

**Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species  
Information/Education Committee Meeting**

June 17, 2024

10:00 – 11:30 AM ET

**Attendees**

Doug Jensen, *Committee Chair, MN DNR*

Tim Campbell, *Committee Vice Chair, WI Sea Grant*

Debra DiCianna, *Lake Carriers Association*

Rebecca Nielsen, *GLANSIS*

Mindy Barnett, *IL DNR*

Brook Schryer, *OFAH*

Eric Fischer, *IN DNR*

Leah Jarmolowicz, *PA Sea Grant*

Sara Stahlman, *PA Sea Grant*

Elizabeth Tanner, *WI DNR*

Sydney Currier, *Invasive Species Centre*

Mike Langendorf, *CORA*

*Staff*

Ceci Weibert, *GLC*

Nichole Angel, *GLC*

Theresa Gruninger, *GLC*

Meeting startup

- Jensen reviewed the agenda and led a round of introductions
  - No changes to the agenda were made

Ruffe Control Plan Archival

- Jensen reviewed the original Ruffe Control Plan, how it got started, and its current proposed archival process
- Weibert reviewed the GLP Ruffe Control Plan memo that was submitted to GLP members last week and the purpose of the planned discussion at the Great Lakes Panel meeting
  - USFWS will be submitting a recommendation to the ANSTF for archival
  - GLP can develop and submit their own recommendations for the future of this plan
- Jensen stated that overall, the plan was considered to be successful. All plan elements have been addressed, some were not successful in finding a solution (e.g., physical removal. Ballast water slowed the spread to eastern Lake Superior and lower Great Lakes. Population investigations showed potential impacts on sportfish (e.g., yellow perch). Surveillance was successful in determining new areas of infestation. Fish community management was successful via fishing regulations that enhanced predator populations. Prohibition of bait harvest was also successful. Education successfully prevented new human-mediated new infestations in Lake Superior, inland lakes and other watersheds
- Based on his opinion, elements that remain relevant today are surveillance, fish community management, education, bait fish management, and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
- Especially since Ruffe have recently expanded into the St. Mary's River, these elements need to continue at some level to prevent further spread

- Langendorf felt it would be important to still leave the door open for educational opportunities given that they are still finding new Ruffe populations whose origins and expected future have not been flushed out yet
  - The archival document says “Monitoring would be continuing as long as it’s within the budget” - would like more clarification on this within the archival
  - Langendorf noted that he would like to see some sort of language in the final document that Ruffe remain a viable area of GLRI Focus Area II
- Schryer noted that Ruffe does not come up often in Ontario EddMaps reporting. That being said, there has been population continued expansion since 2018. Their existence along the northern Lake Superior shore is unknown, no one is reporting them but that does not mean they are not there
  - From the Ontario perspective, there is a need for more Ruffe outreach
  - Confirmed Ruffe population in Sault St Marie and in Thunder Bay but unknown in-between those locations is due to lack of monitoring in those areas
  - The ID portion of Ruffe outreach is relatively easy. Most people know how to ID Yellow Perch, so they're able to differentiate between the two because of their experience with Yellow Perch
- Campbell noted the current questions are: Are the existing outreach efforts we put out there for bait anglers, bait shops, etc., sufficient to prevent the spread or do we need Ruffe specific outreach?
- Campbell noted that we might want to update how people report Ruffe sightings (e.g. past the demarcation line). Jensen adds that previous messages asked for the public to report sightings north of Two Harbors, except Thunder Bay, and east of WI-MI border. This message needs to be updated
- GLANSIS has been asking for Canadian data for some time, it would be useful to get that data added to the GLANSIS database
  - From an educational perspective, a focus on how scientists collect data and what the absence of data means would be beneficial. Just because there is not a report, does not mean Ruffe are not there, that messaging needs to be made clearer to the public
- What I/E actions would this group like to see in the Ruffe Control Plan archival?
  - Future education work, emphasis in identification material in priority areas would be a good step
  - The Invasive Species Centre has made great grass carp identification materials which could serve as a good model for Ruffe to create the materials and target the right people
    - Currier said that the ISC is developing educational Ruffe materials that will be live on the website by the end of July
    - Jensen replied that he can provide key ID characteristics
  - Noted that the term archival seems to need to be changed. The word “archive” seems to imply we don't worry about it anymore
- Is objective #7 of the control plan, regarding baitfish an important priority?
  - Hazard Assessment and Critical Control Point program is used to train bait harvesters in Ontario – they all have to watch a presentation on AIS, including Ruffe. What does Ontario and Michigan plan to do concerning bait harvest in the St. Mary’s River?
- Objective # 8 is also supported as important
- Need clarification for what kind of surveillance USFWS would be conducting in the future after archival
- Consensus was that elements #4, #6, #7 and #8 remain relevant and should remain active

