

REGIONAL COLLABORATION OFFERS STRATEGY FOR CURBING AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

By Ted Lawrence, Communications and Policy Associate, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Collaboration is essential to ecosystem management. The vast natural resource known as the Great Lakes is shared by multiple and diverse stakeholders. Collaboration within such a region can be politically complex, and may lose legitimacy and effectiveness when only a limited number of stakeholders are involved.

As awareness has grown of the Great Lakes as a national treasure-at-risk, so has recognition of the value of collaboration. This is reflected by a May 2004 Presidential Executive Order establishing the historic basin-wide initiative, the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC). The Collaboration was convened December 2004 in Chicago by the federal Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, the Great Lakes Cities Initiative, Great Lakes tribes and the Great Lakes Congressional Task Force.

Unique among Great Lakes collaborations, the GLRC has made an unprecedented effort to be all-inclusive, working within a very short time frame to engage stakeholders from the general public and commercial, recreational and governmental interests, while having political support from the U.S. administration. Taking a holistic approach to the region's ecological, economic, and social concerns, the GLRC established eight issue-area strategy teams based on the key environmental priorities designated by the Council of Great Lakes Governors, including aquatic invasive species (AIS).

The AIS Strategy Team was charged with developing an action plan to stop the introduction and spread of non-native aquatic invasive species into the Great Lakes. It was co-chaired by Gerry Jackson, assistant regional director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fisheries Division; Dr. Chris Goddard, executive secretary of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission; and Ken DeBeaussiaert, director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Office of the Great Lakes.

The team addressed a wide range of issues, including ballast water management; implementation of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control

Act of 1990 (NANPCA); Asian carp barriers and related issues; rapid response; prevention and mitigation; outreach and education; applied research; among others. Development of the AIS action plan was divided into five sections, each addressing one of the primary vectors identified as accountable for Great Lakes aquatic invasions. These are aquaculture, maritime commerce, canals and waterways, organisms in trade, and recreational activities. Drafting teams developed comprehensive reports on each of the five vectors

The AIS Strategy Team produced a comprehensive five-page action plan based on the drafting team reports with the primary goal of preventing "all new introductions of AIS into the Great Lakes" and stopping, extirpating, and/or controlling harmful AIS populations to levels that "ensure sustainable ecosystems and the social, economic and cultural uses they support."

The Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species

The AIS Strategy Team benefited from a high level of participation by members of the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species. The AIS Team utilized Panel documents and had a responsive network of public and private stakeholders in the Great Lakes region, allowing the team to develop a comprehensive and focused action plan.

The Great Lakes Panel met in Ann Arbor, Mich. in April 2005, holding a formal session on the ideology and concepts driving the Regional Collaboration as related to the AIS issue. In a symbiotic relationship, Great Lakes Panel members participating in development of the AIS section of the GLRC action plan will have the opportunity to use this guidance in their work on the Panel. As can be seen from these efforts, collaboration begets collaboration.

Legitimacy of the Great Lakes Collaborative Process

The final document of the AIS Strategy Team was combined with the documents of the other seven strategy teams in April 2005. In October 2005, the AIS Strategy team convened in Rochester, N.Y.

to incorporate public comments and fully develop the team's top five recommendations for action to be immediately addressed by the administration. The entire document, *Great Lakes Regional Collaboration: A Strategy to Restore and Protect the Great Lakes* will then be presented to the administration in December, where participants of the collaboration will offer it as a road map to direct more funding into the region to accomplish the consensus-based goals.

The Regional Collaboration process has further advanced the efforts of Great Lakes entities, bringing these important issues to the forefront of the U.S. administration's political agenda. The Regional Collaboration has bred a new legitimacy by pursuing the development of a basin-wide dialogue between the major Great Lakes stakeholders.

Ted Lawrence held the 2004-2005 NOAA Sea Grant Fellowship at the Great Lakes Commission where he worked with Kathe Glassner-Shwayder in providing support for the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species. Upon completion of his fellowship in May, 2005, Ted moved to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission serving as their Communications and Policy Associate.

