

UPPER COLUMBIA CONSERVATION COMMISSION (UC³) WINTER MEETING

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

12:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Via Zoom (*contact staff for meeting participation details*)

AGENDA

TIME	TOPIC/QUESTION	PRESENTER	PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE	PREPARATION
12:30 PM	<p>Welcome & Agenda Overview Meeting Rules</p> <p>Zoom/virtual meeting etiquette</p> <p>CSKT Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet new CSKT AIS Coordinator (Katie Finley-Squeque) <p>Participant Introductions (roll call)</p>	<p>Lori Curtis, Chair UC³, Conservation Districts Rep.; Science & Education Director, Whitefish Lake Institute</p> <p>Tom Woolf, UC³ Vice Chair; AIS Bureau Chief, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks; MISC Representative</p> <p>Martin Charlo, CSKT Tribal Council</p> <p>Kate Wilson, UC³ Administrator</p> <p>Cassidy Bender, UC³ Coordinator</p>	<p>Welcome Online Meeting Rules</p>	<p>Review agenda and meeting materials provided in advance</p>
12:50 PM	<p>Staff Report <i>Minutes, Staff Report</i></p> <p>Topics covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Update BOR grant Strategic Work Plan Annual Report UCLN Contract update (<i>closed out</i>) Projects <p>ACTIONS: Approve Minutes and Updated FY21 Budget</p>	<p>Kate Wilson</p>	<p>Approve Minutes from 11/4</p> <p>Approve Budget Updates (if needed)</p>	<p>Review 11/4 Minutes</p>
1:30 PM	<p>2021 Legislative Session Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AIS Bills (status) Update & Discussion ACTIONS: recommendation to House & Senate leaders re: UC³ legislators 	<p>UC³ Legislators (if available); Kate Wilson; Legislative Committee; FWP</p>	<p>Learn about how the session is going and the bills related to AIS</p>	<p>Review weekly legislative update emails; come with any questions</p>
TIME	TOPIC/QUESTION	PRESENTER	PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE	PREPARATION

1:50 PM	<p>Committee Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E&O Committee - E&O Strategy & Media Plan 2021 Early Detection & Monitoring Plan (2021) - TBD 	<p>Cassidy Bender</p> <p>Chris Downs, Chair</p>	<p>Discussion & invitation to participate on committees and in monitoring workshop</p>	<p>Review E&O component of Strategic Work Plan</p>
2:05 PM	BREAK		<p>Grab a snack, drink, refresh yourself 😊</p>	
2:20 PM	<p>UC³ Election (Chair, Vice Chair) & review of relevant bylaws</p> <p>ACTIONS: recommendation for new Chair (to Governor); election of Vice Chair; discussion of other Executive Committee position(s); Bylaw amendments</p>	<p>Lori Curtis; Tom Woolf; Kate Wilson; all</p>	<p>Recommend new Chair for Governor appointment (per bylaws); election of Vice Chair</p>	<p>Review bylaws; submit nominations for new officers</p>
2:40 PM	<p>FWP AIS Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination between states/federal government – Discussion/potential ACTION Strategic Plan Update Summit Outcomes Watercraft inspection stations 2021 season Monitoring plans 	<p>Tom Woolf</p> <p>Paul Kusnierz, Avista</p>	<p>Discuss upcoming season for AIS program & efforts; Q&A for FWP</p>	<p>Review summary of 2020 inspection and monitoring & E&O programs; be prepared for 2021 season discussion</p>
3:15 PM	<p>Update from Partner Programs</p> <p><i>Avista; Blackfoot Nation; Clearwater Resource Council; Conservation Districts; Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes; Glacier National Park; Flathead Lake Biological Station; Missoula-County AIS District; Montana Invasive Species Council; NRCS; Swan Lakers; Trout Unlimited; USFS; USFWS; Whitefish Lake Institute; etc.</i></p>	All partners	<p>Learn about AIS activity & efforts from 2020 and into next season; Q&A for partners</p>	<p>Prepare a brief update on 2021 season plans for AIS prevention and/or management</p>
3:40 PM	<p>UC³ Member Survey findings – discussion on moving forward this year</p> 	<p>Kate Wilson; Cassidy Bender</p>	<p>Overview on findings of UC³ member survey; final strategic work plan; discussion on moving forward</p>	<p>Complete survey one week in advance of meeting; Review final strategic work plan</p>
3:55 PM	Public Comment			
4:00 PM	ADJOURN			

The mission of the [Upper Columbia Conservation Commission \(UC³\)](#) is to protect the aquatic environment in Montana tributaries to the Columbia River from the threat of AIS in order to protect water resources, downstream interests, and the economic and ecological vitality of the region.

All Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC³) meetings are open to the public. The UC³ will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Please contact Cassidy Bender (cassidy.bender@mt.gov) for meeting details (e.g. virtual meeting links/teleconference information) or to request accommodations prior to the meeting date.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC³)		
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday Feb 10 th , 2021	Time:	12:30pm-4:00pm
Minutes Prepared By:	Cassidy Bender	Location:	Zoom/Call In

List of Acronyms

AIS	Aquatic invasive species	FLBS	Flathead Lake Biological Station
BOR	US Bureau of Reclamation	FWP	Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
BSWC	Big Sky Watershed Corps (AmeriCorps)	GNP	Glacier National Park
CEMIST	Central Eastern MT Invasive Species Team	MCWD	Missoula County Weed District
CFC	Clark Fork Coalition	NPS	National Park Service
CRB	Columbia River Basin	NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
CRC	Clearwater Resource Council	UCLN	Upper Columbia Lakes Network
CSKT	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes	USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality	USFS	US Forest Service
DNRC	Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation	USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
eDNA	Environmental DNA	WLI	Whitefish Lake Institute
E & O	Education & Outreach	WRDA	Water Resources Development Act
EQC	Environmental Quality Council	WRP	Western Regional Panel

