

THE PANEL'S BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT POLICY: FORGING A REGIONAL CONSENSUS

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We are pleased to announce that the *Policy Statement on Ballast Water Management*, a product of the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, was finalized in March 2001. We believe the policy holds promise as valuable guidance in preventing future ballast-associated aquatic nuisance species (ANS) introductions in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. The objective of the ballast water management policy is: *To eliminate ballast-associated ANS introductions into waters of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system, and reduce ANS dispersal between the lakes through the regional development and application of a timely, effective, scientifically based, environmentally sound and economically viable binational ballast water management program.*

The Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species recognized that ballast water exchange in ocean-going commercial vessels is an imperfect solution in preventing the introduction of ANS to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. Part of the problem is that open-ocean ballast exchange is not fully effective due to the survival of euryhaline organisms and other resistant forms. Not only can the exchange process compromise crew and ship safety, but also nearly 80 percent of commercial vessels enter the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system in a "no ballast on board" (NOBOB) condition. NOBOBs are not required to perform an open ocean ballast exchange, yet residual water and sediment in the ballast tanks contain organisms and resting eggs that can be discharged when new water is added to the ballast tank and later released into the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system or other waters.

The effectiveness of current U.S. regulations and Canadian guidelines is of concern as discoveries of new ANS occur in the Great Lakes and established populations spread among the lakes. To address this concern, the Panel convened a committee in the spring of 2000 to develop a policy statement on ballast water management for

the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. The committee includes binational representation from state and provincial resource management agencies, federal agencies, tribal authorities, maritime industry, recreational and commercial user groups, environmental and other non-governmental organizations. The committee identified three major policy elements to guide development of a ballast water management program for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region. Each element is composed of three sections: an issue description, Panel findings and a list of recommended actions.

First, science-based criteria must be established at the federal level from which states and provinces may develop standards, regulations and guidelines. Once established, these criteria will facilitate the development and implementation of ballast water management practices and treatment technologies.

Second, application of the ballast management program must be well coordinated. To ensure system-wide consistency, regulations and guidelines must be implemented on federal, state and provincial levels.

Finally, we need substantially increased funding for research on ANS prevention. Research priorities include potential ballast management practices and treatment technologies, management of NOBOB vessels, the environmental and economic impacts of ballast water management and ANS introduction, and ballast water associated health risks.

The ballast water management committee and Panel members contributed to development of the policy statement through review and comment on multiple drafts. Every effort was made to build consensus for the ballast water management policy among the Panel's diverse membership. The challenge was to resolve the diverse, sometimes conflicting interests of stakeholders so critical to advancing regional policy on ballast water management. In the final assessment, we believe this challenge

was successfully met and, in doing so, the strength the policy statement was enhanced. The recommendations in the policy statement will provide strategic guidance to those working on the ballast management issue in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region and to policymakers working on the reauthorization of the National Invasive Species Act (NISA). We are confident that the effort invested in this important initiative will benefit all residents of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region, supporting individual and collective efforts to move ahead in the development and implementation of a ballast water management program to prevent further introduction and spread of aquatic nuisance species.

Editors note: The Policy Statement on Ballast Water Management is available by contacting Katherine Glassner-Shwayder at 734-665-9135 or shwayder@glc.org or online at <http://www.glc.org/ans/anspolicy.html>.

Great Lakes Panel Update

This spring the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species finalized its policy statement on ballast water management (see feature article). A copy of the policy statement is available at <http://www.glc.org/ans/anspolicy.html>.

The symposium, *Looking Back, Looking Forward: Assessing ANS Prevention and Control*, sponsored by the Panel and the Great Lakes Commission, will be held on May 16-17, 2001 in Ann Arbor, Mich. Through a combination of keynote speakers, panel presentations and break out sessions, the symposium will examine progress realized under NISA of 1996, with a special focus on ballast water management and "no ballast on board" issues. The symposium, funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, will yield findings and recommendations on research, monitoring and policy needs that can guide the NISA reauthorization process. A preliminary agenda and registration form are available online at <http://www.glc.org/ans/nisa>.

The Panel will hold its spring meeting on Friday, May 18 in Ann Arbor in conjunction with the symposium, mentioned above, as well as the Great Lakes Commission Semiannual Meeting (May 15-16). Key topics for Panel discussion include the upcoming NISA reauthorization process and the I/E strategy and implementation plan. **Contact:** Katherine Glassner-Shwayder, Great Lakes Commission, 734-665-9135, shwayder@glc.org.

Washington Watch

The outlook for the 107th Congress is tenuous with a closely divided House and Senate. The Administration's budget on invasive species programs will not be known until the president's budget is delivered to Congress in early April. The Northeast-Midwest congressional delegation will be circulating a letter nationally advocating funding for invasive species programs.

Senator Larry Craig (R-ID), and other Republicans in the Senate will be sending a letter to the President urging him to support efforts of the interagency National Invasive Species Council, created two years ago by Executive Order. Senator Craig has been an advocate of controlling terrestrial invasive species and plans to reintroduce the Noxious Weed Coordination and Plant Protection Act.

As the expiration date for NISA draws near, there is considerable momentum among Great Lakes members and others around the country to lay the groundwork for the bill's reauthorization. Additionally, Rep. Pete Hoekstra (R-MI) plans to introduce legislation similar to H.R. 4191 introduced in the 106th Congress. With a focus on the Great Lakes region, the legislation would require, to the maximum extent possible, that vessels entering the Great Lakes do not discharge ballast water that introduces or spreads nonindigenous aquatic species and treat such ballast water and its sediments through the most effective and efficient techniques available. **Contact:** Joy Mulinex, Senate Great Lakes Task Force, Northeast-Midwest Institute, 202-224-1211, joy_mulinex@levin.senate.gov.