Washington Watch

On Feb. 10, 2005, Sens. Daniel Inouye (HI) and Ted Stevens (AK) reintroduced the *Ballast Management Act (S. 363)* which amends the *Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990*. The bill closely follows the structure of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) agreement. Concerns voiced include the removal of U.S. EPA's regulatory authority under the Clean Water Act, preemption of states' ability to enforce state ballast discharge standards, and delay in requiring ballast discharge management. On April 14, 2005, Sens. Carl Levin (MI) and Susan Collins (ME), along with Reps. Wayne Gilchrest (MD) and Vernon Ehlers (MI), introduced the *National Aquatic Invasive Species Act of 2005*. Also introduced in the House is the *National Aquatic Invasive Species Research Act of*

2005. Additional information on these bills may be found at www.nemwo.org/biopollute.htm#laws. Rep. Ehlers and Sen. Mike DeWine (OH) introduced the *National Invasive Species Council Act* to permanently establish the Council, which was first created by Executive Order in 1999. The Council will create and implement a national invasive species management plan. Rep. Mark Green (WI) and Sens. DeWine and Levin introduced the *Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act*, which would prohibit the importation or interstate transfer of live Asian carp without a permit. **Contact:** Joy Mulinex, Senate Great Lakes Task Force, 202-224-1211, joy_mulinex@levin.senate.gov.

Around the Basin:

ILLINOIS: Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant (IISG) is revising the "Don't Dump Bait!" sticker to accommodate concerns about dumping bait on land. IISG is also partnering with the City of Chicago on AIS outreach via the city's facilities and activities. Illinois EPA participated in IISG's AIS-Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) workshop in March, and has written and adopted an AIS-HACCP plan for its northern surface water sampling. Construction of the first phase of the Illinois River permanent dispersal barrier should be completed this fall; the second phase should be completed by the end of the year and fully operational early in 2006. The state ANS management plan that has been in operation for five years is currently being updated and revised. For more information, visit ans@inhs.uiuc.edu. **Contact:** Patrice Charlebois, IL-IN Sea Grant, 847-872-0140, charlebo@uiuc.edu.

INDIANA: The northernmost invasion of Brazilian elodea was first detected in Griffy Lake near Bloomington, Ind. in 2003. It is the first public aquatic invasion in state waters, making this lake a high priority for AIS control funding through the Lake and River Enhancement Program. Chemical control was recommended by a private consultant with allocation of \$70,000 for implementation. However, due to public pressure, the city has decided to pursue a nonchemical control option for vegetation management in place of aquatic herbicides. At the urging of the DNR Executive Office, the city has agreed to implement containment strategies while determining an alternative to chemical control. **Contact:** Doug Keller, IN DNR, 317-232-4080, dkeller@dnr.IN.gov.

MICHIGAN: On June 6, 2005, Gov. Jennifer Granholm signed legislation creating a requirement that all oceangoing vessels engaging in port operations in Michigan must obtain a permit from the DEQ starting January 2007. The legislation also calls for the establishment of a Great Lakes ANS Coalition, specifically to implement legislation in all Great Lakes states to prohibit AIS discharge from oceangoing vessels. On July 19, 2005, Gov. Granholm signed a non-native species package of bills creating lists of prohibited or restricted plants and animals,

including penalties for possession or release of these species. The legislation also created the Invasive Species Advisory Council. The third annual AIS Awareness week was held June 4-12, 2005. The Office of the Great Lakes (OGL) awarded about \$17,000 to the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council to administer the third year of the AIS Information and Education Small Grant Program. Ken DeBeaussart, Director of the OGL, is also serving as co-chair of the Aquatic Invasive Species Strategy Team of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration. **Contact:** Emily Finnell, MI DEQ, 517-241-7927, finnelle@michigan.gov.

