

Minnesota Statewide AIS Advisory Committee (SAISAC)

February 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Online Teams

Members Present: Beto Garcia, Will Bement, Shelly Binsfeld, Holly Bushman, Michaela Kofoed, Chris Magnotto, Mike Sorensen

Members Absent: Bruce Babcock, Pat Brown, Chris DuBose, Kate Hagsten, KoriiRay Northrup, Maggie Stahley, Ryan Wersal

Ex-officio Members Present: Meg Duhr

Ex-officio Members Absent: Nicole Lalum, Amy McGovern

DNR Staff Present: Tina Fitzgerald, Greg Husak, Doug Jensen, Heidi Wolf, Major Robert Gorecki

Guests: None

Chair H. Bushman called meeting to order at 9:04AM

Motion to approve agenda: First by W. Bement, second by M. Sorenson.

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes from January 26, 2023: First by B. Garcia, second by S. Binsfeld.

Meeting Summary:

- Committee member Will Bement (White Earth Division of Natural Resources) presented on how White Earth Nation conducts AIS management and prevention for their resources and communities. The Committee discussed how tribal governments and the DNR can better communicate, coordinate and collaborate on AIS issues.
- The Committee learned about DNR's AIS communication strategy from DNR Information Officer Greg Husak. The Committee discussed the importance of consistent messaging, adapting to wider audiences, and gained a better understanding about how DNR communications is approaching and adapting in a rapidly changing communication landscape.

Member Updates:

- **B. Garcia:** No update, but noticed that spiny waterflea spread to a new BWCAW lake (Snowbank).
- **C. Magnotto:** No report.
- **M. Anderson:** Nothing new.
- **M. Sorenson** manages an aeration system on a lake in Robbinsdale and noticed some *Phragmites* where he thought it was eradicated, really obvious in winter, had missed it all summer/fall. Good reminder that winter is a good time to keep an eye out for it. Discussed that it usually grows 7-16', sometimes 10'+ tall in MN and as high 16' in Michigan and Ohio.
- **S. Binsfeld:** No update.
- **W. Bement** is working with the environmental and enforcement programs which take a lot of kids fishing this time of year with outdoor classrooms where kids learn fish identification and AIS

prevention. Really important to reach out to students to emphasize preventing spread of AIS. Lot of planning and grant writing.

- **H. Bushman** is involved in lots of planning. Hoping to get watercraft inspections approved soon. One city isn't going to be able to conduct watercraft inspections this year so her program will take over that access – just adding more hours, up to ~4,000 hrs. Inspections are a significant portion of budget and time. Plans to attend county and watercraft inspection program workshops hosted by DNR and will present on watercraft inspector weather safety on March 3rd; created a one hour presentation based on videos produced by the National Weather Service and OSHA emphasizing water safety. Getting ready for spring and summer field season.
- **M. Duhr:** MAISRC preparing annual report to LCCMR. Update strategic plan every year, a check in on progress. Preparing for Center's Advisory Board meeting next Friday. Plans to attend DNR workshops with partners, they've been excellent so far, looking forward to upcoming ones. Working on a project with starry stonewort and wild rice, planning field work, working with tribe – just gearing up for that project. Planning two events: 1) Common Carp Management and Implementation Workshop, March 16th, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, and 2) Regional AIS Showcase near Cass Lake, working with lake associations, Beltrami, Itasca and Cass Counties, Leech Lake and Red Lake Nation, and DNR staff. Still working on agenda but have some general themes identified (link provided in chat).

