



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Department of Agricultural Resources
**State Reclamation and
Mosquito Control Board**
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Governor

KERRY HEALEY
Lt. Governor

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Charlie M. Burnham
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STATE RECLAMATION AND MOSQUITO CONTROL BOARD MINUTES

WHO: State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board (SRMCB)
DATE: **June 15, 2005**
WHERE: 240 Beaver Street, Waltham, MA

PRESENT: Representing

State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board

Mark Buffone, SRMCB, Chairman
Charlie Burnham, SRMCB, Member
Gary Gonyea, SRMCB, Member
Donna Mitchell, SRMCB, Projects Administrator

Mosquito Control Project Commissions

Nancy Haynes For Steven Ward, East Middlesex Mosquito Control
Carolyn Brennan, Plymouth County Mosquito Control Project

Mosquito Control Directors/Superintendents

Wayne Andrews, Bristol County Mosquito Control Project
Tim Deschamps, Central Mass Mosquito Control Project
David Henley, East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project
Gabrielle Sakolsky, Cape Cod Mosquito Control Project
John Smith, Norfolk County Mosquito Control Project
Robert Thorndike, Plymouth County Mosquito Control Project
Ray Zucker, Plymouth County Mosquito Control Project

Others

None

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Introduction

Chairman Mark Buffone officially called the meeting of the State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board to order at 10:15 AM on Wednesday, June 15, 2005 taking place at the UMass Eastern Extension Center at 240 Beaver Street Waltham, MA (or known as the Waltham Field Station).

For the record, the Chairman noted that this meeting had been filed with the Secretary of State and the Executive office of Administration and Finance in accordance with the General Laws of Massachusetts.

The Chairman acknowledged the other Board members present, Charlie Burnham representing the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Gary Gonyea, representing the Department of Environmental Protection and in doing so noted that there was a quorum.

Chairman Buffone thanked everyone for coming and expressed appreciation for their interest and encouraged those in attendance to participate constructively when acknowledged.

The Chairman also welcomed with a special acknowledgement Nancy Haynes representing Commissioner Steven Ward of the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project and Commissioner Carolyn Brennan representing the Plymouth County Mosquito Control Project. Chairman Buffone stated that the Board believes it important to acknowledge Commissioners and their representatives when they are in attendance at our meeting. He remarked that this is a good thing and hoped to see them more often.

Those present were asked to complete the sign-up sheet as it was passed around the room to insure an accurate account of who were present.

Agenda Item #1: Introductory Remarks

The Chairman quickly moved to agenda item # 1 and asked, if any of the Board members and others present, had any introductory remarks. There were none. However, the Chairman expressed the need to make the following remarks for the record.

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Background:

He began by stating that the main reason for the Board meeting today, so soon, after the May 25th meeting (approximately three (3) weeks ago), was primarily for the benefit of the Northeast Mosquito and Wetlands Management District. At the last meeting, the Board was scheduled to vote on Ramp field-testing. However, the Board, out of deference, to Chairman Robert Morehouse, of the Northeast Commission (who petitioned the Board to allow the RAMP field-testing to continue for one more season), did not entertain a vote. Instead, the Board asked for additional discussion and questions concerning this issue. Being sensitive to a number of additional comments expressed regarding the RAMP field-testing, the Board postponed its scheduled vote on the fate of the RAMP field-testing on May 25, 2005 to allow the Northeast district additional time to seek alternative options for confirmatory testing. During this time, Superintendent Walter Montgomery told the Board that this should be enough time to seek additional information such as the availability of an independent and certified entity that could do confirmatory testing.

Since the postponement of the SRMCB vote, Chairman Buffone noted that he sent a reminder to the Northeast district one week before the June 15th scheduled vote. Superintendent Montgomery responded that they were unable to find anyone to confirm RAMP re-actives. Also, according to the Superintendents knowledge, there was no response at this time from the Department of Public Health (DPH) to a formal request to pursue another option to evaluate Ramp. The option entailed asking DPH to perform limited laboratory evaluation of the RAMP testing within pooled samples of mosquitoes in order to establish or not establish the extent of concordance between the RAMP assay and PCR test, using a small, but statistically appropriate, sample of known WNV-positive and WNV-negative pools. Lastly, Superintendent Montgomery informed the Chairman that he would not be in attendance for today's meeting due to trap collection scheduling.

