

**PNW FW Mussel Workgroup agenda**  
**Thursday 9 March 2016, 10 - 11:08 am**

Call-in information: dial 641-715-3580; enter access code 289634 at the prompt

**Present:** Michelle Anderson (University of Montana Western), Matt Baerwalde (Snoqualmie Tribe), Emilie Blevins (Xerces Society), Liz Bockstiegel (WDFW), Jodi Brostrom (USFWS), Tom Burke (USFS ret'd), Julie Campbell (USFWS), Laura Guderyahn (Portland Parks), Keith Hatch (Bureau of Indian Affairs), Matt Hill (EcoAnalysts), Mike Murray (USFWS), Matt Paroulek (Port of Portland), Chris Sato (WDFW), Celeste Searles Mazzacano (CASM Environmental, LLC), Al Smith (ODFW, ret'd), Cynthia Tait (USFS), Michelle Weaver (ODFW), Travis Williams (Willamette Riverkeeper), Krissy Wilson (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources)

**Agenda**

- Welcome and introductions (Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental)
- The passing of Gwendolyn (Wendy) Walsh (1931-2016), a founding member of the Pacific Northwest Native Freshwater Mussel Workgroup; obituary at <http://tinyurl.com/hhdu424>
  - o avid member of the general public; took bottles of dead mussels to county commissioners meetings and put them on their table; classic “grandmother with tennis shoes”
  - o Al Smith: several years ago she got an award from the ORAFS for her work with mussels
  - o staunch supporter of the workgroup and a true mussel aficionado; she will be missed
- WDFW pilot surveys (Chris Sato, WDFW): Chris and Liz Bockstiegel have been figuring out how to have their fish biologists record mussel sightings during their daily work; department now using an ArcGIS phone app called Survey 123, and one of their data managers designed a mussel-reporting form and loaded it onto the app. This is a WDFW app but not every employee has a license for it as licenses cost money. They are doing a pilot survey in region 6 (southwest Washington and Long Beach Peninsula), with a few fish biologists using the app to do presence/absence surveys as they go about their business; when they record occurrences they can send it to a GIS feature class that will be prepared for downloading in WDFW database. If successful their data people will build a geoplatform that will allow any employee to record occurrences.

- o Celeste Searles Mazzacano: Are you getting good buy in, and how are you determining users? This is pretty new, crews are starting to use this Survey 123 for other surveys, so they were trying to do a quick add-on for incidental mussel observations, and trying to reach out to people who are already using Survey 123.
- o Al Smith: ODFW has done something similar for recording mussels during salmon surveys but this is much more sophisticated; data entry into accessible system is a nice development.
- o CASM: can people upload images, or is it just text reporting? People can upload photos, so Liz and Chris can do QA/QC.
- o It's good to be able to channel public inquiries to one place → Chris noted that reaching out to the public will be next step, once they are sure this all works.
- o If successful, could other DFW agencies hop onto this too? They will have to ask the WDFW data guy, but Chris is willing to share all the work that she did.
- Report on mussel presentations at recent conferences
  - o ORAFS native fish/freshwater mussel session (Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental; David Stagliano, Montana Natural History; Emily Grossman, ESI): Mussel folks kicked off a full-day session on Native Mussels and Fish; well-attended (especially considering it started at 8 am!), ~35 people in the room, lots of note-taking and questions, several positive comments afterwards
  - o RRNW mussel poster (Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental): Poster on BMPs for mussel salvage had lots of action, many different agencies and tribes sayign they are starting to think about mussels in a more programmatic way.
- EcoAnalysts mussel symposium with Heidi Dunn, 19-20 September 2017, Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, The Dalles, OR (Matt Hill, EcoAnalysts)
  - o There will be a flyer and registration packet on EcoAnalysts web site very soon, plus an announcement to workgroup; Matt will send out the flyer to the list serve in the meantime.
  - o EcoAnalysts is getting all the speakers lined up for day 1; day 2 will be in-water survey techniques with Heidi Dunn.
- Potential for workgroup to host 2021 FMCS meeting in Portland or Seattle (guidelines in FMCS Procedures Manual, Appendix A (meetings) and B (workshops) at <http://tinyurl.com/j82mroh>) (group):

