

Western Regional Panel Executive Committee

March Conference Call

March 17, 2025, at 1:00 pm mountain time

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

Minutes

- A) Approval of February minutes. Stephen motioned, Dennis second. Minutes approved.
- B) Panel Business
 - Updates on EDRR Framework – McKayla is onboarding, and Leah has been in contact with her.
 - EDRR Funds Discussion – The funds are still frozen, and Susan is awaiting information on their availability.
 - Finalize Mid-Year webinar agenda – Leah has confirmed with all speakers and will post to the website.
 - Proposed Rule for Injurious wildlife listing – comment period closed on 3/11.
 - Updates to website – Susan provided notification on geography naming from USFWS, specific to Gulf of Mexico. Minor changes were made for compliance.
- C) Legislative update – Stephen Phillips.
 - Continuing Resolution passed without explanatory text for how the money will be spent. There is a reduction in the non-defense portion of \$19 million, and spending guidance will have to be given.
 - Lower Colorado River legislation to address Colorado River flows. There are pulse flows out of Glen Canyon to manage invasive small mouth bass populations that have been called into question. Likely that it may pass. It could reduce those flows.
 - WRDA – PSMFC and partners are going forward with workplans for this year and there is money in the bank. The FY2024 funding level was \$9 million.
- D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons
 - Annual Meeting Committee - Leah Elwell –2025 planning team met for the first time. Leah will distribute a call for abstracts this month. There was a suggestion for the business meeting to be changed somehow. What about the possibility of a working lunch or hold it from 8 -9 am. During the business meeting Bylaws, annual meeting, ex Comm, membership are the votes that would be occurring. Based on the number of abstracts submitted this could influence when the business meeting takes place.
 - Awards Committee – Chair Tom Woolf. Tom is suggesting five or so awards annually that would be manageable to review. Also, with the idea that all of the nominations would be made public too. One Best in the West AIS – professional that is leading the AIS issues in the west. Multiple awards for on the ground AIS staff. A process, final named awards, and review criteria are needed. CPW has an award process, and Robert can query if there is an existing evaluation process. Could there be a standing award associated with the committee types and committees could have a hand in that. Stories of inspectors could be compiled. The discussion time to finalize process shall be at the end of each Ex Comm call. Will need 2-3 month to get nominations out. Interest from most of the Ex Comm to serve on the committee. We need several awards for

inspectors. These would be operational folks anyone that is involved with the program. Best of each state would be the charge. Timeline – deadlines must be identified. The actual award should be determined - certificate, small award chalis, trophy with small plaques with new award each year. Think about ideas for rotating award among recipients. Robert has a 3D printing file.

- Coastal Committee – Co-Chairs Chris Scianni and Amanda Newsom, WDFW; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons. They will meet next week. Amanda will serve as the new chair and Chris will step down.
- Decontamination Think Tank Committee – Co-Chair Chris Killian and Josh Wright; Robert Walters liaison. The first meeting was last week, there is a lot of concern about temperature tolerance for decontamination of golden mussels. Kevin Netcher reached out to Sudeep Chandra for survivability study. Smaller WID programs coming online particularly in CA, there is a need for QAQC. Dennis mentioned all CA programs or waterbodies are required to have prevention plans and QAQC may be required. Most states have a centralized program, whereas CA has more regional programming. Not going to be meeting until the fall likely.
- Field Sampling and Monitoring Committee – Chair Kate Dukette; Tom Woolf liaison. Kate is targeting a June draft.
- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wullschleger. Not much new to share. He will be doing a first look at the bylaws for tribal content. Another meeting will be set soon.
- Outreach Committee – Chair Sara Ricklefs; Barak Shemai Liaison. Met last week and discussed future outreach and brainstormed. Outreach will be changing in terms of what will be funded (e.g., not going to be funding Spanish, underserved or even outreach). TBD for the next steps. The work for Wildlife Forever’s expect to inspect. Elizabeth will be unrolling more info on the social media tool. There may be a million possible for golden mussel outreach, potentially redirecting existing funding to GM work.

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF Activities
 - May 14-15 – Virtual.
 - Status/quick check in of previously submitted recommendations
 - Any thoughts on recommendations for May – maintain plan funding.
 - All Panels Discussions
- Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Participation Discussion
 - Prevention - Chair Joseph Kreiger, NOAA; Barak Shemai Liaison. No activity.
 - Early Detection and Rapid Response - Chair Wes Daniels, USGS; John Wullschleger Liaison. RR template is on track.
 - Control and Restoration - Chair Kim Bogenschutz, Iowa; Dennis Zabaglo Liaison. No info.
 - Research - Chair Susan Pasko, USFWS; John Wullschleger Liaison.
 - Education and Outreach – Chair Tim Campbell, Wisconsin Sea Grant; Monica McGarrity Liaison. No info.

F) Coordinating the Coordination Update (including tribal activities)

- WISCE – golden mussels were the biggest topic of discussion
 - i. Folks were supportive of awards

- ii. Combined meeting WISCE / MICRA topics are too different but trying to find a way to overlap socially at the Annual Meeting. WISCE 8-2 and possibly go on the river in the afternoon with all.
- WGA – is renewing their AIS and biosecurity resolution, within the next month comments in and hoping to finalize by June.
- Tahoe is going to governing board with fee schedule to decontaminate every boat. The fee modification will cover that cost, where over 90% of boats that come to Tahoe came from a CA water. Lots of waters will be positive for GM in near future, right now they do ½ boats, so it will be all boats.

G) Announcements – ALL