DNR Updates:

- **H. Wolf:** DNR is in process of hiring a new Invasive Species Unit Supervisor. Position for north Training position closes today. The DNR has a north and south trainer (Felix Amenumey, Central Office) that conduct LGU (local government unit) watercraft inspection trainings. Interviews will be conducted in two weeks. Also working to fill Keri Hull's position as northeast watercraft inspection supervisor and an organisms in trade pathways, a temporary position (3 year) based on Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding. Good news is position will be posted as a 3 year position even though we've secured only the first year of funding with future funding from a grant in 2023. That will be posted next then all positions will be filled. GLRI RFP is now open to Great Lakes states to apply for interjurisdictional and state grants. Kelly Pennington is leading effort within DNR to decide on priority interjurisdictional projects that states can work on together and benefit from. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also announced funding availability for state and interstate invasive species plans, which is open for states that have an approved invasive species plan (\$90,000). Process is flexible so funding can be used to support anything in a state's plan and anywhere in the state, so excited to apply for that. DNR is also planning for the season, the annual report is completed, which is available on the website. Working internally with enforcement on several projects to check in, make sure everyone's on the same page, discuss what we'd like long term. For example, Lake Service Provider process is being evaluated, making sure that those who don't have a permit, get trained and get a permit. Also working with the DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife on an internal review process for Lake Vegetation Management Plans so that everyone knows their role and to improve response to requests. Two upcoming meetings to discuss. Plan is to try new process this season and review again for next season. Also working on a bait harvest pilot project started last year to possibly allow use of box minnow traps based on a water temperature threshold so that risk isn't increased, yet let harvesters more time to harvest minnows in spring. Evaluating in-situ Hobo

temperature monitoring combined with zebra mussel veliger data to try to come up with a reasonable solution.

- **Major R. Gorecki** introduces himself: He has worked statewide for 20+ years and brings a wealth of experience to the enforcement program. Working on follow up and pre-work with lake service providers, making sure consistent messaging is used, and following up with appropriate actions as needed. Working with Ecological and Water Resources Division (Invasive Species Program) to address suppliers that commercialize/import invasive species for human consumption primarily, like red swamp crayfish. Planning roadside check stations again across the state, with saturations planned before 4th of July for preventative inspections. Also working to clap down on transportation violations of zebra mussels, making sure that there is follow up appropriate enforcement actions.
- **D. Jensen** is working with **T. Fitzgerald** to host a few county workshops; first two have been successful with great attendance, 71 attendees at the first one, AIS Activities at Water Accesses, and 69 attendees at the second, Public Engagement. As testimonials, many participants continued discussion well after conclusion of both workshops. A few more workshops are coming up.
- **T. Fitzgerald** followed up to mention two more online workshops and two in-person workshops. Reminders will be sent out to everyone along with calendar invites. Next workshop topics will discuss Strategic Planning and Evaluation, then Early Detection and Rapid Response. In-person workshops will focus more on collaborations and networking between counties – all in March. For future workshops, we'll need to include more time for discussion. Counties are really interested and engaged in these topics. All workshops are recorded, so we'll get those posted online. Working to edit transcriptions then make the recordings accessible for posting online. Those should be available in next couple of months. Last year's recordings are [online for viewing](#), if interested. We've received lots of feedback from those who have been unable to attend to review them later and who want to watch again. Planning and hosting these workshops are one of our favorite planning efforts of the year!

AIS Prevention and Management by Tribal Governments

Will Bement, White Earth Division of Natural Resources

Overview: Tribal perspectives on how AIS impacts us. Educate and be good stewards of the land.

Why is AIS prevention important to White Earth membership? When working with tribes, and White Earth in particular, how we view AIS is different (through an indigenous people's lens). White Earth is a 36x36 reservation, located 60 miles east of Fargo, ND. Closest neighboring tribe is Lake Mille Lacs, which have their own AIS challenges, who we consult with frequently. Land ownership is checkerboard with not a lot of tribal ownership. Lots of water within reservation, but most lakes are very small (e.g., <250 acres) with many shallow water lakes.

Members regularly use lakes for treaty activities. Focusing on AIS prevention is protecting treaty rights, protecting treaty rights and membership use of natural resources including hunting, fishing and gathering, and healthy lifestyle, ricing, subsistence fishing, recreation and protecting resources. Emphasis is on reintroducing youth back into our culture, getting them outdoors, engaged in a healthy lifestyle; engaging members to participate in activities and eating healthy foods.

