

Western Regional Panel Monthly Executive Committee Conference Call

May 20, 2024, at 2:00 pm mountain time

Attended by: John Wullschleger, Stephen Phillips, Robert Walters, Josh Leonard, Dennis Zabaglo, Barak Shemai and Leah Elwell.

Minutes

- A) Approval of April minutes. Stephen motioned to approve, and Dennis seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved.
- B) Panel Business
 - WRP use of additional funding (questions below were posed during the Panel Principles meeting in May) – Discussion of how additional funding to the panels would be off-set in the future if it became a reality. During the ANSTF meeting it was noted that current ANSTF co-chair David Miko encouraged panels to continue to request additional funding. Stephen and Dennis suggested adding information to a future NISAW briefing sheet that panel funding is a priority. Also highlighting specific actions like panel outcomes of Building Consensus and WID app as models of success.
 - Grass carp - next steps for multi panel recommendations or follow up. Extensive discussion during the ANSTF however there are not clear next steps for the WRP to pursue with the exception of support of other panel recommendations.
 - Letters of support for grants / policy check in. Because there have been multiple requests for letters of support, Leah will post the SOP that outlines the general policy and share with membership.
- C) Legislative update – Stephen Phillips
 - WRDA 2024 has cleared the Senate where this version includes 65/35 cost share language. This bill has a good chance of passing. There is a significant section on reporting for monitoring, control and eradication of species which could be a result of the GAO report.
 - Explore Act is out of the House, 75/25 BOR cost-share, and language on federal waters access closures in coordination with state partners. There still is Senate bill to work through, and Manchin/Barraso bill does not address federal access portion.
 - USCG bill was passed out of House, and includes language on ballast water data sharing, and another bill makes the CG share ballast data with the states.
 - Safe (state) Boating Act - allows states to charge AIS fee, if it is part of the fee with the license it is okay, but if separate fee USCG is pushing back and requiring an option to opt out currently.
 - Federal Workers Back to the Office bill has been introduced for accountability but may affect hiring in remote capacity.
 - Appropriations process has begun.
- D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons
 - Annual Meeting Committee - Leah Elwell – 2024 progress: many abstracts have been received and several sponsor commitments filled. PSMFC is planning to support the meeting TBD. 2025 thoughts: Leah has connected with Elizabeth on the 2025 meeting and plan to assemble a WRP-MRBP small discussion late in the summer.

- Coastal Committee – Co-Chairs Chris Scianni and Christine Moffitt; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons. Looking for funding for the development of white papers on off-shore wind and biofouling. Pacific Ballast and Biofouling Group has updated their name.
- Decontamination Think Tank Committee – Chair Robert Walters. On their most recent meeting they addressed feedback from GLP on decon procedure. WRP is still waiting on ANSTF for the preface which will address the majority of the comments. Once the preface is added to the procedure, then WRP will send it up to ANSTF for approval. Think Tank will take a hiatus and regroup in the fall.
- Field Sampling and Monitoring Committee – Chair Kate Dukette; Tom Woolf liaison. Meeting scheduled this week.
- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wullschleger. Leah and John will discuss the next steps next week.
- Outreach Committee – Chair Monica McGarrity; Barak Shemai Liaison. Met last week and received updates on the two QZAP funded projects; Elizabeth Brown on social media toolkit, and Zach/Wildlife Forever progress on Expect to Inspect platform which is a web interface mapping tool of all cleaning stations, decon stations, inspection stations, and regulations.

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF May meeting recap.
 - Query of other tribal participation among other panels indicates that all are in a similar situation with limited participation.
 - The ANSTF will likely form a Genetics Committee that will address genetic biocontrol and other genetic topics.
 - Amanda Garcia, USCG, posed the creation of a VIDA Intergovernmental Response Framework. There are still many unanswered details but more information to come.
 - The WRP's recommendation in working with DOT is resulting in their agency exploring the best POC. WRP will likely connect directly with DOT to provide more feedback on suggested need for outreach on trailered watercraft.
- Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Participation Discussion
 - Prevention - Chair Joseph Kreiger, NOAA; Barak Shemai Liaison. No new information.
 - Early Detection and Rapid Response - Chair Wes Daniels, USGS; John Wullschleger Liaison. Rapid response plan template nearing completion.
 - Control and Restoration - Chair Kim Bogenschutz, Iowa; Dennis Zabaglo Liaison.
 - EGC working group has been suggested to facilitated plan implementation however there is no USFWS capacity for lead. However, an informal Pacific EGC technical group exists.
 - NZMS plan nearing submission.
 - Research - Chair Susan Pasko, USFWS; John Wullschleger Liaison.
 - Education and Outreach – Chair Tim Campbell, Wisconsin Sea Grant; Monica McGarrity Liaison.

F) Coordinating the Coordination Update (including tribal activities)

- DOI Mussel Group meeting – the QZAP 2.0 progress report was shared with the group.
- Inclusion of panel support in the Blue Ribbon Commission; how do we get that document to have traction?

- WISCE – a suggestion to EDRR Framework folks could a team that could be deployed for containment until resources were in place. Refuges have strike teams already, could these be used for other reasons?
- Bighead Carp were found in Arvada municipal stormwater pond, Colorado. NBS introduced for algae control experiment and claimed that carp were removed. Earlier in May an angler caught 46 lb. fish. No carp have been found in nearby waters.

G) Announcements – ALL

Follow- up on recommendation regarding DOT

Sounds like DOT is figuring out the who, what, and how for the recommendation. What you your preferred path forward - so you want me to see what questions they have and forward them to you for response?

Or would it be easier to set up a call so that they can ask the questions directly and see if we can figure who should be involved moving forward.

Questions posed during All Panels Meeting (May 7) related to

On increase funding and “raising panel awareness”

- If the panel had an additional \$10,000, how would the extra funds be used. How about if it was an additional \$100,000?
- How would this work help move the needle for invasive species management at the national level?
- Why are the regional panels the best positioned to accomplish this work?
- What are the best products / tools to communicate these messages, who should they be communicated to?