

Meeting of the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species

Erie, Pennsylvania

May 10-11, 2007

Meeting Summary

FINAL DRAFT: 9/12/2007

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Welcome and Call to Order

Jim Grazio, Panel Vice Chair

Grazio welcomed everyone to the Tom Ridge Environmental Center informing the group that Mike Conlin, Panel Chair, was not able to attend. Kathe Glassner-Shwayder, Panel Administrator, also thanked everyone who participated in the ANS Task Force Meeting. Grazio called the roll, encouraging meeting participants not to be constrained by formality in their discussion. He asked for amendments to the minutes of the December 2006 meeting, of which there were none, and indicated that any corrections can be submitted in writing. Finally, Grazio reviewed the agenda, available online at <http://glc.org/ans/panel.html#glpmeet>, and added viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) to the Emerging Issues agenda item.

Great Lakes Panel Update

Action Items

Kathe Glassner-Shwayder, Panel Administrator

Shwayder reviewed progress on each of the action items from the December 2006 Panel meeting, available on the Great Lakes Panel website (<http://glc.org/ans/panel.html#glpmeet>). First, she indicated the Panel was responsive to the Policy Coordination Committee recommendation that a letter be sent to the Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Task Force (Task Force) regarding authorization and funding for the ANS dispersal barrier on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. She explained that the letter was not directly forwarded to Congress as originally planned given advocacy oriented-concerns expressed by Panel members as well as the ANS Task Force. Under advice of Tim Eder, Great Lakes Commission Executive Director, the letter was made an informational attachment that was forwarded to Congress as part of a Commission letter directly advocating the need for the barrier. Panel members were also encouraged to communicate the recommendation to their respective organizations and agencies. The Mississippi River Basin Panel was acknowledged for submitting a similar letter supporting the barrier and the importance of coordination among the regional Panels on common issues was highlighted, along with the opportunity for the two Panels to act together on the Asian Carp Management Plan that will be submitted to the Task Force. Shwayder emphasized that the Panel needs to think further about recommendations it can make to the Task Force to focus on **action** rather than **information**.

Shwayder discussed the action items calling for the formation of two ad-hoc committees. A Rapid Response Committee that is being created to work with the Panel standing committees and the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force to develop a communications protocol for rapid response. The work of the Committee would also help to remove barriers and overcome challenges that would ease the state's transition into rapid response. Shwayder said a letter of invitation for potential Committee Chairs has been drafted and will be sent out soon. A committee to populate the Task Force's ANS Experts Database is also being formed. Shwayder said that it was recommended to the Task Force that they submit a letter to the Panel formalizing the request for experts to contribute their name and information to the ANS Experts Database. Rochelle Sturtevant, I/E Committee Chair, explained that approximately half of the Tier 1 experts have been identified and entered, but experts are still needed for states such as Wisconsin and Michigan, in addition to Tier 2 experts. With regards to the two ad-hoc Committees, it was clarified that the intent of the Panel was to form these committees separately.

Shwayder then discussed the recent completion of a number of Panel related documents. The Panel's *Guidance for Operations* has been finalized and included in the meeting packets. The document will be formally submitted to the Task Force for their information only, as Task Force approval is not required. Shwayder highlighted the recently published *Great Lakes Aquatic Invasions* (GLAI) booklet that was also provided in the meeting packets. She indicated that 50 complimentary copies would be provided for all members and interested parties of the Panel. The Information/Education (I/E) committee will be working on dissemination strategy targeted toward decision-makers for the rest of the copies. An online version is also available, with references, at <http://www.glc.org/aquatic-invasions>. The latest version of the *ANS Update* newsletter was also published featuring an article on viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) by Gary Whelan, Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Shwayder concluded with a review of recent and upcoming Committee work items, as follows:

- Information/Education Committee: GLAI booklet dissemination, and I/E Priorities Document, Work Plan and Guidelines
- Research Coordination Committee: Priorities Document, Priority Species List and development of a regional list for organism in trade as recommended by the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration
- Policy Coordination Committee: development of a recommendation for comprehensive ANS regulation(s) and other priorities of the committee