Lower Rice Lake, located in Clearwater County (showed on map), is 2,000 acres, is 95% wild rice so it's a culturally important resource. What if AIS get into wild ricing lakes? From what he could find, there's not

a lot of insights into how zebra or quagga mussels might impact them. Unfortunately, might find out really quick because zebra mussels are encroaching the area. Due to AIS being in the region, fishing season strategies changed to help prevent spread. For example, since zebra mussels and faucet snails are in the area, it's been really hard on members, had to come up with special use permits to use lakes for the different seasons. Many families have used these lakes to net fish for decades in fall and winter. AIS puts burden on them and it's taken a couple of years to accept that management was not out to get them; that everyone is working to protect and do not spread AIS. Challenge has been maintaining productive fisheries, protecting treaty rights, and membership use.

Another challenge is large bait fishing industry. Many families use lakes and rivers for bait harvest. Public meetings have been held to address families who harvest bait and gather rice. In Tamarack Lake area, there are 4-5 good leeching lakes. A lottery was implemented and those that harvest met with **W. Bement** personally to go over prevention strategies, stressing good stewardship. Leechers are asked to watch out for AIS like zebra mussels, which may colonize their folded metal leech traps; those are dedicate to lakes if infested. "Cloverleaf" traps are used for minnows, so those are good hard surfaces for AIS to cling to. Due diligence emphasized: cleaning, observation and knowing what to look for.

Impacts to hunting – lot of members waterfowl hunt and there are faucet snails in the area. Faucet snails are known to kill diving ducks. Messages to hunters are to make sure they are cleaning their equipment, including decoys and any water-related equipment. Problem is these infestations impact family hunting grounds. Traditions have been set by generations – everyone knows where each family's traditional hunting grounds are located.

White Earth is helping with protection by conducting annual zebra mussel veliger testing in about 150 shallow water lakes in June and July for lab analysis – doing since 2016. Conducting faucet snail monitoring in walleye broodstock ponds. Bait dealers are inspected frequently for presence of AIS.

Fisheries operations is a small program without a lot of equipment. Walleye eggs are collected from several sites, fertilized onsite and brought to the hatchery. It's time consuming to decon all of the equipment if sampling conducted on multiple lakes and it's a challenge to get more equipment. Concerned AIS will disrupt spawning behavior, patterns, and spawning grounds. Some border lakes have both member and non-member harvesters. When a lake became infested with faucet snails – that lake is lost. It's been creating problems to protect use and treaty rights.

Education is a priority, important to reach community members, especially kids. Early detection and monitoring, lake surveys, outreach efforts and interaction are good ways to get prevention messages into community. In 2016, members thought that AIS were somebody else's problem, but they've warmed to the idea that everyone needs to do their part.

Really stressed AIS youth outreach during community events, annual take a kid and elder fishing events, annual math and science events, ricing events, leach and rice drawings, head starts, K-12 and fishing tournaments. Held mock inspections for kids to learn what and where to look on boats and gear. When visiting these kids years later, they are retaining what they've learned. Fishing derby had 965 participants; 60% were children. Booths were set up to help reach kids.

Hope to get back to pre-COVID when open forums and community information sessions for members and non-members at event centers and casino were held to discuss AIS identification and prevention.

If AIS are found on reservation, identity is verified by natural resources management or by DNR, infested waters are posted, and tribal leadership and membership are notified about infestation. Tribal signs are posted; DNR signs also available.

White Earth Nation also has its own conservation and environmental codes along with integrated resource management plan. Codes specifically reference AIS enforcement and response plans. Response plan is currently being updated. State of Minnesota has been wonderful to work with in providing of assistance; the group working on AIS has been wonderful to work with.

Overall, taking a community approach using AIS prevention, outreach, identification, communication. Tribes are a tight knit group – everyone knows each other. Easy to meet with membership to discuss. Over the last two years, the program has grown a lot and has been good at reaching membership.

