

RAMBLINGS NASAC NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2010

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I hope this newsletter finds you doing well. The time since the last one has flown. It seems to be the same with everyone. Over the last few years and especially with recent budget cuts, everyone is taking on additional responsibilities. I see that trend here to stay along with increased regulation (ANS, disease, water quality, etc.) and public debate (food safety, animal welfare, sustainability, etc.) by those outside our industry. There is more on some of these items later in the newsletter. Here are some musings on a couple recent news items and information on upcoming NASAC meetings.

VHS has been discovered in Lake Superior. That is bad news but probably isn't a surprise to many people knowing the virus likes cool water. What caught my eye in a recent article though was the last sentence that said, "the results remain preliminary until confirmed because scientists used a new screening tool to test the fish." It turns out that PCR was involved in the testing. We had quite a discussion at our state association meeting a few weeks ago about the pros and cons of PCR. It has application to all kinds of testing, not just VHS, and I expect will be the focus of many future discussions.

Last year, USDA provided a grant to Cornell University to conduct research that would provide insight on stakeholders in the Great Lakes Region. The research was intended to identify the range of knowledge, awareness and concern about VHS among key stakeholder groups. The final report, "Human Responses to Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia Virus in the Great Lakes", was released in September and is online at <http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/hdru/PUBS/HDRURReport09-10.pdf>. It is worth browsing since it gives a good summary of what people think and how VHS has changed their behavior. One of the comments posted on the VHS article I read this morning was, "VHS? I still have one hooked up to my TV!" Whether it was meant to be funny or not, there is still plenty to learn and share with others about the disease.

Negative press continues to be an issue for the aquaculture industry. Aquaculture can combat the attacks with good science but it is an uphill battle once the misperception is established in the public mind. I appreciate NAA working to help us be more proactive in communicating our message. A very recent example of combating negative press involves a story in which CNN gathered information from an environmental NGO and advised people to limit their consumption of salmon, especially farm raised. <http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/expert.q.a/01/08/salmon.fresh.farmed.jampolis/index.html?iref=24hours> The British Columbia Salmon Farmers Association did a great job addressing errors in the article. Gary Fornshell also took issue with the article and then highlighted the "Seafood at its best" program he helped develop. <http://www.seafoodsource.com/newsarticledetail.aspx?id=4294987895> This curriculum is a great proactive step. A second recent article involved the ongoing saga of wild versus farm raised fish. According to the Anchorage Daily News, Target has announced they will no longer sell farm raised salmon and will only carry wild. <http://www.adn.com/money/industries/fishing/story/1110716.html> It is ironic that several articles in the same paper share about the salmon runs being way down and the industry operating under a disaster declaration. How can the public miss the disconnect? How are they, as consumers, doing the environmentally sound thing? Secondly, where will their salmon come from if the commercial season is closed? I think we have a story at least that good to share and appreciate NAA and others like Gary helping us tell it.

LYNNE CANTER, Editor
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Joe Myers will be hosting a NASAC meeting at Aquaculture America March 2. I hope many of you will be able to make it. We have reserved the Dover Room for 6:00-8:00 pm that evening. Please let me know if you will be going and I'll pass a list on to Joe so he can plan and communicate accordingly. There is also an outside chance I may be able to see some of you. I will be in town for another meeting February 27 - March 2 but will be flying out just prior to the NASAC meeting. I wish I could stay for Aquaculture America but that isn't possible.

We will be joining the US Trout Farmers Association for the NASAC annual meeting. We will be in Branson, Missouri Thursday – Saturday, September 9-11, 2010. I'm definitely planning to be at that meeting and hope you can make it. We'll have more details to share after Aquaculture America.

Thanks to all of you for your continued support of NASAC as you do the many things your multiple jobs require of you. Hope to see you at Aquaculture America.

Bart

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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From the mountains of WNC ...

Water is a necessary component of all life and it is essential for aquaculture. The folks in the western US safeguard their water and water rights while other parts of the country have never had to defend their entitlement to water from their property. We just took it for granted. It seems those days might be coming to an end or at least dramatically different.

