

## MEETING MINUTES

**South Carolina Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force  
9:00 A.M., November 30, 2006  
Magnolia Room  
Riverbanks Zoo and Botanical Garden  
500 Wildlife Parkway, Columbia, SC**

<b><u>No.</u></b>	<b><u>In Attendance:</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>	<b><u>E-mail</u></b>
1.	Tom Abrahamsen	USGS South Carolina Water Science Center	tabraham@usgs.gov
2.	Wayne Boykin	National Park Service	wayne_Boykin@nps.gov
3.	Stephen Compton	Department of Plant Industry	scompto@CLEMSON.EDU
4.	Sudie Dares	SC Dept. of Agriculture -NRCS	sudie.dares@sc.usda.gov
5.	Steve de Kozlowski	SC Department of Natural Resources	dekozlowkis@dnr.sc.gov
6.	Mary G. Douglass	US Department of Agriculture, APHIS	Mary.g.douglass@aphis.usda.gov
7.	Jeannie Eidson	DHEC	eidsonjp@dhec.sc.gov
8.	Ed EuDaly	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	ed_eudaly@fws.gov
9.	Larry Feller	SC Landscape Association	larry.feller@syngenta.com
10.	Ken Glenn	US Dept. of Agriculture - APHIS- PPQ	William.k.glenn@aphis.usda.gov
11.	Mike Hook	SC Department of Natural Resources	HookP@dnr.sc.gov
12.	David Knott	Marine Resources Research Institute- Southeastern Regional Taxonomic Center	KnottD@dnr.sc.gov
13.	Billy Lempesis	SC State Ports Authority	BLempesis@SCSPA.com
14.	Ken Manuel	Duke Energy- Lake Services Environmental Ctr.	klmanuel@duke-energy.com
15.	Keith Nell	Port of Charleston	knell@scspa.com
16.	Chris Page	SC Department of Natural Resources	PageC@dnr.sc.gov
17.	Lynn Quattro	SC Department of Natural Resources	QuattroL@dnr.sc.gov
18.	Jennifer Rawlings	Riverbanks Zoo and Garden	jrawlings@riverbanks.org
19.	Denise Sanger	SC Sea Grant Consortium	denise.sanger@scseagrant.org
20.	Alan Shirey	US Army Corps of Engineers	Alan.D.Shirey@sac.usace.army.mil
21.	Kelly Jo Swygert	SC Department of Transportation	swygertkj@scdot.org
22.	Chris Thomason	SC Dept. of Natural Resources	ThomasonC@dnr.sc.gov
23.	Dick Yetter	USDA	dick.yetter@sc.usda.gov

## 1. Call To Order

Steve de Kozlowski, Chief, Environmental Conservation Section, SCDNR welcomed the task force and thanked Jennifer Rawlings for hosting the day's meeting.

Minutes of the September 28 meeting were reviewed; some corrections to email addresses were made and they were approved.

Lynn Quattro, SC Dept of Natural Resources, gave a brief presentation on the SCDNR's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. This plan is an important guide for management efforts and funding in the agency. It identifies invasive species issues and general management actions. The AIS Management Plan should be coordinated with the CWC Strategy to be most effective.

## 2. How Riverbanks Zoo and the South Carolina Aquarium keep the critters from getting out.

Riverbanks Zoo and Botanical Garden staff: Jennifer Rawlings, Senior Aquarist; Chris Gentile, Director of Education and Ed Diebold, Director of Animal Collections gave presentations.

Jennifer Rawlings began with a PowerPoint presentation entitled: *"What are Zoos and Aquariums Doing to Prevent Aquatic Invasive Species Introduction?"*

The Riverbanks Zoo, as a member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), is charged with making every effort to ensure that sound management practices are used in day-to-day operations. The practices involve self-regulation, control and disinfection of wastewater, various disinfection protocols new or existing fauna or flora, quarantine of species, and intentional releases for plants or animals back into their native territory. All of these practices involve stewardship of not only the collections but of the states natural wildlife and flora.

According to AZA Policy on Non-Native Invasive Species; members should make every effort to ensure sound management practices, assess potential risks, and partner with federal, state, and local agencies. Members also participate in activities linked to ANS introductions with self-regulation being the key.

