

## Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species

### Recommendation to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force: *Population of the ANS Task Force Experts Database*

May 8, 2007

Meeting of the ANS Task Force  
Erie, Pennsylvania

**Recommendation:** The Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species (Great Lakes Panel) recommends that the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (Task Force) develop a formal letter of request to experts to contribute their name and information to the Invasive Species Experts Database. The Task Force should then transmit that letter to each of the six regional panels for distribution to potential experts. This formal request will strengthen and add substance to Panel efforts to populate the database.

**Background:** In 2006, the ANS Task Force requested the help of the regional panels in populating a new initiative, the Invasive Species Experts Database. The database, <http://www.anstaskforce.gov/experts>, is a resource designed to direct users to invasive species experts in the following areas: taxonomic expertise; control; ecology; pathways; and physiology. The database is comprised of a two-tiered system in which “Tier 1” experts are an initial point of contact accessible to the public and “Tier 2” experts are accessible only to other experts in the database. The idea behind this arrangement is that Tier 1 experts are willing to answer questions from the general public and have access to the Tier 2 experts, in the case that they can not adequately respond to an inquiry.

While the Panels have made significant progress in obtaining information for Tier 1 experts, they have been struggling with Tier 2 experts. At the spring meeting of the ANS Task Force, the Great Lakes Panel on ANS requested that the Task Force develop and submit a letter to each of the regional panels formalizing the request for experts to contribute their name and information to the Invasive Species Experts Database. The formal letter will help provide credibility to the request, as well as inform and encourage experts to submit their information for inclusion in the database. This communication could also be utilized by the regional panels to convey the importance of this database to state managers, thus helping to get buy-in for their participation.