

**PNW FW Mussel Workgroup draft agenda  
Monday 5 December 2016, 10 - 11 am**

**Present:** Kevin Aitkin (USFWS-WA), Emilie Blevins (Xerces Society), Liz Bockstiegel (WDFW), Jody Brostrom (USFWS), John Fleckenstein (WA DNR), Matt Hill (EcoAnalysts), Marci Koski (USFWS), Alexa Maine (CTUIR), Shelly Miller (City of Eugene), Anndrea Navesky (EcoAnalysts), Doug Nemeth (USFWS-ID Conservation Office), Matt Paroulek (Port of Portland), Chris Sato (WDFW), Celeste Searles Mazzacano (CASM Environmental), Al Smith (ODFW-ret'd), David Stagliano, Cynthia Tait (USFS-ID), Teal Waterstrat (USFWS-WA), Michele Weaver (ODFW), Travis Williams (Willamette Riverkeeper), Krissy Wilson (Utah DNR)

**Agenda**

- Welcome and Introductions (Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental)
- Reminder: freshwater mussel session at annual meeting of ORAFS, 28 Feb - 3 Mar 2017, Bend OR; “Casting A Broader Net: Increasing Diversity and Inclusion in the Fisheries Profession”; see <http://orafs.org/2017-annual-meeting-of-the-oregon-chapter-of-the-american-fisheries-society/>
  - o abstract submission is online, select “mussel symposium” from dropdown menu
- Mussel courses at USFWS NCTC, Shepherdstown, WV: Freshwater Mussel Identification, 26-30 June 2017; Conservation Biology of Freshwater Mussels, 7-11 August 2017; Freshwater Mussel Propagation for Restoration, 18-22 September 2017 (course contact Matthew Patterson, 304-876-7473, [matthew\\_patterson@fws.gov](mailto:matthew_patterson@fws.gov); course schedule at <https://training.fws.gov/NCTCWeb/catalog/CourseSearch.aspx>)
  - o Those who have attended past courses say they are well worth the time, great learning experience and NCTC is in a beautiful rural setting as well.
- IUCN Red List update (Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society)
  - o In progress for several years; over 7,000 records from 180 people and organizations used to complete recommendations, which should be posted to Red List web site this week ([IUCNredlist.org](http://IUCNredlist.org)), will have links on Xerces web site also; we can link on workgroup web site once posted

- o 4 assessments: *Margaritifera falcata*, *Gonidea angulata*, *Anodonta oregonensis* (combined *A. kennerlyi* and *A. oregonensis* records), and *A. nuttalliana* (combined *A. nuttalliana* and *A. californiensesis* records)
  - o Did mapping exercise to see what portion of range has been lost for each species; used range loss and information from published research to assign categories:
    - *A. oregonensis*: Least Concern; but does show decline across the range
    - *A. nuttalliana*: Vulnerable; has declined across one-third of its range
    - *G. angulata*: Vulnerable; declined across >40% of its range
    - *M. falcata*: Near Threatened; declined across 17% of range, but many reports of declining populations and evidence of extirpation in places
  - o Rationale & literature review for each species will be part of web site report, there will also will be a Xerces blog that Emile can send to the group
  - o Thanks to everyone who submitted their records!
  - o How was it decided to merge the *Anodonta*? Xerces followed [molluscabase.org](http://molluscabase.org) checklist for nomenclature. MolluscaBase has worked to update all global checklists for molluscs; synonymised multiple names under *A. nuttalliana* (i.e. *wahlametensis*, *idahoensis*, *californiensesis*, *triangularis*, etc.) and under *A. oregonensis* (i.e. *cognata*, *kennerlyi*), based on Karen Mock's work
  - o Do you foresee any direct actions resulting from new classifications? Hopefully; challenge is finding clear causes for declines, especially in specific populations, taking action to preserve them
- Request for workgroup input on mussel impacts for ORAFS Suction Dredge White Paper for 2017 Oregon Legislative Session (Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental)
    - o Revisions to white paper started several years ago, back when Shelly Miller chaired the workgroup; she provided input but project hadn't come to fruition
    - o Troy Brandt from ORAFS contacted Celeste a few weeks ago, said new version of white paper near completion and would like workgroup to provide a page on mussel concerns, need by mid-December
    - o Celeste put together a rough draft to provide a template to work on, is soliciting help from interested workgroup members with more experience in this area
    - o Al Smith, Shelly Miller, and Liz Bockstiegel volunteered to work on draft; Celeste will e-mail it to them today; Teal Waterstrat has some pertinent references he will send to Celeste to be sure we have them.

