

March 13, 2024

AIS Report to Montana Environmental Quality Council



DNRC participates in the state's AIS prevention efforts with two of its administratively attached agencies, the Montana Invasive Species Council (MISC) and the Western Montana Conservation Commission.

More information about MISC can be found at <https://invasivespecies.mt.gov/misc/>

More information about WMCC can be found at <https://westernmtwaters.com/>

Funding

The DNRC appropriation of \$664,445 from the AIS SSR Account is distributed as follows:

Montana Invasive Species Council – (AIS SSR = \$537,445)

3301 MISC Admin (02284 - AIS) \$208,865

AIS funds cover MISC Personal Service and Operational funds for two DNRC FTE.

3303 MISC Council (02284 - AIS) \$50,000

AIS funds cover the venues, travel, per-diem, and projects for Governor appointed members.

3304 MISC AIS Grants (02284 - AIS) \$278,580

AIS funds are for grants to state/local governments as well as non-profits. Grant applications include on the ground projects, education/outreach, and research. MISC reviews the grant applications and makes recommendations to DNRC for funding. There are currently 15 grant requests being reviewed totaling \$437,962. Information about AIS Grants can be found at <https://invasivespecies.mt.gov/montana-invasive-species/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-Grant-Program>

In addition to state funds, MISC has federal grants to support its projects. At present, the two federal grants awarded to MISC are for non-aquatic invasive species projects; Feral Swine and Forest Pests.

Western Montana Conservation Commission – (AIS SSR = \$127,000)

3120 WMCC (02284 - AIS) \$127,000

These Funds support the AIS related staffing and projects of the Western Montana Conservation Commission (WMCC). WMCC was formed in the 2023 Legislature by a merge of the Flathead Basin Commission (FBC) and the Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC3).

Like MISC, the Western Commission has federal grant awards to augment state funding. Western Commission currently has two AIS related federal grants with USBOR (USBOR #1 \$58,000 ending 2025, USBOR #2 \$68,000 *pending award*). The USBOR grants support AIS programs and associated education and outreach to complement the statewide program at FWP.

Program Activities

Montana Invasive Species Council

For legislative reporting purposes the MISC biennial report will be published at the end of 2024. Its last report was published 2022. This interim report identifies the reporting item required of MISC at 80-7-1203.

Copies of the following are published on the MISC website.

- Montana Invasive Species Framework (Reprint 2019)
- Montana Management Assessment of Invasive Species
- Invasive Species Rapid Response Guidelines, Sept. 2020
- Annual (biennial) Reports 2018, 2020, 2022
- EQC Reports 2017, 2018, 2023
- Rapid Response Exercises: Tree pests, Invasive Mussel TTX Handbook

Also published on the MISC Website are outcomes of the four Science Advisory Panels as follows:

- Firewood SAP, 2022
- Eastern Heath Snail SAP, 2020
- Mogulones crucifer SAP, 2019
- eDNA and Invasive Mussel SAP, 2018

MISC events and activities planned for the remainder of the year include:

- March 25-26 MT Biocontrol Coordination Project Spring Meeting (Missoula)
- April 2 Emerald Ash Borer Conference and Community Event (Billings)
- April 11 AIS Project Grant Hearing (Helena)
- April 17 MISC Quarterly Meeting
- June 1 – 8 Play-Clean-Go Awareness Week
- June 2 – 8 Montana Noxious Weed Awareness Week
- June 4 – 5 100th Meridian Columbia River Basin AIS Team Meeting (Missoula)
- June 10 – 11 AIS Identification & Monitoring Training (Flathead Lake Bio Station)
- July 22 – 25 PNWER (B.C., Canada)
- Sept. 30 – Oct. 3 North American Invasive Species Conference (Missoula)

Western Montana Conservation Commission

WMCC is maintaining UC3's programs and commitments around AIS as well as moving forward with developing WMCC's path forward working on AIS. Current work includes:

- Support Watercraft Inspector Appreciation Week
- Videography Contract – in progress
 - AIS - Fly Angler PSA
 - AIS - Monitoring Techniques Overview
 - AIS - Seasonal Worker Video
- Event attendance sponsorship, tabling, and presentations
 - Example includes AIS Short Course, FWP AIS partner meeting
- WMCC Committee is in Development for AIS (Tom Woolf committee development lead)