

Western Regional Panel
Executive Committee Conference Call
November 1, 2007
Draft Minutes

Members Present: Eileen Ryce, Karen McDowell, Andy Burgess, John Wullschleger, Jason Goeckler, Amy Ferriter, Kevin Anderson, Lynn Schlueter, Tina Proctor

Members Absent: Billie Kerans

Next conference call: December 13

1. Proposals and publication update

The final cost of projects is:

Colorado ANS Management Plan	\$9,000
Master Gardeners	\$8,050 (\$7,000 + \$1,050 overhead)
Flowering Rush	\$10,750
Total	\$27,800

The remaining \$1,200 will be used along with other administrative funds to edit and print more copies of the Threats to the West brochures. Karen, Eileen and John agreed to serve on a committee to update the brochure. Tina will send a message to the membership asking if others would like to help on this committee.

2. ANSTF meeting

Eileen and Tina will be attending the ANTF meeting next week. The Panel Principals will be meeting Monday afternoon, Nov. 5 and will be discussing the State Management Plan Survey (that our members commented on through e-mail and then discussed at the Hawaii meeting). Attached is the result of the survey. We will also be discussing the USGS experts database and improved communication among the regional panels.

The EC discussed the decontamination proposal prepared by Jason. EC members made comments. Kevin suggested that firefighting be added to the associated activities. Tina sent the EC the NOAA "Disease and Introduced Species Decontamination Protocol that they use in the marine environment at Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument" (Northwest Hawaiian Islands). Jason noted that the Kansas City district of the ACOE has assigned a staff member to work on ANS issues with Jason. They are now embracing decontamination and it is a positive move. He doesn't know if this is a result of the WRP decontamination discussion at the ANSTF meeting in May.

3. Presentation to Western States Water Council, Nov. 15, 2007

Tina has been asked to make a presentation to the Western States Water Council, Water Resources Committee on November 15 in Phoenix. This is in response to a meeting she had with Linda Drees (NPS) and John Brenner at the Western Governors Association regarding a partnership among the three entities on ANS. Tina will let the EC know the results of this discussion. The draft agenda can be found at <http://www.westgov.org/wswc/155mtg.html>

4. 100th Meridian Initiative meeting, Nov. 27-28, Las Vegas, NV

The annual (or almost annual) meeting of the 100th Meridian Initiative will be held at the Clarion Hotel, 325 East Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, Nevada on Nov. 27-28. The draft agenda can be found at <http://www.100thmeridian.org>. Eileen and Amy attended the Columbia River Team (of the Initiative) table top rapid response exercise. One lesson learned was how unprepared they are. Some of the states are concerned about the structure and the use of an Incident Command System for a long term response. The plan has morphed into a more hierarchical structure than it was at the beginning. Paul Heimowitz will be giving a report on the exercise at the ANSTF meeting.

5. South Dakota – ANS Management Plan

Andy reported that South Dakota is planning their first meeting to beginning preparing their State ANS Management Plan. Jason will be attending and sharing his experiences in Kansas. About 30 are planning to attend the organizational meeting.

State Management Plan Survey 2007 Western Regional Panel summary of responses

The ANS Task Force requested the panels to discuss three questions associated with State Management Plans. This is a summary of the WRP membership responses.

Question 1: Do you have any comments on the guidelines for the development of ANS Management Plans provided by the ANS Task Force?

Summary of responses: Overall those states that have used the guidelines found them helpful. However, some thought that the guidelines did need updating. The minimum criteria need to be updated and clarified. Some want to see the guidelines be more specific requesting more streamlined plans and that the states should be encouraged to write shorter plans and address more specifically what the state can and can not accomplish, specifically how the plan will be implemented and how the outcomes will be evaluated. There were some concerns that the plan reporting system does not adequately address outcome evaluation.

Question 2: Should there be more management on a regional basis?

Summary of responses: All of those whom responded stated that regional management is a good idea; however, concerns were raised about funding and how regional management will be incorporated with state level management. Adequate funding first has to be available for states to adequately implement their own plans however, regional management is an efficient way to manage ANS issues since neighboring states often share ANS or vectors. The overall response was that regional management should be explored more once more stable funding is achieved for the states.

Question 3: How should ANS funds for state management plans be administered?

Summary of responses: All responders agreed that funds should be divided equally; however, funds spent should be more evaluated and reports should demonstrate that the funds were spent on good, evaluated, ANS management.

The discussion also included the following: With the current level of funds available states should receive an equal share of funds, states should not receive funds at the expense of others, if funds were allocated based on need many states with limited budgets and political “clout” would lose out. Current funding is inadequate; as more funds become available and states have adequate funds then additional funds can be used on either regional projects or on merit based projects. States with new plans are in no more need than those with established plans. Others suggested that additional funds be available for emergency situations, such as the implementation of rapid response plans; however, this also seems beyond the current scope of available funds. One suggestion was made to divide funds with 50% to existing plans (equal share), 25% to new state plans, and 25% for emergency situations for states with existing plans.