- o from latest issue of Ellipsaria: “Symposium Committee Report, Heidi Dunn and Becca Winterringer: Heidi Dunn brought up plans for future symposia including Austin, Texas in 2019. Charles Randklev will make a presentation in Cleveland on the Texas Symposium. They are still in need of Workshop ideas for 2020. A suggestion was made to approach the Pacific Northwest group to see if they would consider hosting in 2021. It was suggested that the membership be queried in Cleveland as to their willingness to travel that far. Alternative would be to possibly host the 2020 workshop there. John Jenkinson, supported by Dave Berg, suggested that the 2021 symposium should move back east first since 2019 would be in Texas. Heidi and Jennifer noted that the membership may be more willing to travel further for bigger event, such as the Symposium, rather than for a Workshop. It was agreed to put this item on the business meeting agenda to gauge the Society’s interest and willingness to travel. Teresa also is to reach out to Matt Patterson at NCTC as they recently hosted a mussel propagation class in Montana. Heidi is also to approach the Pacific Northwest group on their interest in hosting. It was noted that this area is important to the tribes; they just had a mussel position posted, however, it is difficult for them to afford to come East.”
- o Al Smith thought it was interesting that from blurb above, Texas is considered to be in the west! Al has been to several meetings and they are well-attended, very exciting, latest innovative ideas, researchers whose papers or books you’ve only read, great field trips.
- o Michelle Weaver: How many people attend? Likely 300-400, pretty big (i.e. about same size as ORAFS meeting)
- o Often when a local organization hosts a meeting there is some sort of financial benefit for them as an incentive, so this could be a good way to fund a workgroup project in the future
- o What kind of structure would be set up to accept the money? Probably for the conference FMCS will do this (Celeste will check with Heidi Dunn about that) but what if we end up with a nest egg?
  - Xerces might be able to do it (they have held the small workgroup sum for several years)
  - We also have a refreshed relationship with ORAFS, and Michelle Weaver noted they have acted as a financial agent in this way for other organizations

- o FMCS has very detailed protocols, timelines, suggestions, and the Procedures Manual will be very helpful if we move ahead with this, but the planning schedule goes 18 months out from the meeting date so not a trivial effort.
- o We would need 1-2 people to head this with a collection of helpers, and since we have few dedicated mussel people in the west this will be hard to do; would be good idea to see if an agency is willing to fund someone who works for them part time in order to be chair.
- o We don't have a mussel community like they do in the east (people know each other, hundreds of people working on mussels) so will be more work for the group.
- o Cynthia Tait: Would we need to have an income stream? No, FMCS says they put money up front and then they get reimbursed from registration fees.
- o General tone of the the group is favorable if we can pull it off, but want to get input from all interested workgroup members, so Celeste will develop a SurveyMonkey questionnaire to get questions/concerns and overall yea or nay feeling from group, can get results to Heidi Dunn in time for the FMCS March 26 meeting
- o Celeste Searles Mazzacano: I think that overall, if we can swing it, this would be a good undertaking for the workgroup. When Heidi Dunn, who has been active with FMCS for a long time, joined the group last year, she mentioned that FMCS would like to have more of a relationship with the workgroup, and certainly with so few people in the west working as malacologists, we are the face of western mussels (so to speak). With a lot of the changes that have happened with the workgroup in the past few years—increased members and participation, more research and education, which has in turn resulted in greater awareness and interest in mussels among agencies, tribes, and nonprofits, as well as the formation of new sub-committees to develop the new web site, iNaturalist project, and Facebook page, I have been thinking that we are at a new point in our development, and that the workgoup could be more effective if we changed our organizational structure and/or status. I don't know that we have enough people to become a member-fee based organization, but is it time for us to look into obtaining non-profit status? Could we be more effective, better advocates, expand our impact if we organized a little differently? We would need to file for non-profit status, pay the fees for filing and having a lawyer look everything over, but the process is fairly boilerplate. We would need a Board with officers and have to do annual tax reporting, but I (and others in

- the group) have been in on the ground floor of developing a non-profit and/or been a Board member of a non-profit, and though it takes time and a little money, it's hardly impossible. This could additionally allow us to apply for funding as an independent entity, as well as manage funds (either for ourselves, so that we don't need a different financial agent; or for others, and obtain a bit more income in the form of an overhead fee) and accept tax-deductible donations.
- o Al Smith agreed that the group has really grown and may be at the point of needing to change structure to be even more effective.
  - o Travis Williams noted that the scope of group is worthy work, and we have an interesting mission from the perspective of setting up nonprofit; not a hard process to set up that nonprofit status, and we most likely have a ready-made board from within the group.
  - o Celeste will poll the group on their thoughts and their willingness to commit to working towards non-profit status; will try to develop a small sub-committee to gather facts and present a plan to the workgroup in this calendar year.
- Additional items/announcements
    - o NCTC Freshwater Mussel Courses (Matthew Patterson, USFWS/NCTC)
      - Freshwater Mussel Identification - June 26 - 30, 2017 (Instructors: Kevin Cummings and Jess Jones).
      - Conservation Biology of Freshwater Mussels - August 7 - 11, 2017 (Instructors: Chris Barnhart and Heidi Dunn)
      - Freshwater Mussel Propagation for Restoration - September 18 - 22, 2017 (Instructors: Rachel Mair, Nathan Eckert, Tony Brady, Brian Simmons, Matthew Patterson)
      - Al Smith commented that he attended the conservation biology class a few years ago—excellent course in a really nice setting, stay on campus so get to know attendees well.
  - New study on role of trans-Beringian faunal exchange in evolution of mussels (workgroup approached by Ilya Vikhrev, Russian Academy of Science)
    - o Al Smith sent several e-mails to Ilya, who was looking for contacts along the eastern Pacific for help on where to look, getting permission to do surveys; sounds like an exciting and widespread study, has pretty good funding from the Russian Academy.