1. Welcome and Introductions

Welcome Agenda Overview Meeting Rules

Lori Curtis,
Chair UC³, Conservation
Districts Rep.; Science &
Education Director,
Whitefish Lake Institute

Kate Wilson,
UC³ Administrator

- Lori Curtis called meeting to order at 12:30pm. Quorum confirmed.
- **Welcome from Lori-** “On behalf of the executive committee I’d like to thank you all for taking the time to come to the meeting today and for all your positive attitudes and willingness to work... The last year was tough worldwide and the commission is undoubtedly going to face many challenges. This year we have new department directors, funding stressors, and continuation of the pandemic. With all of that, I believe it is more important than ever that UC³ remain an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information regarding AIS in the basin.”
- Meeting rules were presented (Zoom/Virtual Etiquette) and it was specified that voting should be done in the chat, which will be saved for the record.

The mission of the Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC³) is to protect the aquatic environment in Montana tributaries to the Columbia River from the threat of AIS in order to protect water resources, downstream interests, and the economic and ecological vitality of the region.

- **Welcome from Martin Charlo, CSKT Tribal Council Representative-** “Good Afternoon. I would like to welcome everyone and thank the organizers for bringing us together in this difficult time. It is a different world and I look forward to meeting everyone in person someday. Due to the tribe’s geographical location, we are the gatekeepers for a lot of the water that flows out of the mountains near us and we take that responsibility very seriously. Our AIS workers consider themselves ‘Water Protectors’ and they are working through the pandemic.”
- Welcome to the NEW! CSKT AIS Coordinator- Katie Finley-Squeque.
- All commission members and participants introduced themselves including name and organization/interest that they are representing.
- Agenda overview: Staff Report (reports, budgets, projects, grants & contracts), Committee Work (E&O & Monitoring), Legislative Committee/session updates, Election

	& By-laws, FWP AIS report, AIS reports from partners, Member Survey Results, public comment and adjourn.
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2. Attendees

UC³ (voting members underlined): Lori Curtis (Whitefish Lake Institute: Chair/Conservation Districts of Montana), Tom Woolf (FWP: Vice Chair/ MISC), Chris Parrott (Jesco Marine & Powersports/private industry), Stacey Schnebel (/Flathead Electric Cooperative, Electric Cooperatives), Martin Charlo (CSKT Tribal Council), Phil Matson (Flathead Lake Biological Station: private landowner), Paul Kusnierz (Avista, Hydropower), Larry Lack (Sanders County AIS Task Force Lower Clark Fork), Rob Rich (Swan Valley Connections), Andrew Gorder (Clark Fork Coalition, Upper/Middle Clark Fork), ‘BJ’ Brain Johnson (Sea Me Paddle Owner, Flathead River Basin), Jeremy Anderson (Bitterroot River Basin), Monica Pokorny (NRCS), Heidi McMaster (BOR), Gina Hoff (BOR), Michelle Cox (USFS Region 1 Invasive Species Coordinator), Theresa Thom (USFWS), Kate Wilson (Commission Administrator), Cassidy Bender (Commission Coordinator), Brant Dupree (UC3/MCWD BSWC)

Absent: Paul Bradford (Libby Rod & Gun Club, Kootenai River Basin), Sen. Mike Cuffe (Eureka), Rep. David Fern (Whitefish), Sen. Janet Ellis (Helena), Rep. Neil Duram (Libby), Brian McKeon (Glacier NP),

Committee Members/Partners/Public/Other: Chris Downs (GNP, Monitoring Committee Chair), Lindsey Bona-Eggeman (MCWD), Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI, UCLN), Kate Finley-Squeque (CKST), Liz Lodman (FWP), Jennifer Riddle (FWP, BSWC), Russ Hartzell (FWP), John O’Bannon (FWP), Zach Crete (FWP), Mike Hensler (FWP), Mark Bostrom (DNRC), Richard Janssen (CSKT), Stephanie Hummel (FLBS), Hailey Graf (FCD), Michael Wallace (Swan Lakers), Michael Locatelli (Yellowstone NP AIS Biologist), Deb Tirmenstein (Montana Black Dog Services), Ron Catlett (Sen. Daines Office)

3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues

Presenter	Topic/Discussion
Approval of Minutes Kate Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion: to approve minutes from Nov 4th, 2020 meeting (Paul). Seconded (Stacey). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i>
Staff Report Kate Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on staff activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting/action item follow up and planning Bi-weekly Executive Committee planning and participation Grant & Budget management (writing/reporting/tracking) Website management 3 yr. Strategic Work Plan and E&O strategy development/implementation Annual media plan & augmenting FWP E&O efforts Annual UC³ Monitoring Plan BSWC member supervision, projects & planning- industry outreach project Tabling at events (Covid permitting) Partner E&O monitoring & report 2021 Legislative Session Bill & Committee Tracking Legislative Committee meetings/follow up EQC/Agency/Gov Office Reporting Tracking AIS in CRB/West Flathead Basin Commission (50% of staff time) Crown Managers Partnership steering committee (represent both Commissions) North American Invasive Species Management Association (president-elect)

Staff Report

Kate Wilson

- PNWER (co-chair of invasive species working group)
- Western Regional Panel (chair of Fire AIS protocol committee)
- BC Columbia River Basin Steering Committee (member)
- Pend Oreille Basin Commission (Ex-officio, MT upstream rep)
- County Assist Team (CAT) Public Information Officer & Liaison Officer
- Graduate School- MPA Certificate (Kate)

