly
- Fishing license Widget and RBBF (\$12 million)
 - 60-60 program
- National Fish Hatcheries – 230 million fish and egg produced
- 12 Unified Regions being developed across DOI
- Will AADAP be able to use all funds with vacancies
 - Unclear if funding will be preserved at \$1.2 million
 - 2 year funding in hand
 - 2 GS11 positions – 1 hiring done and 2nd hire in process
 - Any waivers available to states
 - Appropriation levels and their maybe some opportunity to do so
 - \$170K in INAD
 - MUMS no longer available

- Likely will use funds for communications and overhead
- DAWG MOA at Hoskins desk – Should be done soon

10:40 Additional Federal Agency Updates

- USGS
 - FW Mussel die offs – Clinch River, TN and OR and WI
 - Unclear issues
 - Fish disease
 - WFRC – Genetic data – IHNv virulence changes
 - VHSv in Great Lakes
 - SVC in imported amphibians detected from India
 - Control work – Trematode work in WA
 - MUMS Grant – Formaldehyde issues with biofilters
 - JL122 anti-viral effectively blocked IHNv, SVC, VHS
 - Surveillance – IHNv – non-lethal tests being developed
 - PKD are working – qPCR Assay - eDNA tests
 - Coop Units are available too
 - OR pre spawn mortality issues with salmonids
 - VA mussel
- BLM – Jeff Herrod – New national fish and aquatics program leader
 - New integration process coming with riparian
 - Lower CO River projects coming
- NPS
 - AIS focus - \$2 million in 9 western parks for watercraft inspection/containment and \$1 million addition – Mostly on CO River
 - Strategic Plan will be available soon
- NOAA – Handouts available

11:00 National Fish Habitat Action Plan

- Update from Board Chairman, *Ed Schriever, IDFG Director*
 - Emerging issues
 - CWD
 - Increasing elk populations with farming
 - Farm Bureau growing hemp
 - Recognized Jesse T. for her contributions to IDFGD
 - New chair in October 2018 and identified other Board members and staff along with FHPs
 - 840 projects total since 2006
 - Now have 20 FHPs
 - Emphasis on FHPs in his chair
 - Recognized that USFWS will add \$80K more to FHPs along with current budget
 - NFHP Act is in the ACCESS Act this year
 - Tech assistance from multiple federal agencies
 - Board goes from 22 to 25 members with Fisheries Commissions
 - DOI Secretary would take Board recommendations
 - Legislative Workgroup work on new governance
 - Capital Briefing on March 13th – Leonard and D. Nygren

- BTP effort is struggling
 - Meaningful output is an issue for supporting the NFHPs
- Board meeting in Alexandria, VA at TU
 - Vision session
- Western Native Trout Initiative– *Therese Thompson, WNTI*
 - Showed projects and species ranges
 - 2006-2017 - \$5.5 million in funds with leverage to \$25 million for 141 priority projects – In handout
 - Campaign for Western Native Trout
 - Active outreach – Small grants (\$75K), quarterly newsletter, WNTI events with other events
 - Know Your Native Trout Posters and put on trailheads
 - Blueheads and Bonneville film – Weber River – Also MSGP
 - Chasing Native Trout Campaign – 2200 people have signed up for weekly newsletters
 - Story Map – Story of West through trout
 - Rare Fish/Rare Beer Project – 5th version –
 - Nativia Laws Whiskey House – 220 bottles of whiskey raised \$10K
 - RepYourWater.com
 - Facebook – 3300 followers
 - Instagram – 2017 start – 9953 followers
 - Asked people holding trout species and species they love
 - ODFW Instagram Takeover to drive people to WNTI
 - Matchthehat – 35 followers
 - Thoughts
 - Story telling
 - Annual report
 - Free or low cost opportunities – Focus on key audience
 - Talk to businesses that share passion
 - Tap your partners for content
 - Ask people to help you – 2 or 3 people can manage account
 - World Fish Migration Day in May

11:25 Fish and Wildlife Service – Migratory Birds Division – *Ken Richkus, FWS MB*

- Double Crested Cormorant and Free Swimming Fish – Update
 - Four regional workshops in August 2018 – Report at djcase.com/dcco
 - Outcomes
 - Must work together
 - Short term solution needed now
 - Long-term solution – Recognize uncertainty and know gaps
 - Conflict differs across country – Range from GL and private ponds in TX
 - Species differ across the country
 - GL follow meeting – Dec 2018
 - Long term datasets – LH, Leech Lake MN, Oneida Lake NY
 - Numerical responses on fish populations – Mortality, age class shift and growth shifts