Featured At-Large Member

Mike Murray, National Wildlife Federation

Murray provided an overview of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), a national non-profit education and advocacy organization. Specifically, the Ann Arbor regional office works on Great Lakes issues such as water quality, toxics, nutrient loading, over-fishing, invasive species, hydrology, land use and climate change. They specifically advocate for comprehensive Great Lakes restoration action as outlined in the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC) Strategy. Murray's background is in environmental chemistry and toxics, specifically environment cycling. He explained NWF's role as co-chairs of the Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition, which advocates on Great Lakes regional priorities, such as ANS, to the U.S. Federal Government. NWF also does a considerable amount of education and advocacy on ANS via public reports and fact sheets. Murray highlighted several of those reports which are available on the national NWF website. NWF has organized several workshops related to ANS including a May 2005 symposium on the role of ANS in food web disruption and a June 2006 workshop for scientists to consider projects targeting ANS pathways. In addition to the GLRC, NWF has also participated in the recent review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) which included a working group to address issues not currently included in the GLWQA such as ANS. Additional NWF interests and action on ANS issues include emphasizing prevention through policy, infrastructure and technical means; supporting development and education components of early detection/rapid response system; helping in quantification of benefits of avoiding ANS introductions; and controlling further spread of existing invasives to the extent possible through habitat restoration and other efforts.

Discussion at the conclusion of Murray's presentation concerned the rate of increase in the number of invasive species in the Great Lakes region. Murray presented a graph showing the approximate, cumulative number of discovered and identified *nonindigenous* (not necessarily "invasive") species in the region between 1840 and 2003. David Reid, NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, noted that relative to the shipping industry, 65 percent of those species since 1959 can be attributed to ballast water. It was emphasized that the graph represented a rate of species discovery, not a rate of species invasion. It was also pointed out that the region has become relatively more sensitive (i.e., aware) to species introductions since discovery of the zebra mussel.

ANS Task Force Update

Kathe Glassner-Shwayder, Great Lakes Commission

Shwayder provided a brief update regarding ANS Task Force activities on behalf of Scott Newsham, ANS Task Force Executive Secretary. The Task Force Strategic Plan is now online and available for review on the Task Force website, <http://www.anstaskforce.gov/plan.php>. Also, the Task Force is narrowing the focus of information received from the regional panels to just recommendations for Task Force action. Finally, the Task Force will be focusing on rapid response and state management planning for the next meeting. It was noted there is an emerging shift in terminology from “rapid response” to simply “response.”

Committee Break-out Discussions

Committee break-out discussions were focused on state management plan issues as continued from the previous day’s all-day session on state management planning, as well as committee work and action items.

Friday, May 11, 2007

Agenda Review

Jim Grazio, Panel Vice Chair

Grazio provided a brief overview of the agenda and asked for amendments, of which there were none.

Emerging AIS Issues Discussion

Recent Discovery of *Hemimysis anomola* (Bloody Shrimp)

David Reid, NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL)

Reid began his discussion on *Hemimysis anomola* (bloody shrimp) with background information on the species. The organism originates in the Ponto-Caspian region in the Black and Caspian Seas and is a shrimp-like crustacean approximately ½ an inch small. He indicated that when living, the shrimp are red in color but will lose this color when they die. The shrimp had been previously predicted as a potential future invader to the Great Lakes region and was eventually discovered at the GLERL research station in Muskegon, MI in November of 2006. Reid said it was discovered because of swarming in the water column in broad daylight. He indicated that this behavior is unusual, however, as they generally disperse into the water column only at night to avoid predation. Reid expressed belief that 2006 was likely the first year the species was in the Great Lakes. He said shrimp distribution is often associated with break wall structures or other areas in which it can hide. With regards to impacts of the bloody shrimp, which is an omnivore, Reid said there is uncertainty at this point. European countries have found that it can strip out the base of the food web and impact the nutrient cycle. There has been no documentation to date of impacts on fish populations. He also indicated that the shrimp can serve as high energy prey and thus fish predation may have the capacity to limit abundance. GLERL has created “bloody red shrimp watch” awareness materials providing identification information. Reid advised that people should look for swarms on breakwaters or piers and in fish stomachs. All potential sightings should be reported to mysis.glerl@noaa.gov. The GLERL website is also an excellent place to find further and updated information (<http://www.glerl.noaa.gov/hemimysis>). With regards to potential transfer or introduction via ballast water, Reid indicated the shrimp has a salinity tolerance, but did not know whether it would tolerate an exchange of ballast water. He said these species are often found clinging to the anchor chain and there has been some outreach to boaters on this issue.

