**FISHERIES AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Chair: Jim Fredericks (ID)**

**Vice-Chair: Craig Bonds (TX)**

**Thursday, March 23, 2023 – 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM CT**

**Gateway B – Marriott Lower Level**

**88**

**th**

 **North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference**

**St. Louis, MO**

**Agenda**

2:00

 PM

Call to order/Agenda Review –

*Jim Fredericks, Chair, ID*

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Introductions

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Agenda Review

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Approval of 2022 North American FWRPC Meeting Minutes - Gary and Craig an d



* Approval of Minutes – Gary Whelan (motion) and Craig Bonds (2nd) - approved
* Subcommittee on water
	+ NHD+ update from USGS – 3D as it corporates topography
	+ IFC and AFS – IF and WL training program
		- Leadership, training, research and integration of methods
		- Draft report comments complete
		- Unclear on whether it will be brick and motor
		- Public Trust Doctrine update – Richard Ross Collins has updated and are available at IFC website
		- Rotenone issues with liquid production – Looking to share existing supplies
			* Working to get another manufacturer
			* USFWS Region 3 has some
		- ICWP – Letter supporting stream gauging and programs was submitted
			* Added more stream temperature monitoring
* Bird & Fish Related Conflict Working Group
	+ Will have a virtual meeting
	+ Agenda – DCCO survey status, DEIJ, Fish Chief Paper
	+ Dave Cobb is retiring and looking for a replacement on the bird side
		- Scott will likely by the co-chairs
	+ White paper is in progress
		- Several meeting to work on the recommendations
		- High level outline is ready
			* 2-3 pages per item
		- Communications
		- By annual meeting completion
	+ Fish Chief Survey to follow up on effectiveness of DCCO permit system
		- ID will assist WI
	+ Meeting in late June and July – Emphasis on new species and key interactions
	+ Time for a rebuild
	+ Need a co-chair on both and requested
		- Contact Randy C to be co-chair
* FW Coordination Act Working Group
	+ Looking to identify mutually
	+ Developing a repository of materials
	+ Trainings available with the USFWS and NCTC
	+ Educational talks
	+ Recommendation – Explore a Fish and Wildlife Workshop at the Annual AFWA Meeting
* NASA Earth Science Fisheries Research and Apps
	+ How to fill gaps with NASA data
	+ Mummichog in space anniversary – 50 years ago
	+ Earth Science Division - $ 2B budget -25-26 satellites along with U2 aircraft
		- Programs
			* Tech
			* Flight
			* Research and Analysis
			* Data and Compare
			* Apps
	+ Remote Sensing
		- True Color Imagery
		- Spectral imaging
	+ Engagement
		- Need temperature and water elevation data
		- Research and analysis
		- Competitive grants
		- Showed salmonid fish response modeling
		- How to get the information on the ground
		- 10-week pilot projects - Develop
			* Do this quickly
		- Encourage ECRs, NASA interns and students
		- Applied science geospatial needs
	+ Fine scale information is needed on elevation, water temperature and water surface elevation
		- Need aquatic vegetation
		- Flight centers are key locations
		- Big data handling
	+ Mechanism is unclear to get involved but Jessica is a good contact
* AFS
	+ MSGC
		- Grey literature project noted
		- Books – 200 – Electronic subscription
		- Bluebook – Best procedures
			* First done in 1975 based on 1974 meeting
			* Standard methods
			* CD then online
			* Widely used
				+ USFWS
				+ NOAA
				+ Tribal
				+ State
				+ Testing labs
				+ Researchers
			* Diverse steering committees
			* Original Grant
				+ Rewrite
				+ Institutional issues had to be resolved to allow a new Bluebook

