

Western Regional Panel Monthly Executive Committee Conference Call

Thursday January 16th, 2014; 10 AM MDT

Present: Elizabeth Brown (Chair), Beth Bear (ViceChair), Allison Begley, Stephen Phillips, Tom McMahon, Bob McMahon, John Wullschleger and Leah Elwell (Coordinator).

Minutes

- A) Approval of November Call Minutes - Leah – Stephen moves to approve, all in favor and none apposed
- B) Discussion recap on SAH! Conference call and outreach forecast – Elizabeth - what did others think about the SAH! call in December? Right now there is an interesting situation where Wildlife Forever (WF) holds a contract but it does not have funding; they are being hired to do a variety of different things under that banner. The WRP did submit the letter to ANSTF and several follow-ups, as well as request the ANSTF respond to the letter the WRP submitted and which routes through leadership. Moving forward and hearing through the grapevine Joe Starinckek (USFWS) is being assigned several tasks such as drafting a 5 year strategic plan. At the Fall ANSTF meeting Elizabeth felt it was clear that WRP wanted to be involved but are we being included? What is next and what is the ask? Also putting current status of SAH! in context with other WRP priorities where does SAH! fit in for priority? Do we need broader discussion and a priority objective for 2015 to address SAH! and education? Stephen – one question remains is will WF receive funding in current budget? Elizabeth - If they get funding it will be put toward updating the website (www.CleanDrainDry.org) and will move what is relevant from protectyourwaters.net and archive protectyourwaters.net. The updated website would also be the educational clearinghouse nationally. WF is asking for 150K, Stephen – branding is the one thing that moves forward, is Joe the liaison on that (yes – Elizabeth), our action is to make sure the website goes up, Beth – agree as well that we need to support the web effort, Elizabeth – she can try to stay plugged in, but who can be the volunteer for the ANSTF Outreach and Education committee. Beth - volunteered and also Allison could provide back up. All agreed that the priority moving forward for 2014 is the website and providing available products.
- C) Legislation update - Stephen – Water Resource Development Act, hoping to see a conference report shortly and then it will move quickly. There is money for AIS in WRDA. In recently passed Interior budget there is \$2 million for Quagga/Zebra in West but not sure how that will be allocated, USFWS will clarify in the coming weeks, not heard if there will be another \$1 million grant program but it may be possible. National Park Service has a separate \$2 million for QZ prevention/containment in west; John –the intention for this money would likely be Lower Colorado. Healthy Habitats - no new news, and have not seen any information besides waiting for the current budget to be settled before the bill is introduced. Bishop's (UT) staff was looking for sponsors. PSMFC has provided some language to Thompson's (CA) staff for putting together an amendment to a NISA type bill. Hopeful there will be another AIS caucus hearing; Ted Thayer in discussion with Rep Thompson's staff for possible visit to DC the last week of February. In coming week will find out more to determine what priorities are for February hill visits.

Discussing a potential meeting with Secretary of Interior or other top level staff, and Tahoe considering writing a letter suggesting cooperative needs of the region.