Budget

- FY2020 Budget: \$40,000 Operating
 - State Gov Fiscal Year= July 1-June 30
 - Expended on member travel, meetings, UC³ materials, staff/office supplies, projects (outreach, events, advertising, CDD materials), BSWC member
 - **\$40,000 Expended**
- FY2021 Budget: \$40,000 Operating
 - State Gov Fiscal Year= July 1-June 30
 - Expended \$26,532
 - Accrued to contracts: \$8,125 (from FY20)
 - **Current balance \$21,511**
- BOR Federal Grant: \$120,000 CLOSED
 - Funding timeline: 2017-2021 (4 years)
 - Education & outreach; monitoring; website and materials
 - Expended \$120,000
 - **Current Balance: \$0**
- BOR Projects Completed:
 - Education & Outreach (\$75,000) - *Complete*
 - Dev. of materials; engagement of public, stakeholders & partners; webpage dev. & maintenance (Windfall contract)
 - E&O work/advertising in Upper Columbia Basin
 - Expansion of Monitoring Network (\$25,000) – *Complete*
 - Citizen science AIS monitoring expansion through Upper Columbia basin; protocol development; support for monitoring committee
 - Supplies & equipment
 - Industry Outreach Pilot (\$20,000) – *Complete*
 - Engagement of water-based businesses in the Upper Columbia Basin; partial support for Big Sky Watershed Corps member; development & dissemination of outreach materials; pilot transferrable to other locations nation-wide
 - Indirect (DNRC, 11.73%) - *Paid*
 - Final grant report to be completed (by 12/2021)
- We have accrued some DNRC divisional funds from FY20 toward BSWC and Windfall contracts. We are proposing an increase in the following items to allocate these funds.
- **FY21 Line Item Budget w/ Proposed Changes (in red):**
 - \$13,748/**\$20,000** AIS Education & Outreach*
 - **\$16,366** previously approved (11/4); **recommend \$20k total**
 - Augment FWP/partner AIS advertising in basin
 - Coordinate/fill gaps in annual E&O media plan
 - Targeted outreach & events
 - \$6,000/**\$13,125** BSWC Project 2021*
 - **Accrued \$3,125 (FY20)**

Staff Report

Kate Wilson

- **\$8,000 previously approved (11/4); recommend \$10k for staff & supplies**
- \$0/\$5,000 UCLN continuance & training video production
 - Video production (for use statewide) – split between FY21/22
 - UCLN maintenance (annual) – likely minimal for FY21
- \$3,857/\$4,000 Member travel/meetings & sponsorships
- \$2,080/\$4,000 Annual Report, E&O plan, Additional Projects, Misc.*
 - **Accrued \$5,000 (FY20) between this & E&O work**
- \$929/\$2,000 Staff supplies/travel/office
- **\$48,125 TOTAL FUNDS (including accruals)**

Discussion

- Operating and personnel are separate pools of funds that come from the same account (State Special Revenue). Half of our staff times comes out of the personnel pool, the other half is covered by the Flathead Basin Commission. The \$40,000 operating budget does not include staff time/salaries.
- Accruals have to go to an active contract so the accrued money will not be new projects but will expand projects that we already have.
- We have until July 2021 to spend those accruals and we will not have any trouble doing so. The only one that may be tricky is the UCLN monitoring contract 5k balance, to be used for maintenance and a citizen science training video (coordinated with FWP and other monitoring partners to use statewide).
- **Motion:** to approve amended FY21 budget (Phil). Seconded (Martin). All in favor. *Motion passes.*

Upper Columbia Lakes Network Monitoring Contract: Complete

- Competitive RFP process – spring 2019
- Contract issued to Whitefish Lake Institute, subcontractor: FLBS
- Contract Contacts: Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI), Phil Matson (FLBS)
- **Total contract amount: \$20,300 (balance \$0)**
 - Objectives: Increasing monitoring partners in Upper Columbia; engaging new partners in AIS
 - Strategies: Outreach to watershed, conservation & HOAs, outdoor groups; provide in-person training and materials; website development (<https://ucln.net/>); regular AIS reporting; development of UPPER COLUMBIA LAKES NETWORK
- 2020 Review (Cynthia): Successfully held two trainings before COVID, pulled together all the protocols for volunteers. 12 volunteers over 8 partner groups have these monitoring kits. All data was uploaded into FWP Survey123 app. Creation of the training video would be great to host on the UCLN website with background information and resource for the volunteers. Was difficult to get people to FLBS even if we are in person.

Discussion:

- How to maintain and continue to expand UCLN w/o BOR funding?
 - Maintaining would require continuing to get ethanol and bottles to volunteers every year, Cynthia’s time distributing those, continuing to collect the data and upload into FWPs data app. Volunteers were great about getting samples to the FWP office, a lot of volunteers absorbed the shipping cost but it would be great to be able to cover that in the future.
 - Cynthia has quite a bit of ethanol that was purchased through UCLN, easier to get than the ethanol used for eDNA.
 - FLBS can get eDNA ethanol with a special license but are not able to distribute it. Permitting process is a huge pain, Cynthia has tried but it is exhaustive.