The drought in the southeast in 2007 and 2008 brought to light how much water is needed to support municipalities like Atlanta, Charlotte, or Raleigh. People began to wonder if there was going to be enough water to supply the growing populations of these cities and others as well. Thus began the process of studying watersheds and water usage by people, industries, agriculture, and municipalities. Many of these studies project the demand for water into 2030.

In October of last year I received a call about a Riverkeeper complaining that a fee fishing operation water withdrawal was impacting the river and negatively effecting the fish populations and fish passage. The call came from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and thus began over a two month discussion about water, water impoundment, water rights, water usage, water quality, and existing water regulations regarding aquaculture. The culmination of the many emails and phone conversations was a meeting held in early December. The outcome of the meeting did not render a remedy for the fee fishing operator and thus it will probably be an ongoing issue at low water flow times. However, the meeting did bring to light that having the rights to use water will be a hot topic of conversation for years to come.

I began the year feeling that a lot of energy had been expended dealing with water diversion or usage to only learn one thing – use of water by agriculture is not an inherent right, even if your state has riparian laws and even though Ag uses a very low percentage of the water. Because water is a public resource *all* water users are held accountable.

The resource people and the aquaculturists must forge this path of *rights* to use water. But it will have to be in conjunction with the regulatory and environmental community in order to have favorable outcome for aquaculture. Will this be any easy task? Probably not. But it is necessary.

AQUACULTURE NEWS

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USFWS Regulations Concerning Live Animal Importing and Exporting

Aquaculture Coordinators may occasionally be asked what are the federal regulations concerning the importation or exportation of live fish as a live species. This discussion does not cover federal animal health regulations.

The lead federal agency is the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). They derive their authority to regulate international live animal trade through the Endangered Species Act, Lacey Act, and the Convention in Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

A critical distinction is whether US farmers are shipping US farm-raised or wild-caught fish. If there are any US or foreign wild-caught fish in their shipment, then they will have to acquire a wildlife import/export license. The license is good for a year and costs \$100. Paperwork that must accompany the shipment is the USFWS Declaration Form 3177.

For information from the USFWS directly, visit: http://www.fws.gov/le/ImpExp/Info_Importers_Exporters.htm. Click on the first item in the list: *How to import and export your commercial wildlife shipment*. This will lead to a page with more information. The first sentence on this page has hot linked key words that will lead farmers to the annual import/export license and USFWS Declaration Form 3177. Critical to the form is the reporting of the genus and species for each fish shipped. Farmers must have your taxonomy correct for this form. As noted on the form, it is a federal violation to provide incorrect information. Aquaculture Coordinators should be prepared to direct farmers to people or programs that can assist them with taxonomic identification.

As an additional wrinkle, live animals must be shipped through designated ports (see this list: http://www.fws.gov/le/ImpExp/Designated_Ports.htm). Farmers can use nondesignated ports but to do so they will have to pay higher fees. All of this is explained in the USFWS materials but I point it out so there will be, maybe, one less surprise for them and you.

One last tip: Find out what the working hours are for the USFWS port inspection office. If a shipment arrives for an inspection within 30 minutes of the end of the day or after business hours expect to pay overtime. Plan shipments accordingly and consult the fee schedule link within the USFWS webpages.

If farmers are shipping domestically raised fish, they do not have to declare those exports or acquire a license. However, if any of the species shipped are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) or under the international treaty, CITES, then they will have to acquire the import/export license and submit Form 3177. Whether a species is farm-raised or not will not matter. If the species is listed under ESA or CITES, the shipper must have the license and file the declaration form.

If farmers are uncertain about any of the information that you have provided or that they have read at the USFWS website, then encourage them to call the designated port office that they intend to use and ask questions.

EPA Establishing Florida Numeric Nutrient Criteria

On November 16, 2009 a federal court approved a consent decree between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and several environmental advocacy organizations to enforce the Clean Water Act. The consent decree requires the identification of numeric nutrient criteria (nitrogen and phosphorus) for Florida waters. The State of Florida has been using a narrative nutrient standard, "...in no case shall nutrient concentrations of body of water be altered so as to cause an imbalance in natural populations of flora or fauna." A numeric nutrient criteria is a specific concentration of total nitrogen or total phosphorus in a measured volume of water.