Other Issues of AIS Concern

Mike Hoff, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, gave a brief presentation on didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*), a nuisance freshwater algae, with a native range in the Pacific Northwest. Hoff referred to an associated recently released 2007 report co-authored by Sarah Spaulding and Leah Elwell. The report

includes documented distribution of didymo in the U.S., including two spots in Lake Superior. Didymo was found in the nearshore area of the Lake, not in rivers as would normally be expected. Didymo is commonly found in clear water on rocky substrates and has been expanding its range in the U.S. There is concern about its movement via the waders of fly fisherman and outreach efforts to these groups are being conducted in the Western U.S. The primary reason the species is a problem are the long stalks which do not degrade for a number of months. Hoff suggested that the Great Lakes Panel could play a role in education and outreach on this issue.

Discussion on this issue indicated that didymo has been present in N. America for a while, but has only recently become a problem. Further, it is being found in more areas because people are now starting to look for it. It was noted that didymo was a nuisance problem in Canada in the 1990s and has also been a problem in New Zealand. Distribution and method of spread is also unclear because its presence is only reported when it has reached nuisance levels. Shwayder indicated the Panel would continue to be updated on this issue at future meetings.

Federal Program Reports

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Mike Hoff, USFWS

Hoff gave a brief overview of his presentation to include updates on the USFWS budget, work on the quagga mussel, and several regional initiatives. Hoff highlighted several important ANS components of the USFWS budget, as follows:

- \$1.075 million to support state and interstate management plans (19 approved plans total);
- \$300,000 to support work of the regional panels; and
- \$600,000 to support ANS projects and staff in the Great Lakes region, of which the greatest allocation goes to Asian carp management and control.

Hoff next touched on the spread of the quagga mussel to the Colorado River basin and increased efforts to prevent further spread in the West. With regards to Great Lakes basin work, Hoff first talked about the M/V Spencer F. Baird, a new hatchery fish distribution vessel. The Baird began the 2007 field season by stocking lake trout as part of restoration efforts and will soon begin lake assessments, mostly in Lakes Huron and Michigan, which will include some assessment of nonnative and invasive species. Hoff then gave an update on VHS, saying an international body of fish health and fishery management experts was convened in August 2006 to address the issue. Their recommendations included increasing the use of HACCP, as well as outreach to recreational boaters and anglers to clean and disinfect their craft and gear, to prevent the spread of the virus. Further, the USFWS is having all Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin field stations implement HACCP plans that address risks of transporting VHS and other AIS. Other work of the USFWS Hoff highlighted included continuing:

- Implementation of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration AIS Action Plan;
- Implementation of the Ruffe Control Plan;
- ANS outreach and partnership efforts (e.g., Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!™); and
- Development of the Asian Carp Management Plan.

Finally, Hoff posed for discussion the possibility of a joint meeting between the Great Lakes Panel and the Mississippi River Basin Panel, based on issues of common interest. There was a general positive response to this suggestion.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)

James Schardt, USEPA Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO)

Schardt first provided an update on USEPA authority as part of the Clean Water Act NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) program to regulate ballast water. He described how some groups had been putting together a petition since 1999 supporting USEPA regulation of ballast water

through the NPDES permitting program. In 2003, USEPA responded saying it is not responsible due to the long standing history of a ballast water exemption. The petitioners challenged the USEPA response filing a lawsuit in late 2003. In 2005, the court issued a summary judgment declaring that USEPA exceeded its authority when it interpreted the Clean Water Act to create the ballast water exemption. According to the court ruling, the USEPA has until September 2008 to remove the exemption and implement ballast water regulations. USEPA has referred the case to the U.S. Justice Department which subsequently filed an appeal. At the time of the meeting, Schardt indicated there had been no ruling on the appeal and in the meantime, USEPA has convened special working groups to decide what could be done for the regulations if the original ruling stands.

It was pointed out that removing the existing exemption will also impact the recreational boating community and many boaters are unhappy with the court's decision. As it stands, the exemption includes all discharges for all normal operations of a vessel. Further it was noted that permitting moving commerce is significantly different and more challenging than permitting stationary sources of discharge. The U.S. Coast Guard already has a permitting system to certify moving commerce and is working to develop a ballast discharge standard with other cooperating agencies, including the USEPA.

