

Western Regional Panel Monthly Executive Committee Conference Call Minutes

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Participants: Executive Committee Members: Karen McDowell (chair), Kevin Anderson, Bob McMahon, Stephen Phillips, John Wullschleger; Coordinator: Joanne Grady

1) Annual Meeting Update - Larry via email report

After an arduous negotiation involving Lindy Highman and myself with the Hilton contracting staff, I signed a reasonable contract today with the downtown Salt Lake City Hilton, 255 South West Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84101; 801.328.2000 or 800.445.8667 (800.445.HILTONS) as the location where UDWR will host the 2012 WRP meeting on September 4-7, 2012. There were a number of negotiated issues, but the stickiest issue was a performance clause that could have required us to pay \$13,410 up front for the sleeping rooms or the difference in cost if they were not all rented, plus another \$3,200 for food/beverage services. I got the performance clause over the sleeping rooms removed, so the financial obligation is only for the food/beverage, and UDWR will fund that cost.

Reservations need to be made under the code **Western Region Panel Meeting** or Group Code **WRP**, and our block of 55 rooms will be released on Monday, August 13, 2012. So, get your reservation done soon. After the release date, rooms may not be available. Room rates, exclusive of state and local taxes (12.6%), are as follows: \$90 single, \$105 double, \$120 triple and \$135 quadruple. The rates are valid 3 days prior and 3 days after our event.

We get wireless internet codes for all of our participants, too. Parking will be \$4 per 16/hr day or \$13 overnight, unless you use valet parking at \$16 per evening.

We will use two rooms on the 4th (1-5 PM) and one large room on the 5th & 6th (8 AM - 5 PM), followed by a morning field trip on the 7th.

There will be another \$1,200 contract for webex capability and microphone coverage during our meeting--Lindy is working on that now.

The agenda is our next hurdle to tackle, and I will soon set a telephone conference date to bring progress to that discussion.

Discussion: What does "present" mean for voting? Can members vote in advance? Can members vote via chat on webex? Look at procedures & have suggestion for next ExCom meeting.

2) ANSTF Meeting Update – Larry via email report

The subject meeting was well attended; however, the west was only represented by me as the WRP representative, likely due to the meeting's occurrence in MD. (Eileen, representing Montana and the Missouri Panel, and Stephanie, representing BLM, and Joe, representing BOR, each speak out on western issues, too.) I am confident that the official meeting notes will be released soon, which will portray the complete doings of the ANSTF meeting.

Regarding the WRP's report of activity, it was well received and I punctuated the report with a couple of specific, real-life and contemporary AIS activities in the west.

Regarding the WRP's three recommendations and specifically our topical issue of continued funding for state plans' implementation and supporting funds for ANSTF panels, every panel made a nearly identical recommendation/plea. Also, I reminded folks about the assistant AG conference planned for August and invited those with legislative and legal authority to attend. And the recommendation to revitalize the NZMS working group resulted in two motions, both of which passed as follows: (1) Update the NZMS management plan, however,

it was unclear regarding funding support to accomplish the activity; and (2) reinstate the annual NZMS Conference became reinstate a communication protocol for sharing NZMS information (e.g., Webinar)--again funding was not clearly identified. In summary the WRP achieved ANSTF support for our NZMS recommendations, but no funding was identified, which means we are on our own.

There was considerable discussion about federal funding support for AIS issues in the upcoming FY13 period, and it looks bleak for most, but not all federal agencies. Unfortunately, the federal agencies most involved with passing down operational AIS funds are anticipating significant cuts, some possibly to zero. As I previously pointed out, every panel recommended continued funding support, but I didn't see any ray of bright hope. AFWA, although not alone, continues to be the best and most successful lobby for congressional funds--if there is an AFWA god, we should all pay homage at its alter, otherwise AIS programs are likely in for a rough ride.

Thanks for the opportunity to attend the ANSTF, representing the WRP and UDWR.

