

**Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District
Ruth Lake Community Services District**

**Joint Agency Aquatic Invasive Species Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting: August 6, 2008, HBMWD office in Eureka

Attendees: See attached list

Topics Discussed:

1) **Minutes**

The minutes of the July 16, 2008 committee meeting were approved (M/S: Lorin Fleming/Ric Jeans; unanimous)

2) **Committee Charter**

The updated Committee Charter was reviewed and approved (M/S: Barbara Hecathorn/Karen Kentfield; unanimous)

3) **Areas of Agreement**

Aldaron Laird summarized what he thought were areas of agreement from the first committee meeting. He noted:

- Keeping Ruth Lake mussel free
- The mussels are not known to be there now
- We have some time
- The boats that are local only are not the problem
- Whatever plan is adopted, it will cost money and we have to figure out how to fund it

4) **Brief Update at Statewide Level**

Senator Feinstein's letter to Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne was passed out, and the key provisions summarized.

Aldaron Laird introduced Assembly Bill 2065. If passed, it will require that threat assessments be completed, and that monitoring and control plans be developed and implemented to prevent the introduction of the non-native mussels. In essence, what HBMW and Ruth Lake CSD are undertaking now on a voluntary basis would become legally required.

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5) **Community Education Plan**

Carol Rische summarized the communication activities that had occurred to date and passed out the "communication log" that is being maintained by HBMWD.

Dave Saunderson announced that a number of leaseholders will be volunteering over Labor Day weekend to conduct a survey of where boats are coming from and to pass out educational material. A number of people commended Dave and Dennis Berners for their support and thanked them for the efforts on Labor Day.

Karen Kentfield stated that K-12 educational programs have been developed and delivered by Americorps which have focused on resource issues (e.g., fisheries). She suggested that perhaps education regarding aquatic invasive species could be incorporated into the program to begin to education at an earlier age.

6) **Prevention Plan**

Ric Jeans inquired how Minnesota has been relatively successful at keeping these mussels out given the number of lakes they have. Breck McAlexender responded that they have implemented a fairly successful control strategy (with some link to or support from the University of Minnesota). He said that education was a key component as well as mandatory inspections. He added that a surcharge has been added to the boater registration fee state-wide which funds full-time inspectors. He also added that people in Minnesota seem to be more engaged and educated about the issue.

Tom Felt distributed a proposed "Plan of Action (Quagga and Zebra Mussel) from July 2008 to December 2008". This plan outlined a number of activities Ruth Lake CSD proposed to take in the short-term. He also distributed a map showing the location of the five boat launch sites around the lake. The plan proposed several steps:

- identify boats from the local communities (e.g. southern Trinity, McKinleyville, Arcata, Eureka) that only boat in Ruth Lake and to issue those boats a sticker which would be displayed on the boat
- take immediate steps to close the launching sites at Hobart Creek and Boy Scout Cove

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- post signs at Old Ruth that directs all boats other than local and leaseholders (with stickers) to launch the Marina or Ruth Rec
- generate a plan by December 31 that will ensure all boats are in compliance with the inspection/local sticker guidelines
- work with Supervisor Reiss on development of an ordinance similar to Lake County's

Lorin Fleming reported that Supervisor Reiss indicated that the County was not in a position to develop a county-wide ordinance at this time.

Aldaron Laird responded that HBMWD's representatives to this committee met and reviewed Ruth Lake CSD's draft plan and passed on committee-level comments to Tom Felt in a memo. Carol Rische distributed a paper that is intended to facilitate discussion at the committee level, and ultimately the Board level (titled "Discussion Document Regarding Proposed Prevention Plan for Aquatic Invasive Species (Quagga and Zebra Mussels) at Ruth Lake"). She summarized the key points in the discussion document:

- what we know about these invasive species and this issue
- what we do not know, emphasizing there are many unknowns
- what we have done so far to address this emerging issue
- What's important to all concerned
- Risk tolerance from a water supply perspective, recreational perspective, economic perspective and environmental perspective. She noted that are risks if we do nothing and yet there are still risks if we do "something"
- Proposed elements for a Prevention Plan – she commended the Ruth Lake CSD for their initiative and what they proposed in their draft plan. She added the proposed elements build on what Ruth Lake CSD proposed incorporate HBMWD's committee-level comments on that plan.

The committee discussed several of the proposed elements.

Regarding boat launches: HBMWD expressed support for blocking access at Hobart Creek and Boy Scout Cove, but also requested that access be blocked at Old Ruth since it was unmanned. Ruth Lake CSD expressed concern regarding this given that it is the primary access points for locals to launch their boats. Brian Newell suggested a locked gate be installed that only locals would have the key for. Several committee members expressed support for this idea.

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Regarding watercraft: The plan proposes to segment watercraft into five distinct categories and develop policies and procedures appropriate to each category. One category acknowledged boats that are resident to Ruth Lake and never leave the area which should be allowed to launch quickly and easily once registered. For all other categories of boats (which are coming in from outside the Ruth Lake area), the proposed program would involve registration, banding, inspection and quarantine).

Other elements that need to be addressed were briefly acknowledged – bass tournaments, DFG's trout stocking program and USFS's fire fighting protocols.

The committee generally endorsed the plan elements and agreed it was a good starting place.

7) Monitoring Program

Breck McAlexander reported that he and Brian Newell placed three monitoring devices in Ruth Lake. They have been placed at various locations and depths where the mussels, if introduced, might like to colonize. He indicated they should be checked once per month and that otherwise they should not be disturbed.

Carol Rische inquired as to whether the State would be conducting the ongoing monitoring or whether they need help. Breck responded that the State should be doing it, but that some help may be beneficial. Carol Rische replied that local resources could probably help (whether they be HBMWD's or Ruth Lake CSDs), but that training and specific protocols would have to be provided.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 3rd at 10:00 a.m. at Ruth Lake Community Hall

(Note – it was discussed and decided to rotate the meeting location between Ruth Lake area and Eureka/Fortuna area so as to share travel responsibility)