

Western Regional Panel Monthly Executive Committee Conference Call

June 24, 2024, at 1:00 pm mountain time

Present: Tom Woolf, John Wullschleger, Stephen Phillips, Josh Leonard, Robert Walters, Vanessa Salazar, Dennis Zabaglo, and Leah Elwell.

Minutes

- A) Approval of May minutes. Stephen motioned to approve, and John seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved.
- B) Panel Business
 - No new items for discussion
- C) Legislative update – Stephen Phillips
 - House version of WRDA is underway. The Senate released their version of WRDA in which there are changes to the cost share of 65 to 35 for the Watercraft Inspection Decontamination and Rapid Response sections only. On the House side there is an attempt to get all APC-WIC sections (4 total) which would add monitoring and contingency planning to decrease the cost share amounts.
 - Appropriations – Will begin in the next couple of weeks. The appropriation amount for WRDA was cut 50% last year. The hope is that it will be kept at \$9M. USACE is asking for it to be zeroed out because spending has not kept up with appropriations. However, if it is zeroed out, funding may not be easily restored.
 - EXPLORE ACT – This bill includes the 75/25 BOR cost share for WID. This bill is moving on the Senate side which still has the limited language about launching on federal waters. If it goes to conference will have to work to make sure the House bill does not include this language.
 - For the basins, WRDA funding contracts are in motion with PSMFC.
- D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons
 - Annual Meeting Committee - Leah Elwell – 2024 progress and 2025 next steps; Leah shared a draft version of the agenda for any general comments. The planning team is working to finalize all the speakers. There were more abstract submissions than spaces for presentations. Josh reminded prioritization for in person speakers. Stephen suggested perhaps a poster session maybe during social hour to allow speakers that cannot present in the main agenda. Tom suggested this could be an offer to the sponsors to share during a poster session as well. So far there have been multiple sponsors that have provided funds, some are still deciding. Leah will follow up with all for finalization. Leah will open registration in July and will circulate an agenda at-a-glance for travel requests very soon. For the 2025 meeting, Leah and Elizabeth will plan for August meet and greet for both panels.
 - Coastal Committee – Co-Chairs Chris Scianni and Christine Moffitt; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons. No new information.
 - Decontamination Think Tank Committee – Chair Robert Walters. No meeting in the summer.
 - Field Sampling and Monitoring Committee – Chair Kate Dukette; Tom Woolf liaison. Will meet tomorrow. The latest draft is being reviewed and will be discussed during that meeting. The goal is to have the draft ready by October.

- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wullschleger. The plan is to take a look at the bylaws and membership application to determine if there are any changes needed related to Tribes. The committee will meet in July. CSKT sent a letter indicating that they are interested in a seat if something is available. Leah will follow-up with CSKT. Leah and John have identified other WRP members for participating in the committee to work on tasks. Leah will contact others to join the committee.
- Outreach Committee – Chair Monica McGarrity; Barak Shemai Liaison. They will be meeting next week.

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF Follow-Up on Recommendations – DOT etc. WRP is waiting for follow up from DOT and/or Susan on next steps. Dennis will follow up with Lisa regarding the transport email.
- Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Participation Discussion
 - Prevention - Chair Joseph Kreiger, NOAA; Barak Shemai Liaison. No new news
 - Early Detection and Rapid Response - Chair Wes Daniels, USGS; John Wullschleger Liaison. The plan template is almost done. Close to being given to ANSTF.
 - Control and Restoration - Chair Kim Bogenschutz, Iowa; Dennis Zabaglo Liaison. Have not met since May.
 - Research - Chair Susan Pasko, USFWS; John Wullschleger Liaison. No new news
 - Education and Outreach – Chair Tim Campbell, Wisconsin Sea Grant; Monica McGarrity Liaison. No new news.

F) Coordinating the Coordination Update (including tribal activities)

- WAFWA – Josh went in early June to present on the hatchery AIS protocol. WAFWA will investigate a briefing paper. The WAFWA AIS Committee Chair, Jim Fredricks will meet with the president of WAFWA to see what they will do to adopt it. Training for hatchery inspections is the next step but bandwidth is needed to develop training. WAFWA was supportive of training in some way. Hosting? funding? How do we help off-set the financial burden of AIS in private hatchery? Maybe the USFWS RR fund could be a mechanism but may need to have state sponsor.
- WISCE – mostly still focused on data sharing of eDNA discussions.
- BC-MT Cross Border rapid response exercise in BC last week. This was hosted by PSMFC as a CRB rapid response exercise.
- DOI Mussel MOU group met, and a working group has been formed to work on the equipment caching (with Mark Frey) and others to assist on that front. Funding has yet to be identified for this. Different programs (states) have different needs/approaches to caches.

G) Announcements – ALL