MINNESOTA: *Habitattitude*TM was a key message delivered by Sea Grant staff during River Quest, an annual spring educational experience for 700 sixth graders from Duluth-Superior area schools. Minnesota Sea Grant celebrated its 30th Anniversary in July. The national *Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!*TM campaign is being extended along key invasion highway corridors in the Midwest states of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. Based on a grant from the National Sea Grant College Program, Minnesota Sea Grant is working with the DNR agencies in the aforementioned states and Wisconsin Sea Grant, as well as local partners to implement a multimedia campaign targeting boaters and anglers in areas leading to and from infested waters in those states. This fall, a workshop will be held to provide public review and comment on a draft comprehensive state plan on invasive species. **Contact:** Doug Jensen, MN Sea Grant, 218-726-8712, djensen1@umn.edu, or Jay Rendall, MN DNR, 651-297-1464, jay.rendall@dnr.state.mn.us.

OHIO: ODNR staff from the Division of Wildlife are monitoring the Chagrin River for adult sea lampreys this spring following the failure of the Daniels Park Dam during a high-flow event in November 2004. The dam had served as a barrier to upstream movement of sea lampreys from Lake Erie. No sea lampreys were collected in the assessment effort. Monitoring will continue to assess sea lamprey movement since the dam will not be replaced. A new educational brochure, *Invasive Alien Species: Impacts to Fish and Wildlife in Ohio*, has been completed and is a collaborative effort of ODNR-Division of Wildlife and USFWS Reynoldsburg Ecological Services Office. **Contact:** John Navarro, OH DNR, 614-265-6346, john.navarro@dnr.state.oh.us.

ONTARIO: Ontario announced completion of the Ontario Biodiversity Strategy in June (www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/). Numerous partnerships, funded partially through the *Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem*, continue to raise awareness of invasive species, through distribution of educational material, volunteer monitoring programs, biological control of purple loosestrife, signs posted at boat launches, workshops, and HACCP training for the bait industry. Research into management and control of round goby and fanwort is ongoing. In August, an amendment to the

Ontario Fishery Regulations came into effect that prohibits the import of live leaches for use as bait; possession of live bighead, grass, black and silver carp; all species of snakehead, and round and tubenose goby; except in the case of approved research (<http://gazetteducanada.gc.ca/partII/2005/20050921/html/sor249-e.html>). **Contact:** Beth Brownson, OMNR, 705-755-1950, beth.brownson@mnr.gov.on.ca.

WISCONSIN: About 20 workshops have been held around the state to train volunteers as watercraft inspectors in the Clean Boats, Clean Waters' program. Approximately 300 volunteers have been trained so far this year. The DNR sampled more than a 100 waterbodies this summer for zebra mussels, spiny and fishhook water fleas, Eurasian water milfoil, curly leaf pondweed and rusty crayfish. Zebra mussel introductions have been verified in two new Wisconsin lakes. The DNR is in the early stages of developing a classification system for invasive species (it will include both terrestrial and aquatic species). The Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission hosted an AIS conference for resource managers in Lac du Flambeau, Wis., October 19-20, 2005. **Contact:** Ron Martin, WI DNR, 608-266-9270,

Great Lakes Panel Update

The Great Lakes Panel fall meeting will be held November 16-17, 2005 at the Courtyard Marriott in Ann Arbor, Mich. Further information on this meeting, including an agenda, will be available online at www.glc.org/ans/panel.html#glpmeet. For more information, see Upcoming Events, below. **Contact:** Kathe Glassner-Shwayder, Great Lakes Commission, 734-971-9135, shwayder@glc.org.

ANS Task Force

The Task Force (ANSTF) held its fall meeting October 19-20, 2005 in Herndon, Va. Topics covered at the meeting include the *Caulerpa* national management plan, an invasive species forecasting system, Asian Carp management and control, regional ANS panel reports and priorities, and federal agency annual reports. A completely revamped ANSTF web page will be unveiled in November. Scott Newsham returned to the AIS arena in September as the new ANSTF Executive Secretary. Scott formerly coordinated the U.S. Coast Guard's ANS program from 1998-2003. **Contact:** Scott Newsham, USFWS, 703-358-1796, Scott_Newsham@fws.gov.

Upcoming Events

- Meeting of the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species. November 16-17, 2005. Ann Arbor, Mich. **Contact:** Kathe Glassner-Shwayder, Great Lakes Commission, 734-971-9135 ext. 108, shwayder@glc.org.