Item 1 Questions and Discussion:

NONE

Item 1 Action Taken:

Because the Chairman introductory remarks focused on the Ramp field-testing, Chairman Buffone asked the Board to consider taking up agenda item 3 first and to vote on RAMP field-testing. The SRMCB members agreed to move to item 3 on the agenda.

Agenda Item # 3: Approval or termination of RAMP field-testing for WNV

Background:

Chairman Buffone stated that the SRMCB has spent too much time considering whether or not to proceed with RAMP field-testing. He continued saying that this issue goes all the way back to October 2004. He reflected that Gary Gonyea requested a report on October 6th and none was ever received. Yes, for the record, a PowerPoint presentation (the same presentation the Board heard in Newport) was sent after several e-mails reminding the district of its original request. The PowerPoint presentation was not what the Board asked for on October 6, 2004.

Also, he reiterated that DPH has strongly indicated that RAMP field-testing is not an appropriate test for public health surveillance in Massachusetts. DPH continues to maintain and contend that the Ramp field-testing positive predictive value is poor.

Gary Gonyea requested that the minutes reflect that the SRMCB and others pursued this issue with DPH via electronic correspondence in regards to seeking DPH views and potential support of the field-testing for one additional season to no avail. Chairman Buffone commented that the main sticking point gleaned from the DPH responses was that DPH would not perform confirmatory testing along with several other reasons as cited below.

DPH has strongly indicated

- that this field test is not an appropriate method for public health surveillance purposes;
- the positive predictive value is extremely poor;

- False negative results could have serious consequences with regard to protecting public health;
- DPH will not accept mosquito pools pre-tested by RAMP field tests for confirmatory testing;
- DPH timeliness and accuracy of testing has significantly improved and offers the best system for assuring the safety and confidence of the public;
- a solid collaborative mechanism and protocol currently exists between DPH and the organized mosquito control districts to deliver and document mosquito samples sent to the State Labs for testing.

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Chairman Buffone expressed that DPH feels that their system of testing is accurate, timely, and probably one of the best systems in the United States for assuring the safety and confidence of the public.

He said that he felt that the improvement in turn around time to test virus was significant and did not see a fit for RAMP field-testing for the districts it oversees especially considering the fact that these districts are not necessarily vector control districts. He further qualified his remark by saying, "at least at this point in time since legislative mandates are more directly related to annoyance alleviation or nuisance control". As a result, he questioned the utility of Ramp field-testing. Also, he was disappointed that the district did not ask for the SRMCB input early on and expressed that perhaps the Ramp field-testing would not have been the issue we have before us.

Chairman Buffone continued stating, "that no other district that the SRMCB oversees is interested in using the RAMP field-testing".

He added that if we vote to terminate RAMP field-testing, it should be effective immediately and not be something the SRMCB concern itself with again unless or until DPH wants to do confirmatory testing or some changes occur over time to make the testing more accurate and sensitive.

The Chairman strongly indicated that the Northeast district is spending time, money, and personnel without much return on their investment for the field-testing. On behalf of the SRMCB, he suggested that the district should take these same resources mentioned above and use them to accomplish their overall mandate of controlling mosquitoes.

Another thought that the Chairman expressed concerned Commissioners. He mentioned that when the SRMCB appoints Commissioners that they are sworn to the faithful performance of their duties pursuant to the law and that the SRMCB does have the authority to instruct Commissions not to continue with approved improvements whatever they may be. The Chairman asked both Charlie Burnham and Gary Gonyea if they had any comments at this point. Charlie Burnham agreed that if the testing is indicating poor results, he questioned why use it?

Chairman Buffone also stated that he could not accept two (2) arguments or concerns placed on the table about the testing unless someone present could persuade him otherwise. He questioned that by approving the Ramp field-testing for only one district, how would this improve or enhance the number of pools being tested by the existing DPH system, which currently limits mosquito pools for testing. Secondly, the Chair did not feel the use of Ramp field-testing would improve or enhance additional trap placements since districts have a limited number of traps to use. Chairman also asked how many pools would you need to get better results than the current system in place by DPH and how many more traps would be practically available by districts if field-testing was approved?

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Finally, the Chair commented that the SRMCB is cognizant and supportive of research and innovation by the districts. However, he pointed out emphatically that the lesson learned here is that the district and its Commission, in his opinion, should have communicated very early on to the SRMCB about their intentions to use the Ramp field-testing and ask for guidance regarding this matter.

Gary Gonyea agreed with the Chairman. Further, he expressed that the use of Ramp is hard to support because even if you get a re-active for the RAMP testing, you have no idea based on past performance if that sample is positive or not. Therefore, Gary Gonyea indicated that he was not supportive of its use.