The consent decree requires EPA to propose numeric nutrient criteria for lakes and flowing rivers by January 14, 2010 with a final rule completed by October 15, 2010. EPA published a proposed nutrient criteria rule for lakes and flowing waters on Jan. 26th.

Proposed numeric nutrient criteria for coastal waters will be announced January 14, 2011 with a final rule to be published by October 15, 2011. The consent decree provides that the State of Florida and EPA may agree to standards prior to the listed dates.

News reports indicate this may be the first instance where EPA has stepped in to impose numeric nutrient criteria on a state; however, it may not be the last. A similar law suit is being considered in Wisconsin. A recent Government Accountability Office report was critical of how the Clean Water Act has been implemented nationwide. The GAO report can be found here: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10165t.pdf>. According to EPA, 25 states have no standards whatsoever for nutrients. Of the remaining states, only seven have standards covering one or more nutrient for at least one entire water body category.

For information about the development of numeric nutrient criteria for Florida, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wqssp/nutrients/index.htm> or <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/standards/rules/florida/>. The proposed EPA rule that includes numeric nutrient criteria for lakes and flowing waters can be found here: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1220.pdf>.

Washington State Prosecutes Zebra Mussel Transport

Recently a commercial trucker moving a recreational boat from Michigan to Washington State was stopped and inspected for zebra mussels. Mussels were found on the boat, but the trucker left before a decontamination team could arrive and treat the boat. An arrest warrant has been issued and the State of Washington is seeking federal agency assistance to prosecute under the Lacey Act for the transport of a species included on the Injurious Species List across state lines. The genus *Dreissena*, zebra and quagga mussels, are listed as Injurious Species.

This may be the first prosecution under the Lacey Act for transporting dreissenid mussels and may trigger interest in this law enforcement tool by other states. Aquaculture Coordinators may wish to alert aquaculturists that ship live species across state or national lines to carefully examine their shipments for these very small mussels. For information about the Lacey Act and the Injurious Species List, visit: <http://www.fws.gov/contaminants/ANS/ANSInjurious.cfm>. For suggestions on how to inspect and removed hitchhikers from live shipments, visit: <http://srac.tamu.edu/tmppdfs/2020179-SRAC3902.pdf?CFID=2020179&CFTOKEN=2a5910cbd206e7c9-B2DF2B6A-7E93-35CB-8C4ABB7BE142D42E&jsessionid=903046564739439beb995a2e1a6f60186c48>.

EPA Seeking Public Comment on a Draft Lake Superior AIS Complete Prevention Plan

The Lake Superior Binational Program (http://binational.net/home_e.html) has developed a draft Aquatic Invasive Species Complete Prevention Plan (Plan) for the lake. The Plan identifies the pathways aquatic invasive species use to enter and become established in the lake. Further, the Plan recommends prevention actions that need to be newly implemented, in addition to existing efforts, in order to close existing pathways on both sides of the border and prevent new aquatic invasive species from entering the Lake Superior ecosystem. A series of conference calls will be scheduled for February 2010. On these calls, the plan will be presented via a webcast, and comments will be welcome. The comment period closes February 26, 2010. Visit http://epa.gov/glnpo/lakesuperior/ais_draft.html for additional information, to download the plan, and to submit comments.

Bivale aquaculture standards

WWF has opened their draft standards for a second public comment period that ends April 1. <http://wwf.worldwildlife.org/site/PageServer?pagename=BivalveDraftStandardsForm>

Revised New Zealand Mudsnail Guide

The Oregon Sea Grant Program has revised their New Zealand Mudsnail Guide. Some of the revisions include a new section on some look-alikes and a table outlining some disinfection treatments.

To order copies, call 541-737-4849 or e-mail Oregon Sea Grant, sea.grant.communications@oregonstate.edu.

A pdf is available here: <http://seagrant.oregonstate.edu/sgpubs/onlinepubs/g10001.pdf> (Note the pages in the PDF file will seem out of sequence because the design is in a booklet form with a fold out on the back page).