Staff Report

Kate Wilson

<p>E&O Updates</p> <p>Cassidy Bender, UC³ Coordinator</p>	<p>Microscopy samples (mussel veliger samples) use a different, easier to get ethanol through Carolina lab supply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Phil looking at the efficacy of ever clear for citizen science monitoring. ● Creation of training video (for use statewide) ● Monitoring Workshop topic: We do want to nail down specific deliverables and estimate costs for maintenance and expansion so we can have an annual realistic line item to support the network. ● Anyone who wants to chat about this further come to the monitoring workshop for a more robust discussion. <p>UC³ Education & Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Goal:</u> Increase public awareness in the Upper Columbia Basin related to AIS impacts, State AIS program rules and personal responsibilities. ● 3-year UC³ E&O Strategy (2020-2023): document housing E&O goals, objectives, target audiences and communication strategies is now available on our website. ● We are planning for the 2021 season to augment FWP advertising and outreach efforts with a coordinated media plan. ● Currently have secured a billboard from March-Sept '21 in Evaro (prior to Ravalli WIS) ● We are working with Windfall to design new motorized targeted advertisements and will be implementing a media plan with those new designs including print, tv, radio & digital advertisements. ● Implemented a survey of partner AIS E&O efforts in 2020 to include on the FWP+UC³ media plan. This information is exhibited in our 2020 Annual Report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will help is assessing exposure, medium, & timing in the basin in order to coordinate and not duplicate efforts. ● BSWC Industry Outreach Project Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The 2020 Industry Outreach Project was a continuation of the 2019 Marina/Boat and Fishing Shop Pilot Program and we are back for the third year of this project. ▪ The goal of the program is the spread the Clean Drain Dry message and ensure that businesses have all the correct information, materials, and resources to inform their staff and customers. ▪ Joint BSWC member w/ Missoula County Weed District, Brant Dupree back for second term! ▪ Working with 2021 FWP BSWC member- Jennifer Riddle who is implementing the Industry Outreach Project concept on the east side of the divide. ○ We have created a partnership with businesses met with so far. They sign on to become a Clean Drain Dry Partner in which we receive a commitment from them that they will spread their knowledge to customers and staff in dedication to protecting Montana's waters. We have been featuring Clean Drain Dry partners on the FWP Protect Our Waters Montana Facebook Page.
<p>Committee Updates</p> <p>Kate Wilson</p>	<p>Committee Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Executive Committee: Chair, Vice Chair, staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business/oversight between meetings ○ Meets bi-weekly (Wednesdays @ 9:30), open to public ● Education & Outreach Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide feedback on UC³ E&O efforts and associated E&O strategy ▪ Support the Industry Outreach Project

Legislative Committee Update

Kate Wilson

Andrew Gorder,
Legislative
Committee Chair

- Provide ideas and a sounding board for future E&O efforts & events
- Members: Lori Curtis (CDs/WLI), Liz Lodman (FWP), Lindsey Bona-Eggeman (MCWD), Chris Parrott (new!), Rob Rich (new!), Big Sky Watershed Corps members, staff
- We would like to expand and engage the committee more, let staff know if you would like to participate (do not have to be commission members to join).
- Early Detection & Monitoring Committee:
 - Objectives:
 - Develop annual monitoring plan
 - Develop recommendations for gaps/areas of improvement for AIS monitoring in the UC
 - Provide feedback and oversight on the continuance of the Upper Columbia Lakes Network
 - Members: Chris Downs (GNP), Craig McLane (FWP), Phil Matson (FLBS), Joann Wallenburn (CRC), Mike Koopal & Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI), Lindsey Bona-Eggeman (MCWD), CSKT
 - Any new volunteers? Let staff know if you would like to participate (do not have to be commission members to join).
 - Invitation: Monitoring Workshop & Development of 2021 Upper Columbia Basin Monitoring Plan (zoom), *Date/Time TBD*
 - Chris Downs (Monitoring Committee Chair): Upcoming committee tasks include putting together the monitoring plan (at workshop), expand the Colorado database and get more folks to use this (GNP participating 2021), Phil improving eDNA protocols (white paper), discuss UCLN future support, veliger survivability studies and more.
 - As an attachment to DNRC we are required, with the new administration, to get permission for all public information (newsletters, press releases, etc.)
 - We will get a listserv/meeting notice and an agenda out to everyone prior to the workshop date.
- Legislative Committee + Session Updates:
 - Legislative Committee: Andrew Gorder (Chair), Lori Curtis, Tom Woolf, Erik Hanson, Phil Matson, Sen. Cuffe, Rep. Duram, Sen. Ellis, Rep. Fern, FWP staff
 - 11/4/20 meeting: UC³ voted to support two draft bills (AIS List/authority clarification & Pull the Plug)
 - Session Update:
 - Participation has been challenging
 - Both bills currently tabled
 - Uncertainty around concerns or issues with bills
 - MISC bill (SB 40): added UC³ membership to MISC moving forward.
 - Big thanks to Rep. Duram! Phil Matson, Chris Parrott, partners
 - Background on recommendations/Leg Comm:
 - Recommendations generated in MISC law review, discussed at 2019 AIS Summit & subsequent UC³ meetings
 - Prioritized by Legislative Committee
 - Discussions/correspondence with FWP & DNRC agency directors & staff; monthly committee meetings; recommendations based on discussions and changes over time
 - Sought answers to questions and potential unintended consequences & 'pros/cons' for each