- o What will this white paper be used for? Used as resource when information needed by legislature, so don't have to be there in person to provide testimony.
- Mussel die-off reports for 2016 (Teal Waterstrat, USFWS-Olympia WA)
  - o workgroup instituted a new form this year for people to report mussel die-offs that they saw in the course of their work; done in response to several die-offs we heard about during 2015, which was a low water year.
  - o Trial rollout this year; posted on web site and advertised among various groups that workgroup members are involved with, but we haven't had a great way to really advertise it largely.
  - o Four reports, all in WA state but different watersheds (Snoqualmie, Chehalis, and upper of Yakima); Chehalis & Snoqualmie were *Margaritifera*, the others were *Anodonta* related to reservoir draw-downs. Teal will write up a summary and share with the workgroup.
  - o From what groups did the reports come? One from Teal, others from DNR, tribes, WDFW; good to know a variety of organizations are finding the form.
  - o Will Xerces be collating/sharing these? Emilie Blevins says Xerces has small database of die-offs, would like to keep adding to it
  - o How complete were reports? All had images, coordinates, watershed, county so pretty complete, could confirm species diagnosis from images and localize sites; not carefully quantified (i.e. "many", thousands) but in future could accommodate that by asking people to report estimated ranges/abundance categories.
  - o Additional reporting forms: there is a mussel relocation reporting form on the Xerces and workgroup web sites, as Xerces is wanting to track relocation efforts as well; if you have done or heard about relocation projects please send Emilie Blevins the details
- McBride Slough mussel surveys for Port of Portland (Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental)
  - o done in advance of dredging and carbon filter capping to be done in the slough, which is located near the airport and feeds into the Columbia Slough
  - o took a long time to get access permissions, but was able to survey late summer; difficult habitat (steep blackberry-covered banks, thick contaminated sediment) so surveyed transects from a kayak using a dredge net; no evidence of mussels (also no valves ever seen on shore during scoping visits), slough filled with *Gambusia* (mosquitofish), only mollusks found were native pond snails (*Physa*, lymnaeids) and

some invasive Chinese Mystery Snails (*Cipangopaludina chinensis*)

- Additional items and announcements
  - o Doug Nemeth (USFWS—Orofino, ID) said his office is going to begin some directed surveys for mussels in ID, likely starting in the Clearwater drainage. He is in the process of trying to find as much data as possible on mussel distribution in the state; has talked with Fish & Game, USFWS Boise office, Clearwater Forest. Group input: Terry Frest did a lot of work on the Snake; David Stagliano supplied his ID records to the Xerces database, did a lot of work on the Clearwater, also did workshop in 2011 that was attended by tribal, state, and FS people around St Joe Basin; Cynthia Tait has some ID info and would like to coordinate with Doug; Kevin Aitkin says talk to Steve Lysne who is now at the College of Western Idaho, wrote a mussel field guide (Kevin will send Steve's new contact info); can e-mail Emile Blevins to get state records from Xerces database.
  - o Shelly Miller has request for mussel data from a contractor working with OR State Parks to develop site assessment and stewardship plan for Willamette Valley parks. They would like to include mussel data where available (confirmed or possible), be able to develop quality assessment or quality impact; might identify additional surveys as a need in their stewardship plans. Travis Williams commented that so many properties along the Willamette River really need good management plans, mussel data will feed into that. Emilie is happy to send records to Shelly and/or the consultant, and notes further that Xerces still wants to maintain that database so keep sending your records to keep it current.
  - o David Stagliano reminded the group about the 1st positive tests for zebra mussel in Montana; the two sites are sites very far apart, one is Tiber Reservoir east of Shelby (confirmed), second is Canyon Ferry Lake (suspected but inconclusive) on the Missouri River near Helena. Veligers found in zooplankton samples but no adults found yet; see <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/MISAC> for more details.
  - o Matt Hill & Anndrea Navesky: EcoAnalysts mussel symposium is still being planned, likely occur in May in population center that has easy access via airport, but other details not worked out yet. Date is determined by Heidi Dunn's availability before her field season starts.
    - What will the theme be (invited speakers, research, other)? Still trying to figure that out; centered around getting Heidi Dunn out here to share her knowledge with them; not trying to re-invent the wheel, still in planning stages

- o end-of-year statistics: For those who are interested, there are currently 124 people on the workgroup list serve. Our numbers keep growing—14 people were added to the group in 2014, 7 people in 2015, and 21 people in 2016!
- Thank you for your participation in the workgroup. Enjoy whatever holidays you celebrate, and we will see everybody in the new year!