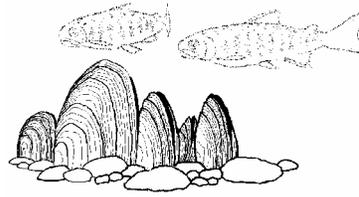


Pacific Northwest Native Freshwater Mussel Workgroup



September 09, 2003

Minutes

Attendees were as follows: Jen Stone, Al Smith, Dick Dewey, John Fleckenstein, Kevin Aitkin, Kelly Toy, Wendy Walsh, Rob Plotnikoff, Kathy Thornburgh, Ed Johannes, Terrance Frest, Michelle Steg, Jamie Glasgow, Tom Burke, Donna Nez, and David Wolf; on conference call were Jayne Brim Box, Molly Hallock, Robin (proxy for Mark Sytsma) and Judy Jacobs. See attachment 1 for contact information.

Jen Stone opened the meeting by initiating the introductions from attendees. Everyone gave a brief synopsis with his or her name, company, and general job description.

Al Smith followed with a presentation on the state of freshwater mussels of the Pacific Northwest. See attachment 2.

Dick Dewey followed with a discussion on potential education programs for freshwater mussels in the Pacific Northwest:

Pointing out that Education is a broad term, he stressed that we need to get information into schools (kindergarten through grade 12, college, professional educators, consultants, etc.) and to promote educational opportunities. Science needs to look at the value and function of mussels. Issues include their right to exist, their overall image, and indicators of environmental function. With outreach and public awareness, we can get the information out with the grants available (example: Sea Grant). Seeing this group as promotion of good information, he feels the content of the information will drive what agencies do about the educational need. We need to consider this a long-term mission.

Jen Stone presented a talk on formation of the Pacific Northwest Native Freshwater Mussel Workgroup.

Al Smith led a review of the draft Charter. After lengthy discussion and agreement to modifications, an enhanced Charter resulted. See attachment 3.

Next, an open dialogue concerning mussel needs and short-term goals for this group:

Education

- Timing and target
 - The educational needs are immediate

- Grass-roots movement
- Need to get headlines in local paper, local agency awareness
- Educate the public, starting with professionals (i.e. state agencies) and landowners as to the mussels' importance to the ecosystem (i.e. salmon)
 - need to be concerned with the negative response associated with "yet another imperiled species"
 - unique life style
- Tools
 - Need .pdf file with mussel pictures, descriptions
 - Jayne and Kevin will work on this, Al also has photos
 - Need to check on copyright issue
 - Need list-serves, addresses to send this information
 - Hook-up with schools and get mussels in their educational trunks
 - Attend meetings of other biologists
 - Train the trainer
 - Senior projects
 - One concern is that we don't want to injure the populations by having people trampling and picking mussels with good intentions
 - A course for teachers (Teaching workshops about FW mussels)
 - Al volunteered to talk about freshwater mussels and show photos
 - Dick will head up Oregon, who will take WA?
 - Possible webcourse?
 - Teaching groups: Oregon Environmental, NW Aquatic
 - CTUIR could attempt the same in their schools
 - Send representatives of this workgroup to schools to add mussel education to curriculum
 - Evergreen in WA has a science program
 - Inform Jen of what you are doing in order to update website to help us with partnerships, etc

Research

- Species distribution and identification
 - Kevin is maintaining a WA database with geographic information and species, verified by Terry Frest
 - One issue is how to store the specimens and get more precise geographic data (UTM)
 - Need a collecting permit to collect shells from WA, but not from OR
 - Kevin has a WA collecting permit that he can add names to
 - Kevin will put together a process for collection of specimens
 - Photos are not a substitute for live specimens
 - All collection must be legal to be included in the database
 - It would be useful to know status: live or dead
 - We need to insist on proper and complete information
 - We need a list of the monitoring groups already in existence to help us with this effort

- Critical needs and uncertainties
 - Need to develop this into a formal, prioritized list for dissemination
 - Species distribution (get on Kevin's collecting permit)
 - DNA, anatomic, morphologic
 - Ongoing monitoring for status and trends
 - physiological and chemical setting for determining cause/effect
 - Sources of mortality
 - Systematics
 - Historic data compiled
 - Recruitment
 - Description of physical/chemical habitat needs (environmental needs)
 - Life cycle studies
 - Hosts (includes status/distribution of host species)
 - Links to other species (i.e. salmon)
- General comments
 - Comparative data would be valuable
 - Need to document downward trend to get USFWS interested
 - Get U. WA involved in research
 - Linking mussels to other species (i.e. salmonids)

Miscellaneous

- Use letterhead when corresponding, see attachment 4
- Donna Allard will be webmaster for our website
 - Please send Jen links for our website, and figure out who should be linking to us
- Encourage newspaper interest
- Next annual conference will be held in the Spring (March/April), with possible locations at:
 - Evergreen State College
 - USFWS, Lacey
 - Dept. of Ecology, Lacey
 - Sandpoint
- Whether this organization should be affiliated with another is tabled for the next meeting
- Follow up workgroup recruitment possibilities in Southern B.C., there may also be interest in AK, WA, ID, MT, UT, NV, Central and Southern CA (Judy will get Jen a list of people in AK)
- Send sampling slides to Jen for webpage (Al, Jayne, etc)
- If you want to present at ORAFS, send abstracts to Jen
- Each committee chair should work with their committee to determine specific goals and objectives, send to Jen
- Terry will send Jen BC names for workgroup and will send her links to other malacologist groups

Workgroup meeting schedule

- Tentative meeting scheduled 1st/2nd week of December, Tues/Wed (2nd/3rd or 9th/10th) in Lacey—please email Jen with your schedule preference— from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.
- Four face-to-face meetings per year (one at the conference), with telecommunication support provided for each
- Possible field trip next Summer or Fall

Adjourn