Discussion:

- **B. Garcia** asked, why the transition change concerning awareness, willingness, and perceptions of AIS? **W. Bement** says previously, they thought it was somebody else spreading AIS. But, when they realized they could spread AIS to their homelands and the problems they cause, like to rice and bait fishing, it's a source of income for many. Once they discovered they could be impacted, they're more open to process of protection.
- **D. Jensen** asked, do you think the spread and impacts of faucet snails on waterfowl hunting in the Leech Lake area helped in the realization that AIS are problems? **W. Bement** says unfortunately, it helped a lot; we developed a template for what was done there. There are lots family members that live in both places, so once they realized what impacts could be, it gained their attention. Agreed, it was a bad problem, but it helped with positive transition with neighboring tribal work.
- **D. Jensen** asked, in terms of outreach, how have you seen the progression, when did it start and begin to ramp up, how long has it been conducted? **W. Bement** says previous AIS coordinator began holding meetings in 2016 and only a few members attended. Now, whenever there is a public meeting, there is a rice drawing or something else, attendance has been outstanding. People are more open to answering questions, more open dialogue, members are more relaxed, especially when only tribal staff attend. Now more elders and youth are asking questions and getting more involved; they realize protection is needed for their kids and grandkids.
- **B. Garcia** asked, concerning when it's members only internally, do you think it would be useful to have a training program for AIS youth ambassadors? **W. Bement** says they could offer job shadows to students at the tribal college; something they've talked about but haven't implemented yet. That would help a lot. **B. Garcia** asked, could there be grants or scholarships available? **W. Bement** says yes, small pots of funding, but if anyone has anything to share, please forward to **W. Bement**.
- **M. Duhr** asked, concerning zebra mussels, wild rice and potential impacts, she wonders as earlier open water season allows for warmer waters earlier causing zebra mussel reproduction earlier, could zebra mussels attach to wild rice during the floating leave stage? And if so, could the settlement become so heavy that plants are unable to emerge above water? Could be some research questions to be address through tribal college student projects? If you have any ideas to bounce of MAISRC staff, please let them know. **W. Bement** says good points, during June-July rice could impact emergence and impact water quality – both questions need answers.
- **M. Duhr** said MAISRC has pilot program using settlement plates, but colonized zebra mussels were removed – they can put on significant growth in one season. **D. Jensen** added that the rule of thumb

is that young zebra mussels grow ~1mm/month. **W. Bement** agreed that with that growth rate, could cause floating leaves at the vulnerable stage to sink if sufficient weighted. **D. Jensen** reported that during a research study he conducted on Saginaw Bay, he observed zebra mussels attaching to aquatic plants like wild rice and water celery. **W. Bement** asked if plants were observed sinking due to zebra mussel weight? **D. Jensen** replied that study looked at fisheries so aquatic plants were not focus of the research. It was also early in zebra mussel infestation of Saginaw Bay.