- D) List serv update – Leah – Currently still having state of California host the WRP list serv free of charge. There are other options out there that might be feasible. Leah would like to test one option that is free but would give management to the WRP directly. She will report back to Ex Comm.
- E) Coordinating the coordination - draft priorities to PNWER/WGA – Elizabeth – Western Governors Association and Pacific North West Economic Region are the two main groups that are working hard on AIS and both have come to us asking for WRP priorities. There are a few things that are somewhat universal. One of our main priorities is increased funding for state plans, funding QZAP, and the reauthorization of NISA. Stephen – in 2013 as part of our NISA group a briefing sheet prioritized several items: the QZAP, state plan funding and, regulatory and policy changes needed for the Quagga/Zebra listing or add Quagga mussel species to list of injurious wildlife. The review of on/off federal lands and all of the AIS regulations of federal agencies, if WRP should look for opportunities to provide assistance in moving this along, it is important that this moves from the information gathering stage to the action stage in a timely manner. John – just on the federal lands committee call and did take the opportunity to point out great efforts of the states. Allison – how does this exercise fit with PNWER latest push to hire a coordinator? Stephen –There is a need to reduce any potential duplication. With PNWR they do have a lot of political influence in the US and Canada. For WRP to draft a letter to WGA/PNWER with priorities is well timed. In the US, the WRP is the group that is written in federal legislation and has representative from the western US and Canada for western coordination. There may be a need to gather upper level WGA/PNWR/WRP and others like 100th Meridian Basin Teams together. Elizabeth – agrees that we do need to get together; Stephen – more like an executive session (not to have all the interests related to AIS in the west); we want to set up a working relationship, Allison – the outlines of the PNWER coordinator profile mimics QZAP, what the PNWR group feels that is missing is the legislative action, spoke to MT PNWR rep to see if there a way engage the legislators. Leah – draft letter in the next month to send to PNWER and WGA, Elizabeth – will there be travel support from the WRP to commit to go to face to face meetings when needed? Stephen and Allison – yes
- F) All Member Call March 6th – agenda discussion - Leah – agenda items to include committee updates, legislative update, SAH! update, input on annual meeting topics, approval of Annual meeting minutes, and budget update. Leah will draft agenda and circulate to Ex Comm.
- G) WRP Committee/Working Group Updates – Roundtable for Liaisons
 - a. Annual Meeting 2014 Committee– Leah Elwell – has done a hotel search and located a reasonable facility that will honor our government rate – Crowne Plaza Downtown. Will move forward with soliciting sponsors for catering. ISAN will accept sponsorships and make payment to hotel. Ex Comm advised Elwell to move forward in securing the Crowne Plaza location with agreement from the Gulf Panel to ensure that we have meeting space. The next committee meeting will be February 19th at 2 pm MST.

- b. Building Consensus Workgroup – Elizabeth – model law is on the street for review with deadline for comments Feb 15, John - federal group met this morning – slowly but in the process of sending out a questionnaire to identify perception of their authorities for moving AIS. A summary will be the product for the ANSTF spring meeting. Elizabeth – state coordinator meeting Denver II meeting in Feb, Stephen, Leah and Lisa have been working on the agenda. Good news; as a result of the Denver I workshop, Utah did several changes to their legislation to mirror the new listing criteria, Elizabeth/Colorado has approval to do the same soon will be on the new standard on Feb 1.
- c. Coastal Committee — Chair Sonia Gorgula has been unavailable due to work visa issues and is to be back at work at the end of January. Leah – in early December several members of the Coastal Committee (Kevin Anderson, Glenn Dolphin), Elwell, Brown, Peg Brady NOAA, and members of the NE Panel discussed the possibility of a workshop on invasive tunicates for 2014. NOAA has agreed in some form to support a workshop of this type. The Coastal Committee has been charged with developing a draft agenda and proposal of need to be presented to Brady at NOAA. The Committee has been developing it and the goal is to get it back to Brady by end of January.
- d. Lab Protocols and Standards Workgroup– Stephen Phillips – no new news, ISAC will be meeting this spring, so likely that it will be brought up there.
- e. Membership Committee– Leah Elwell – the committee met in early December to discuss the identified membership entities that are currently vacant. Elwell is communicating with ANSTF (Mangin and Maclean) to secure appropriate members.
- f. Recreational Ballast Tank Research Workgroup – Stephen Phillips – The contractor University of Nevada Reno has tested preliminary results, and it looks like the units work and they remove a significant amount of veligers. He will have more informed update following workgroup conference call today.
- g. “Fiscal Sustainability” workgroup – Leah – The committee met in early December and discussed ideas for achieving some sort of mechanism to handle finances. The committee tasked ISAN to develop a briefing paper on steps to achieve non-profit status. The next committee meeting will be January 29th at 1pm MST.

H) ANSTF Workgroup Updates – Roundtable for Liaisons

- a. Ballast Discharge – TBD – Leah will double back with Susan Mangin to determine if there are needs for WRP to provide input.
- b. Lionfish – John Wullschleger – new draft of plan is out for review
- c. QZAP – Stephen Phillips – continues to be mentioned in the appropriation bills, because of funding mentioned in budget, he will contact Susan Mangin on holding a QZAP Steering Committee call.
- d. Snakehead – John Wullschleger – met in December with final revisions, assuming that plan will be approved at spring ANSTF
- e. Strategic Plan / Action Plan – TBD
- f. Education and Outreach - Beth - Elwell will communicate with Susan Mangin to get Beth Bear placed on the committee communication list.

I) Announcements – ALL