

## REPORT OF THE USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

Co-Chairs: Kevin Snekvik, WA  
Lester Khoo, MS

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The Committee met on October 20, 2012 at the Greensboro Sheraton Hotel, Greensboro, North Carolina from 12:30 4:45 p.m. There were nine members and 15 guests present. There were no resolutions to review from the previous meeting. Co-chair Kevin Snekvik announced that Andy Goodwin had stepped down as co-chair, taking a new appointment with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and that Lester Khoo will be replacing Andy as co-chair. There was no time-specific paper this year and the meeting was continued with items as listed on the updated agenda to the Committee.

### Presentations

#### **Update on USDA-APHIS Aquaculture Program, the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP) and Introduction of a USDA-APHIS Voluntary Aquaculture Health Certification Program**

Janet Whaley  
USDA-APHIS

Dr. Whaley provided the background and overview of the Aquaculture Program and the NAAHP. She then led a discussion on the need for a voluntary aquaculture health certification program. Concerns brought forth included the cost to producers for the certification testing and what the benefits this would provide for the producers. This certification program would be for specific pathogens as opposed to facility certification which would be for all pathogens. Cost/benefit analysis for the industry would need to be conducted to ascertain if this program would be beneficial especially since producers are involved in either international exports or interstate commerce.

#### **Implementation of a Surveillance Plan for Infectious Salmon Anemia Virus (ISAV) in the Pacific Northwest**

Janet Whaley  
USDA-APHIS

Dr. Whaley provided background and an update of the ISAV surveillance plan. The enhanced surveillance builds upon the existing State, Tribal, Federal and industry health infrastructures and activities and is in Alaska and Washington due to proximity to British Columbia, Canada. It is focused on detection of ISAV including HPR0. This surveillance involves geographically distributed biannual sampling (Summer/Fall and Spring) of Pacific salmonids native to the Pacific Northwest for two years. The coordinated screening and testing utilizes mainly molecular and to a lesser extent virus isolation. Proficiency testing lead by NVSL is currently underway. In conjunction with this plan, there are parallel research efforts including molecular analysis of samples for other orthomyxovirus.

#### **Current Status of the Infectious Salmon Anemia Virus (ISAV) Real Time-PCR Proficiency Exam**

Janet Warg  
National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL), USDA-APHIS

Warg provided information on the possible molecular assays for screening for ISAV and the eventual assays that were chosen. The selected assays have not been validated by the OIE reference laboratories and thus validation is being done by NVSL in conjunction with other diagnostic laboratories involved with ISAV testing in the United States. A proficiency exam (PE) is currently underway and should be completed within six months. The PE will evaluate amplification efficiency, limit of detection, and reproducibility within and between the involved laboratories. The PE utilizes both European and North American genotypes of ISAV. An overview of the testing algorithm that will be implemented in the Pacific Northwest was presented.

#### **Integration of the Aquatic Health Testing Laboratories into the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN)**

In lieu of a presentation, there was a discussion facilitated by Barbara Martin, Coordinator for the NAHLN. She led this off with an update on the NAHLN Concept Paper that describes four laboratory types including specialty laboratories. The concept paper was open for comment and changes have been incorporated. Martin is currently working with regulatory

staff and it is anticipated that it will be published in the federal register after election where there will be a call for comments followed by a propose rule and final rule. To facilitate the process, an electronic copy of the concept paper will be provided to the committee by Kevin Snekvik. Martin shared what she could provide to help to move the process forward including the NAHLN check list as well as the requirements to become a NAHLN accredited laboratory. She also mentioned that there are online modules to aid in training and that there might be a possibility of another quality management course. Discussion within the committee led to the conclusion that NAHLN accreditation would be the way to go but it might be prudent to survey the aquatic health diagnostic laboratories since they are still interested due to economic changes.

**Update from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on Regulating Diseases under the Lacey Act, Including Chytrid Fungus, *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis***

Craig Martin

USFWS Branch of Aquatic Invasive Species

Martin gave background and an overview of the FWS mission in regards to injurious species to wildlife including the use of the application of the Lacey Act. Included in that information are also two pieces of pending legislation that have been introduced specifically, Invasive Fish and Wildlife Prevention Act of 2012 (HR5864 and S3606). However, these are unlikely to pass due to the upcoming elections. In the near future, there will be continued discussions on the petition from the Defenders of Wildlife within the USFWS which includes a meeting on October 30, 2012. The committee sought clarification on the petition especially if it will result in a proposed rule. Martin mentioned that the agency position on this might be forthcoming and urged that those attending the October 30, 2012 meeting request the agencies official stance.

**Committee Business**

No resolutions or other actions were brought forth at this time.