Chairman Buffone quickly follow-up stating that he felt it vital and prudent to partner with DPH and strengthen our relationship instead of pursuing a path that could perhaps create a conflict such as seeking independent confirmatory testing laboratories in order to approve the use of Ramp.

Questions and Discussion:

Wayne Andrews commented that the SRMCB consider the fact that mosquito control districts/projects may not be able to move a re-active sample over state lines without approval from USDA and he added that one might even questioned whether a mosquito control district can legally hold these samples in their freezers without approval.

Action Taken:

Gary Gonyea made a motion that the SRMCB vote on the approval or termination of the RAMP field-testing for WNV as conducted by the Northeast Mosquito Control and Wetlands District or any other districts, which may consider employing it in Massachusetts. Charlie Burnham seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the SRMCB voted unanimously to terminate RAMP field-testing conducted by the Northeast Mosquito Control and Wetlands District or any other districts, which may consider employing it in Massachusetts

Also, the Chairman noted he would draft a letter to the Chairman of the Northeast Mosquito Control and Wetlands District prior to their the July 6th meeting with a copy to the Superintendent that the SRMCB has voted to terminate the RAMP testing. Also, SRMCB members asked that the Chairman to incorporate the reasons found on page 6 of the May 25th SRMCB minutes into the letter.

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Agenda Item #2: Approval of May 25, 2005 Minutes

Background:

Chairman Buffone noted that the minutes of May 25, 2005 was in order and entertained a motion to approve them as written.

Questions and Discussion:

NONE

Action Taken:

Gary Gonyea made a motion to approve the May 25, 2005 minutes as written and Charlie Burnham seconded the motion. The vote to approve the minutes carried unanimously.

Agenda Item #4: Commissioner appointments/re-appointments

Background:

Chairman Buffone stated that the SRMCB has recently interviewed three (3) applicants for appointment and re-appointment of various mosquito control districts. Of the three, the Board could only take action on two (2). The SRMCB interviewed an applicant for a vacancy for the Cape Cod Mosquito Control Project on May 25, 2005, and shortly thereafter, the SRMCB received another request from an applicant expressing interest in the vacant position. As a result, Chairman Buffone remarked that the SRMCB would need to postpone action on this particular position until the SRMCB interviews the other candidate.

Nonetheless, Chairman Buffone stated that the two other applicants, William J. Mara Sr of the Plymouth County Mosquito Control Project and Paul A. Mazzuchelli seeking to replace Mr. Jim Shuris of the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project successfully completed the appointment process and could be voted upon by the SRMCB today.

Questions and Discussion:

None

Action Taken:

Charlie Burnham made a motion to re-appoint William J. Mara Sr to the Plymouth County Mosquito Control Commission and appoint Paul A. Mazzuchelli to the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project effective on June 15, 2005. Gary Gonyea seconded the motion and, hearing no discussion, the motion was voted unanimously. Chairman Buffone stated he would send letters and the Certificate of Appointments to these individuals and notify the Chairman of the respective Commissions of these appointments.

Agenda Item # 5: Mosquito-Borne Disease Operational Work Group

Background:

Chairman Buffone commented that item number 5 was placed on the agenda more for discussion and also to seek some interested individuals to assist the SRMCB. At the last meeting, Chairman Buffone mentioned that the Commissioner of Agricultural Resources at the behest of the SRMCB sent a letter to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) alerting officials that there might be a potential Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) threat this year along with a recommendation to convene a group to plan proactively ahead. To date, no group has been formed. In lieu of the likelihood that a group may be convened at some point, the SRMCB wanted to ask some individuals to begin to do some of the operational legwork even though a formal group could be convened. Chairman Buffone mentioned that a number of individuals here have expertise and have likely been involved with the last major EEE outbreak in 1990.

Questions and Discussion:

A number of items were placed on the table to consider that could be useful for planning an operational response such as obtaining a list of beekeepers, Organic Farms, Aquaculture operations, Fish Hatcheries, Surface Water Supplies, Landing Zones, legally available chemicals, and possibly the development of a Media Package with facts sheets

Gary Gonyea mentioned that his Department provided files for past aerial sprays and that if we had coordinates of areas of concern as discussed that these could be added to files. Gary Gonyea stated that he would coordinate retrieving information on water supplies and their delineation on maps

Chairman Buffone stated that he would ask Steve Antunes-Kenyon of the Department of Agricultural Resources if he could search and print out a list of products registered for adult mosquitoes in Massachusetts.

