

LFICD Board Meeting
Oct 31, 2023
Virtual Zoom meeting

Minutes:

1. Call to order: 3:00

Present: Christine Chapline, Bob Cluss, Dinah Bain, David Zarowin, Craig Zondag, guest: Tom Vanacore

2. Discuss season 2024 based on the results of season 2023 and strategize on how to deal with the 2024 season.

End of season notes:

Craig collected and identified a total of 128,473 mosquitoes in light traps, the largest yearly number collected by far, and comprised of 24 different mosquito species. We collected as many mosquitoes in the LFICD district as the VAA collected across the State.

The major species found was *Ochlerotatus trivittatus* (woodland, meadow and swamp), 40.8% from traps all over the district; the Hemingway Rd. trap was the worst by far. 8,000 mosquitoes were collected there in one night. The homeowner did a barrier treatment of the property, but it got washed away by the next rain and the mosquitoes came back.

There were less *Oc. trivittatus* in the floodplain area traps; most of the mosquitoes collected in the floodplain were *Aedes vexans* or *Culex restuans* (a container species, but were clearly coming from the swamp).

Tom Vanacore commented that when he was FC, he also collected huge numbers of *Oc. Trivittatus*, too many to be coming from upland areas. He was finding them in deep columns of water in the main floodplain and in the traps. He also found *Culex* in the ditches. He thinks all 3 species could be coming from the floodplain.

Craig: The valley was in high flood for over 30 days, but hatches were too amorphous and there was too much open acreage that had no activity to justify a call for an aerial treatment, given the Grant Agreement parameters of only treating areas with high enough larval counts. Spot treatments were done by hand in small areas when larva were found. If we had had the option of a drone, larger edges in those areas of high activity would have been treated.

Lessons learned and plans for the 2024 season:

-Given that the concentrations of larval activity were so spread out argues for the need for a wide spread treatment, and it would have been judicious had we been able to call for an aerial treatment. Tom V. commented that he found that when the floodplain was treated widely, with enough larvicide, the larvicide found its way to the shallow eddies where the mosquitoes were breeding.

-Given the high mosquito numbers in this year's trap data, we know that the likely concentration of over-wintering eggs is especially high and that we will need to be more aggressive next spring. We will plan to treat with an aerial treatment as soon as the conditions warrant in the spring.

-We would like to plan on the possibility of needing two aerial larvicide treatments next season, anticipating exponentially higher numbers of mosquitoes. Since two treatments will blow the entirety of our carryover for the following year, we need to ask the member towns for higher contributions from them. The Select Boards of the 3 towns need to be notified as they plan their budgets. The Towns' contributions have never been raised since the beginning of the LFICD in 2006.

3. Make a list of items to discuss with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets (VAAFAM) for 2024.

-We need to make the case to the VAA that next year we will need to be proactive and aggressive in treatment. After doing the IPM work over the last 8-10 years, we have learned what conditions result in a major hatch, even when we don't find "treatable" larval #s everywhere. Based on the experience from 2005-2006, we can assume that next season we will experience exponential growth in mosquito numbers. We need to discuss with the VAA the option for an area wide aerial treatment after any large precipitation event when conditions are there for a major hatch, regardless of whether we find contiguous areas of high larval activity.

-Discuss with the VAA our belief that the State needs to take over mosquito management for the whole state and the VAA needs to work with the legislators on this point. There needs to be more State money allocated for mosquito control. Having arbitrary districts doesn't make sense. We're getting complaint calls for help from people outside of the district. Also, the LFICD shouldn't be a Municipal District for funding purposes, funding should be a State responsibility and not the responsibility of random districts. Much more money needs to be allocated at the State level.

-Point out the health concerns and economic concerns (outdoor jobs, tourism and recreation) from not being able to get the mosquitoes under control. From a mosquito treatment policy perspective, the distinction between health and nuisance mosquitoes shouldn't be a factor. The mosquito species we are finding in abundance can be vectors (Culex restuarans and Och. Trivittatus). From a climate perspective, our climate is heading toward that of much more mosquito friendly and the mosquito problems and health effects and quality of life from more vectors are only going to get worse.

Adjourn: 5:15