

Western Regional Panel Executive Committee November Conference Call

November 25, 2024, at 1:00 pm mountain time

Attended by: Josh Leonard, Vanessa Salazar, Robert Walters, John Wullschleger, Stephen Phillips, Barak Shemai, Tom Woolf, and Leah Elwell.

Minutes

- A) Approval of September minutes. John motioned to approve, and Stephen seconds. All in favor. Minutes approved.
- B) Panel Business
 - Chair/Vice Chair election. John moves to elect Tom Woolf as chair and Robert Walters as vice chair. Stephen seconds. All in favor.
 - Next steps on Prevention-Containment Discussion from the annual meeting – short report, bullet points that highlight the primary messages. Leah will circulate by Jan 1 or for review prior to the January Ex Comm.
 - 2025 Ex Comm call schedule: Stay with the 3rd or 4th Monday at 1 pm depending on federal holiday or WISCE February. Leah will send invites ASAP.
 - Savings account – Currently the savings account is getting .05% interest rate and the balance post 2025 meeting is \$16,613.12. Sara Ricklefs/ISAN has provided information that there is an opportunity to transfer the funds into a money market account to improve the interest rate to .12%. Stephen made a motion to move savings to money market account. John seconds. All in favor. Leah will finalize with Sara on the transfer.
 - Feedback on EDRR Framework – Kaylin Clements hosted a meeting with Tom, Stephen and Leah regarding information and data sharing agreements on how information flows. The goal was to understand western concerns. Communicating with the states is important and these issues are significant, but who is in charge. Handshake agreements are really what are on the books now. Office to office and region to region within Interior and the agencies – the idea is to harmonize this.
 - Annual meeting minutes – Leah shared brief minutes from the annual meeting. These will be posted online. Discussion on finalizing method for the member report process. Based on the survey at the meeting and Ex Comm discussion, a slide from each member will be solicited and shown during lunch/break. A report will also be created to post online. For 2025, clarify the expectations for the slide to minimize wordiness.
 - RR BIL funds – Susan Pasko has contacted WRP with the need to facilitate the disbursement of remaining funds within the pilot rapid response fund. These are BIL funds that must be obligated by the close of 2024 (Dec 20). The amount of funding is significant (>\$500,000) and would be applied to rapid response needs in the West. For this amount of funding PSMFC may be able to assist. The WRP would essentially conduct an RFP, and it may be possible that the current process's regulatory compliance may see some efficiencies. WRP could create a review committee and administer grant paperwork etc. while PSMFC would administer the funds. It is possible that an assessment of invasion may be a fit. Tom motioned to agree to support this effort and investigate a way for WRP to take on funds. Stephen seconds. All in favor. Barak

suggested that a new agreement would be the best way to direct the funds. Susan indicated that there will be a directed announcement within Grant Solutions next week.

C) Legislative update – Stephen Phillips

- WRDA conference report will be released soon.
- Appropriations look like they will be finalized in 2025. House and Senate budgets are similar for FWS.
- State Boating Act will address the US Coast Guard effort to stop state agencies from taking fees. There is language in the National Defense Authorization Act for the Coast Guard of not allowing states to charge fees. Next year it will likely be front and center S.4103 would reverse the taking of the fee.
- Hageman introduced a bill to protect the Upper Colorado River and how the Colorado Basin water is used. There is water released to manage small mouth bass in Lower Colorado. The management of the Glenn Canyon dam and efforts to save humpback chub, pikeminnow, and razor back is complex. This bill is an effort by the water users to get water back in and not manage AIS.

