The Case for Collaboration Between Watercraft Interception Programs in California and the West

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Bill Zook, Contractor
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
**Watercraft Interception Programs in the West**

**Western Regional Panel Completed an On-line Survey of all WIP Programs in 20 Western States**

*(January- February, 2009)*

- Identified 72 programs in 20 western states (28 CA)
- On-line survey to all - 46 questions to define program parameters and gauge support for uniform minimum protocols and standards
- 97% return rate
- More than 500 FTE’s involved in WIP programs
- Programs in place on 300+ waters
- 3 of 4 WIP programs used WIT training to establish program principles, protocols and standards – some commonality
- Range from spot-checks to comprehensive programs
- Less than 5% of these programs accepted the work of others
- Report available @ [www.aquaticnuisance.org](http://www.aquaticnuisance.org)
- Update now in progress
Those results underscored the need for more cooperation and collaboration between programs because.....

- Neither mussels nor boaters recognize political jurisdictions—not the way boaters think or operate or the way waterways are configured.

- Need to encourage and support the use of the most effective region-wide interception strategies and the best available science and technology.

- Maximize efficiency and use of limited resources by building trust in and between programs - reciprocity.

- Achieve consistency between programs in order to reinforce the prevention message with boaters, the public, law makers and policy makers.

- Makes it easier for the boating public to understand, anticipate and comply with “clean boating” principles.

- Q-ZAP recognizes as one of its highest priority action items “the development of consistent inspection and decontamination protocols.”
Uniform Minimum Protocols and Standards for Watercraft Interception Programs for Dreissenid Mussels in the Western United States

“UMPS”

Adopted in September 2009 by the:

Western Regional Panel
Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force and it’s Member Agencies

Bill Zook and Stephen Phillips
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission

100 + contributors from over 70 western agencies/organizations (including all of yours)

UMPS II Process Underway
UMPS Report

Recommendations for:

Program levels – Recognizes vast differences in individual agency/organization “capacity” e.g. authority, resources, political and public support, etc.

1. Self-inspection
2. Screening/failure
3. Comprehensive

➤ Protocols and Standards for:

➤ Screening interviews
➤ Inspection
➤ Decontamination
➤ Quarantine/Drying
➤ Exclusion
➤ Certification
Is collaboration a reasonable and achievable objective?

Start with these three givens:

1. It is possible to prevent the introduction of quagga/zebra mussels by trailered watercraft/equipment if enough resources are committed to doing so.

2. Prevention is most effectively and efficiently achieved by pooling resources and collaborating between jurisdictions (we’re all safer when everyone is safe).

3. There are legitimate and difficult institutional and logistical challenges to achieving collaboration that need to be clearly identified and addressed before we will succeed “Capacity.”
What are those challenges and how do we overcome them?

Logistical: (relatively easy)

- Uniform protocols and standards
- Adequately trained and motivated personnel
- On-going peer reviewed research on efficacy
- Similar regulatory authority (need model rules)
- Uniform banding and tracking system (available)
- Adequate access control and facilities (not available to everyone)
- Other?
Challenges - continued

**Institutional: (the hard part)**

- 25-30 different political entities have control in CA
- Authorization, priorities, motivation and political will differ
- Budgets, facilities and resources differ
- Reluctance to give-up any control
- Need for state-wide coordination /regional (CDFG oversight authority for prevention plans is + in CA)
- Trust issues going beyond mussel prevention in some cases “history”
- Other?
Questions and Discussion