



# Final Minutes

## US National Ramsar Committee Conference Call August 6, 2014

**Meeting was conducted via phone between 11:00 am – 12:30 on August 6, 2014**

**Members Participating:** William J. Mitsch, (Florida Gulf Coast Univ.), Chair; Suzanne Pittenger-Slear (Environmental Concern), Vice-Chair; Deb Hahn (AFWA), Secretary; Ralph Tiner (ASWM), Treasurer; Li Zhang, (Florida Gulf Coast Univ., lzhang@fgcu.edu), webmaster; John Overland, (Minnesota, [john.overland@state.mn.us](mailto:john.overland@state.mn.us)); Liz Donley, (TNC, [ldonley@swfrpc.org](mailto:ldonley@swfrpc.org)); Anne Birch, (TNC (for Jamie Boswell) [abirch@tnc.org](mailto:abirch@tnc.org)); Caitlin Lustic (TNC, Canaveral National Seashore, [clustic@tnc.org](mailto:clustic@tnc.org)); Jodie Toft (North Bay, Puget Sound, [jtoft@TNC.ORG](mailto:jtoft@TNC.ORG)); Olivia Smith (North Bay, Puget Sound, [oliviasmith23@hotmail.com](mailto:oliviasmith23@hotmail.com)); Boze Hancock (TNC, [bhancock@tnc.org](mailto:bhancock@tnc.org))

**Observers Participating:** Krishna Roy (USFWS)

**Call the meeting to Order:** Bill Mitsch, Chair, called the meeting to order.

**Meeting minutes:** Minutes from the last meeting will be approved at the November meeting.

1. Review of May 8 meeting – will finalize meeting minutes in November
2. Discussion of USNRC address and fiscal progress (Finding a home, an address, and a bank) – Suzanne – Did not find an organization to partner with for an address. We are going to set up a mailbox at a UPS store to have a Washington DC address. It is 1220 L Street, NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20005. We can have it forwarded to other locations when needed. There will also be a mailbox number. We will also open an account at a national bank so that there are convenient locations near Ralph and in Washington DC. We will deposit \$9,545.29 in the bank and send out membership notices.
3. Discussion of quarterly meeting schedule; e.g. Nov meeting in Florida – Bill – The meeting will be in Naples, Florida on November 18, 2014.
4. Outreach-Web page-Press Releases - Li Zhang; Deb Hahn; committee – Li has updated the website. The address is <http://www.usnrc.net/>. We also have a facebook page and encourage everyone to like USNRC on facebook. We wrote an article about Ramsar for the Society of Wetland Scientists newsletter.
5. Summary of Discussions with Chris Briggs, Secretary General, Ramsar (June 6) - Krishna Roy – Chris had a busy visit. They started with a meeting with the International office of the EPA. They discussed the issues within Skagon Bay. They met with Assistant Secretary of Conservation and Management of US Department of Commerce and Bryan Arroyo, Assistant Director International Affairs USFWS. A reception was held at the Organization of American States. The day was successful to get the word out to folks in

the US about Ramsar and also to highlight synergies between Ramsar and US partners. Chris would like to see Ramsar be more than just designated wetlands. Krishna will share the press release.

6. Update on RIS form and other issues with Ramsar applications - Krishna Roy (USFWS) and others – Sites should still use the old form. The Secretariat is behind in getting the new form out.

7. Overall specific initiatives on Ramsar site designations – Door Peninsula Coastal Wetlands submitted a completed Ramsar application. Another site, Chiwaukee Illinois Beach Lake Plain, is in the process of finalizing their application. USFWS will send the final application to the USNRC officers for review.

Kakogan – still needs a letter

Potential Future Sites -

**North Bay, Puget Sound, Washington** – largest population of native Olympia oysters. It has been used by native American tribes for centuries and continues to be used by them.

**Charlotte Harbor region, SW FL** – It is a complicated area with both private and public ownership. They also have aquatic preserves already designated. They are looking to include land that abuts the preserves for the Ramsar sites. They are looking at bivalve reefs and about 10 other Ramsar wetland types. 106,000 hectares with 5 management entities and about 25 different management areas. They have an oyster restoration and management plan for Charlotte Harbor. The site meets all of the Ramsar criteria. They are working to develop the application.

**Mosquito Lagoon, FL** – It is on the eastern side. They looked at the watershed to determine what lands to include in the Ramsar site application. The total area is 32,000 hectares. There are 3 to 4 different management agencies. The bivalve reefs are important to birds and threatened and endangered species. They will be meeting with the management agencies at the end of August. They have confirmed that they meet 5 of the Ramsar criteria. They will most likely meet more once they talk to the management agencies.

**State of Minnesota** – John Overland presented that the State of Minnesota is just getting started to look into what sites could be candidates, who would be involved and how the application process works. His agency might be the most appropriate as they are responsible for Clean Water Act regulations related to wetlands in the state.

**Ohio Wetlands Association** – Bill presented on behalf of the OWA. They have developed a list of 15 wetlands that are potential Ramsar sites.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm (ET).**

**Respectfully submitted by Deb Hahn, Secretary**