Discussion:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate and Tom provided information for the AIS listing bill (HB 42). There was a republican caucus in which they voted to table the bill in executive action. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The only information Kate was able to get was that there was general apprehension on providing agencies (FWP) rule making authority. • There was one opponent during the Pull the Plug (HB 152) hearing: Bob Gilbert, lobbyist speaking for Walleyes Unlimited and various other warmwater fishing organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ His most direct concern was worry about folks not remembering to put their plugs back in and sinking boats/causing danger to individuals. • Ideas for reintroducing next session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Add testimony of what AIS will actually do to the ecosystem (i.e. less walleye) ○ Add testimony from warm water fisherman from other states ○ Get stats for boats that have actually sunk from this rule • Andrew has submitted written comments on behalf of the Clark Fork Coalition and has reached out to Clayton Elliot to see if Trout Unlimited can submit comments, as well. • The session is difficult because the hearing for this bill was scheduled/announced on a Friday for the following Monday. Timeline for contacting partners, attending hearings and gathering testimony is very short. • The legislative committee is ad hoc and has some standing actions including sending a letter to South Dakota to encourage AIS support. However, it is a tough time for sending letters to other states with new administrations, we will table now and revisit. • Our annual report was sent out with a note to all the legislators in the UC Basin. • Kate has reached out to the new boards and commissions coordinator for reappointments and terms. This may be an opportunity to work our mission in and remind them who we are when we are asking to reapprove our appointees. • Lori drafted a letter of thanks to the senate and speaker of the house, for appointing our legislators and requesting they be reappointed. • Motion: Send a letter to request current legislative members are reappointed by the Senate President and Speaker of the House (Phil). Seconded (Paul). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> • ACTION: Get an invitation for our next commission meeting to the Governor's office and legislative services.
<p>Announcement of Retirement</p> <p>Lori Curtis, UC³ Chair</p>	<p>Lori Curtis, UC³ Chair is Retiring!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lori Curtis will be stepping back from her role as chair of the commission and retiring from her work at the Whitefish Lake Institute in July of 2021. • On behalf of staff and DNRC, Lori has been a great leader getting the commission off the ground and we are incredibly grateful for her time and dedication to UC³. There will be a gift in the mail for her to celebrate her great service and a happy retirement.
<p>By-Law Review & Discussion</p> <p>Kate Wilson</p>	<p>ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3: Agency Representatives – Discussion on USACE, NWPCC, BC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are some agency seats on the commission (USACE, NWPCC, BC, etc.) that have been harder to engage, they operate at a much larger scale and have difficulty engaging at our smaller commission scale. ○ If anyone has a recommendation for new people to engage from these organizations, please share contacts with staff. ○ Doug Grabb appointed to NWPCC from Flathead Electric and may be able to attend meetings and speak on the work they do. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ACTION: Stacey to contact Doug Grabb (NWPCC) about possible participation on commission. ▪ ACTION: Russ with share USACE contacts from Libby Dam.

By-Law Review & Discussion

Kate Wilson

- WGA was interested in making sure there is good communication between the governors and state IS councils. Maintaining that connection is important.
- **Section 4:** Ex-Officio Members – ‘additional representatives from federal entities, state agencies, local gov organizations, tribal governments, Montana universities & private and for-profit organizations with an interest in the wellbeing of Montana pertaining to invasive species’
 - No changes, just including to inform decisions.
- **Section 5:** add language ‘Senate President & Speaker of the House’
 - We don’t get to decide who is a UC³ legislator, the senate president and speaker of the house appoint legislators to boards and commissions.
 - Adding this language would specify that we would send a recommendation to the Senate President & Speaker of the House.
- **Section 8:** Incomplete terms – may recommend a new member (CDs)
 - Because the conservation district seat is a governor appointed position, we still have to follow appointment process, but we can send a letter of recommendation for that seat.
 - Terms are set by the governor’s office for gov appointees.

ARTICLE III: ADMINISTRATION

- **Section 4:** Chair & Vice Chair – add terms. ‘The VC shall be eligible for additional two-year terms, but an election shall take place every two years.’
 - It is specified in the by-laws that the chair has a specific term, but it does not specify for the vice-chair.
 - This change would add a two-year term with no term limit (can serve endless 2-year terms but need to be re-elected every 2 years).

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

- **Section 4:** Executive Committee – discussion of FWP membership (either as formal ex-officio member OR ExComm)
 - Current executive committee consists of staff, chair, and vice chair.
 - Tom’s official seat on UC³ is MISC representative as well as vice-chair.
 - Tom is an FWP employee, but he doesn’t represent FWP on UC³.
 - MISC seat is a voting member on the commission.
 - Technically there are no state agencies seats on UC³.
 - In order to ensure we have FWP representation in some form we need to create a seat for them.
 - Options to address: 1) Vote to make FWP ex-officio member seat, and/or 2) Add FWP representative seat to the executive committee.
 - Additionally, if we want to make the executive committee bigger, we need to vote to make that change to the by-laws.
 - Some background, the idea of UC3 (created by Sen. Cuffe) was to structure a commission that would be advisory in nature with actionable items, that was not led by an agency or dominating group, all of those who participate from agencies would do so in an ex officio roll.
- **Motion:** Add FWP to UC³ as a formal ex-officio member and as a seat on the executive committee (Stacey). Seconded (Paul). All in favor. *Motion passes.*
- **Motion:** To accept by-law revisions as written (Mike). Seconded (Martin). All in favor. *Motion passes.*

Election

1. **Chair** (2 year)—Recommendation only (requires Governor appointment)
2. **Vice Chair** (2- year term)