### Review the draft committee charge

- Jensen says that he supports the development of committee charges. Charges are like by-laws but can serve different purposes. Both do similar things in that they scope the mission of an organization, can say what they should support or not support as needed. Such a document helps to avoid mission creep.
- Weibert reviewed the purpose of the committee charges, which is to focus on what the standing committees are meant to accomplish. The structure of the charge has been organized with thoughts from the GLP staff and the Ex/Com
- This meeting will be just to discuss the larger overview and structure of the charge
- We will have a full Panel meeting after this meeting to discuss the finer details of the charge and make decisions as a group. The I/E committee will then reconvene to work through and fill-in the “Work” section
- Weibert reviewed the layout of the draft charge and what content is currently filled in
  - A draft of the charge was attached to this meeting’s calendar hold
  - Some sections are fully drafted (members, meetings, etc.) as they will be the same across committee charges
  - The “Work” section is not yet drafted, as this section will be I/E specific
    - This section should be a guideline of things that are out of the committee’s scope, which may take an internal review of what this committee is
- The name “Information and Education” is a bit of an outdated name and based on the information deficit model (which is no longer really used). Jensen recalls that that antiquated model was discontinued in the early 2000s. A call-to-action model (community based social marketing and theory of planned behavior) is now the basis for current outreach across the Great Lakes region
  - Jensen suggested a committee name change to “Education and Engagement” or “Outreach and Engagement”
    - Most other panels use the term “Outreach”, we may want to keep language consistent
  - Members agreed that a name change is warranted
  - Ceci will check the GLP Guidance of Operations to see if there is current guidance on committee name changes
  - It makes sense to make the decision at the next I/E committee meeting. Members can be polled, and the decision can be presented for the ExCom
- The “Relationship with the ANSTF and Other Regional Panels” section of the charge will be completed after further discussion with Susan Pasko and getting more information on what this engagement process may look like
  - Relationships with other panel likely will not be a one-size fits all approach
  - Campbell noted that a more formal approach would be helpful, and this could be an opportunity for the GLP to show leadership and create a standard for others
- Anything currently written in the charge is not permanent, it is dynamic guidance that can be changed as needed to fit panels and member’s expectations
- There were no comments from members on items in the charge that should be removed
- There were no comments from members on aspects of the charge that are missing

