

Western Regional Panel Executive Committee

April Conference Call

April 20, 2026, at 1:00 pm mountain time

Minutes

- A) Approval of March minutes. Stephen motion to approve, John seconds. All in favor. Minutes approved
- B) Panel Business
 - Mid-Year Webinar agenda check in. If the ANSTF charter is not approved by May 6, then can be changed to Western AIS Regional Meeting and remove all ANSTF related (i.e. Susan presentation and recommendations).
 - Rapid Response Funds Discussion – After many months to seek compliance for their rapid response project to address invasive anemones, Hawaii is set up and ready to take their action. Paperwork with PSMFC is almost complete. Leah will do an informal check-in this summer with the other two projects underway.
 - Updates on National EDRR Framework – no news
 - ANSTF Regional Panel Input Template – Leah submitted the final document at the beginning of the month.
 - Susan shared with all panels their notification of panel funding package due June 20. Leah will assemble as soon as possible and share draft materials with Ex Comm prior to submitting.
- C) Legislative Update – Stephen Phillips
 - Appropriations - House and Senate are both working on their budgets. Their individual language may come out in the next 30-60 days. The president's budget has been released.
 - Stalled funding - Sara Ricklefs as recipient of QZAP funding, contacted many House Natural Resources Committee members regarding the delay. Oregon Rep Hoyles questioned USFWS, David Miko during a hearing last week about mobilizing the funding. Rep. Olivia Wilheight has also been asking follow up questions on funding with Interior. Christy Martin, Hawaii, testified in support of Invasive Species Strike Team funding last week.
 - Proposed Golden Mussel Act still only has democratic support. Some organizations are waiting until there is republican to join the bill before they support it.
 - Proposed AIS 2.0 Act is intended to update the NANPCA/NISA. There has not been much activity on the bill.
 - Pacific Ballast Water Meeting tomorrow in Vancouver.
- D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons
 - Annual Meeting Committee - Leah Elwell – Planning team selected 20 abstracts for presentations on the agenda. The portal to submit is still open and a few more presentations will be selected. Leah has updated the sponsor information in the spreadsheet housed in Sharepoint. Leah has connected and clarified with the hotel and AV company on logistics. The planning team discussed having a discussion session on reciprocity at the meeting. Dennis noted that CA State legislative is discussing reciprocity in legislation. TRPA is working to clarify reciprocal decontamination versus

reciprocal seals. Leah clarified that there was general interest in making sure that the field trip would include a stop to see golden mussels.

- Best in the West Committee – Chair Tom Woolf; Materials to guide process have been updated, targeting June for releasing. Leah will update the website accordingly.
- Coastal Committee – Chair Amanda Newsom, WDFW; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons. No news.
- Decontamination Think Tank Committee – Co-Chair Chris Killian and Josh Wright; Robert Walters liaison; Met last week and the primary topic is to have standardized protocol for dip tanks based on the UT protocol. They are working toward step-by-step protocol to align with previous decon protocol layout. They will be meeting again in the fall. There is still some clarity needed on current protocols in the efficacy of golden mussel decon – the ongoing Dudek study shows adults need a long time to be killed, and it is still unknown for veligers. Leah has queried with Susan on national adoption of already approved WRP decon protocols. Still awaiting a reply.
- Education and Outreach Committee – Chair Sara Ricklefs; Barak Shemai Liaison. No new news.
- Field Sampling and Monitoring Committee – Chair Kate Dukette; Tom Woolf liaison. Robert's team provided new revisions, and the document has been provided to Kate in April. Questions continue to be raised on river plankton tow sampling.
- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wullschleger. Meeting Monday April 27th.

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF Activities
 - Charter has expired and ANSTF is awaiting approval. In the meantime:
 - The expiring charter means that no ANSTF / FACA business items (e.g., updates, voting on recommendations) can occur. However, Panel funding is intended to allow the panel to fulfil its mandates under NANPCA, which includes facilitating regional coordination and collaboration with states. The expiring charter should not halt these coordination duties.
 - "Regional Coordination Calls" can occur in person or virtually - just should not include anything that would be considered "ANSTF business" (e.g., updates, voting on recommendations). Since the FACA does not impact funding (unlike a shutdown), there is no reason Federal or other members could not attend. Rename the name of the panel meeting a "Regional coordination meeting" or something similar.
 - Status/quick check in of previously submitted recommendations – no discussion
 - Golden Mussel Task Team – no meetings due to charter expiration
 - All Panels Discussions - none
- Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Participation Discussion – no meetings due to charter expiration.
 - Prevention - Chair Joseph Kreiger, NOAA; Barak Shemai Liaison.
 - Early Detection and Rapid Response - Chair Wes Daniels, USGS; John Wullschleger Liaison.
 - Control and Restoration - Chair Ceci Wiebert, Michigan DWR; 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 – Josh; Oregon interception of GM boat, it was small company commercial hauled. Boat owner was highly compliant, and it may be in dry storage for the rest of summer. They will meet in Sacramento prior to meeting start. Dip tank protocol will be talked about next time. Some of the BOR spend plan money has been released, but very slowly. AFWA topics were discussed for their next meeting. Call Before you Haul reciprocity update from Lisa.
- Reclamation – All projects over \$50K must be approved by a single person in Interior. Heidi hosted regional coordinators in Denver to work creatively on policy and spend plan for future years. Some possible sources of funding might be in 1) IRA Sec 50233 under the drought mitigation program for environmental justifications, funding needs to be obligated by Sept 30. \$250 million are in that pot. No cost share. 2) Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration programs – Scott Cameron is approving projects, and these could include WID stations. 35% cost share requirement, O&M requirement. No deadline/expiration for these requests. Golden mussels would be eligible. Department is including new language “critical information” for notifications that will add invasive species. The language notification would be for new invasive, State declaring emergency for invasive species. This means that these occurrences must be reported up the chain within the Department of the Interior. Heidi will broaden their communication plan accordingly.

G) Announcements –

- Next meeting May 18th.
- Mid Year Webinar May 6th.