Election

<p>Kate Wilson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation of chair will have to go through the process for the governor’s office. • Lori recommends Stacy Schnebel (Flathead Electric Co-op) as new UC³ chair. • Motion: Recommend Stacey Schnebel to serve as the next chair of the UC³ (Paul). Seconded (Phil). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> • Motion: Tom Woolf to serve another term as vice chair of the UC³ (Mike). Seconded (Paul). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> • Lori- “Commission has really grown, and we are doing great work with so many great folks. Tom and Kate and I have had meetings where we have said I wish we hear more from most of the group. We are not directing you; we are leading, and we want direction from you. Stay involved and thank you!” • Mark- Thanks Lori, we will go through getting Stacey up to speed on administrative attachments and how those work, the role DNRC plays, etc. Welcome Stacey! • No action needed today but now that Lori is retiring, the conservation district seat is open on the commission. If you know of anyone who would be interested in that seat and is in the Upper Columbia basin, let staff know. • ACTION: Kate/Lori to draft letter of recommendation for Stacey as new chair of UC³ and send on to the boards and commissions office for review.
<p>FWP AIS Report</p> <p>Tom Woolf</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to make sure everyone knows what’s going on behind the scenes of the states AIS program. UC³ is here to enhance the state AIS program and is an excellent forum to talk about any questions, issues and/or concerns. Please bring forward ideas and suggestions, this is how we better protect the state from AIS. <p>2020 Program Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record number of: watercraft inspected, mussel fouled boats intercepted, weeds found on boats, boats inspected by partners, early detection samples collected, and level of partner involvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No Dreissenid mussels detected! ○ 35 mussel fouled vessels in 2020 mostly coming from the Midwest and the southwest, no mussel detections in our waterways. ○ 144,000 interviews conducted in 2020 -> 174, 423 boats inspected ○ Tiber reservoir is our one mussel positive waterbody. Mussel veligers were detected in 2016 and have not been detected since then. ○ Canyon Ferry was delisted as a mussel suspect waterbody last season and we kept the inspection station there in 2020. In 2020, we will be removing this station and be using those funds towards Ravalli night operations. • Contracted partner stations now conduct more boat inspections than anyone else. Specifically highlighting Whitefish Lake and Glacier NP stations, FWP does not contribute any funds to these programs but does coordinate on the data system, trainings, materials, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuing to work on continuity around the state, Glacier NP is moving to the Colorado data system and now every state in the west except Idaho is using it. ○ Working closely with Swan Lakers on their inspection program in Seely/Swan. • AIS Sampling/Surveys: Collected by FWP, FLBS, CRC, USACE, WLI, GNP, Avista, Yaak Valley Forest Council, etc. There is opportunities for expanding this citizen science potential that we are working on through UC³ and UCLN. The more we can get people out in the water looking around, know what we are looking for and know to report something they can’t identify, the better. • Tiber reservoir is our one mussel positive waterbody (detected 2017 and haven’t seen since then). Mandatory exit inspections and decontaminations will be required through 2021 at Tiber reservoir and if we sample to the same degree next year and have no

mussel positive waterbodies, FWP will move to delist in 2022. Has been five years since initial detection.

- Statewide outreach program works closely with UC³ on print, radio, digital, and geotargeted ads. Specifically targeting boaters that are visiting the state, making sure they are aware of CDD requirements, inspection requirements, fee requirements, etc.
- Trout Unlimited received a DNRC AIS grant program to install CDD stencils at fishing accesses sites, boat put ins, etc.
- We have signage to put up at boat ramps. This is something commission members can help with. We still have a lot of the old 'Mussel Alert' signs out there that we need to get replaced with the new signage. Our monitoring staff are going around the state looking for these signs and replacing them, but we can always use more eyes out there.
- Lastly, we have various billboards including the Gallatin River Billboard funded through the "Come Clean, Leave Clean' DNRC AIS grant, as well as billboards through UC³.

2021 Program Plans

- Extended hours & season, specifically at border stations.
- FWP will be funding CSKT night operations this season. Will also be investigating night operations with warden support (Hardin station) to see what boat movement is happening at night.
- Expanded outreach: UC³ supported 'Pull the Plug' bill, whether that passes or not it is beneficial to get that message out there and emphasized.
- Last year for containment at Tiber.
- Continue focus on QA/QC at inspection stations, making sure inspectors do what they're supposed to do, every time. New initiatives to push this more in 2021.
- Stations begin opening mid-March (Dillon, Ravalli, Anaconda), hiring has already started, and trainings will be underway soon.
- Early detection survey initiated in May: three crews of two people traveling around the state collecting early detection samples at all major water throughout the season.
- 2021 Focus Areas:
 - Expand partner involvement and engagement
 - AIS Survey & Outreach (trainings and materials for local partners)
 - Targeted enforcement (putting warden in areas we have had compliance challenges in the past)
 - Implemented last year at Anaconda and compliance drastically improved. Went from ~8% drive by's to ~4%.
 - Improve QA/QC: Expanded training, increased supervision, refresher trainings, performance reviews, spot checks, public survey, etc.
 - Secret shopper: contractor goes around to each station twice a year to evaluate inspection stations and inspections.
 - 3 visits per station
 - Follow up with station staff when issues are identified.
 - Additional targeted visits with secret shoppers with FWP staff (monitoring crew undercover) to check on stations with persistent issues and challenges.
 - Does UC³ have capacity to help? There is history of an outside group trying to show how bad we are, so we have baggage here. But if it we developed a well-coordinated group, there may be opportunity here.
 - Expanded Coordination to encourage consistency/continuity and minimize duplication of efforts/maximize efficacy.
 - Locally: Tribes, Counties, Cities, Conservation Districts, Irrigation Districts, NGO's UC3, CEMIST, etc.
 - Identify and address locally driven gaps and needs.

