

Western Regional Panel Executive Committee

June Conference Call

June 23, 2025, at 1:00 pm mountain time

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

Minutes

- A) Approval of May minutes. Barak motioned to approve, and Blaine seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved.
- B) Panel Business
 - Tracking research needs (Golden mussel) – Dennis, Decon time temperature survivability study is being explored. NPS is providing funding to Nevada/Lake Mead to support the study which may be completed by Dr. Chandra. Elizabeth Brown mentioned that there is a research firm in CA that is also doing temperature research. Leah will clarify to minimize duplication of effort.
 - Rapid Response Funds Discussion – Leah sent notifications a week ago. Only one recipient replied, Leah will double check with all recipients that are invited to submit a proposal that they received the email. Leah will circulate a poll to identify a time in August for proposal review period– 1 four-hour block. All scoring will be done prior to the call and provided to Leah. She will summarize and provide for the discussion.
 - Coordination Contract – The paperwork for year 3 of the 5 year agreement was submitted May 31 and awaiting approval. The POP for this year is until 9/25.
 - Ex Comm elections - Stephen, Josh, Blaine, Barak, Vanessa are up for election. Supreme Court decisions could RIF federal employees. This could affect who from federal entities are on Ex Comm. There may be a need to ensure that leadership gaps are addressed.
 - Add/Remove monthly update topics
 - i. Updates on EDRR Framework – The group agreed to keep it! WGA just sent a letter to Congress stressing the important invasive species related programs and projects, which included the Framework.
 - ii. No new items were suggested
 - Bylaw revision – The draft bylaws were distributed to the membership on June 16. The review period is until July 7. Later this year the SOP may need a revision to make updates and keep aligned with the bylaws. Some of the items that could be added to the SOP are 1) outlining the process for ANSTF recommendations and 2) reconciling who can serve as committee chair. Barak mentioned a clarification of who can serve as “back up” on the Ex Comm should be clarified. Or more broadly, how alternates can serve.
 - Final check in on Ruffe Management Plan recommendation to archive. WRP is done discussing and supports archiving.
- C) Legislative update – Stephen Phillips –
 - Waiting on the appropriations committee FY26 for Interior and NOAA and USACE. On the Interior side, \$50M this would include state plans, QZAP and other AIS programs.
 - BOR is getting an additional \$2M for QZ in FY26.
 - The current President’s Budget contains very little on AIS. Anticipating significant cuts for many federal programs.

- Golden mussel bill (Harder, CA) was introduced, but not sure of the likelihood of passage under this Congress. The bill mentions funds for research and eradication.
- At PSMFC, funds are starting to move to programs. There now is funding to continue WID training but likely not next year.
- NPS has provided funding to support WID training via USFWS, July 1 deadline to initiate funds
- QZAP NOFO is in the queue for posting, but at this time 15 signatures are needed to get it posted. There will also be a specific Golden Mussel NOFO for \$500K.

D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons

- Annual Meeting Committee - Leah Elwell –2025 progress. The agenda team has been reviewing abstracts and is creating the first full draft agenda. Leah posed the idea of having a virtual call for a business meeting on Day 2 because of MRBP joint aspects this would simplify planning. All agreed to a Zoom call prior to the joint meeting. Leah will schedule. Kansas partners are concerned about actual travel for federal and non-federal participants. Leah will launch registration soon, which may help us understand participation. Federal partners meeting may not take place. John noted that NPS cannot travel unless for human health and safety.
- Awards Committee – Chair Tom Woolf – Leah launched the call for nominations June 1. The deadline to submit is August 15. The award itself could be a nice wooden plaque. Leah will look into plaque possibilities. Reminders for nominations will be sent.
- Coastal Committee – Chairs Amanda Newsom, WDFW; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons. Mostly organizational call as the new chair getting feedback from group. There is discussion of potential subcommittees. The major topics of interest are infrastructure and wind development. The current administration has not expressed much interest in wind energy development. The committee will aim to meet every 2 months. It is possible that the committee may piggyback the Pacific Ballast Water Group meeting.
- Decontamination Think Tank Committee – Co-Chair Chris Killian and Josh Wright; Robert Walters liaison – no meeting until fall
- Field Sampling and Monitoring Committee – Chair Kate Dukette; Tom Woolf liaison. Kate stated via email that “a draft will be circulated to WISCE for feedback and then shared with Ex Comm in July”.
- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wullschleger. The bylaw revision is the primary activity. Revisions have been circulated to Membership for feedback.
- Outreach Committee – Chair Sara Ricklefs; Barak Shemai Liaison. They will meet on Friday.

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF Activities
 - July 8-9 virtual. Tom (and all other panel chairs) will provide panel overview at the July meeting. Susan is holding dates for December for possible fall meeting in WV.
- Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Participation Discussion
 - Prevention - Chair Joseph Kreiger, NOAA; Barak Shemai Liaison. Met May 1 and will not meet again until July, focusing on seaplane recommendations and AIS in Commerce items. Marine Biosecurity and prevention presentation was given.
 - Early Detection and Rapid Response - Chair Wes Daniels, USGS; John Wullschleger Liaison. Rapid response plan template will be approved at July meeting, and comments on the workplan are being discussed.

- Control and Restoration - Chair Kim Bogenschutz, Iowa; Dennis Zabaglo Liaison. Control Plan guidance for management plans for upcoming review on the agenda. NZMS Plan is sitting in the solicitor's office. It will need to be on the federal register for vote approval so that will likely be this fall.
- Research - Chair Susan Pasko, USFWS; John Wullschleger Liaison.
- Education and Outreach (ad hoc?) – Chair Tim Campbell, Wisconsin Sea Grant; Monica McGarrity Liaison. No new information. Have not met

F) Coordinating the Coordination Update (including tribal activities)

- WISCE – met last week. Focus on golden mussels and talked about some of them being intercepted on watercraft in CA mostly. Will meet in July. Talked about USFWS IINSERT program get an update to the states on where it is heading.
- Draft agenda for PNWER does have a session on AIS but WA focused.
- WY Directors office will be meeting Congresswoman Hagamen (WY). Josh provided AIS talking points.

G) Announcements – ALL