### Member updates

- PA Sea Grant has a new aquatic invasive species guide and an app. They have already seen a large uptick in people using the app to report sightings. A training on the app will be June 26<sup>th</sup> and is open to public if anyone is curious to see how the app functions <https://seagrants.psu.edu/events/pa-ais-app-instructional-webinar/>
- Invasive Species Centre: At the end of May, a ministry team from Quebec caught three grass carp at the Ottawa River and Rondeau Bay in Lake Erie. ISC is focusing outreach efforts in these areas
- OFAH: The biggest update has been the completion of the Guide to Ontario Crayfishes, which has identification for all Canadian crayfish species. Let Brook know if you would like copies of the guide. Enforcement in ON has requested 1,000 copies and OFAH held a training with conservation officers. It was great to see such engagement from them.
- The Great Lakes AIS Landing Blitz starts next week!
  - The GLC has put together some great fact sheets for partner recruitment for the Landing Blitz. They will be available online on the Landing Blitz website (<https://www.glc.org/work/blitz>) and state AIS coordinators will get printed copies. Feel free to share!
- The Interjurisdictional Plant Management project is about to launch their website with AIS species guidance. If anyone would like to review content before they go live, let Tim Campbell know
- WI Sea Grant: Bret Shaw has been working on a project that ran analysis on how brands explain prevention actions. The awareness of Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers and Clean Drain Dry were found to be the top reason prevention actions are taken. This study and the results will be published soon!
- Tim Campbell is coordinating a workshop at the upcoming NAISMA meeting in November to discuss outreach coordination and AIS branding. Many folks from the Great Lakes regions will be there. Let Tim know if you would like more information on the workshop
- MN DNR: UMISC 2024 planning is going excellent, Nov 12-14, Duluth, MN, registration will be open July 15. Over 200 presentations, 13 sessions on aquatics and 18 interdisciplinary, Curling at the Curling Club, 7 workshops, 7 field trips, an Exhibitor Expo and Poster Session Reception and other fun networking opportunities. This year's focus is on DEIJA with a special workshop and plenary speaker, special opportunities for funding registration for covering costs for underserved audiences.
- The 2024 MN Fishing Regulations were published in five languages: English, Hmong, Karen, Somali and Spanish. As of last week, there were nearly 900,000 downloads from the website <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/regulations/fishing/index.html>.
- MN DNR Invasive Carp Action Plan released in January focuses on tagging, tracking, removal, and reduction via dam spillway gates [https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural\\_resources/invasives/aquaticanimals/invasivecarp/invasive-carp-action-plan-2024.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/invasives/aquaticanimals/invasivecarp/invasive-carp-action-plan-2024.pdf).
- The 2023 MN DNR Invasive Species Annual Report released in January, which includes a section on Education and Public Engagement <https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/legislative/2024/2023-invasive-species-annual-report.pdf>.
- MN DNR added 13 new species to list of prohibited invasive species: jumping worms, non-native common reed, mitten crabs, Nile perch, snakehead fish, walking catfish, yellow floating heart, tench fish, freshwater golden mussel, marbled crayfish, freshwater golden clam (formerly known as Asian clams), tubenose goby, and Eastern mosquito fish

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/news/2024/02/20/minnesota-dnr-classifies-13-invasive-plants-animals-prohibited>.

- MN DNR prevention planners co-hosted four online and two in-person AIS workshops for local AIS programs with the purpose of networking and sharing AIS work with peers, basically sharing lessons learned that can be used to improve existing efforts, inspire new prevention efforts, reach new audiences, and get advice from those with similar experiences. Recordings found here: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/ais/prevention/index.html>.
- As a follow up to our November update, signal crayfish monitoring is being conducted on Winona Lake in Alexandria, MN, in collaboration with DNR, MAISRC, Douglas County and a commercial harvester. No new specimens have been collected thus far. More from Don Eaton during the GLP meeting.
- In 2023, invasive *Phragmites* was successfully controlled at most sites in MN using one-time effective herbicide treatment.
- The MN DNR is embarking on pilot projects to reach out to pet owners with don't release messages, surrender events, and outreach to recreational divers.
- The MN DNR's interactive display, called "Muck Hunt", for the Minnesota State Fair is being updated with actions on how people can take action to prevent the spread of AIS.

#### Wrap-up and adjourn

- The next meeting I/E Committee meeting will be late summer (maybe August) to discuss the "Work" section of the charge and finalize the committee's name change
- **Action items:**
  - Ceci: Review the GLP Operating Guidance for a standing committee name change
  - Committee members: Brainstorm the Committee Charge "Work" section. Come to the next meeting with ideas of how to incorporate guidelines of what is and is NOT committee work. Please think: capacity, scale, scope and purpose
  - Theresa: Send will out date poll, after the GLP Spring Meeting, for a summer I/E committee meeting