



Mississippi River Basin Panel
9053 Route 148
Marion, IL 62959



Great Lakes Panel on ANS
2805 South Industrial Hwy.
Suite #100
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

February 26, 2009

Ms. Mary Glackin and Mr. Gary Frazer
Co-Chairs, ANS Task Force
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Dr., Room 322
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Co-Chairs:

The Regional Panels on Aquatic Nuisance Species and state ANS management programs are severely limited in their ability to fully address ongoing ANS priorities due to financial constraints. Implications from this situation were addressed during the spring 2008 Joint Meeting of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin Panels on Aquatic Nuisance Species in Milwaukee, Wis., and the need for further action was identified. Funding challenges for these programs are formally acknowledged in the ANS Task Force Strategic Plan. This issue is a regional priority among all Panels, and therefore a growing concern at the national level. Please find attached letters from each of the six Panels requesting a dedicated session to discuss these matters with Panel chairs and coordinators during the spring 2009 ANS Task Force meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Douglas Keller
Mississippi River Basin Panel Co-chair
Indiana DNR

James Grazio
Great Lakes Panel Chair
Pennsylvania DEP

cc: Susan Mangin, ANS Task Force

Craig Martin, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Margaret (Peg) Brady, NOAA

James Grazio, Great Lakes Regional Panel

Earl Chilton, Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel

Jonathon McKnight, Mid-Atlantic Regional Panel

Douglas Keller, Mississippi River Basin Regional Panel

Susannah King, Northeast Regional Panel

Karen McDowell, Western Regional Panel



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Chair: Jim Grazio, Pennsylvania DEP
Vice Chair: Phil Moy, Wisconsin Sea Grant

Co-Chairs, ANS Task Force
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Dr., Room 322
Arlington, VA 22203

March 2, 2009

Dear ANS Task Force Co-Chairs:

I am writing to convey the significant challenges faced by the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) as well as the other Regional ANS Panels (Panels). Resource constraints make it increasingly difficult for the Panels to fully address ongoing ANS priorities as mandated under federal law (P.L. 101-646). Similar challenges exist for implementation of the ANS state management plans (SMPs) established under P.L. 101-646. The Panels have consistently identified and presented to the ANS Task Force (ANSTF) near-term priorities and tasks on ANS prevention and control, most notably increased coordination on a regional level. There is considerable concern among the Panels that these priorities and tasks cannot be adequately addressed due to significant funding limitations. Namely, appropriated funding for the Regional ANS Panels has remained flat while the number of Panels has increased. Also funding for SMPs has not been sufficient to meet individual state requests, given shortfalls from previously authorized amounts coupled with increasing numbers of approved and funded plans.

I recognize that funding challenges for ANS programs are formally acknowledged in the ANS Task Force Strategic Plan. Namely, Objective 5.2 of the plan is to "Determine if a need exists for new funding mechanisms for interagency activities" and Objective 5.3 addresses the need for federal budget coordination. While funding issues have been discussed at recent ANSTF meetings, we believe further dialogue and action are essential. Therefore, I recommend that the spring 2009 ANSTF meeting include a session with Panel chairs and coordinators dedicated to funding issues. Specifically, we need to better understand opportunities for involvement in the inter-agency budgeting process in order to secure funding that will enable us to effectively advance priorities on a regional panel and state level.

The level of resources invested in ANS prevention and control will determine the extent to which our collective mission can be achieved through the work of the Regional ANS Panels and SMP implementation. If funding is not increased soon, not only will expanded programs be unachievable, but existing programs will become unsustainable. I look forward to hearing from you on how we can work together in taking action on these funding challenges to effectively meet our ANS goals and objectives. Please let us know if the ANS funding issue could be discussed further at the upcoming ANSTF meeting in May.

Sincerely,

Jim Grazio
Great Lakes Panel Chair

Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel
2404 Government Street
Ocean Springs, MS 39564



February 11, 2009

Mr. Gary Frazer and Mr. Timothy R.E. Keeney
Co-Chairs, ANSTF
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Dr., Room 322
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear ANSTF Co-Chairs:

The Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species, as with the other Regional Panels (Panels), is severely limited in its capacity to fully address ongoing aquatic nuisance species (ANS) priorities under federal legislation (P.L. 101-646) due to financial constraints. Similar challenges exist for implementation of state ANS management plans (SMPs), also mandated under the aforementioned legislation. Appropriated funding for the SMPs have consistently fallen below authorized amounts; the resulting funding constraints have negatively impacted the ability of the state agencies to pursue ANS activities outlined in their SMP. Even though the Panels are fully funded at authorized levels; they are constrained to limited programs with no room for expansion to combat new ANS problems/threats.