- **W. Bement** mentioned another challenge is that wild rice plants could be transported by canoe. Another challenge for members is remembering where they've been and where they're going. Most families cannot afford two canoes. Harvest season is short, and storms can heavily damage wild rice, so windows for harvest opportunities for members is even shorter.
- **M. Duhr** asked if any lakes are totally within reservation boundary. **W. Bement** replied Lower Rice is and open only to members. However, inlets and outlets that connect to other waters outside boundary. **D. Jensen** asked if there are wetlands (with slow moving water) that separate those lakes. **W. Bement** replied there are a lot of boggy areas that would create a buffer. **D. Jensen** added that zebra mussels do not prefer high pH waters, so that might provide a buffer as you indicated. Once pH is 6.5 and below, zebra mussel ability to colonize decreases quickly. **W. Bement** said good info to know; anything that is known to help is welcome. **D. Jensen** also added that those types of waters are low in dissolved calcium (which zebra mussels need to build shell material). **W. Bement** confirmed that RMB Lab results show low calcium. RMB provided a list of lakes based on calcium which has been a good tool.
- **M. Duhr** asked if department has considered use of eDNA. **W. Bement** responded that first thoughts by members would be about genetically modified rice. Once it is recognized that it is for early detection and not GMOs, that could be discussed in the future. **D. Jensen** mentioned that are rapid advancements in technology to measure eDNA in the field using what is call LAMP, DNA signature is amplified with field results in ~20 mins. USGS has them but does not know cost. This spring, **M. Duhr** has a study with volunteer sampling kits which will be sent to U of M lab, doesn't know cost yet but probably competitive with RMB charges for analysis. Veliger tows are good but when densities are low it's like looking for a needle in a haystack.
- **W. Bement** appreciated all of the feedback. **M. Duhr** appreciated hearing about specific impacts to subsistence harvesting and traditions. For indigenous peoples, impacts are directly tied to their economic livelihoods and culture. **W. Bement** responded that it beneficial to get tribal perspectives because tribes will approach issues quite a bit different, not so much about aesthetics, it's much more about culture and lifestyle. **S. Binsfeld** felt presentation was really well done, hit all of the areas that we needed to hear about. She looks forward to learning more.
- **B. Garcia** asked about zebra mussels on water chemistry. **D. Jensen** replied that are two big things that zebra mussels cause to water chemistry: 1) they act as a conveyor belt by removing phosphorus and nutrients and passing them to the bottom, and 2) through their filtering capacity, they make water clearer which changes everything. **W. Bement** asked if anyone has heard from people that zebra mussels should be introduced to lakes to help clean up the water? **D. Jensen** replied that he's heard this his entire career. A main audience of concern communicating this is recreational divers. Many think they want zebra mussels because they increase visibility, but soon after, the things that brought them to dive in those waters are completely covered with zebra mussels. **C. Magnotto** reflected that there is a lack of understanding or misunderstanding, needs to be an effort to dispel myths about any positives by zebra mussels or other AIS. **B. Garcia** agreed, adding there needs to be

education for this purpose, it's not about scientists and ecologists wanting to keep people from enjoying lakes. Public needs to know that once they have AIS that they will permanently impact that lake. To this end, **S. Binsfeld** suggested that a video needed, quick to visualize.

During the break, members were asked to review, if not had already, the 2022 DNR Invasive Species Annual Report regarding Public Engagement beginning on page 19. Members were asked provide comments and suggestions.

Presentation: Strategic AIS Communications

Greg Husak, DNR Information Officer

- **G. Husak** shares some thoughts on today's conversations so far. Videos are primary now – that is true. Acknowledges the need for messaging on not wanting zebra mussels. Messaging needs change year to year. For instance, thinking about climate change and zebra mussels, the DNR climatology office is in the DNR's Division of Ecological and Water Resources (EWR). He has been working with them on really successful drought communications and coordination, including a drought task force made up of 32 agencies. Climate change is in everything we do. DNR is focusing on more community based communications. Working and learning more about localized approach. Locally crafted for local audiences that are so different. E.g. **T. Fitzgerald** and **D. Jensen's** work with counties.
- **G. Husak** says his role is the communications lead for EWR, working closely with the Invasive Species Unit for 8 years. Previous communications work with Minnesota State University Mankato as well as consulting and voiceover work. Combine good research and solid communications science.
- **G. Husak** provides an overview that was presented to this Committee in the past. Turning the tide on false beliefs (they are everywhere etc.). Obviously still work to do on that. Promoting new advances. Building community norms, local focus.
 - Changes: The world has changed. Communication challenges now are short attention spans, less reading, loss of patience, increased anger, etc. "Dopamine throttling" – pleasure comes from the anticipation. What was a channel showing nonstop music videos is now an app with 10 second videos. Human brain is not fully formed until 27 years. Experience seeing face to face communications taking a back seat to digital communications.

Discussion

- **W. Bement** says to address shorter attention spans he shorted curriculum time for kids, but also had to do it for adults. **G. Husak** adds it used to be about 40 minutes before you needed a break, wouldn't be surprised if it is much shorter now. **W. Bement** provides another example at community event booth where the kids had to check off a box for talking to vendors. They put up a sign and asked kids to text them questions – they wouldn't ask face to face, but would they would text. **G. Husak** says at the university, posters were the way to communicate. But at some point, they stopped using them because students were not noticing. They had monitors throughout the student union, but shut them off because people weren't looking at them. Similar to messaging at public access are law, we have to post them, but at a certain point they just don't see them. Have to reach them in different ways.
- **H. Bushman** says we lose connection with people when it is all virtual, but it easier to get ahold of more people digitally. Stakeholders are lake associations of the older generation – some are tech savvy, some are not. Those that are not, are missing out. Trying to find a balance. **G. Husak** agrees it is important to consider those uncomfortable with digital engagement. Hybrid never seems to go

smoothly, never seem to get that connection, and is much more awkward. We don't have answers for all of these things yet.