- Conceptual models to link DCCO management to fisheries objectives
- Another tech meeting March 26-27 – Assess biological information and evaluate possible options on a National scale
- Start NEPA process soon
- Increasing allocation take under existing EA under analysis – Reduced take based on analysis (52K take right now) but could increase

11:45 Discussion on FWRP Committee NCN – *J.D. Strong, OK/Devin DeMario, AFWA*

- NCN Update
 - Past focused on NFHP and importance of that program
 - Others did not fit
 - Agriculture Conservation Committee Template was fully
 - NFHP importance maintained along with other areas
 - Much broader - Examples
 - Socioeconomics
 - Fish Health
 - NFHP
 - Bird-Fish Conflicts
 - Solicitation for LOI will be coming out
 - Approved all NCNs – Ours was too broad and scored lowest

11:55 Identify Follow-up Issues and Next Steps - *J.D. Strong, OK*

12:00 Wrap-up/adjourn – *J.D. Strong, OK*

Committee Charge:

Discuss, develop and recommend Association positions related to:

- *Federal laws, regulations and policies concerning water uses, aquatic habitat conservation, fisheries resources and related funding for such programs.*
- *Fisheries management practices and emerging issues (e.g. climate change) for both freshwater and marine resources.*

Subcommittees and Working Groups:

- *Drug Approval Working group*
- *Subcommittee on Water*
- *Bird & Fish Related Conflict Working Group*

Federal Agency Update Summaries

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USDA Forest Service Fisheries Accomplishments and Highlights
84th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference
Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee
March 7, 2019

Submitted by:

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In November 2017, the USDA Forest Service released its updated Rise to the Future National Fish and Aquatic Strategy. For a copy of the strategy, please visit:

<https://www.fs.fed.us/naturalresources/fisheries/resources/risetothefuturestrategynov2017.pdf>. This year's summary provides a broad overview of Fisheries accomplishments at the national scale and also features work related to several of the high priority actions identified in the Rise to the Future strategy.

Summary of National Fisheries Accomplishment for 2018

Fiscal year 2018 was another productive year for the USDA Forest Service and our partners in stewardship of fish and aquatic resources. We have many outstanding examples of our successes at the national forest, region, research station and national levels. Please visit our Forest Service National Fisheries Website at <https://www.fs.fed.us/naturalresources/fisheries/about.shtml> to obtain further information. Here's a snapshot of our overall accomplishments nationwide:

- Nearly 3,500 miles of Stream Habitat restored or enhanced.
- Nearly 32,000 acres of Lake Habitat restored or enhanced.
- 255 Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) projects that re-opened 481 miles of habitat.
- 16 priority watersheds restored under the agency's Watershed Condition Framework.
- Over 1,300 scientific publications, both aquatic and terrestrial research. Over the last 10 years, Forest Service scientific publications have been cited over 165,000 times.
- Over 12 million people reached through outreach and education activities, both aquatic and terrestrial.

Updates on High Priority Actions from Rise to the Future National Fish and Aquatic Strategy National Aquatic Biodiversity Assessment

The U.S. Forest Service plays a key role in conserving freshwater biodiversity because of the diverse and high-quality aquatic habitats found on the national forests and grasslands across the country. We are working on a national aquatic biodiversity assessment to succinctly describe at a national scale the role of national forests and grasslands in sustaining fish and other aquatic resources. To date, we have compiled a list of 5,643 aquatic species and infrataxa to be included in Forest Service national aquatic biodiversity assessment. The taxonomic groups represented include finned fish, crustaceans, reptiles, amphibians, mussels, mammals, birds, and macroinvertebrates. We are building a nationwide database of the geographic distribution of these species from records found in the NatureServe Biotics database, the Department of Interior BISON database, the National Fish Habitat Partnership's species distribution data, and Trout Unlimited's State of the Trout database. The resolution of the national assessment will be 8-digit hydrologic unit code (HUC) watersheds. In regions where more detailed species distribution information is available (e.g., California, southeastern U.S.), it will be possible to "zoom in" to the resolution of 12-digit HUC watersheds. We have formed a workgroup of Forest Service fish biologists and aquatic ecologists to guide the development of the assessment. We are also working with EcoTrust, a non-profit organization who among other things specializes in data analysis and web-based tool development, to make the assessment publically available online. The goal of the assessment is to provide broad-scale information about the distribution of aquatic species throughout the U.S. and the overlap of species ranges with national forests. This information will help to identify conservation watersheds to help protect and conserve aquatic biodiversity. For more information, contact Dan Shively, USFS NFS, at daniel.shively@usda.gov or John Rothlisberger, USFS R&D, at john.rothlisberger@usda.gov.

