

## **MCTF Policy Structure Subcommittee Meeting Minutes 11 18 21**

### **Minutes for the Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century (MCTF) Task Force Meeting**

#### **Subcommittee Meeting: Policy Structure**

November 18, 2021, 1:00 p.m. via Zoom

#### Meeting Topics:

- Meeting Open, Welcome and Roll Call (chair)
- Housekeeping Notes (EEA representatives)
- Meeting Purpose, Agenda (chair and facilitator)
- Presentation on Best Practices and Mosquito Control Policy Structure from Other States (Julia Blatt)
- Presentation on Florida's Mosquito Control Program (Brad Mitchell)
- Presentation on Colorado's Mosquito Control Program (Heidi Ricci)
- Discussion of Best Practices from Other States Highlighted in Presentations
- Identify Questions for EEA to Ask of MCDs
- Wrap Up and Next Steps (Facilitator)
- Closing Remarks and Vote to Adjourn (chair)

Meeting called to order by Stephen Rich at 1:05 p.m. Subcommittee members in attendance included Heidi Ricci, Brad Mitchell, Julia Blatt, Russell Hopping, Richard Pollack, and Heidi Porter. Alisha Bouchard provided an update on housekeeping items.

9/30 and 10/28 meeting minutes were presented for an approval vote. Richard Pollack noted a correction to the 10/28 meeting minutes. Heidi Ricci also noted that the meeting minutes should clearly reference Heidi Porter and Heidi Ricci as there are two Heidi's on the subcommittee. Alisha Bouchard noted edits to the meeting minutes could be e-mailed to ERG and ERG would make minor edits and post the minutes online.

Stephen Rich took a motion to accept meeting minutes for 9/30 and 10/28. Richard Pollock made a motion to accept meeting minutes with the recommended correction to the 10/28 meeting minutes. Heidi Ricci (aye for 9/30 abstain for 10/28), Brad Mitchell (abstain from both 9/30 and 10/28), Julia Blatt (abstain for 9/30 and aye for 10/28), Russell Hopping (abstain for 9/30 aye for 10/28), Heidi Porter (amendment to the motion to include an initial at the end of any Heidi names, aye to both 9/30 and 10/28), Richard Pollack (aye to both 9/30 and 10/28).

- Presentation on Best Practices and Mosquito Control Policy Structure from Other States (Julia Blatt)

Julia Blatt introduced Sarah Bower from her staff. It was noted that there was a much longer document with all of Sarah's notes which would be shared with the subcommittee as well. Sarah indicated seven research questions that were utilized for NY, NJ, and CT.

1. What state entities are responsible for mosquito control and how do they interact?
  2. What is the structure for management?
  3. How is it funded?
  4. What is the role of the state health department and research institutions/scientists?
  5. How do their surveillance plans differ from ours?
  6. What services do they provide?
  7. How well is it working?
- NY: County level health departments do surveillance and management as well as aerial spraying decision making was done by local health departments
    - Technical and outreach support from the State DOH

- Funded by county and state supported assets. State pays for surveillance control activities and testing
- CT: Local health departments perform control and outreach measures
  - Control was not very robust. State was limited to doing larviciding on state lands only
  - Interagency Mosquito management program (6 agencies) provides surveillance, management, and technical assistance to municipalities
  - Funded through the state's general fund for mosquito control
- NJ: County mosquito control commission (6 agencies) perform control measures such as spraying
  - State does more of the surveillance and monitoring, testing, operations, and budget
  - Funded by the commission annually

Stephen Rich asked if CT and NY had a similar structure to NJ where Rutgers was involved and if there was a sense of academic institutions direct ties to programs. Sarah responded that she didn't get a sense there was a connection with NY but believed that most of the CT surveillance was conducted by their Ag experiment station. Russell Hopping asked if the state department in CT was limited to mosquito control on state lands on the coast? Sarah noted that they haven't had to do larviciding over the past 20 years and if they had to do it, it would only be to state owned parks and coastal areas. Heidi Ricci asked if CT did adulticiding and Sarah stated she thought they did.