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

CDR Karen Phillips, USCG District 9

CDR Phillips gave the USCG update, specifically concerning ballast water initiatives. She provided several handouts, the first of which was the recently published *Summary of Great Lakes Ballast Water Management Exams*. Phillips indicated agencies were successful in doubling the number of ships they were able to board from 2005 to 2006. The USCG has also developed a shared protocol with Transport Canada for inspecting the ships. She indicated that only about 50 percent of the time inspectors are able to obtain a sample of the ballast water since it is sometimes difficult to get into tanks through the cargo hatch with a secchi line. Given these technical challenges, agencies have developed a new protocol for trying to get a better picture of ship operations. This includes a more comprehensive survey of reports and logbooks in an attempt to determine which ships are complying with best management practices. There is also a confidence level system for inspectors to score how they feel the ship is performing. Phillips said shippers seem to be getting used to having a joint inspection program; however this year, Canada will be requiring more stringent practices. She indicated that 90 percent of the ships appear to be "good actors" and making efforts to install equipment to increase compliance with regulations.

Phillips next gave an update on USCG progress to develop stricter ballast water standards. She said the U.S. Department of Agriculture – APHIS – has most recently joined in the discussion over concern for VHS. The environmental impact statement (EIS) on new regulations will be coming out later in the summer and the USCG has recommended a series of three public meetings in the Great Lakes region once it is released. The EIS evaluates the impact of doing nothing and a spectrum of 5-7 standards of sterilization. As the EIS progresses, the USCG is also working on a strategy for implementation in the case that a federal discharge standard is passed by Congress in the coming year. Phillips said that critical to this effort is partnership with Canada and the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.

There was a concern raised regarding the definition of "infested waters" for VHS in relation to best management practices of ballast water uptake (i.e., USCG regulations say do not uptake ballast water in areas of known infestations). Phil Moy, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant, suggested it might be easiest for a local fish biologist to coordinate with the local USCG office to report fish kills. Then the USCG office could issue a ballast warning for that area. A problem, he indicated, is determining how long the warning should last based on the viability of viral products. Another question was voiced concerning the authority of the USCG to act when an organism of concern (e.g. VHS) is found in the ballast tank. Phillips indicated that the USCG has not been able to determine any applicable emergency authorities; however a discharge standard would be the first step to creating an authority. It was further noted that Canada would have the authority to act in emergency situations under pending fisheries legislation.

Committee Reports

Information/Education (I/E) Committee

Rochelle Sturtevant, I/E Committee Chair

Sturtevant first called for approval of the Committee Work Plan, which was supported. She then highlighted some minor changes to the Committee operational guidelines, which were also subsequently approved. With regards to Panel member updates for meetings, positive feedback was received on the new method of submitting written updates prior to the meeting for distribution in meeting packets. It was recommended that this should also include I/E, policy and research updates in addition to the regular member update. Further, it was noted there is still the opportunity for members to speak on emerging issues and further discussion. Shwayder also indicated that updates longer than a paragraph would be accepted, but requested that members ensure they are well-written to save time in editing. The purpose of these updates is not just informational, but to foster regional engagement and partnerships in ANS work.

Moving on, Sturtevant described two recommendations of the I/E Committee. The first was to invite the NOAA Coastal Services Center to conduct a 'Project Design and Evaluation Workshop' prior to the next Panel meeting. In further detail, NOAA has a program to conduct educational workshops and this particular workshop focuses on how to design a project for evaluation and introduces participants to evaluation. If there is interest, Sturtevant indicated she can provide agenda and logistical information. A motion was made to explore options related to this I/E Committee recommendation and was approved. The second I/E Committee recommendation was to invite a state Coastal Zone Manager to serve as an at-large member of the Panel. Given that recommendations on Panel membership are the responsibility of the Nominating Committee (NomCom), it was suggested and supported that the recommendation be forwarded to the NomCom for their consideration when they are formed later this year.

Finally, Sturtevant discussed I/E Committee work on a developing a dissemination strategy for the recently published GLAI booklet. She indicated the objectives of this strategy would be to reach targets without duplication and make sure the most effective messenger is chosen for each target audience. For those that are distributing copies, the Committee felt it important to included contact information and key messages, including actions the Panel is not able to take. The Committee expressed interest in working on a French translation of the booklet. The Committee also proposed a \$2.00 charge for the booklets as a cost recovery move that may fund additional printings. It was clarified that Panel members will not be expected to pay for the booklets they distribute.