National Fisheries and Aquatic Ecology Research Needs Assessment

We are in the process of conducting a fish and aquatic ecology research needs assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to inform the trajectories of the research programs of Forest Service research fish biologists and aquatic ecologists. We hope it will also be useful to researchers from state, federal, and tribal agencies as well as universities. In addition to informing the work of Forest Service and other scientists, the larger goal of the assessment is to strengthen the connections between science and management for aquatic resources. To gather information for the assessment, the Forest Service distributed an online survey to agency employees working in fish biology, aquatic ecology, and related fields. In the survey we asked respondents about the need for additional research about various topics related to seven categories or areas of interest. The categories are as follows: Potential Threats to Aquatic Ecosystems, Restoration Techniques, Ecosystem Types, Taxonomic Groups, Disturbances, Management Activities, and Themes in Fish and Aquatic Ecology. For example, we asked, "On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is it to conduct additional scientific research about each of the following Restoration Techniques?" The survey then listed a number of aquatic restoration techniques such as bank stabilization, large wood addition, removal of fish passage barriers, and so on. We received 135 responses.

In our preliminary analysis, the top topics identified needing additional research for each category are:

Page 3 Category or Area of Interest	Top Two Topics Needing Additional Research
Potential Threats to Aquatic Ecosystems	1) Climate Change 2) Invasive Species
Restoration Techniques	1) Riparian Treatments to enhance Recruitment of Large Wood 2) Invasive Species Control

Ecosystem Types

- 1) Fish-bearing Streams
- 2) Wetlands

Taxonomic Groups

- 1) Multi-species ecosystem-based research
- 2) Inland Fish

Disturbances

- 1) Drought
- 2) Climatic Variability

Management Activities

- 1) Climate Resilience
- 2) Roads

Themes in Fish and Aquatic Ecology

- 1) Restoration Effectiveness
 - 2) Monitoring Tool
-

North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference 2019 - Talking Points for AFWA Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership

We are in the process of filling two new permanent AADAP research positions and are happy to announce that Julie Schroeter, who was hired as a term employee within the research program in June 2018, has been selected to fill one of the permanent positions beginning March 4th. We anticipate being able to announce the hiring of the second position in the near future.

National INAD Program

The National INAD Program (NIP) had a very strong year in 2018

- 288 individual INAD enrollments located in 44 states
- 777 treatment authorizations issued for otherwise unavailable treatment options

Drug Needs Survey

AADAP is finalizing the results of these surveys and is working with the DAWG to use these results to help prioritize future drug approval activities.

AADAP Workshop 2019

The 25th annual USFWS AADAP Workshop will take place on July 30th through August 1st, 2019 in Bozeman, MT. This annual event brings together participants from all aspects of the drug approval process for aquatic animals including FDA Center of Veterinary Medicine, drug sponsors, researchers, INAD participants, veterinarians and other fish health professionals, hatchery personnel from public, private, Tribal or state entities, and other interested parties.

Hatcheries and Applied Science

Priority propagation system analysis

A project is underway to evaluate our 22 most expensive restoration and recovery propagation programs to ensure that we are meeting our restoration and recovery plan goals. To date, six have been reviewed by FAC national leadership, four are in advanced draft, and two have been initiated, and ten remain. The timeline aims to complete the project by early 2020.

Fishing and hunting access

The National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS) is working closely with the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) on S.O. 3356, which is aimed at assessing fishing and hunting regulations and increased access at federal facilities. The initial effort has been focused on the National Refuge System, but will be pivoting to the National Hatchery System in 2019.

Lab certification

The Service's Fish Health Centers (FHC), continue to participate in the three-tiered lab certification process governed by the Standing Committee for Quality Assurance for the Fish Health Section of the American Fisheries Society. To date, five FHC's have received their Tier 1 Certification.

Data management

The Service's FHCs continue to implement the Accelerated Technology Laboratory's TITAN lab data management software across our fish health system. This Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) is modernizing and streamlining data management and processing of inspections, diagnostic requests, and the Wild Fish Health Survey.

Branch of Aquatic Invasive Species

2018 State/Interstate Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Management Plan Grant Program

FAC received \$2 million for the FY19 State and Interstate ANS Management Plan Grant Program.

- There are currently 44 ANSTF-approved plan; Nevada is the newest approved plan.
- The Notice of Funding Opportunity was posted in Grants.gov on February 25th. Due to the government shutdown the posting period has been reduced from 60 days to 30 days.
- All 44 eligible plans are expected to apply for funding this year. If each plan does successfully apply, they would each receive approximately \$45,454.

Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force

The ANS Task Force held a teleconference in October, 2018 and an in-person meeting in December, 2018.

- The in-person meeting had a strong focus on strategic planning, utilizing breakout sessions to identify and prioritize outputs for the draft ANS Task Force Strategic Plan for 2019-2024.
- The Task Force conditionally approved the Strategic Plan for 2019-2024.
- Before the next meeting, which will be held May 7 – 9, 2018 in South Lake Tahoe, California, the ANS Task Force Goal Teams (subcommittees) will develop a concise description of how the Task Force will implement each of the objectives in the draft ANS

Task Force Strategic Plan for 2019-2024, including key outputs and project leads.

- The ANS Task Force conditionally approved the ANS Task Force 2016–2017 Report to Congress.
- Each of the six regional panels of the ANS Task Force will receive funding in FY 19 for administrative support.

Outreach Updates

The Invasive Species Action Network began a directed Don't Let It Loose (DLIL) program in 2014 through Service Funding. The program specifically targets independent pet stores utilizing in-person contact, recruiting them to educate their customers to avoid releasing pets and to encourage them to become identified “turn-in” centers for unwanted pets. The Service provided additional funding to the Invasive Species Action Network in 2018 to support expansion of the Don't Let it Loose program into Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico. This grant also provided some continued support to the existing efforts in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas and Utah, which were previously funded by the Service.

Working with Boat Manufacturers through the American Boat and Yacht Council
FAC has worked in collaboration with our State partners to make \$52,000 available for marketing and promoting the ABYC Technical Information Report.

Quagga Zebra Mussel Action Plan (QZAP):

For FY19, the Service is expected to allocate approximately \$960,000 for the implementation of containment programs for quagga/zebra mussels in the western U.S. A Notice of Financial Opportunity should be posted in Grants.gov in early March. For FY18, the Service received 12 proposals, requesting a total of \$3,221,608.00. After reviewing and ranking the proposals, the \$960,000 was distributed among 7 containment and education projects.

USFWS prevention website and availability of ERSSs:

The Service's ERSS process characterizes and prioritizes the potential risk of invasiveness for wild animal and plant species. It provides an initial estimate of a species' invasiveness and can be used by the Service, its natural resource partners, industry, and the public to help inform future decision-making. Over 900 ERSSs are posted on the FAC prevention website. We will post 340 new or updated ERSSs to the website by the end of the fiscal year.

Branch of Aquatic Habitat and Species Conservation

Branch Personnel

We have hired Eric MacMilian to lead the National Fish Passage Program and the National Fish Habitat Partnership Program. This is the National Coordinator position that was previously held by Susan Wells. Eric starts March 4th in our Headquarter Office.

Sikes Act

FWS continue to work closely with the DoD and military services. This fall a joint Air Force/FWS meeting was held in Colorado to address INRMP implementation and overall coordination between the two organizations on natural resource activities.

Building on our success in working with the Air Force to develop and implement integrated natural resource management plans on Air Force installations, we have entered into an MOA

with the Army and have established a liaison position. The liaison started October 1st and is embedded with the Army at the Pentagon to help facilitate implementation of Sikes Act on Army bases nationwide.

Earlier this week at the concurrent NMFWA meeting, the Service announced the recipient of the Service's 15th annual Military Conservation Partnership Award. This award was created to recognize a military installation for outstanding conservation work. This year the Service is recognizing the U.S. Army's Ft. McCoy. Located in Wisconsin, Ft. McCoy's Natural Resources Branch partnered with the Service and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to remove the failing West Silver Wetland dam and completed over a half mile of stream habitat enhancement.

Communications and Partnerships

Outdoor Recreation and Public Access

- FAC worked with the Recreational Fishing and Boating Foundation to publish a widget on the FAC webpage for viewers to purchase fishing licenses through a tool that will send them directly to each state's license page.
- FAC is participating in a multi-agency team with the Recreational Fishing and Boating Foundation to identify strategies for federal agencies to support the 60 in 60 MOU that focuses on increasing angling and access on public lands.
- In Fiscal Year 2018, the National Fish Hatchery System produced and distributed over 230 million fish and eggs, which provide recreational angling opportunities while contributing to species restoration and recovery goals.

Budget & Information Management

FY19 Budget for FAC is \$2.6M more than FY18.

- \$1M – Klamath Basin restoration/propagation
- \$1M – Delaware River Conservation Act
- \$600K – Asian Carp Management/Containment

Total - \$167M FY2020 budget released later this month