Diana transitioned to Brad Mitchell regarding FL. Brad asked to table that discussion to the next meeting but wanted to bring attention to a white paper from FL. Brad thought FL did a good job with their mission statement. It was noted that FL raised an issue that had not been discussed regarding economic development. For example, the Cape district in the past had made statements about the relationship between tourism and their mosquito control, and that might be something interesting to keep in mind for future conversations.

- Presentation on Colorado's Mosquito Control Program (Heidi Ricci)

Heidi noted that CO had a detailed technical memo with several resources and an ecological approach to mosquito management. Heidi Ricci commented that the mosquito population was increasing while other useful insects are decreasing, and it was noted that mosquitos bred readily in artificial habitats. Most predators and other helpful insects and fish needed higher quality habitats. This was a common theme across ecological management. CO did larval dips, trapping, and other monitoring of species in the wetlands. Heidi noted the role of natural predators in a diverse ecosystem suppress pest species like mosquitos and that they tended to be present but in lower numbers, and noted the technical review of scientific literature on BTI and noted toxicity to tadpoles. Heidi Ricci commented that they don't use adulticide in CO due to human health and efficacy concerns. CO was monitoring 500 sites that had thousands of biodiversity records. Higher aquatic biodiversity richness was correlated with lower mosquito larvae. The presence of aquatic life reduced abundance of larval and adult mosquitoes and the presence of adult dragonflies significantly reduced the presence of adult mosquitoes. It was noted that CO did not have EEE, just WNV, and they categorized breeding sites to tailor their responses. CO may use BTI on occasions in catch basin in low quality high breeding sites and they worked to improve habitat in high quality high breeding sites.

Richard Pollack mentioned that many of the MCDs in the state do pursue nonchemical management and environmental improvements. Richard also noted that a few of the key species of mosquitoes don't live in areas where fish and dragonflies are native. Heidi commented that an area of potential study was getting eels into the crypts and headwater areas where they can live. Brad Mitchell noted that introducing fish into a habitat where they are not found may pose an issue. Heidi Ricci clarified that she was not talking about introducing, but rather restoring a native species to an area.

Brad Mitchell noted that Gabrielle Sakolsky had a comment in the chat. The chat commentary recommended that people refer to the CO report and review the original publications referenced to ensure the information cited was taken in the correct context. It was noted that there are hyperlinks to the sources in the CO report. Heidi Ricci

commented that was a good point to make and referenced the American Mosquito Control Association's most recent guidelines. That document states that natural predators are not effective for mosquito control, but the only citation it provides to support that claim is a narrow study on purple martins from 1968. So it is important to go back to the original sources.

Diana shifted the meeting discussion to the questionnaire the subcommittee wanted to send to the MCD's. Diana shared her screen and the set of questions that were put together by Brad Mitchell. The questionnaire was broken out by salt marsh water management and adulticide. Brad noted the questionnaire focused on consistency across MCD's and identification of reasons for inconsistencies. Diana commented that she would be sending the content out to the group for review.

Heidi Ricci thanked Brad for his work and suggested asking if the MCDs work with restoration projects or conservation agencies related to salt marshes as she would be interested to know more. Brad noted that he was going to leave it more general but would add more if that was what the group wanted. It was noted that this questionnaire was to understand the decision-making and striking the balance between MCD decision making and central oversight decision making. The goal was not on effectiveness or efficacy, but rather to understand the process.

Diana noted that the questions would be sent to the MCD's during the week of 11/29. Heidi Ricci commented that she would like to also include the question regarding specific threshold for action and asking open ended questions on follow up measurement of efficacy. Brad agreed it would be useful to compare how the MCDs evaluate efficacy and it was probably appropriate for both marsh management and adulticiding. Stephen Rich noted that this underscored the difference between best practices and policy structure and wanted to make sure that people understood these were just case studies and didn't want people to be defending decisions. Brad noted he tried to do that and if individuals had suggestions about making this stronger or clearer, they should weigh in.

Diana discussed the upcoming meeting schedule. It was determined that there would be a quorum for the 12/23 subcommittee meeting and the suggestion was made to have the meeting at the scheduled date and time. Due to technical difficulties, the Zoom meeting unintentionally closed at 2:01pm for the entire subcommittee group and attendees. Diana Pietri closed out the meeting via e-mail and agreed to follow up with more details regarding information and the sharing of meeting materials.