

## **Alaska Invasive Species Working Group audio Conference**

Tuesday August 1, 1pm to 2 pm  
Hosted via NRCS bridge number

### **Participants:**

Michele Hebert- UAF Cooperative Extension Service, Fairbanks  
Deena Jallen- UAF Cooperative Extension Service, Fairbanks  
Denny Lassuy- US Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage  
Rose Lombardi- Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Wasilla  
Bob Piorkowski- AK Dept. of Fish and Game, Juneau  
Jeanne Standley- Bureau of Land Management, BLM  
Calvin Steele- Natural Resources Conservation Service, Palmer

### **Agenda: Items to discuss**

- Discussion of the AISWG website
- AISWG Newsletter
- Update from Marine subcommittee
- Invasive Species Assessment
- MOU Progress
- October Anchorage meeting
- Project briefings
- Next teleconference for the AISWG
- Additional Resources

### **Discussion of the AISWG website**

The AISWG website is ready to debut. The site will stress that the AISWG does not have a signed MOU, and is not yet working in an official capacity. Logos from participating agencies are noted as being 'Logos for agencies concerned with invasive species in Alaska.' The website will be registered by UAF and paid for by the Cooperative Extension EPA grant. The address is proposed to be: [www.alaskainvasives.org](http://www.alaskainvasives.org)  
At some later date, if the website is hosted by another agency, the name and address can remain the same so as to reduce confusion. Those wishing to review the site and make corrections and suggestions can view the work-in-progress draft at [www.uaf.edu/ces/michele/tests](http://www.uaf.edu/ces/michele/tests) Please email the webmaster with feedback.

### **AISWG Newsletter**

The AISWG newsletter is being produced on a quarterly basis. The August issue will focus on invasive species research activities throughout the state. Brief research summaries should be sent to Deena Jallen at [fdmj@uaf.edu](mailto:fdmj@uaf.edu). Accompanying photos would also be helpful. The deadline for these submissions is August 11. Subsequent issues of the newsletter will provide updates on AISWG progress, and may focus on outreach or management activities among AISWG participants. Finished versions of the newsletter will be available via the listserv and website.

### **Update from Marine Subcommittee**

The Marine subcommittee of the AISWG continues to hold monthly teleconference meeting. The last meeting was held on July 25. The next meeting is scheduled for 9:00am August 31. Details will be announced over the listserv and website.

During the July meeting, the Marine subcommittee provided updates on ongoing projects. For more details, please see the Marine subcommittee minutes. It was agreed to not pursue formal criteria and ranking for a critical invasive species list for the website. The list will be based off of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council list, with a few additions to reflect more plant species, and

important invasive species outside of the Prince William Sound area. See Additional Resources for the link to PWSRCAC invasive species page.

### **Invasive Species Assessment**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is working with the Alaska Natural Heritage project. They have received a \$10,000 grant to produce a ranking system for aquatic invasives. This project is in the beginning stage, a deadline for completion has not yet been set. As previously mentioned under the Marine section, it has been decided that efforts would be better focused on producing a needs assessment, rather than setting and applying invasive species ranking criteria. An assessment would be very helpful in convincing state leaders that we need support for the AISWG.

### **MOU Progress**

The MOU has not yet been reviewed by the Natural Resources Commissioners Cabinet. The Alaska state legislature is in the middle of a special session. Rachael Petro has not yet given an update on the MOU progress to the AISWG. Progress is expected to be slow in an election year.

Michele Hebert will contact Rachael Petro, and Bob Piorkowski will contact his commissioner for an update on the MOU progress.

Once the MOU has approval from the Commissioners, Michael Shephard from USDA Forest Service will lead the effort to get signatures from the participating agencies. If anyone has questions for the Commissioners, they should email them to Rachael Petro at, [rachael\\_petro@dnr.state.ak.us](mailto:rachael_petro@dnr.state.ak.us)

### **October Anchorage meeting**

On October 24, the AISWG will meet in Anchorage. Much of the agenda and scheduling for that meeting will be determined by the progress of the MOU. The meeting should start after 10:30 am, to allow people to travel to Anchorage that morning, and save money on an additional night of lodging before the meeting. It is not yet decided to end the meeting at 4:30 pm. An earlier end time could be possible if not much is on the agenda. The USFWS building will not be available for this meeting.