D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons

- Annual Meeting Committee - Leah Elwell –
 - 2024 debrief – There is a definite need to have a technical person or getting all the presentations in advance to help with managing onsite tech. It is important to have a virtual moderator to troubleshoot and relay information.
 - 2025 next steps. Leah has researched various locations near Kansas City. It looks like Lawrence, KS would be a good location, with the Marriot near the river and downtown. Dates of September 17-19 have risen to the top. Leah and Vanessa will meet post call to discuss. MRBP Ex Comm meets December 9th and will discuss as well.
- Coastal Committee – Co-Chairs Chris Scianni and Christine Moffitt; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons. No new news.
- Decontamination Think Tank Committee – Chair Robert Walters (hiatus) – A replacement chair and new members are needed. There are other projects that still need to be completed. Plus, the golden mussel detection brings up new decontamination questions. Reminder will be sent.
- Field Sampling and Monitoring Committee – Chair Kate Dukette; Tom Woolf liaison. Leah will ask if there is a draft coming.
- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wullschleger. No new news.
- Outreach Committee – Chair Monica McGarrity; Barak Shemai Liaison; No new news since the October meeting.

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF Activities
 - Status of previously submitted recommendations – regarding the specific one submitted in May 2024 regarding requesting DOT insert language into hauling contracts. Lisa DeBruckere has made significant progress with Call Before you Haul elements (see below). Leah will visit with Lisa to understand the timing and progress. The recommendation may be pursued with additional progress.
- Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Participation Discussion
 - Prevention - Chair Joseph Kreiger, NOAA; Barak Shemai Liaison. Work plan discussion to be relayed for the ANSTF meeting.
 - Early Detection and Rapid Response - Chair Wes Daniels, USGS; John Wullschleger Liaison. Finalization of the draft template for rapid response plan

close. Comments by full committee are sought by end of year. Goal to get it approved at Spring 2025 meeting.

- Control and Restoration - Chair Kim Bogenschutz, Iowa; Dennis Zabaglo Liaison.
- 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).

- WISCE - Martha provided update on Golden Mussels. Robert created a map of data from WID stations and movement from the golden mussel detection area. This analysis tells us that there is some important level of detail in WID data collection missing. The December meeting will have EDRR staff on info sharing. WISCE has been requesting additional information on the golden mussel from USFWS. WISCE will meet in person in February last week. They will also do HACCP training that week.
- CO and WY are also interested in other HACCP training courses.
- CRB – December 10th and 11 in Spokane.
- PNWER - WA summit; PSMFC director will be going. Bi state working group, Snake River Rapid Response group, site specific rapid response exercise that WA is doing with the USACE to test out booms and curtains.

G) No December call

Additional Information provided on Call Before you Haul effort by Lisa DeBruyckere

- AASHTO Subcommittee on Freight Operations to get their guidance and recommendations on harmonizing oversize/overweight permits for watercraft haulers re: Clean, Drain, Dry and Call Before You Haul. Great group, very engaging, and excellent conversation post-presentation. They recommended:
 - Presenting to the AASHTO Committee on Environment and Sustainability and the AASHTO Freight Committee - the AASHTO Subcommittee on Freight Operations lead person is helping me to get this on the agenda.
 - Presenting to the Committee on Freight Policy - the AASHTO representative from Colorado is helping me to get this set up.
- Connecting with the Owner Operator Independent Drivers Association Land Line Media, who they say is a key target audience for big truckers hauling watercraft - there is a nightly hour-long newscast on Sirius/XM satellite radio and a daily e-newsletter/social media; the radio program is pre-recorded, and the AASHTO Michigan representative will help get it set up - 75% of the listeners are owner-operators (this is the group we've had the most difficulty reaching because they aren't affiliated with the major state trucking associations).
- Speaking on the Dave Nemo Program and Road Dog Trucking News with Mark Willis on Sirius XM (both live satellite radio shows that truckers tune into), and the AASHTO Michigan rep will take the lead in scheduling.
- Placing an article in Overdrive Magazine, an owner-operator publication that includes many owner-operators that haul boats - editor is Todd Dills, and AASHTO Michigan rep will help introduce.
- Connecting with the State Freight Advisory Councils - the AASHTO Illinois rep is helping me kickstart this.