Riverbanks Zoo regulates wastewater from life support systems or displays. They use disinfection protocols in which all tools are disinfected between tank use and between uses here and in the field. They employ quarantine measures and all intentional releases are done only with native, disease free fish.

Chris Gentile, Director of Education at Riverbanks gave a brief presentation on the educational programs offered at the zoo. Also included in this was a Teacher/educator packet, which was offered to various school and education groups, outlining invasive species.

Ed Diebold stated in a presentation entitled “AZA Programs” that over 210 accredited zoos and aquariums, 5 in South Carolina, and over 8000 individual members are members of AZA. Accreditation means *official recognition and approval of a zoo or aquarium by a group of experts*, called the AZA Accreditation Commission, that carefully examines each zoo or aquarium that applies for AZA membership. AZA accreditation is a rigorous process that each institution must undergo every five years. Only those zoos and aquariums that meet our high standards can become members of AZA. Species-level animal management programs included in AZA certification are population management plans, survival plans, and controlled managed breeding programs to eliminate extinction.

David Watkins with the South Carolina Aquarium gave a presentation on the aquarium’s efforts to prevent the release of non-native species. They have very similar practices as the zoo and are an AZA certified facility. He believes that the biggest problem with releases of exotic animals and plants is with private citizens. They get calls weekly regarding donations of exotic animals to the aquarium from homeowners who don’t want their pets anymore and want to get rid of them. People need a place to release exotic species that have outgrown their cages and aquariums. The group discussed Florida’s exotic pet moratorium effort and the aquarium/pet trade’s Habitatitude program.

**3. Review, discuss, and finalize details of first draft of Introduction, Problem Description, and Agency authorities and programs (September homework assignment)**

A large number of comments were received by e-mail even though the draft was just sent out earlier in the week. The task force proceeded to go through the draft plan chapter by chapter and make changes. A comment was made concerning why the National Park Service wasn’t included. A write-up will be provided soon. Discussion involved rewriting the definition of an “aquatic invasive species” on page 8 and 9. It was decided that the proper wording should be: “Many non-indigenous species can coexist with native species and may be beneficial. These species typically do not reproduce rapidly or develop large populations. For the purposes of this plan the term “aquatic invasive species” refers to non-indigenous species that live most or all of their lives in freshwater or marine/estuarine environments and have the potential to adversely affect ecological health or economic activity.”

Considerable discussion focused on the Species Introductions section and the completeness of the USGS database. Some wanted to add species that were known and not on the list and others wanted to use the existing list to start but add known species later. We concluded that we needed to clarify the limitations of the USGS database and make sure the figures are consistent. (Note: all final figures will be of consistent style and color scheme.)

An AVM write-up should be added to hydrilla in the Freshwater Plants section and a Fishes title should be added under Freshwater Animals. More write-ups should be

included on Swamp eel, Northern Snakehead and Asian Carp. Questions also arose concerning whether the channeled apple snail should be included in plan. It will be.

Lynn Quattro volunteered to provide copy for the section on crustaceans, reptiles and amphibians. David Knott provided the entire marine animals section.

Beach vitex would be removed since it is not technically an aquatic species.

The word “understanding the knowledge of” was added to the first sentence of the Pathways of Introductions Section. There was general confusion about the graphs for pathways. It was recommended that we have a separate graph for plants and one for animal introductions.

A discussion on unregulated stocking is needed in the plan. Wording on hull fouling is needed in the Shipping section. Rewrite the bait release section based on Thomason input.

Boater registration data should be added to the Hitchhikers section and an "Others" section should be developed to include some of the various other pathways into the section. Also important to the issue of pathways is the role that natural processes play in this arena.

SCDHEC should be added to the write-ups for state entities and all lists of flora and fauna should be clearly identified as to what they are and what that means.

We need to add a summary table to the legislation section that links state and federal agencies to appropriate pathway responsibilities.

#### 4. Other business

##### a. Homework assignments

Turn in any additional information within two weeks.

Review and be ready to discuss management objectives.

##### b. Next meeting

- Location – Charleston

- Specific – DNR office or Sea Grant

- Speaker – Marilyn O’Leary, SARP – ANS Coordinator to facilitate management goals and objectives discussion.

#### 5. Adjourn for Lunch

Adjourned for lunch at 12:30

#### 6. Behind the Scenes Tour of Zoo and Gardens

Attendees joined in a behind the scene tour of portions of Riverbanks Zoo.