- Relying on groups like UC3 to identify additional gaps and needs and identify strategies for addressing these.
 - Draft AIS Strategic Plan distributed for review this summer.
- Regionally: State & Province AIS programs, WRP, CRB, PNWER
 - Containment at mussel source waters.
 - Address other pathways (used boat sales, pet stores).
 - Develop standards and protocols (through WRP).
 - Engagement with the Dakotas: Call last week with CDs in MT and South Dakota. They are looking to contract with South Dakota CDs to operate in that state for the first time.
- Nationally: Federal partners (WRDA, QZAP), NISC, NAISMA
 - To address funding issues and research needs.
- We are looking for ideas and strategies to reward inspectors for good work. We are trying to change 'every feedback being negative', worked with TU to do some reward programs last year but are always looking for more ideas on how to reward.
- Important if people see something going on or not going on at the station, let FWP know so they can follow up. Seeking more UC3 member feedback and involvement.
- FWP got a call on plastic octopus from a local ice skating in Helena, is was great that someone saw and called, raising that awareness is extremely beneficial.

Regional Coordination- State/Federal AIS Coordination

- Interest in mussels in the west was elevated immediately in the west in 2016 with mussel detection, new government administration, and DOI plan.
- Groups involved in Federal Coordination: Columbia River Basin Team, WRP of the ANS Task Force, WGA, PNWER, DOI (Safeguarding the West)-BOR, USFWS (QZAP, State ANS Plans), USACE, USFS, etc.
 - Montana AIS program receives lots of state funds but also funding from BOR, BLM, QZAP, State ANS plans, USACE (\$2 mil each year w/ 50/50 match program), USFS, WRDA.

Discussion:

- Paul- There are a lot of moving parts with AIS management. Concern that Montana seems to be doing well but there are gaps in AIS management, and those gaps seem to come from other states. For discussion:
 - Do we think that we are getting enough guidance... is there something that could be done on a federal level whether it is a set of guidelines for states to follow or inspection protocols?
 - Is there opportunity for us to make some statements to our governor to say we need a bit more guidance to help us as a whole?
 - Is there enough funding available federally (for MT and other states with smaller/less developed programs)?
 - Are there things that could be done to change the funding framework to get those states with smaller or no programs the funding that they need?
 - For discussion and possible future recommendation (not optimal time to make recommendations now).
- There is a current discussion on changing the match strategy for WRDA from 50/50 to 75/25, discussing now on finding better ways of getting the funding on the ground.
- USFWS tried to ask if we could wave the match requirements for the state ANS grants thinking there may be some state deficits from COVID protocols, takes about a few years to get that waiver, that is put on hold.
- Things are moving in the right direction and federal partners are trying to find ways to make things work and fill those gaps.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USFWS has a really long-standing effort to ‘build consensus in the west’, bringing the states together to talk about watercraft inspections and what a detection meant. WRP has moved discussion forward (esp. with mussels) whole series of documents from WRP on BMPs for WIS programs and consistent protocols, we are tied together with other states using those WRP protocols to improve consistency.
<p>Member and Partner AIS Program Reports</p> <p>Partner Programs in the Upper Columbia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea Me Paddle- Brian ‘BJ’ Johnson: We own Sea Me Paddle kayaking tours on Flathead Lake. COVID was a weird year, we lost 6 weeks of winter business and lost all of summer staff after FWP was unsure if they would authorize permit. At the end of the season, summer business was up 74% and we did it with 8 people. With bookings of this coming season, will see a very similar pattern. Winter business was very busy, and the park and campgrounds have been packed. • Trout Unlimited- Jeremy Anderson: Education and outreach at the fly shops and quite a bit of youth programs “Trout in the Classroom”. Have incorporated water quality issues, disrupting the balance of ecosystems and food cycle with AIS, spreading the knowledge with the next generation through that curriculum. • Avista- Paul Kusnierz: Last year we collected a couple mussel samples from Cabinet Gorge reservoirs, doubling collection this year with Noxon (2 samples) and Cabinet Gorge (2 samples). Partnering with FWP to research modify EWM beds for fisheries management purposes, working on the Environmental Assessment. Anticipate treatment in those reservoirs, as we have been doing the past few years. • Blackfeet Nation- Gerald Wagner: Working with FWP on getting contract agreement reviewed for opening the Browning station. Phase II of opening for Covid, hopefully we will open up more in the next few months. Finishing up some funding for fishing sites on Cut Bank creek (border of the reservation), Birch creek (south side of reservation). • CSKT- Martin Charlo: Gearing up for the season, last year we had a tremendous amount of traffic and looking to get ready for that this season. AIS HB 241- committee yesterday. If that does pass, it will have far reaching implications for recreation on the lower half of Flathead Lake and the agreement we have with FWP for hunting and fishing on the reservation. Our sovereignty is being challenged in the legislature this year and the legislative process/session is the biggest thing we are dealing with. The Water Compact has passed, and we are now in control of the Bison Range. • MACD- Lori Curtis: Tough time, things are on hold with budgets in the legislature. • Glacier NP- Chris Downs: Only Lake McDonald was open to watercraft last year, still did ~10,000 inspections, unsure of what lakes will be open this year. Will be participating in Colorado database. North Fork might be open as well but Apgar IS will be open for sure. • FLBS- Phil Matson: Research and development, specifically in PCRs, digital droplets, and qualitative PCRs in regard to eDNA tech. Heavily involved in public education and outreach in K-12 and public arenas. Sampling Flathead Lake and Tiber reservoir, through DNRC AIS Grant, covering 40 different site 700 samples, interacted with 75 individuals on CDD/AIS. First of its kind, underwater rover that collected a plankton tow sample and videos of those samples from Tiber Reservoir. Allows us to sample smaller areas/habitats in areas of that lake. Last year marked 5-year anniversary working with CSKT. Mussel walk with CSKT happening next year. Would like to collaborate with Industry Outreach project and do some sampling demonstration with the marinas. • MCWD/Missoula AIS District- Lindsey Bona-Eggeman: Operating CIS gearing up for hiring. Created Missoula AIS District this year, first county AIS district in the state. Two alternate positions still open if you are a Missoula County Resident and interested. Fragrant Water Lily monitoring project and treatment trials in 2020 (is now a Missoula County listed noxious weed). Creating training videos for the watercraft inspection stations. Will have a two-part video training with a classroom/PowerPoint video (available by the end of march) not to replace in person trainings but to be used as

supplemental/as needed (mid-season hiring and reference for inspectors). Then a separate video on the decontaminations and watercraft inspections. Monitoring Committee, prevention coordinator has been talking about doing an equipment or resource sharing/swap, creating a list or database on what equipment partners have. Instead of purchasing more gear you can share and use from partners. Commissioners and sheriffs dept are supportive with aiding with enforcement at the station, getting a dedicated law enforcement officer at the station. Putting feelers out if there is any funding out there to support that enforcement at the station.