Approval for the process

* + - * + New parts

Risk evaluation

New standard testing committees

YouTube Video available that provides all details

* + - * + Grant has $20K left
				+ Second grant to getting the writing job done
	+ Federal Fisheries Summit
		- Purpose – To improve mgt and conservation of aquatic species and habitats through better federal relationships and collaboration
		- Objectives
			* Roles and responsibilities of federal agencies
			* Build community between federal agencies
			* Develop a shared vision
		- 14 federal agencies participated and 5 tribal organizations, DOI, AFS, NAFWA and AFWA
		- http://Necoopunit.unl.edu/fedfishsummit
		- Report being developed
			* Next steps will be part of report
	+ Freshwater Fish of America Graphic – Status of Fishes Report
		- State of Fish Report
		- Example
			* Worlds Forgotten Fish
			* State of Trout
			* State of Birds Report
		- Many routes
		- Why
			* Our obligation is to share this compelling story
			* Requires collaboration across all levels
			* Data sharing and standards needs
			* Prioritize research needs
			* Knowledge gaps and support – Such as tribal lands
			* Prepare for next
		- Periodic report card
		- Feasibility Study
			* Steering committee
			* Evaluation options
			* Workplan
			* MSCG is an obvious option with many federal agencies included
	+ National Cooperators Coalition Update
		- 7 additional units this year
		- $32M ask for this year
	+ BIL/IRA Implementations
		- USFWS
			* Many federal partners working together for reviewing including a fish passage workforce
				+ Looking to release a report
				+ Single website with all funding opportunities
			* FY2022 - $38 million – 100 barriers with 3000 miles opened
			* FY2023
				+ Better coordination effort
				+ LOI in November

292 letters received - $950M

Asked about how much water would be reopened for future use

Highest priorities by region with $10 million per region

$50 million submitted to get to $38M with selection in April

* + - * + Invasive species efforts being increased, particularly with prevention

New rule writers

Highest issues with the Smithsonian

* + - * General Fish Passage Work
				+ $5 million – Fisheries Irrigation Act funding off of the $18 Million

Fish screens and diversions – West coast

* + - * SPFBC
				+ ACE Act required dual reporting with new charter which is ready to solicit memberships
				+ Had to rebuild – A range of members and organizations
				+ Review of RBFF
			* Gap analysis
				+ Similar to propagation
				+ Habitat gap analysis being done across all offices

Lower GL, Lower MS River, and Lahontan CUT

* + - * ADAP
				+ INAD fees will be back - $700
				+ Backfilled research director and other
				+ Aqui-S – Extended light sedition – 72 hour withdrawal
				+ Benzonac
		- NOAA
			* BIL
				+ $891M

$491M for habitat

Underserved communities

Capacity building into the future

Definition in progress – Social and economic data for social indicators on fishing communities

Justice 40 will be worked on with federal workgroup

Transformational

Resilience with habitat

Holistic perspective key

$400M for fish passage with 15% for tribal

Office of Habitat Conservation

Four competitions

$105M in fish passage recommendations – 36 projects

More are coming and will be included on webpage

* + - * Written report submitted to David
				+ National Recreational SW Policy

Should be done soon

Will drive each offices’ focus and work

Climate change

* + - * + Bycatch Engineering Reduction

Full proposals on April 3

* + - * + MS Act

Standards and guideline review – Three in review with advance note coming – 4,8,9

Allocations

Communities

Bycatch

Likely will take a few years to update to get to new guidelines

* + - * + Habitat

$14M GLRI in Great Lakes and AOCs

Multi-year projects

Resilience and rehab

* + - * + Marine Aquaculture Drugs

To support community

Framework is guiding work in area

Signed MOU on DAWG

* + - * + Science

NOAA Climate and Ecosystem Monitoring System

Assess risks

Implement new and better mitigation

* + - * + Fish Distribution Mapping Site – DISMAP

800 marine species from bottom trawl data

* + - * + DEJ Strategy

Will be shared in a month’s time

Plans will be incorporated into standing strategies

* + - * + Budget

$1.1B

$74M above previous

$13M below Presidents Budget

$18M for North Atlantic Right Whale

Offshore wind work

$6M wind work

$5.5 M for survey work for offshore wind

$6.8B requested - $423M increases

Executive Order - $80.2M for climate change work

Equity in workforce - $9M

Facilities

$55.7M for maintenance and repair

Green Book is coming

* + - USFS
			* Not available
		- USGS
			* BIL – No directly funds
				+ Active with taskforce
				+ Role to assist with long-term effectiveness of passage
			* Native FW Mussel Strategy – April
				+ Stressors
				+ Conservation
				+ Distribution
			* Commissions
				+ Working to assist with all of them on all coasts
			* Prairie Fishes and Streams
				+ State and universities involved - CRUs
				+ Five subgroups

