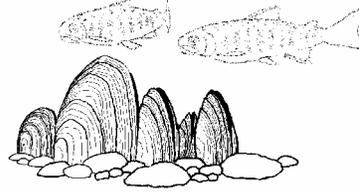


Pacific Northwest Native Freshwater Mussel Workgroup



February 3, 2004

Minutes

Attendees were as follows: Jen Stone, Al Smith, Kevin Aitkin, Micah Wait (standing in for Jamie Glasgow), Molly Hallock, and Tom Burke. On the phone were Michelle Steg, Kathy Thornburg, Jayne Brim Box, and John Fleckenstein.

Purpose: The purpose of this meeting was to: 1. discuss logistics of the 2004 Symposium; 2. better define the role of the Workgroup; 3. discuss Workgroup membership; 4. discuss modified objectives; and 5. provide updates.

Planning for 2004 Symposium:

Location: Jen reported that the location of the 2004 Symposium has been changed from Lacey, WA to Vancouver, WA due to parking restrictions at the Department of Ecology and the US Fish and Wildlife buildings. Every attempt will be made to have the 2005 Symposium in northern WA, and planning should begin soon after the 2004 Symposium.

Funding: Jen reported that the Workgroup has not yet been able to find sponsors to support the travel of our invited guest speakers. A detailed list of agencies/companies that were solicited is attached to these minutes. Jen still has hopes that the US Fish and Wildlife Service will be able to sponsor the event. Oregon AFS will be solicited next week during a monthly conference call. Jayne will be able to fund the travel of Karen Mock and will know by February 9th if she can support one more person. The Workgroup established a drop-dead date (March 1st, 2004), a date when we contact the guest speakers and let them know that we will not be able to afford to reimburse them for their travel expenses. Micah Wait will look into having the Environmental Protection Agency sponsor the event. Molly, through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, offered to cover the cost of refreshments and snacks for the event (approximately 200\$). Jayne will look into the minimal travel costs to see if we can reduce our budget from 1000\$ per speaker to something more affordable. Kevin is still working on funding Catherine's travel through the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Workgroup discussed the possibility of charging a registration fee to cover these expenses, but this was turned down due to problems with our group handling money and a potential reduction in the number of registrants.

Presenters: Kevin will contact Terry Frest to determine if he is interested in giving a presentation on the conservation trends of freshwater mussels in the PNW. Jen will ask David Wolf if he, or another member of the CTUIR (potentially Dave Close), would be interested in giving a presentation on the tribal perspective of the importance and status of freshwater mussels. Kathy will discuss this with the Tulalip Tribe. Jayne will send an updated copy of the flyer to the invited speakers to make sure they are comfortable with having their names on it, considering the potential that they might not be able to attend.

Publicizing the Symposium: Jen will put a blurb in the Oregon AFS newsletter and will talk to Dick Dewey about getting it out on the PSU listserv. Kevin will add a text version of the flyer to the Unio listserv. John will send the flyer to the wildlife listserv and Tom will drop off flyers at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference (March 16-20, 2004). Al will bring flyers to his course in Ellensburg. Jen will provide the workgroup with a final version of the flyer. Kathy will send this to the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (update: the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission will be sending our flyer to shellfish biologists and water quality staff in their 20 member tribes).

Symposium Preparation: Jen asked members of the Workgroup to be available before and after the Symposium to help set up and clean up.

Miscellaneous: Michelle Steg is interested in joining Kevin and Catherine Gatenby on a tour of Quilcene Hatchery as they discuss the potential of the hatchery in being used as a mussel propagation facility. Kathy Thornburg will not be able to attend the Symposium due to travel restrictions

Future Workgroup Meetings: Jen will schedule a conference call on April 16th between 10-11 to allow the Workgroup to finalize preparations of the 2004 Symposium. The next meeting of the Workgroup will occur 7-10 days following the Symposium and will be in Lacey, WA. Jen will coordinate with Rob P. to get space at the Department of Ecology building.

