

Western Regional Panel Executive Committee

June Conference Call

June 15, 2026, at 1:00 pm mountain time

Tom Woolf, Josh Leonard, John Wulschleger, Stephen Phillips, Heidi McMaster, Vanessa Salazar, Robert Walters, Dennis Zabaglo and Leah Elwell

Minutes

- A) Approval of May Minutes. John motioned to approve, and Stephen seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved.
- B) Panel Business
 - Rapid Response Funds Discussion – There has been progress on all projects, notably the AK project managers submitted an invoice.
 - Updates on EDRR Framework – Hilary will be sharing an update on the upcoming CRB AIS Team Meeting later this month.
 - Schedule Business Meeting – The business meeting will be done virtually prior to the annual meeting. Identify a date for August. Leah will poll Ex Comm and Chairs. Week of 17th and others.
 - “Friends of WRP” trigger date – Due to the unsigned charter, if still unsigned one month prior to the annual meeting, then this will trigger alternatives.
 - There are Ex Comm and some vacant member seats up for election. However, elections will have to wait until charter is signed, but we are able to solicit for nominations (confirmed by Susan).
- C) Legislative Update – Stephen Phillips
 - House Interior Department appropriations came out June 3 with \$49.5M for invasives program in ‘25, and \$57M in ‘26. Everything else is flat funded. There was an increase for Tahoe AIS from \$2M to \$7M. State AIS management plan funds and QZAP funds are flat funded. EPA was drastically decreased. Some other report language mentioned golden mussels.
 - Energy and Water appropriations. This year during NISAW meetings, partners asked for WID funds to be increased. WRDA for 2026 has not been released yet, every 2 years for the past 12 it has been reauthorized. A bit delayed this year.
 - There is a BOR community funded project with \$5M for San Joaquin WID pilot.
 - Federal grant approval process has changed dramatically with department approval required, and more review of project greater than \$50K.
- D) WRP Standing Committee – Roundtable for Chairs/Liaisons
 - Annual Meeting Committee - Leah shared agenda, and highlighted information on sponsors to date. One sponsor has agreed to support an evening social, Leah will confirm with them. Registration is steady with many from California and approaching 40 people. One session will be a focused discussion on reciprocity. Leah has assembled a session agenda. Robert had several suggestions including a pre-survey and sharing information in advance to ensure good discussion.
 - Best in the West Committee – Chair Tom Woolf; There has been one submission so far. Leah will send a reminder in July.
 - Coastal Committee – Chair Amanda Newsom, WDFW; Stephen Phillips/Leah liaisons.

- Decontamination Think Tank Committee – Co-Chair Chris Killian and Josh Wright; Robert Walters liaison; **follow up on adoption of protocols - full package of all decon protocols will be requested for adoption. Leah contacted Susan to reinvigorate this discussion.**
- Education and Outreach Committee – Chair Sara Ricklefs; Barak Shemai Liaison
- Field Sampling and Monitoring Committee – Chair Kate Dukette; Tom Woolf liaison.
- Membership and Communication Committee – Chair John Wulschleger

E) ANSTF

- ANSTF Activities
 - Charter approval. As of today, it is still not approved.
 - Status/quick check in of previously submitted recommendations
 - Golden Mussel Task Team
 - 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 Wulschleger Liaison.
 - Control and Restoration - Chair Ceci Wiebert, Michigan DWR; Dennis Zabaglo Liaison.
 - Research - Chair Susan Pasko, USFWS; John Wulschleger Liaison.
 - Education and Outreach – Chair Tim Campbell, Wisconsin Sea Grant; Monica McGarrity Liaison.

F) Coordinating the Coordination Update (including tribal activities)

G) Announcements – ALL

- Greg Conover USFWS retired this month.