

# Western Regional Panel Executive Committee

## August Conference Call

August 25, 2025, at 1:00 pm mountain time

### Minutes

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

- A) Approval of July minutes. Stephen, Barak second. Minutes approved.
- B) Panel Business
  - Finalize 2025 Virtual Business Meeting agenda – September 4<sup>th</sup> @ 1 pm MST. Leah will make minor adjustments and distribute agenda. Check-in with committee chairs for short presentation.
  - Tracking research needs (Golden mussel) – Dennis has been in communication with CA to get a table of identified research needs.
  - Rapid Response Funds Discussion – Questions about Friday review. The spreadsheet has some errors, and Leah will attempt to correct and re-send today.
  - Coordination Contract status – The next year of funding was just approved on Friday.
  - Elections – both open until August 29<sup>th</sup>. Open vote on 30<sup>th</sup> and close September 15.
    - i. General Membership seats are open, academia, non-profits etc.
    - ii. Ex Comm elections - Stephen, Josh, Blaine, Barak, Vanessa are up for election
  - Updates on EDRR Framework – Last week USGS hosted a workshop to develop a structured-decision making tree for rapid response to determine if an eradication should happen. Last week there was a report on all the national hotspot projects. Molecular lab network projects are being used. Projects seem to be moving forward slowly.
  - QZAP 2.0 status update document review/finalize – Some minor edits are needed to incorporate WISCE feedback.
  - Bait – Any next steps for WRP to pursue? WISCE discussed bait issues on their last call and there may not be a need for a larger western discussion. MRBP has an ad hoc committee on bait, and those in the WRP are connected with MRBP on this. The consensus is West of the Continental Divide, bait is not allowed or very restricted.
- C) Legislative update – Stephen Phillips
  - Appropriations – Senate and House both have their versions out. The amounts in the House are \$2M below FY24, and Senate is above by \$2M for the USFWS AIS program. In House Interior appropriations it indicates WRP-ANSTF to direct a national Golden Mussel Plan. Concern is timing for ANSTF process to produce this as ANSTF plans can move slowly due to their process. Senate Interior appropriations budget calls out different agencies and species (e.g., USGS AIS programs, green crab, BIA and NPS). A CR will be needed by October 1, which would revert to FY24.
  - Coast Guard bill has passed House and Senate; this calls out data sharing for ballast water quality monitoring.
  - National Wildlife Refuge and Invasive Species Strike Team bill calls out collaboration and development of consistent taxonomy among all the Department of Interior databases,

(i.e., National Agriculture Pest Information System, USGS NAS database, iMap invasives, etc.)

- House APC – WID funding for FY26 at \$20M which will not adequately cover all the states that are coming online. There may be some prioritization soon for the requests that come in starting July 2026.

D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons

- Annual Meeting Committee - Leah Elwell –2025 progress; Leah requested ideas for discussion prompts on pathways, commission and collaborating sections of the agenda. Tom would like to find ways to collectively inject our agencies into the process to address fouled used equipment. Barak booked a room at the Lawrence library and invited the federal participants to a meeting at 3:30 pm on Tuesday. WISCE will be 8-2pm on Tuesday. Martha Volkoff confirmed that CA may be able to host in Sacramento 2026. She will be on the virtual business meeting to share.
- Awards Committee – Chair Tom Woolf – Review submission/decisions. Following discussion of all nominations provided, the decision was made to give “best of the West” to all nominees this year (9 recipients) and Martha Volkoff, CDFW will also be part of those recipients. The initial decision was to give out 4 awards, but it was decided to give to all that were nominated this year. There were 3 nominations received for the “AIS Leader” which included Robert Walters, Tom Woolf and the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks AIS Bureau. Discussion determined that Robert Walters would be the recipient of the AIS Leader award. The awards will be announced on the virtual business meeting and at the open of Day 2 of the meeting in Lawrence. If possible, Leah will get awards ordered and have at the meeting to give to someone who will accept the award and bring to them. [K2Awards.com](https://www.k2awards.com) looks good with bamboo plaque and custom engraving.
- Coastal Committee – Chair Amanda Newsom, WDFW; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons. They met today and are focusing on next steps.
- 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. A draft was circulated to the committee and edits are due September 2. Then it will come to Ex Comm for review.
- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wullschleger. Leah mentioned that now that the bylaw revision is complete, the SOP will need to be reconciled. The Ex Comm will take the lead in reviewing that document.
- Outreach Committee – Chair Sara Ricklefs; Barak Shemai Liaison. Media kit is on website now. Met in the beginning of August, discussion around the golden mussel outreach materials were shared and then discussion on project “effectiveness” objectives. Sara is working on identifying who might address the committee on program effectiveness.

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF Activities
  - December fall meeting in WV.
  - Status/quick check in of previously submitted recommendations
  - All Panels Discussions
- Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Participation Discussion
  - Prevention - Chair Joseph Kreiger, NOAA; Barak Shemai Liaison.
  - Early Detection and Rapid Response - Chair Wes Daniels, USGS; John Wullschleger Liaison.

- Control and Restoration - Chair Kim Bogenschutz, Iowa; Dennis Zabaglo Liaison. NZMS management plan is still moving through the federal register process. Susan has initiated a golden mussel working group.
- 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)

G) Announcements – ALL

- Grants to PSMFC and Colorado for WID database and training are secured.
- QZAP RFP open until September 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Golden Mussel FRP \$500K open until the beginning of October.