Meeting times, location and agenda will be updated via the listserv and website. Bob Piorkowski will try to have a draft of the Alaska needs assessment ready to discuss at the October meeting. The AISWG may also adopt a more formal structure during the meeting. Further teleconferences will review the goals from the initial AISWG meeting in April, and determine the October agenda.

The day after the AISWG meeting, CNIPM (Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plants Management) will have a meeting at the Anchorage Coast International Inn. National speakers are scheduled for the CNIPM meeting. There is also a talk planned for the evening of October 24 about invasive plants that is open to the public. The time and location of this talk has not yet been set, and will be updated via listserv and website.

### **Project Briefings**

Michele Hebert from UAF Cooperative Extensive Service has coordinated with WPDN; Western Plant Diagnostics Network. Twelve people statewide are working on a database of plants, plant pests and diseases that is part of the western region and national database. Training took place in June in Fairbanks, and covered techniques for taking good digital photos using microscope cameras, data forms, and collecting sample information. Forest Service is also connected to this network, and participates in diagnosing samples. The WPDN is predominantly utilized in Cooperative Extension, and is concerned with agricultural crops and homeland security. The DDDI (Distance Diagnostics through Digital Imaging) can also be used to record and identify invasive plants and insects. See Additional Resources for websites.

Jeanne Standley from Bureau of Land Management activities gave a brief overview. BLM has contracted with the Alaska Natural Heritage Program to do weed surveys along Alaska highways. Results from the Steese and Elliot highways will soon be on the AKEPIC site (Alaska Exotic Plant Information Clearinghouse). Surveys are conducted up to a mile from the road. This project is connected to monitoring

for weeds after fire activity. In areas with less severe fire damage, weeds may move in slowly, in areas with severe fires, weeds can move in more rapidly. BLM conducts continuous surveys of weeds on its lands. Additional tasks in the contract include hand pulling small outlier infestations and establishing monitoring plots on BLM managed lands. This work was prescribed by Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) teams in the form of Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R) Plans for 20 fires. The goal of this work is to prevent weeds from moving into the burned areas. The data from these surveys will be entered into AKEPIC this fall or winter and final reports on the surveys are due this winter.

Denny Lassuy noted that the USFWS had supported similar survey activities in response to the extensive fires of 2004 and 2005. Preliminary results of those surveys were presented by AKNHP personnel at the 2005 CNIPM meeting in Fairbanks and copies of the final report are available upon request. USFWS is currently working on a technical guide for the treatment of invasive plants on fire-affected National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska, with completion expected in the Fall of 2006.

**Next Meeting for the AISWG:**

Tuesday August 29, 1 pm. NRCS Bridge number 907-271-1405.

**Additional Resources:**

**PWSRCAC Non Indigenous Species and Technology Fact Sheets**

<http://www.pwsrcac.org/projects/NIS/factsheets.html>

**AISWG temporary address for review**

[www.uaf.edu/ces/michele/tests](http://www.uaf.edu/ces/michele/tests)

**Alaska Natural Heritage Program**

[http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/ecology/Ecology\\_Monitoring\\_Projects.htm](http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/ecology/Ecology_Monitoring_Projects.htm)

**Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plants Management**

[www.cnipm.org](http://www.cnipm.org)

**University of Alaska Distance Diagnostics through Digital Imaging;** has information about the system. You must have an account to submit samples. For more information on training and getting an account, contact Michel Hebert, [ffmah@uaf.edu](mailto:ffmah@uaf.edu)

<http://www.dddi.org/AKU/index.cfm>

**Western Plant Diagnostics Network**

<https://www.wpdn.org/>

**AKEPIC (Alaska Exotic Plant Information Clearinghouse)**

<http://akweeds.uaa.alaska.edu/>