Role of the Workgroup: Al provided the background for the purpose of the discussion. David Wolf, CTUIR representative, expressed his concerns via email about the language we have chosen to describe the Workgroup and the Workgroup's Goals and Objectives. He was especially concerned about our use of the word "funding". The members of the Workgroup discussed this issue and wanted to clarify that portion of the Objectives. The Workgroup will solicit funds (through sponsorship) to support the Symposium and the publication of educational materials, and otherwise will not receive funding for the purpose of disbursement. However, it will provide guidance, if requested, on data gaps and information needs pertaining to the freshwater mussels of the PNW. It will also provide links to potential sources of funding (i.e. grants, scholarships, etc). The Workgroup decided to drop the word "funding" from the second objective. David also was concerned that this group might turn into something similar to the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority. The members of the Workgroup discussed this and determined that our group does not have a legal mandate and standing, so this is not likely to occur. Another concern of David's was that the Workgroup may usurp the Tribal rights and religious and cultural values. The Workgroup re-read our Charter and decided it was explicit enough in describing our role, which would focus on research, management, and education and would not cross the boundary into cultural and religious importance of the freshwater mussels. David's last concern was in the responsibility of the Workgroup to prioritize freshwater mussel research needs. Jen will ask David to review the Workgroup Charter as well as the Workgroup's objectives and ask that he assist us in modifying the documents so that they are consistent with the Tribe's perspective. Jen stated that this Workgroup is supposed to be representative of all the agencies, tribes, non-profits, etc that have an interest in freshwater mussels and that it is the responsibility of each member to ensure that the products of the Workgroup are consistent with the perspective of their representative group. Additionally, Al requested that the members of the Workgroup take an active role in publicizing our existence, to ensure that every agency, tribe,

researcher, non-profit, etc is familiar with our Workgroup and has an opportunity to take a more active role.

Membership: Jen is occasionally approached by people interested in joining our Workgroup and wanted to know how the Workgroup wanted her to respond to these requests. Jen would like to keep the Workgroup small, yet representative of the groups interested in freshwater mussels. Currently, the Workgroup has approximately 20 members, 15 of which are active. Discussions focused on the following: 1. letting anyone who wants to join, join; 2. restricting membership so that one representative from each agency or agency-type was included; 3. allowing new members to join only through attrition; and 4. having no policy. The Workgroup was not able to come to consensus and felt that this topic should be discussed at a later date when Workgroup membership becomes more of an issue. The Workgroup decided that it will take an active role in publicizing our existence (Kathy will talk with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Jen will talk to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission), and that if anyone is interested in joining, the Workgroup will discuss their inclusion at the next meeting of the Workgroup. A process still needs to be determined, perhaps including a stronger statement of commitment.

Modification of Goals and Objectives: Al has incorporated the Workgroup's comments into the newest draft and this will be placed on our website after David has an opportunity to comment.

General Updates: Jen and Al presented the Workgroup poster at the Urban Ecological Research Consortium Symposium. It was a huge success. Modifications to the objectives came late, therefore this current version of the poster has an earlier draft of the Objectives. A more current poster will be added to the Webpage, and any subsequent printings will be correct. Kathy and Micah offered to provide abstracts to the website, and Jen will include the abstracts that Al and Cynthia Tate produced. Molly sent out her survey cards to 65 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists. Micah reported that Washington Trout crews have been instructed to collect observations of mussel presence/absence while doing a coho prespawn mortality study. Jamie has the data. Michelle requests that the Workgroup work on a general mussel packet that can be handed out to scientists that are working in the field (in particular, people working for The Nature Conservancy in Oregon). She was requested to contact Jimmy Kagan from the Oregon Natural Heritage Program to see if they would be willing to handle the data generated from this effort. Kevin suggested that Michelle contact Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to make sure that it is legal to collect shells for scientific purposes. Tom is working on a revision of the Mollusk list for the Oregon Natural Heritage program. Jen thinks the Workgroup should work on an educational brochure, about the Workgroup and about mussels in general. Al is obtaining Yukon floater shells from Steve Smith, a contact of Phil Brna's in Alaska.

Meeting Adjourned.

Sponsorship solicited from:

US Fish and Wildlife Service (Regional office, Columbia River Fisheries Program Office, Western Washington Office), Forest Service, Bonneville Power Administration, Montgomery-Watson-Harza, Mobrand Associates, BioAnalyst, SP Cramer, CH2MHill, Oregon AFS, Western Division AFS, Jones and Stokes, Friends of Ridgefield, Lower Columbia River Estuary

Partnership, Washington State University, Idaho Fish and Game, NOAA-Fisheries, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Applied Biomonitoring, Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, King County, Pacific Northwest Laboratory, URS Consulting, US Army Corps of Engineers, Wyoming Fish and Game, Trout Unlimited (Washington) and Maul-Foster-Alongii.