

## Pacific Northwest Native Freshwater Mussel Workgroup

December 7, 2018; 9:00 – 11:00 Pacific Time

Call-in details: Dial 1-570-731-0464. Enter PIN: 469 364#. Please announce your name/affiliation when you join.

### Meeting Agenda

1. Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society— welcome and introductions
2. Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society— update on workgroup funds
3. Patty Morrison, USFWS retired; Teal Waterstrat, USFWS; Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society— discussion of FMCS 2021 symposium [recurring agenda item]
4. Kevin Aitkin, USFWS— discussion of museums presently taking voucher specimens and of the present federal and state rules and regulations for collecting/observing mussels in the West
5. Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society— discussion of mussel die-off investigations
6. Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper— findings from 2018 Willamette mussel study
7. Workgroup members— 2018 and future 2019 presentations, meeting attendance?

Attendees: Kevin Aitkin, USFWS; Emily Davis, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission; Ron Constable, ODFW; Teal Waterstrat, USFWS; Michele Weaver, ODFW; Celeste Searles Mazzacano, CASM Environmental; Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper; David Stagliano, Montana Biological Survey; Laura Guderyahn, City of Portland; Patty Morrison, USFWS retired; Ann Gray, USFWS; Ann Gannam, USFWS; Courtney Newlon, USFWS.

### Call Notes

- Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society— update on workgroup funds  
We have transferred \$439 to FMCS to be held for future workshops etc. Workgroup members commented that it makes sense to hang on to the funds to have upfront money for future plans. No concerns raised about FMCS serving as a fiscal sponsor.
- Patty Morrison, USFWS retired; Teal Waterstrat, USFWS; Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society— discussion of FMCS 2021 symposium [recurring agenda item]

Small group met to discuss planning for proposal to host a 2021 Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society symposium. During initial discussions, Portland was identified as the best candidate based on centrality, ease of travel from other locations, presence of workgroup members in the area to help coordinate, and lower costs compared with other cities. Venues being considered now. Workgroup members indicated support for Portland as the location.

Patty commented that between now and April, we need a commitment of a core group (3-5) to work on potential host venues, dates, biggest commitment is for members of our workgroup to attend it. Having a meeting like this at the far reaches is a risk because people from the eastern U.S. to attend. We need similar attendance from our folks. We need to show that we would attend. Celeste reminded workgroup that we should specifically reach out to tribal members so that they are involved.

Kevin mentioned the symposium planning guide that FMCS provides. There was also an update in Ellipsaria regarding what progress had been made on the 2019 meeting 6 months prior to the meeting. He commented how useful it is that they are keeping us up to date as to what is going on.

There was a request for workgroup members to provide input on a theme, which will help us determine who to invite for plenary sessions. Similarly, any thoughts on potential field trips are welcome. The proposed time for the meeting (March or April) could make mussel-related field trips challenging. Note that we can set limits to the number of people attending the field trip but need to come up with ideas, could have more than field trip.

Al asked who is attending the FMCS meeting, and responses included Al, Patty, and Emilie.

Kevin Aitkin, USFWS— A discussion of museums presently taking voucher specimens has been on our agenda every couple of years. We don't have local museums to house our specimens. Al commented that Oregon State University has some whole mussel specimens but is unsure if they can accept other specimens. Kevin mentioned that we don't have someone local so we can have access to this, and need money available to manage them.

Regarding present federal and state rules and regulations for collecting/observing mussels in the West:

-need more clarity about permitting for surveys and collecting because varies by state

Michele Weaver commented that she is a good contact for information about collecting requirements in Oregon. For example, a letter from a refuge manager would not cover Oregon (unless ODFW-run).

Teal commented that WA state is becoming more stringent regarding the species that they regulate. Examples include bullfrogs and nongame or invasive species.

- Emilie Blevins, Xerces Society— discussion of mussel die-off investigations, update to form, any recent observations, collections, FMCS symposium

Cynthia discussed mussel die-offs with Emilie and contacted Dan Isaak at USGS about stream temperatures. A project has been developed, looking at stream temps, operating under a hypothesis that these die-offs are related to low water and high stream temperatures. However, it is hard to tie back to when die-offs occurred because we often find shells and don't know when it occurred. Dan provided average August temps near die-off sites, but nothing obvious. Cynthia looking at maximum number of continuous temps above a certain temp or 7-day moving mean temps. Dan will provide, as well as daily discharge data to look at low water. If no site sensor nearby, will have air temp sensors. The data goes back to 1990 and can help look historical conditions.

Al mentioned the importance of this information with respect to climate change. Teal shared a paper about habitat shifts to colder water refuges for salmon, including an interesting issue with mismatch between host fish and mussels.

Note there is a new die-off reporting form:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/07295ba7aa33447fb927f0b071591147>.

- Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper— reported on findings from 2018 Willamette mussel study. There was a 2017 study at Norwood Island. Celeste designed the study, and it was implemented over several days. No reproduction was observed in that population. WR reproduced the study after finding mussel beds near Eugene. Celeste designed study and led project- a 300mx150m area with 100,000 mussels in a healthy bed. Al and Patty participated. WR is interested in conducting another study, perhaps on the Middle Fork Willamette. Also found a western ridged mussel during the study.

Al commented he has only found western ridged mussel near St. Paul and perhaps one other place in the Willamette.

Travis let everyone know report is available for people to review. He sent out a link after the meeting.

- Workgroup members— 2018 and future 2019 presentations, meeting attendance?

A couple of meetings people mentioned attending included FMCS 2019 (see above), the Willamette Basin Within Our Reach Conference (Emilie and Travis), a Utah native mollusk working group meeting (Cynthia), the Oregon AFS meeting (Ron), and a Coast Fork Willamette science pub (Emilie).