Bullets provided by Susan Mangin of ANSTF:

- The letter to NISC initiated by the WRP recommendation is in the review process.
- The letter to USGS about the importance of the NAS database to the ANSTF and panels is in the review process
- The ANSTF voted to approve the 2013-1017 Strategic Plan and to establish an ad-committee to work on a step-down operational plan. The Strategic Plan will be placed in the Federal Register for comment.
- Additional information is being added to the recreational guidelines, which will be brought before the ANSTF in November for approval.
- The Snakehead and Lion Fish Plans are being developed.
- NISC will be looking for volunteers to help with next year's NISAW and also for new ideas for the week's events. I'll send out an e-mail to the ANSTF and panels as soon as NISC is ready to gear up for next year.
- The ANSTF co-chairs and exec. sec will meet with the national LCC coordinator to discuss opportunities to coordinate with LCCs.
- ANSTF and panels members are encouraged to contact Bill Bolen, EPA, about ICS training needs.
- Approved the establishment of an ad-hoc committee for New Zealand mud snails

Invite state AIS coordinators to participate on the the NZMS committee – start with Allen Pleus

3) Ballast Tanks Project Update –Stephen

Proposal to Bonneville Power grant program – passed first phase and working on second phase proposal. Should hear about funding by June. Working with Master Craft personnel on developing a unit for ballast tanks. Tentative plans are to test demo units at Lake Mead Hatchery, Tennessee and Florida. Would like to be on WRP annual meeting agenda for discussion because there's no process/agency in place for design for freshwater technology. This is a good public/private partnership to help watercraft inspection programs.

4) WRP Coordinator RFP– Joanne

Four folks have submitted queries expressing interests but no applications in yet. The deadline of May 15th is next week. Committee will meet tomorrow at 1 pm MT (12 pm Western) to go over scoring criteria.

5) Update on WRP Letter to States Re Funding – Karen

Karen thought this had already gone out. She will send out the letter today.

6) Update on ANSTF Quagga/Zebra Recommendation Letter – Karen

WRP via Karen informed Susan we had no comments/edits to draft letter she provided. The letter is under review at ANSTF

7) Assistant Attorney General Workshop – Joanne

The workshop will be held two days in Phoenix during the week of Aug. 20th.

Grant funds for State AIS coordinator, LE Supervisor, Asst Attorney General from each state. Karen will call Susan Ellis to determine if she's willing to go. Kevin has put his request in, but hasn't heard back.

Need to get letter of invitation out to AIS coordinators ASAP. Paula Cotter of NAAG can help us with identifying folks in the AG realm. We still need to figure out who our LE contacts will be. Intention is to have state AIS coordinators (w/ AGs?) identify the most appropriate person for their state.

8) NOAA Recommendations – Kevin (covered 1st)

WRP received request from ANSTF to give feedback to NOAA. They are having an AIS workshop in June in Maryland and need to find out the scope/need for AIS issues across the regions. Kevin polled coastal community (with no response) and he filled out the questions. Linda Shaw of NOAA will be attending workshop and polled Alaska separately.

ExCom will mark up last draft and return to Karen for compilation today. We need to submit to NOAA by tomorrow. Should list examples of marine AIS such as Undaria, green crab, mitten crab, tunicates, etc. Suggestion to enhance QZAP information in response too. Note that we're trying to target our response to marine issues. Big deals are QZAP and salmon/steelhead. NOAA does not have an AIS program, they point to Sea Grant as their program. States need partnership funding to take on their duties. (Some of this is in our current response.) NOAA has a big research arm we're not tapping either.

Karen will consolidate comments and send out to ExCom. Joanne to submit to NOAA. Kevin to submit to coastal committee. Kudos to Kevin for the time/energy to craft the WRP response.

9) Committee reporting update – Karen

Karen submitted the spreadsheet to ExCom with committees/chairs/etc. Send any updates to committees to her.

Next Call: Scheduled Thursday, June 14, 2012 at 10 am MT, 9 am PT, 11 am Central