- **ACTION: Add equipment sharing discussion to Monitoring Workshop agenda.**
- **NRCS- Monica Pokorny:** Education and outreach, through the service center and the water resource report, to private landowners focusing on how they can prevent the spread of AIS.
- **Swan Lakers- Michael Wallace:** AIS inspections at Swan Lake in July and August of 2020 (inspected 654 boats). No AIS- largely because most boats are inspected before getting to Swan Lake.
- **USFWS- Teresa Thom:** USFWS provides funding, coordination, and outreach to states for ANS plans and funding tied specifically to ZQM work. Will share the links: fantastic paper published Aug 2020 on the Lacey Act (summary of act and how it has changed). DOI released the IS Strategic Plan for the whole dept. in January of 2021. WGA launched IS data mobilization campaign to streamline data sharing across the west in December. USFWS updated data policy supporting the WGA efforts on data sharing. November of 2020 a large interagency MOU was signed with DOI, USFS, USACE on coordinating incident command and rapid response to invasive mussels, real push to implement the things outlined in this fiscal year. NISAW starting Feb 22-26 and USFWS has whole series of social media posts that we will be sharing. Prioritizing watercraft inspection database, USFWS pushing to use the Colorado database for the whole DOI. Horizon scanning project moving forward in 2021, looking ahead of what IS will be coming in the future and targeting different pathways, any regional watercraft and national organisms and trade. Working on hazard analysis and critical control point training (HACCPT), focusing on not moving around non target species in our everyday work. eDNA sampling at hatcheries expanding for NZM, ZQM, Northern Pike and Asian Carp. Rapid response exercise happening in Missouri River Basin at Fort Peck happening in the summer of this year (FWP, ISAN, PSFMC, USFWS, USACE, etc.)
- **Swan Valley Connections-Rob Rich:** Received DNRC AIS funding grant for a series of videos this summer, sharing widely throughout the region. Videos will help tell the story of different ways people are engaging in this work focusing on the Seely/Swan area. Let SVC know if anyone is out there and wants to get involved in that video effort. Will be sharing as that comes online.
- **Whitefish Lake Institute- Mike Koopal:** Whitefish program is a collaboration between WLI and the City of Whitefish with support from FWP. Efficiency and QA/QC at WIS, 2020 inspection just under 1700 watercraft with decontaminations on 120 watercraft. Also implement self-certifications for lower risk watercraft and exit seals are applied to boats that come off of whitefish lake and then come straight back to the lake. 3,500 seals came back unbroken. Donation from FWP for the decontamination station at the City Beach, reduce wait/travel time for users for that service. Partnering with FWP on EWM monitoring and control at beaver lake, few more plants were identified and removed this year as well as bottom barrier placement. WLI donated a suction dredger to FWP. Partnership with City of Whitefish to collect eDNA samples on local lakes, in addition to USFS partnership to collect samples on forest lakes. NWMLN partnerships with 41 lakes where Cynthia will visit once a year (mi-July-mid-August) to collect a

	<p>sample and send to FWP (as well as UCLN). FLBS and WLI raised some grant funds to complete economic benefit study of Whitefish/Flathead Lake (published on website).</p> <p>May 12th Meeting Guest Presenter Poll</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top voted results- 1) Panel of inspectors and decontaminators or 2) Presentation from mussel infested area. • We will keep other ideas for future topics, if you have any additional guest speaker/topic ideas please let the staff know.
Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No public comment.
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Workshop is March 16th • Next meeting date is May 12th • Motion: To adjourn the UC³ Winter Meeting (Stacey). Seconded (Paul). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> • Adjourned at 4:20pm.

4. Action Items			
Action:	Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Draft minutes and send to members	Kate Wilson/Cassidy Bender	
2	Add equipment sharing discussion to Monitoring Workshop agenda.	Kate Wilson	3/16/21
3	Kate/Lori to draft letter of recommendation for Stacey as new chair of UC ³ and send on to the boards and commissions office for review.	Kate Wilson/Lori Curtis	
4	Stacey to contact Doug Grabb (NWPPCC) about possible participation on commission.	Stacey Schnebel	
5	Russ with share USACE contacts from Libby Dam.	Russ Hartzell	Completed
6	Get an invitation for our next commission meeting to the Governor's office and legislative services.	Kate Wilson	5/12/21
EXISTING ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS			
7	Contact Liz Lodman for Clean Drain Dry rack cards, kids' activity books, AIS materials, etc. or if you would like to assist with placement and distribution of the AIS species signs at infected waterbodies.	All	On-going
8	Send anything you would like to share or add to the new UC ³ website (i.e. photos) to Kate Wilson or Cassidy Bender	All	On-going
9	Discuss drafting a letter for South Dakota AIS program to the agenda with the legislative committee.	Kate Wilson	
10	Look into railway transport of watercraft as potential high-risk vector	Tom Woolf, Chris Parrot	