- **M. Duhr** says her role is research translation and outreach and this all rings true. Our demographics are in that older range, but people we really need to reach are the “jerks,” the 1% that don't care or don't follow the rules. Do they need a factsheet? From academic standpoint, it can be nit-picky and caught up in details so much that you can't even communicate the simple things. E.g. “AIS harm lakes” vs. “AIS could harm lakes.” The “could” takes away from the directness of the message. Researchers are committed to scientific uncertainty, but it waters down what needs to be communicated. **G. Husak** sees these challenges day to day, for instance, leadership who may or may not be on board with different messaging. Micro-attention to messaging that does get watered down because of competing issues, legislative concerns, funding, etc. **M. Duhr** says we are trying to get some behavior change through materials and we have been successful, but have that last 5-3% that we haven't gotten through to yet. Potentially all it takes is one. A lengthy factsheet that is transparent and scientific based and therefore has to include “could” – this gives them an opening to not care. **G. Husak** asks, how do we reach that last percent? Where do they get their information, what do they care about? Get out of the box of what is important to us and focus on benefits to the audience, e.g. what is in it for me?
- **B. Garcia** says he aged himself earlier by saying put out a flyer, but there is a wide range of audiences not motivated by videos. They are interested in how does this impact me and why should I care. Wide ranges of audiences, multiple channels we need to reach out on – digital, handout, in-person, etc. **G. Husak** agrees, there are audiences that appreciate certain ways of communicating. **M. Duhr** adds via chat: MAISRC still produces LOTS of flyers (and videos). We get tons of requests for handouts. Definitely still a place for those. **G. Husak** adds to always take an integrated view, a single piece is not going to solve a problem. Communications plan includes many channels – GovDelivery, online, video, events, etc.
- **D. Jensen** on the question about tabling and to be a minimalist or have a lot of materials – he has done hundreds of events in his career. People pick up more if you have more. Once you get into a discussion, they pick up one and they will take other things as well. Demographically, he sees younger adults hardly picking up any materials at college events, but older demographic pick up lots more. Lake associations are still establishing print newsletters now. **G. Husak** asks, how important is it to have one clear statement at a booth? In contrast to something like the state fair where there is a tremendous amount of printed materials available and so many people do collect many items. **D. Jensen** says his main message is “Prevention is working.”
- **G. Husak** circles back to **S. Binsfeld's** comment about elementary students – we are doing that in some ways and missing out in other ways. We're working on it. As well as printed materials.
- **W. Bement** asks, is age and how to communicate with these different groups included in the inspection training? **H. Wolf** says yes, but we also rely on the person to have personal skills to make those decisions. We try to do training all season long, approach people as people, note what they are doing on the water, have a conversational tone, etc. Some people are good, some are not great. Let us know if you run into those that are not excellent and we will address. We have Jeannine Howland, full time AIS Trainer, now. She can work with local governments and provide more than just our initial training. For our DNR staff we do a better job on people skills, but for local governments it is up to them. Every once in a while, those who are interested in enforcement, their attitude and tone is not appropriate. There is a watercraft inspection feedback email. **W. Bement**

says the tone he hears is “this is my lake and I don’t want anyone here” – it is a certain individual. **H. Wolf** can follow up on that. **G. Husak** adds the updated training manual is moving through too, including some expansion on communications.