Around the Basin:

MICHIGAN: The Brick Watch program helped identify 30 new infestations of zebra mussels in Michigan's inland lakes in 2000, bringing the total to 149 infested inland lakes. In February, DEQ's Office of the Great Lakes included an ANS exhibit in Michigan United Conservation Club's *Outdoorama*, a nine-day interactive show for outdoor enthusiasts. Purple loosestrife plants along with *Galerucella* beetles were on display to demonstrate a biological control for this invasive plant. The DEQ's Ballast Water Work Group, with members from academia, the shipping industry and many other agencies, continues its work to determine practical methods available to minimize ANS introductions from ballast

water. **Contact:** Emily Bankard, MI DEQ, 517-241-7927, bankarde@pilot.msu.edu.

MINNESOTA: The DNR and Sea Grant hosted a minnow harvester permit workshop in March. Produced by Sea Grant, the *Aquatic Nuisance Species - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Training Curriculum* will be distributed to attendees. These agencies are also coordinating the *Minnesota Volunteer Zebra Mussel Detection Program* in collaboration with the Minnesota Lakes Association, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and University of Minnesota Extension Service. Two hundred volunteers reported efforts of visual inspections for adult zebra mussels on the lakeshore, docks and boats. Zebra mussel veliger kits were used to sample 19 lakes and rivers with none found. **Contact:** Doug Jensen, MN Sea Grant, 218-726-8712, djensen1@d.umn.edu.

NEW YORK: The DEC requested \$61,500 to continue the Finger Lakes Zebra Mussel Monitoring and Ecological Assessment Program. This will be the seventh consecutive year of data collection regarding changes to eight morphologically similar lakes resulting from zebra mussel colonization. **Contact:** Timothy Sinnott, NYSDEC, 518-457-0758, txsinnot@gw.dec.state.ny.us.

OHIO: Information on the state ANS management plan and related programs was presented at the annual Ohio Fish and Wildlife Conference. Staff visited the Toledo Port to view three different bulk cargo ships, compliments of the Lake Carriers' Association. Ongoing efforts of the ANS advisory team include drafting projects for the control of purple loosestrife, development of a zebra mussel alert card, and ANS signs for boat ramps at lakes and streams infested with zebra mussels. **Contact:** Randy Sanders, OH DNR, 614-265-6344, randy.sanders@dnr.state.oh.us.

PENNSYLVANIA: Zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) were documented for the first time in two inland lakes in Pennsylvania last year. Zebra mussels were confirmed in Edinboro Lake in northwestern Pennsylvania; both zebra and quagga mussels were documented in an old quarry used for scuba diving near Allentown (some 300 miles from the shores of Lake Erie). After conducting a baseline survey of the Edinboro Lake population, a 5-foot draw down of the lake for zebra mussel control was initiated in December 2000. DEP will conduct a follow-up population survey in the spring of 2001 to evaluate the efficacy of this control measure. **Contact:** Kelly Burch, PA DEP, 814-332-6816, kburch@state.pa.us.

WISCONSIN: The governor's recently released budget includes \$600,000 of dedicated funding for aquatic invasive species programs over the next two years. If approved, the funding would support a comprehensive program, including a strong public outreach/education effort, watercraft inspections, monitoring, and biocontrol for purple loosestrife. Maps showing state distribution of zebra mussels and Eurasian water milfoil are currently available on the DNR website: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/>

[org/water/wm/glwsp/exotics/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/glwsp/exotics/). **Contact:** Ron Martin, WI DNR, 608-266-9270, martir@dnr.state.wi.us.

National ANS Task Force

The Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force held its spring 2001 meeting in San Francisco, Calif. on April 4 and 5. The meeting began with presentations about local aquatic invasive species issues and was followed by a field trip to observe some invasive species problems in the area, including biofouling organisms at the Berkeley Marina and mitten crab and spartina infestations. The second day of the meeting included presentations on broader topics of concern to the Task Force, including an update of activities from the Task Force's regional panels; the development of a strategic framework for the ANS Task Force; the Plant Protection Act; a report from the Ballast Water Program Effectiveness and Adequacy Criteria Committee; status and updates from several other Task Force committees, and reports on troublesome species such as giant salvinia and black carp. **Contact:** Sharon Gross, Executive Secretary, ANS Task Force, 703-358-2308, Sharon_Gross@fws.gov.

Upcoming Events:

- *Symposium—Looking Forward, Looking Back: Assessing ANS Prevention and Control.* May 16-17, 2001, Ann Arbor, Mich. **Contact:** Michael J. Donahue, Great Lakes Commission, 734-665-9135, mdonahue@glc.org. More information available online at <http://www.glc.org/ans/nisa>.
- *Meeting of the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species* May 18, 2001, Ann Arbor, Mich. **Contact:** Katherine Glassner-Shwayder, 734-665-9135, shwayder@glc.org.
- *11th International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species.* Oct. 1-4, 2001. Alexandria, Va. **Contact:** Elizabeth Muckle-Jeffs, 800-868-8776, profedge@renc.igs.net.

On The Bookshelf:

- *Aquatic Nuisance Species - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Training Curriculum.* 2001. Single copies free, multiple copies \$10. **Contact:** Doug Jensen, MN Sea Grant, 218-726-8712, djensen1@d.umn.edu.
- *Minnesota Zebra Mussel Watch Volunteer Monitor Instruction Guide.* 2000. Free. **Contact:** Doug Jensen, MN Sea Grant, 218-726-8712, djensen1@d.umn.edu.
- *Plants out of Place* (documentary video). 2001. Information Television Network. To order a copy, call 888-380-6500, or visit www.itvisus.com. **Contact:** Katherine Glassner-Shwayder, Great Lakes Commission, 734-665-9135, shwayder@glc.org.