Human Dems

Research Syn

Database

Policy and practice

Research priorities

* + - * Aquaculture
				+ Conservation side with fish health
				+ Mussel rehabilitation noted
			* NFHP – Daniel W noted
				+ Want to be more involved
			* Puget Sound – SOS bill makes them involved
				+ Science on ecohydrology and CHS-forage fish
			* Looking to expand arts into the science education
			* State of the Nations Fish
* Legislative Update
	+ RAWA
		- Did not get through this year
		- Senate bill will go to floor next week and will bypass committee with little changes
			* New pay-for will get locked in
		- House is moving at a difference pace and are okay with Senate pace
	+ USFWS, USFS, and USGS briefings coming
		- Much question and answer
		- Interior house testimony in place with usual request
			* Wild Horse and Burro
			* State and Tribal Wildlife Grants - $100M
				+ Mini-fly-in coming in April
			* National Cooperators - $34M
			* ICW – Stream gages, cooperator funding
		- April 5 to Senate DOI – 4-page limit
	+ America the Beautiful Challenge Grants using LOI due April 20 with invites in June for full
	+ BIL – American sourcing – Approved waivers for DOI assistance agreements up to $250K
		- Up to 5% of construction costs
		- Specific project waivers – Public interest – much detail, Not availability, and Unreasonable cost waiver that increase costs by over 25%
	+ National Seafood Strategies comments are out and now extended to March 31.
		- Consultation and enforcement assistance
		- Young Commercial fishers
		- Increased stock assessment
		- Supply chains
	+ WRDA
		- Priorities
			* Recreational use on USACOE projects
			* Brandon Road
			* PPAs
		- BOEM
			* Offshore wind energy comments
			* March 31 deadline at this time and have requested 45 days
				+ Will try to provide high level comments if not given
		- WOTUS
			* Rule released for all but ID and TX
			* 26 red states AGs have filed suit
			* House passed resolution with Senate following suit that will be vetoed
		- Permitting Reform
			* House
				+ Tap American Resources Act – Moved and going nowhere
				+ Serious consideration for House
				+ Fix for Cottonwood – Restart negotiations with new info under ESA
* NFHP
	+ PPT given
	+ Invasive species inclusion question in assessment
* MICRA
	+ 1990 formed with 26 states
	+ Mission noted
	+ Wanted to become a fishery commission
	+ Cooperative interagency IJ fishery mgt a key purpose
		- Research needs and data sharing
		- Long term stable funding
	+ 2021 – Joint Strategy Plan developed
		- 26 Directors signed MOU and open to all 31 states
		- Document
			* Common goal statement
			* Key problem areas
			* Strategies
			* Process
	+ Vision – MICRA similar structure
		- Implement JSP with voluntary
		- Subbasin mgt
	+ Purposes
		- Coop fish mgt
		- AIS control will be a key area
		- Research to support mgt
	+ Draft legislation
		- Working with Congress
		- Authorize formation of Commission hosted by DOI
			* Authorize 10-year appropriations
			* $1 M then $30M for Year 2-3 and $50M Year 7-10
			* Competitive grants for research and projects to support mgt and non-competitive grants for capacity
* PFOS/PFAS - ASA
	+ Recent publication noted
		- Angler risk from consumption
		- Exposure is uncertain
	+ 117th Congress regulations for drinking water, and polluter payment for damages
	+ ME schedule for 2030 elimination law
		- 2023 report PFAS in products and inability to do fully report
		- Trying to develop a path forward
	+ Looking at alternatives
	+ Green and wildlife groups want more strict regulations
	+ ASA is developing a messaging strategy
		- Looking to develop alternatives to allow phase out
	+ Great Lakes Consortium is developing consistent messaging
		- Caution is warranted on how to proceed
* Committee DEI
	+ Virtual meeting to go through
	+ DEI Committee think sheet was done without how to proceed
		- Thoughtful suggestions are likely the outcome