- New project to compile mussel and snail occurrence data for Alaska (workgroup approached by Amanda Droghini, Alaska Center for Conservation Science, Univ. of Alaska)
  - o Al Smith noted there have been several people in AK who expressed recent interest in freshwater mussel surveys and data compilation, good to see this effort continuing.
  - o Celeste Searles Mazzacano said she had e-mailed Amanda off-list asking her to share their report when it's done, and Amanda was quite willing to do so.
- Final suction dredge mining white paper (Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental): submitted to legislative committee by ORAFS
- Senate Bill 644 introduced to Oregon Legislative assembly 2017 (see <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB644/Introduced>) (Shelly Miller, City of Eugene): Shelly was unable to attend meeting but e-mailed Celeste earlier and said that this hasn't moved any further, just wanted to alert the workgroup.
  - o "Makes various changes to laws relating to mining and mineral resources. Exempts certain small mining operations from exclusion certificate requirement. Exempts surface mining operations or exploration activities on federal lands from state bonding requirements if in compliance with federal financial guarantee requirements. Modifies certain permitting fees related to mining operations. Prohibits motorized in-stream placer mining in indigenous anadromous salmonid habitat and waters essential to recovery and conservation of Pacific lamprey, with certain exceptions";
  - o **MOTORIZED IN-STREAM PLACER MINING**

SECTION 17. Sections 2 and 4, chapter 783, Oregon Laws 2013, are repealed.

SECTION 18. (1) As used in this section:

(a) "Essential indigenous anadromous salmonid habitat" has the meaning given that term in ORS 196.810.

(b) "Motorized in-stream placer mining" means mining using any form of motorized equipment, including but not limited to the use of a motorized suction dredge, for the purpose of extracting precious metals from placer deposits of the beds or banks of the waters of the state.

(c) "Waters of the state" has the meaning given that term in ORS 468B.005.

(2) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, no motorized in-stream placer mining may be permitted to occur in the beds or banks of the waters of the state that:

(a) Are indigenous anadromous salmonid habitat; or

(b) Essential to the recovery and conservation of Pacific lamprey.

(3) This section does not apply to motorized in-stream placer mining within patented claims granted or unpatented mining claims located prior to the effective date of this 2017 Act.

- Tom Burke asked why the discussion item regarding placement of *Anodonta californiensis* on WDFW Species of Concern list removed from agenda: Chris Sato (WDFW) replied that the WA Species of Concern list was recently updated; the update was new so it was thought at first that *A. californiensis* was new addition as candidate (an announcement that was sent out to the list serve), but in fact it has been a candidate since 1996 (based on Tom Burke's work in 1995, when it was written up as priority habitat and species with a habitat management recommendation was written in 1995). Probably made a candidate due to presence of that management recommendation, and at the time that candidate status may have been valid
  - Tom Burke noted it may be that a lot of the older *A. californiensis* records were actually *A. nuttalliana*, but those are now in a single clade
  - Chris Sato: WDFW recovery team is aware of new taxonomic developments, but they still officially keep *californiensis* and *nuttalliana* separated as species. Species of Greatest Conservation Need list does make note of *Anodonta* clade question with these species, though.
  - Tom Burke said he always wondered why *M. falcata* considered of more concern than *A. californiensis*; also said that in the overall mollusk list, there are a couple of snails in WA and OR that are considered almost extinct but not yet listed, he can give that info to interested folks.
  - Chris S. said that WA currently going through candidate assessment review (kick upstairs or get off list); she did one for *A. californiensis* but none of the other mussels have been considered; Chris will bring that up at upcoming prioritization meeting, they haven't done much with snails and not much funding for them so searching for ways to combine them with other groups so they can get more attention.
  - Chris sent an e-mail after the meeting providing a short summary of their different conservation lists that describes the scope and parameters of each.
- Meeting adjourned at 11:08 am—thanks to everyone who participated! As always, Celeste will send out a draft of the minutes within a few days for comment/corrections by the group. Our next workgroup meeting will be in June—look for a Doodle scheduling poll to come out in early May.