Research Coordination Committee

Phil Moy, Research Coordination Committee Chair

Moy began his report out talking about the Committee's Priority Species List which was approved, along with the introduction, with a few minor editorial corrections and no further additions or deletions of species. He described an addition to the listing criteria which was "promising new methods of control or eradication are in development", primarily as a result of the recent work developing new sea lamprey control technologies. Moy also spoke about the Committee's Research Priorities Document, to which two sections were added: canals and waterways, and economics; and additional editorial changes will be made.

Moy emphasized that a considerable amount of information on ballast water is being collected and going to the Smithsonian Institute's National Ballast Information Clearinghouse (NBIC), but is not being made available to researchers. As a result, he indicated the Committee would like to develop a recommendation for the ANS Task Force to request to the NBIC to allow the release of data to Great Lakes researchers in order to make information available in a timely manner. The Committee made a motion to the Panel to write a recommendation to the ANS Task Force that they work to get information from the NBIC released to the Panel and other researchers. The motion was given a voice vote and approved by the Panel.

Moy discussed work of the Committee related to organisms in trade that includes creating a list of banned and allowed species for the Great Lakes basin. He said they have obtained each of the states lists, but

work still needs to be done to unify them into a single Great Lakes basin list. He indicated the Committee would like to include all of the states and the Canadian provinces, even though the provinces were not included in the GLRC recommendation to create this list. Moy also said that the list would be based on political boundaries, not basin boundaries, as that is the basis for how the regulations are written. Lindsay Chadderton volunteered himself and University of Notre Dame colleague, Reuben Keller, to develop this comprehensive list. Moy said that once the comprehensive list is compiled, the Committee would work to identify species details and look to see what is out there that is not covered.

Moy concluded by briefly mentioning the Committee's VHS discussion, which had been reviewed earlier that morning. The result of that discussion was a suggestion that the states and the USCG need to develop a reporting system between state biologists and local USCG stations to report fish kills.

Policy Coordination Committee

Jennifer Nalbone, Policy Coordination Committee Chair

In her report, Nalbone reviewed action on the three policy priorities submitted at the previous Panel meeting and identified actions to be taken before next meeting. She discussed the recommendation on the dispersal barrier which was forwarded to the Task Force on January 19, 2007 and later communicated to Congress as an information attachment to a Great Lakes Commission letter. Both letters and the Task Force response were included in the meeting packets. It was pointed out that the Mississippi River Basin Panel sent a similar letter and received the same response from the Task Force. Concern was raised over the ability of the Task Force to act on this type of issue and their responsibilities under NANPCA. Nalbone indicated it may be appropriate to compose a follow-up letter during the appropriations process to ensure that barrier completion, operation and maintenance, and the feasibility study are fully funded.

Nalbone provided an update on a Committee action item identified at the previous meeting to prepare a recommendation supporting comprehensive ANS legislation. She said this letter will be worked on before the next Panel meeting and there will be efforts to again coordinate with the Great Lakes Commission and possibly the Council of Great Lakes Governors. Issues of concern regarding comprehensive legislation that will need to be resolved before a letter can be sent include: harmonizing with Canadian regulations, requesting a numeric or environmentally protective standard, keeping the focus on comprehensive rather than ballast only legislation and determining state positions regarding preemption issues.

Nalbone discussed the formation and potential work of the ad-hoc Rapid Response Committee. Committee discussion confirmed interest from the states on this issue, but thought a lack of funding and direction for ad-hoc Committee work might be limiting momentum. She said that Schardt indicated the USEPA may be able to provide secretariat for such work, as it relates to the priorities of the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force (GLITF). Tom Crane, Great Lakes Commission, clarified that the intent is for the co-chairs of the ad-hoc committee to determine the exact scope of work. Crane noted that the co-chairs of the committee, to include one state and one federal representative lead, would be provided general guidance on the scope of work in the letter of invite requesting their service as co-chairs. He also said that while the Great Lakes Commission can provide staff support to the standing committees, it may not be able to provide support to an ad-hoc committee. Schardt said the GLITF recognizes that jurisdictional authority is needed in rapid response actions and there is interest in engaging the states.

Nalbone explained the second recommendation of the Committee to have a presentation on the IMO at the next Panel meeting. She said there was some confusion over the implications of supporting and passing a numeric standard in the U.S. that is different than the International Maritime Organization (IMO) standard. She recommended that at the next panel meeting there be a briefing on the relationship between parties that ratify the IMO standard and individual party legislation. The progress of the USCG EIS process was also brought up as it relates to this issue and the timing of the next Panel meeting. It was determined that including the USCG EIS in this discussion was important, but given timing and other constraints, it may not be best to have it as part of the next meeting. Nalbone suggested that the recommendation be amended to support the exploration of opportunities to have this type of presentation.