Funding challenges for ANS programs are formally acknowledged in the ANSTF Strategic Plan. Specifically, Objective 5.2 of the plan is to "*Determine if a need exists for new funding mechanisms for interagency activities*" and Objective 5.3 addresses the need for federal budget coordination. Although funding has been discussed at recent ANSTF meetings, further in-depth discussion is essential to resolve funding deficiencies. Therefore, we request a dedicated session to explore existing resources and discuss these challenges with Regional ANS Panel chairs and coordinators during the spring 2009 ANSTF meeting.

The amount of financial resources allocated to ANS prevention and control will directly determine the extent to which the Regional ANS Panels and SMP programs can be implemented. If funding is not increased soon, not only will expanded programs be unachievable, but existing programs will become unsustainable. We look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Earl Chilton

Chair, Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel



Gary Frazer and Timothy R.E. Keeney
Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Dr., Room 322
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Co-Chairs:

As you are aware, financial constraints have long been a limiting factor in Regional Panel effectiveness in dealing with invasive species needs. I write today to join with some other Panel Chairs in urging that we collectively and directly engage in a discussion about how we can find funding for the many worthy initiatives, plans, and projects that we have developed over the years we have been working together.

In polling my panel membership, I found a broad agreement that funding is critically needed in order to continue to make any headway into the broad range of challenges we face. I also found a strong current of belief that it is only by having a reasonable and well-thought-out strategy for applying these funds where they are needed most that we will be successful and fully deserving of additional funding.

Therefore, I wish to join my brothers and sisters on the other regional panels in requesting a dedicated session to discuss the fiscal challenges we face and to seek agreement on a plan for finding and spending funding with Regional ANS Panel chairs and coordinators during the spring 2009 ANS Task Force meeting.

I look forward to working with you in the days ahead to continue to protect our waterways and natural areas from invasive nuisance species.

Best Regards,

Jonathan A. McKnight, Chair
Mid-Atlantic Regional Panel

CC: Susan Mangin
Lisa Moss -Panel Coordinator

Mississippi River Basin Panel
9053 Route 148
Marion, IL 62959



February 24, 2009

Ms. Mary Glackin and Mr. Gary Frazer
Co-Chairs, ANS Task Force
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Dr., Room 322
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Co-Chairs:

The Regional Panels on Aquatic Nuisance Species (Panels) are severely limited in their individual and collective capacities to fully address ongoing aquatic nuisance species (ANS) priorities under federal legislation (P.L. 101-646) due to financial constraints. Similar challenges exist for implementation of state ANS management plans (SMPs) also mandated under the aforementioned legislation. Appropriated funding for the Panels is legislated at \$50,000 per Panel, and support for SMPs has consistently fallen below authorized amounts; these resource constraints have made pursuing core activities of member agencies and the Panels difficult.

Funding challenges for ANS programs are formally acknowledged in the ANS Task Force Strategic Plan. Specifically, Objective 5.2 of the plan is to "Determine if a need exists for new funding mechanisms for interagency activities" and Objective 5.3 addresses the need for federal budget coordination. Although funding has been discussed at recent ANSTF meetings, further discussion is essential to increase funding for specified needs. For this reason, we request a dedicated session to discuss these challenges with Regional ANS Panel chairs and coordinators during the spring 2009 ANS Task Force meeting.

The amount of financial resources allocated to ANS prevention and control will directly determine the extent to which the Regional ANS Panels and SMP programs can be implemented. If funding is not increased soon, not only will expanded programs be unachievable, but existing programs will become unsustainable. We look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Doug Keller
Mississippi River Basin Panel Co-Chair



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February 9, 2009

Mr. Gary Frazer and Mr. Timothy R.E. Keeney, Co-Chairs
Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force
c/o US Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Dr • Room 322
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Gary and Tim,

I am writing to convey the significant challenges faced by the Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel (NEANS Panel) as well as the other Regional ANS Panels (Panels).