- **B. Garcia** asks, are there rebranding effort of different AIS? E.g. Copi, his brother was involved in that. What was the impact or success? What is the state of Minnesota doing, rebooting people’s thoughts on zebra mussels? **G. Husak** says it remains to be seen on how that has gone to rebrand and make a positive campaign.
- **G. Husak:** Consistency of messaging, for example, working with counties on highest values or behavior changes that we can collectively work on; invasive species in trade like aquariums and water gardens. What is your elevator speech? Thinking about what is of value to them vs. “no” messages which we know are less effective. We have the “Clean In, Clean Out” icon and are looking to test this message against others.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion (DEAI)

- **G. Husak** says he is learning every day. For example, the term “BIPOC,” someone said they don’t like that term, because they don’t like being lumped into “person of color.” Changing so fast, but more important than ever before.
- “The DNR considers aspects including race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, life experience, ideas, knowledge and learning styles.”
- **H. Bushman** says statement encompasses every community. We all identify with in our own way.
- **G. Husak** says, for accessibility, we are required to produce accessible materials, so we don’t have to ask if people need / people don’t need to request things in a different format.
- **G. Husak** says the DNR is developing a language access plan, to communicate with people with limited English ability. Access for every Minnesotan. More materials translated than ever before. Fishing regulations are in five languages and will be expanded further. Translating news releases. DNR has tribal liaison. Understanding the right ways to engage, while acknowledging we are finding our way with the right intentions.
- **B. Garcia** asks, does mental/physical ability include mental/physical health, which can be transitory? Also he doesn’t see culture in here, something **W. Bement** was talking about. **G. Husak** says culture has many different definitions and important to consider. Mental health is a continuum.
- **D. Jensen** adds that being thoughtful about learning orientation is critically important. We discussed “boothing” earlier. Having imagery (like large pictures of AIS impacts on banners), various print materials (from books to cards), and preserved AIS specimens all support communication and learning for all types of learners.
- **G. Husak** adds that we moderate how we communicate based on DEAI.
- **G. Husak** says the DNR has been mindful about community media and ethnic media and their audiences. Black-owned and run newspapers, Hmong radio, etc. We’ve consistently heard across the agency – don’t come to us and expect we are going to carry your information because it is important to you. Relationships are needed personally and financially. Financial support is how they operate. Genuine relationships need to be built, not just once a year when we need it.
- **G. Husak** says thank you for interactions, will take this all back and think more on everything.
- **H. Bushman** says let’s do this every year.

Wrap-up

- **H. Bushman** asks, anything else on the annual report? **T. Fitzgerald** says it is a resource on what DNR is up to. She would like to continue these communications discussions with this Committee, for instance the online Pledge effort and how to use that this season. **H. Bushman** says we can review these conversations and see what next steps might be.
- **B. Garcia** says the combination of presentations today dovetailed well, thank you!
- **M. Duhr** asks, was there something this Committee was supposed to review in the fishing regulations? **T. Fitzgerald** says it was just an example of how we communicate. It is also available in different languages, so keep that in mind as a resource. Also thinking about how we apply the language access guide to AIS communications specifically.
 - **M. Duhr** adds comments on the fishing regulations booklet: The bait disposal was information was good. She was confused about what you can can't do on infested waters, maybe needs additional clarity. Also, just because it is not an "infested" water, doesn't mean there are not other invasive species like curly-leaf pondweed and common carp. **T. Fitzgerald** will relay that information to Kelly Pennington (DNR).
- **B. Garcia** asks if detailed scientific information being translated or if it is just high level information. **G. Husak** says just high level so far. Fishing regulations are an example of more detailed translation.
- **D. Jensen** asks if the translated content is being translated in ways their culture communicates. For example, in some communities conservation is not as important. **G. Husak** says yes, like for religious activities, but much more could and needs to be done.
- **T. Fitzgerald** suggests the following for next meeting which will be in-person: Enforcement (if available), rock star county coordinators, and continuing communications based on these conversations. Will try to add more interactive components since we'll be in person (with an online option). Many members who attended the last in-person meeting said it was very valuable to be in the same room with everyone.

Discussion Time for Committee:

There was no unfinished business and/or next steps on meeting topics.

Adjourned at 2:52 PM

Next Meeting to be held in person at the DNR Sauk Rapids Office with online option from 10AM to 3PM on March 23, 2023.