Lacey Act Presentation

Elizabeth Springsteen, staff attorney with the National Agriculture Law Center, recently gave a presentation that describes the Lacey Act. She provided a variety of interstate commerce situations from an aquacultural perspective to illustrate how the Act affects those activities. The presentation can be seen here: http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/articles/springsteen_aquaculture-lacey-ppt.pdf.

Also the Center maintains a "reading room" on a wide variety of topics relevant to aquaculture. Visit it here: <http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/readingrooms/aquaculture/>.

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The Virginia Aquaculture Conference was held on November 13 and 14 in Williamsburg with 164 registered attendees, including speakers, vendors/exhibitors and invited guests. The first afternoon session was on Friday, November 13 and focused entirely on marketing. The topics included: "What a Grocery Chain is Looking For" and "What a Restaurant is Looking For" with a Seafood Buyer from a major local chain and Owner/Chef from a major local seafood restaurant giving the keynote presentations. That was followed-up by a panel of speakers covering topics "From Water to Table," "Selling at a Farmers Market," "Direct Marketing and Community Supported Seafood Marketing," "Value-added Marketing and the Big Picture," and "Marketing Resources." Saturday morning was another Plenary Session with appropriate and general topics. Saturday afternoon consisted of two breakout sessions, one on freshwater aquaculture and one on marine/shellfish aquaculture. Friday evening was an all Virginia aquaculture product gala.

We started the Virginia Aquaculture Conference back-up in 2007 and hold it on the odd years. The response is strong, and we made improvements on the 2009 edition, over the 2007 edition. Aquaculture appears strong and growing in Virginia.

On a state-of-the-State note, budgets are in the pits. We are having continuing cuts and layoffs, and it does not look good for travel and other things.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The 2010 NASAC Annual Meeting will be joining the US Trout Farmers Association meeting. The meeting will be in Branson, Missouri, Thursday – Saturday, September 9-11, 2010.
Start making your plans now to attend.

NEXT ISSUE OF THE RAMBLINGS
(SEND ARTICLES BY MAY 31st)

I hope we can get back on track and the next issue of the Ramblings will go out in April. With people's busy workloads, and computer glitches, articles were a little later coming in and then mother nature decided to bless us with LOTS of snow! I was not able to start on the newsletter since George and I have been busy shoveling!!! The BLIZZARD of 2010 has hampered things a bit. I am concerned that with all the snow we have and the storm coming, we may lose power so I am trying to get it done now. DC is in the Bull's Eye AGAIN and we are suppose to get another 8" – 24" (on top of the 20 some inches we have already)!!!! I, for one am DONE with the snow. There is no where to put the snow when we shovel out after this snow!

!!!! IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR NASAC DUES !!!!

Don't forget to pay your NASAC dues for the upcoming fiscal year. Membership in NASAC is important. The stronger our association is the louder our voice will be heard when testifying or commenting on aquaculture issues. Dues are good from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. A form for membership is included with this newsletter. If you have questions concerning dues contact Joseph Myers, New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Fish and Seafood Development, PO Box 330, Trenton, NJ 08625, (609) 984-2502, (609) 633-7229 FAX, email joseph.myers@ag.state.nj.us.

**DIRECTORY OF STATE AQUACULTURE
COORDINATORS**

As changes occur (**retirement, resignation, etc**) please send the new information to Lynne Canter, nasac@nasac.net

It is very important to keep your state's information current. Without the correct email or address your State will not receive the quarterly newsletter or important information disseminated concerning aquaculture issues. You can get an up to date copy of the Directory of State Aquaculture Coordinators from the NASAC website: www.nasac.net

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AND BOARD MEMBERS**

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STATE AQUACULTURE COORDINATORS
(NASAC)

www.nasac.net

INVOICE/MEMBERSHIP FORM
DUES 2009/2010

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Type of Membership (check one)		Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Member	\$100	_____
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NASAC's Federal Employer Identification Number: 54-1589538

Please remit annual membership dues for **fiscal year July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010**. Please remit payment by the end of the first quarter, September 30, 2009. MAKE CHECKS payable to NASAC and remit to:

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