

Alaska Invasive Species Working Group: Marine Subcommittee audio Conference

July 9, 2008, 9:30 am

Hosted via NMFS bridge number. Minutes taken by Deena Jallen

Participants

Kris Benson- AKDOT

Tammy Davis- ADF&G, Juneau

Howard Ferren- Alaska SeaLife Center, Seward

Dan Gilson- PWSRCAC, Valdez

Ingrid Harrald- KBRR, Homer

Jeff Heys- NPS, Anchorage

Deena Jallen- AISWG volunteer, Fairbanks

Lisa Ka'ahue- PWSRCAC, Anchorage

Cheri Murphy- AKDOT, Ketchikan

Linda Shaw- National Marine Fisheries Service, Juneau

Heather Woody- Sitka Tribe, Sitka

Agenda: Items to discuss

- Update on activities
- Set next meeting time
- Possible agenda items for next meeting

Additional Resources

- Website links

Update on Activities

Linda Shaw and Tammy Davis will be putting out tunicate monitoring plates in Juneau in July. Gary Freitag was able to monitor on two remote sites, Doll Island, and Naked Island. He would recommend monitoring at Doll Island again, but not Naked Island, due to the suitability of habitat at those sites. A coworker of Linda Shaw will be taking a sailboat to Seattle, and has offered to trap for green crab along the way. Linda has amended the sampling permit to accommodate the opportunistic sampling.

There may be a green crab monitoring training session in Yakutat. Tammy Davis said she might have some funds to support travel costs. Ingrid Harrald said that they will be training a few teachers in Homer in August, and would be able to train additional people. Precise dates for the training will be set later in the summer.

Ingrid Harrald has placed an order for 47 green crab mounts at \$70.00 each, which should be done by the end of the month. The crabs came from a contact on the East coast identified by Gary Freitag. KBRR has also produced a 'rack' card, for interpretive centers, which should be done by end of the month, and can be used statewide. No invasive tunicates were found on the SERC plates recently recovered. Joel Markus will be replacing Judy Hamilton at KBRR.

Howard Ferren is the Alaska SeaLife Center assistant director for research operations. He spoke to Tammy Davis about a year ago about marine invasive species. The Alaska SeaLife Center has a large research programs, primarily focused on pinnipeds and eiders. The center receives about 150,000 visitors per year.

The SeaLife center would like to address invasive species issues to help maintain the integrity of Alaskan ecosystems. They have opportunities to do monitoring in Resurrection Bay, which experiences a large amount of vessel traffic (cruise ships, cargo ships, fishing boats, etc.) and is potentially a gateway for invasive species. The Center has a dive team and could do monitoring for invasive species. They can also serve as a forum to introduce the public to invasives species concerns, which would fit well with their mission goals and education programs. Howard would like to be involved in the AISWG Marine Subcommittee to see how partnerships and collaborations could be developed.

Dan Gilson was very glad to hear that Howard was on the call. Dan has traps in Valdez that are ready to go to Seward, and he would be willing to travel to Seward to train potential monitors.

Green crab trapping took place this summer at Chenega Bay in June, and Cheryl Elishansky (Chenega IRA) will also be doing tunicate monitoring.

Heather Woody set green crab traps on July 3rd. No green crabs were caught. After the last teleconference, it was mentioned that traps should be set perpendicular to the shoreline, to trap in differing water depths and habitat types. However, while setting the traps, it became apparent that traps in low water would go dry, and local eagles were eyeing the herring bait. Not wanting to catch eagles, Heather set the traps on either side of a rock jetty. Salinity at the different trap sites was highly variable, but likely within the tolerances of red rock and green crab.

The tunicate bricks have not yet arrived in Sitka, but should be on the ferry soon.

Cheri Murphy will check with Norman to see if the bricks were picked up in Ketchikan to go to Sitka. Dan Gilson will check to see the bricks destined for Chenega and Tatitlek arrived from Homer. Linda Shaw in Juneau could use more bricks, as some of theirs have been lost.

Cheri has spoken to managers at different docks, and so far, all have been on board and willing to help with monitoring.

Kris Benson recently watched an EPA webcast on the new NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) on vessels. Invasives came up as a question, and the EPA replied that removing invasives outweighed the environmental impacts caused by more washing.

Jeff Heys reported that Whitney Rapp has been doing tunicate and green crab monitoring in Glacier Bay, and has a crew of assistants to help. They have not found invasive species yet. Jeff is looking at expanding the monitoring efforts to other parks, including Kenai Fjords, Katmai, and Lake Clark.

Tammy Davis has been talking to the media and working on an article for the State Fish and Wildlife news magazine. A massive spill of 30,000 Atlantic salmon occurred in British Columbia on July 2nd. Atlantic salmon may be seen in Alaska in greater numbers this year; anglers and fish processors should keep an eye out for them.

The rat people have been busy; Terry Johnson with Sea Grant UAF has been working with harbor masters and has put together a rat manual on the Sea Grant website. Tammy has also been working on a green crab informational piece for ADF&G.

Linda Shaw asked if ferries are linked into the rat eradication efforts. Cheri Murphy said that she has not heard about any infestations on the ferries. Kris Benson sent the rat regulations to the operations manger when they came out.

Ingrid Harrald reported that KBRR has completed the education plan for its invasive species program. They are getting reviews and comments. Jodi Harney is in the finalizing stages of a spartina habitat suitability model. Jodi will be finalizing the analysis of known infestation sites in BC for the model test. Linda Shaw said that NMFS has put out the advertising for bidding on a risk assessment contract for spartina. They hope to have the contract awarded by the end of the summer.

Upcoming teleconferences

Tunicate Monitoring Coordination

August 6th, 9:30 am

To attend, call into 907-586-7977. Allow line to ring until another party picks up, long distance charges apply.

Marine Subcommittee

August 13th, 9:30 am

To attend, call into 907-586-7977. Allow line to ring until another party picks up, long distance charges apply.

Additional Resources

Alaska SeaLife Center

<http://www.alaskasealife.org/>

Chenega IRA

<http://www.chugachmiut.org/tribes/chenega.html>

Link to Atlantic salmon spill in BC article

<http://www.canada.com/victoriatimescolonist/story.html?id=e8e01e0c-c2ac-441a-ba8b-e05347585422>

<http://tinyurl.com/5hh7mu>

Sea Grant: Rat Control in coastal Alaska

<http://seagrant.uaf.edu/map/conservation/rats/index.html>