Minutes of Meeting

Participants: Mark McElroy (LDWF); Marilyn Barrett-O'Leary (Louisiana Sea Grant); Al Hindrichs (LDEQ); John Meyers (USCG); Johnny Cefalu for Pat Gallwey (Port of NO); Randy Lanctot (Louisiana Wildlife Federation); Pat Carter (USFWS); Ron Lukens (GSMFC); Bill Spitzer (USDA); David Lowery (Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association); Michael Stevenson for Martin O'Connell (UNO); Louis C. Heaton for Bobby Simoneaux (LDAF); Greg Grandy (LDNR); Michael Saucier (USACE); Jim Marchand (Governor’s Office); Keith Stoma (Entergy Corporation); Hans Rick (ULL); Bruce Thompson for Hallie Dozier (LSU); Peter Johnston (Waterman Steamship Corporation); Charlie Demas (USGS); Henry Graham (Louisiana Chemical Association); Stuart Fossey (Louisiana Farmers Association); Justin Meunier and Kerry St. Pé (Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program); Allan Ensminger (Louisiana Landowners Association); Doug Meffert, Richard Campanella, and Alysia Kravitz (Center for Bioenvironmental Research).

I. OPENING REMARKS & INTRODUCTION

M. McElroy called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. CST.

M. McElroy welcomed and introduced Task Force members P. Carter, R. Lukens, and J. Marchand who were unable to attend previous Task Force meetings. He then asked members for any comments, changes, or additions to the draft minutes from the December 11 Task Force meeting. No changes were suggested, and A. Ensminger made a motion to approve the minutes. J. Meyers seconded the motion, there was a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

II. WHERE WE ARE IN THE PROCESS

R. Campanella recapped the voting from the Task Force meeting on December 11, 2002. He reminded Task Force members of the results of the ballot, which directed that the management plan should place roughly equal emphasis on pathways and species. In addition, the management actions in the implementation table will be approximately equally divided between the four voted on approaches: prevention via education, prevention via regulation, control/management, and early eradication. There will, however, be slightly greater emphasis on education and slightly less emphasis on regulation.

III. GUIDED TOUR AND DISCUSSION OF DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

A. Kravitz and Lisa Schiavinato (Sea Grant Legal Program) went through the draft management plan to date, describing the various sections and the maps and graphics that will eventually populate the document.

During the discussion of the Species Section of the management plan (Section 3B), B. Thompson suggested adding Common Carp to the subsection on Finfish. The rest of the Task Force concurred.

K. Stoma and R. Lukens suggested adding microbes and diseases, such as Vibrio cholera and West Nile Virus, to the Species Section of the management plan. After some discussion, it was decided that viruses, microbes, and other disease-causing microorganisms would be mentioned in the management plan so readers would not think microbes were ignored or overlooked; however, it was also decided that microbes should not be a major focus of the management plan because other organizations, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, focus a lot of resources in this area.

IV. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF HOMEWORK RESPONSES

A. Kravitz gave a presentation discussing the results of homework questions 6 and 7. Question 6 asked state and federal agency representatives to research the legal jurisdictions of their agencies. A. Kravitz provided brief summaries of those jurisdictions, but stressed that the information provided was incomplete. L. Schiavinato is supplementing the homework responses with her own research into the legal jurisdictions.

Question 7 asked all members to describe the invasive species programs that are ongoing at their organizations. A. Kravitz provided members with a diagram, which illustrated the similarities and connections between these programs, which ranged from ballast water management to education and outreach.

R. Campanella provided instructions and examples for completing the next homework assignment and stressed its importance to completing the management plan. This assignment asks members to propose management actions that will enable the state to achieve the decided upon goals and objectives of the management plan. (See below.)

ACTION: A. Kravitz will email members with the next homework assignment, question 8. Members will complete homework question 8 and send it to A. Kravitz via email or fax on or before Monday, June 16. The question can also be downloaded from www.cbr.tulane.edu/is/TaskForceMembers.html.
V. DECIDING ON OBJECTIVES

M. Barrett-O’Leary lead a discussion on the overall goals and objectives of the Task Force and management plan. Topics such as rapid assessment, rapid response, early eradication, regulations, prevention, and control were discussed. After much debate and dialogue, the following goal and objectives were agreed upon:

Goal: Prevent and control the introduction of new nonindigenous species into Louisiana; control the spread and impact of existing invasive species; and eradicate locally established invasive species wherever possible.

Objective 1. Prevent and control the introduction/reintroduction of nonindigenous invasive species through education about species and pathways, targeting the general public (including schools), industries and user groups, government agencies, and nongovernmental organizations.

Objective 2. Eliminate locally established invasive species through monitoring, early detection, rapid response, and early eradication.

Objective 3. Control the spread of established invasive species through cooperative management activities designed to minimize impacts when eradication is impossible.

Objective 4. Prevent the introduction of nonnative species, or spread of existing ones, through legislation and regulation.

ACTION: When continuing to write the management plan, R. Campanella and A. Kravitz will incorporate the above goal and objectives. Projects in the Implementation Table, resulting from member responses to homework question 8, should reflect all four objectives with extra emphasis on Objective 1 and less weight on Objective 4. A. Kravitz and R. Campanella will distribute the second draft management plan before the next meeting so members can be prepared to discuss it.

VI. PRESENTATION: COASTWIDE NUTRIA CONTROL PROJECT

Greg Linscombe (LDWF – Fur and Refuge Division) gave a presentation on the status of the Coastwide Nutria Control Project, or Nutria Bounty. After providing some background on the history and biology of nutria in Louisiana, G. Linscombe explained the rules and requirements to participate in the program. The bounty is $4 per tail. Participants must have a license issued by LDWF and must fill out a special application to enroll in the bounty program, after which they receive a registration number. When participants turn in the well-preserved tails at the collection stations, they must provide information on the location from which the nutria were taken, and then they receive a voucher. Checks are mailed to the participants within a few weeks of receiving the vouchers.

To date, approximately 260,000 tails have been collected through the bounty program, and the program will end its first year on March 31.

VII. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 16, 2003. The meeting will be at Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Headquarters at 2000 Quail Drive in Baton Rouge, and is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. CST.

NOTE—Due to scheduling conflicts, in May 2003, the date of the meeting was changed to July 30.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:30 p.m. CST.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark G. McElroy
Chairman, Louisiana Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force

Subject to Approval