Nalbhone concluded with a final Committee recommendation to explore writing a general letter to the Task Force regarding the mandates of NANPCA. The intent of the exercise would be to clarify the responsibilities of the Task Force in responding and acting on regional Panel recommendations regarding federal legislation. It was suggested that the letter use a constructive approach and focus positively on the relationship between the regional Panels and the Task Force. Nalbhone clarified that the recommendation was to explore a letter and suggested a conference call to brainstorm and exchange ideas.

Public Comment

Grazio opened the floor for public comment, of which there was none.

Panel Business

Shwayder led discussion on potential dates and themes for the upcoming fall Panel Meeting and then reviewed the action items (*see attached*).

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Summary Statements and Action Items

Information/Education Committee

Member Updates are now being conducted on a written basis prior to Panel meetings. The updates will be collected 2 weeks before meetings for inclusion in pre-meeting materials and will also be included as part of the meeting proceedings. The written updates should be limited to a paragraph with a page limit if a special project is being highlighted in the update.

- **Action Item:** Submit your member update, if you have not done so already, to Erika Jensen (ejensen@glc.org) by Friday, June 15, 2007.

Project Evaluation Tools

- **Action Item:** Staff were requested to investigate the following agenda ideas for the fall (2007) and future Great Lakes Panel meetings:
 - 'Project Design and Evaluation Workshop' sponsored by NOAA's Coastal Services Center to raise awareness among Panel members of the language and available tools for project evaluation.
 - Opportunities to have a joint meeting with the Mississippi River Panel and/or the conduct of a Panel meeting in Canada in coordination with our provincial partners.

New At-Large Membership

- **Action Item:** When convened for the next Panel election, a request will be forwarded by the Executive Committee to the Panel nominating committee to consider nomination of a Coastal Zone Manager for representation as a new at-large member.

Dissemination Strategy for *Great Lakes Aquatic Invasions* booklet

- **Action Item:** Staff was requested to continue work with the I/E Committee on a dissemination strategy for the *Great Lakes Aquatic Invasions* booklet. (*Please note that details on this strategy will be available in the I/E Committee report as part of the forthcoming meeting summary document*)

Dissemination Strategy for Committee Priorities Documents

- **Action Item:** Staff was requested to work with the Panel committees in developing a strategy for joint dissemination of the I/E Committee Priorities Document and the Research Coordination Committee Priorities Document.

Research Coordination Committee

Access to Ballast Water Information

- **Action Item:** Research Coordination Committee will draft a recommendation letter for the ANSTF to request the National Ballast Information Clearinghouse (NBIC) to expedite release of data to the Panel and Great Lakes researchers.

Organisms in Trade Research

- **Action Item:** Research committee will continue work on Organisms in Trade in the following areas:
 - Obtain provincial lists of banned or allowed species to add to state lists
 - Work with Lindsay Chadderton (TNC) in developing a unified list (based on state/provincial lists) for regional application

International Maritime Organization (IMO) Ballast Water Discharge Standards

- **Action Item:** Staff was asked to investigate potential for a future Panel meeting session on the implications of adopting the IMO or other discharge standards.

Policy Coordination Committee

Comprehensive AIS Legislation

- **Action Item:** Staff will work with the Policy Committee on drafting a recommendation letter to the ANS Task Force in support of comprehensive AIS legislation. The letter will be coordinated with the Great Lakes Commission, taking an approach similar to disseminating the AIS dispersal barrier recommendation to the ANS Task Force. The Council of Great Lakes Governors will be invited to participate with the Commission in using the ANSTF recommendation to leverage Congressional action.

Rapid Response

- **Action Item:** Staff was directed to continue work on establishing an ad hoc Rapid Response Committee, giving immediate attention to the letter of invite to potential co-chairs to include one state and one federal representative lead. Steps will also be taken to explore options for secretariat support as well as the interest of the states to engage on rapid response planning efforts.

Role of the ANS Task Force

- **Action Item:** Policy committee will consider holding a conference call to clarify the responsibilities of the ANS Task Force under NANPCA and explore the potential for further developing the relationship between the Task Force and the Great Lakes Panel in working together on ANS policy issues based on the legislative mandate.