Resource constraints make it increasingly difficult for the Panels to address fully the ongoing ANS priorities mandated under P.L. 101-646. Similar challenges exist for implementation of the ANS state management plans as established under P.L.101-646. The Panels have consistently identified and presented to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force the near-term priorities and tasks on ANS prevention and control, particularly the need for increased coordination on a regional level. There is considerable concern among the Panels that these priorities and tasks cannot be addressed adequately because appropriated funding for the Regional ANS Panels is locked in legislatively at \$50,000 per panel, and support for state management plans has consistently fallen below previously authorized amounts.

The NEANS Panel recognizes that funding challenges for ANS programs are acknowledged in the ANS Task Force Strategic Plan, in Objective 5.2: "Determine if a need exists for new funding mechanisms for interagency activities," and that Objective 5.3 addresses the need for federal budget coordination. While these funding issues have been discussed at recent ANSTF meetings, the Panel is requesting further dialogue focused on the outcome of identifying and taking next steps on funding mechanisms. The NEANS Panel recommends that the May 2009 ANSTF meeting include a session for Panel chairs and coordinators that is dedicated to funding issues with a focus on better understanding opportunities for involvement in the inter-agency budgeting process with the objective of securing funding for Panels and states to effectively advance priorities on a regional panel and state level.

The level of resources invested in ANS prevention and control will determine the extent to which the Panels' and states' collective mission can be achieved. If funding is not increased in the very near term, not only will expanding programs become unachievable but existing programs will not be sustained. The NEANS Panel looks forward to hearing from you on how we can move forward to take action together in an effective and timely way to achieve and exceed our ANS goals and objectives.

Sincerely,

Susannah King
Co-chair

CC: Susan Mangin, Executive Secretary, ANS Task Force

February 18, 2009

Gary Frazer and Timothy Keeney
Co-Chairs, ANS Task Force
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Drive, MS 730
Arlington, VA 22203

Executive Committee

Eileen Ryce, Chair
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Karen McDowell, Vice Chair
San Francisco Estuary Project

Kevin Anderson
Puget Sound Partnership

Andy Burgess
South Dakota Dept. of Game, Fish
and Parks

Diane Cooper
Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers
Association

Amy Ferriter
Idaho Dept. of Agriculture

Robert McMahon
U. of Texas Arlington

Lynn Schlueter
North Dakota Game and Fish
Dept.

John Wullschleger
National Park Service

Erin Williams, Panel Coordinator
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Dear Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Co-Chairs:

Resource constraints make it increasingly difficult for the Regional Panels on Aquatic Nuisance Species (Panels) to address aquatic nuisance species (ANS) priorities as allowed for under Public Law 101-646. Similar challenges exist for implementation of the state/interstate ANS management plans (SMPs). Appropriated funding for the SMPs has consistently fallen below authorized amounts; these resource constraints make it difficult for states to develop or implement their plans. Since states have the primary authority to manage control programs on state lands and enact regulations, SMPs are a vital tool in addressing the prevention and control of ANS. However, the SMP funding has consistently fallen below the authorized amount of \$4 million.

Funding challenges for ANS programs are formally acknowledged in the ANS Task Force Strategic Plan. Specifically, Objective 5.2 of the plan is to "Determine if a need exists for new funding mechanisms for interagency activities" and Objective 5.3 addresses the need for federal budget coordination. Although funding has been discussed at recent ANSTF meetings, further discussion about how the Panel can assist in increasing funding for State Plans would be helpful. Furthermore, as advisory groups to the ANS Task Force, the Panels are also fiscally constrained with only \$50,000 per year to coordinate regional activities and priorities. We realize that only \$300,000 is authorized in the legislation to be divided amongst the six panels and wonder if there are avenues where the Panel members can assist to increase the funding for Panels. For these reasons, we request a discussion session to discuss these issues during the spring 2009 ANS Task Force meeting. We would like to better understand opportunities for involvement in the budgeting process in order to secure funding that will enable us to effectively advance priorities on a regional panel and state level.

The level of resources invested in ANS prevention and control will directly determine the extent to which the Regional ANS Panels and SMP programs can be implemented. Existing state programs are finding it challenging to sustain focus and attention on the issue, especially as additional state plans are approved and the funding allocated per plan decreases each year. We look forward to hearing from you on how we can work together in taking action on the funding challenges outlined here and our request for a discussion at the spring meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen McDowell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Karen McDowell
Western Regional Panel Acting Chair