Gary Gonyea stated that mentioned that an evaluation of a couple of materials has already been accomplished. In fact, ORS reviewed malathion and Naled in 1991 as well as malathion and resmethrin in 1998. In both reviews, he stated that the review was favorable for Malathion from an environmental risk standpoint. He commented that Malathion would likely be the product of choice in light of this review

Wayne Andrews believed a list of what is available should be sought and all materials be reviewed.

Gary Gonyea asked those in attendance, what are the important things that need to be lined up over the next several weeks to be prepared?

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This question stimulated once again robust discussion such as the importance of having An aerial contract in place especially for smaller acreage such as 25,000 acres or less as well as knowing ahead of time the chemical of choice/ vendor.

Robert (Bob) Thorndike brought up the importance of mapping and mentioned the mosquito control districts positive experiences with a company on the state contract called TRU-NORTH Mapping.

Chairman Buffone agreed that mapping was essential but there was no funding for creation of new mapping for emergency situations.

John Smith stated that all the maps of his district have been designed for larvicide operations not designed for adulticiding.

Charlie Burnham mentioned that you would want to identify GPS coordinates of your hazards such as apiaries and organic farms on maps used for aerial spraying.

The group present narrowed the discussion to the importance of aerial contract, chemical of choice (what is legal to use in Massachusetts), mapping, landing zones, which depends on type of aircraft helicopter or fixed wing (small or large) and the area of treatment.

Action Taken:

A group consisting of the following individuals Mark Buffone, Gary Gonyea, Steven Antunes-Kenyon, Dave Henley, John Smith, and Bob Thorndike will begin to do some legwork for an operational response. There was a consensus to ask each district or districts in the endemic areas of any potential outbreak areas to make a list of possible landing zones.

The group would meet to the discuss the types of things that need to be discussed for planning work such as storage areas for bulk larvicide for the purpose of responding to flooding events.

The Chairman cited the importance of moving ahead to maintain a level of readiness in the event of an outbreak.

Agenda Item # 6: Mosquito Population Reporting

Background:

Chairman Buffone stated that this item on the agenda has been discussed before without tangible results. Therefore, he requested that the districts consider sending a brief narrative to the SRMCB periodically so as to keep the SRMCB informed of overall trends in mosquito populations throughout the state. Chairman Buffone read aloud an example of what he felt the districts/projects could send to the SRMCB and further mentioned that these narratives would useful to compare to DPH reports too.

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Questions and Discussion:

Wayne Andrews asked for the SRMCB to established a specific due date for the narratives.

Gary Gonyea explained that the SRMCB is not looking for an in depth analysis but a more general information on increases and decreases.

Chairman Buffone stated the information could be used for SRMCB annual report or meetings such as the Northeast Annual Mosquito Control Meeting.

Action Taken:

The SRMCB requested that each district send a brief narrative of their mosquito populations, on the 1st and 15th of each month giving an overview of their regions mosquito activity and any other interesting information such as weather conditions, numbers of complaints, and how these trends compare to previous seasons.

Agenda item # 7: Other

Background:

Donna Mitchell asked the Chairman on behalf of the SRMCB to sign a letter that verifies the annual certification by the SRMCB of mosquito funding with a copy of the minutes as voted upon at the last meeting of May 25, 2005 and outlined under action taken (SRMCB Minutes May 25, 2005 on page 10). This letter is required by the state comptrollers to accommodate timing discrepancies of between receipt of revenues and related expenditures by mosquito control districts/projects.

Questions and Discussion:

NONE

Action Taken:

Gary Gonyea made a motion that the SRMCB certify as indicated in letter given to the SRMCB by Donna Mitchell Projects Administrator gave the SRMCB the letter to certify the SRMCB budgets/assessments, seconded by Charlie Burnham and approved unanimously. As such, Chairman Buffone in the presence of the other SRMCB members signed the letter-certifying mosquito funding for FY 2006 to state comptrollers.

Agenda item # 8: Next Meeting Date

Background:

Chairman Buffone mentioned that the next official meeting is in October. However, depending on SRMCB schedules and issues of importance, the SRMCB would schedule the next meeting on an as needed basis. The SRMCB agreed to schedule Commissioner interviews for September 28th and 29th.

Questions and Discussion:

NONE

Action Taken:

Gary Gonyea made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 AM and seconded by Charlie Burnham and voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Mark S. Buffone
Chairman