

MEETING MINUTES

These abbreviated summary minutes will become the official adopted minutes at the next Montana Invasive Species Council meeting when they will be approved. Until then, they are considered a draft.

Meeting Name:	Montana Invasive Species Council		
Date of Meeting:	July 9, 2024	Time:	8:30 am
Minutes Prepared By:	Anna Connerton	Location:	Big Horn Resort, Billings Zoom
Attendees			
<p>MISC: <u>Steve Wanderaas</u>, Tom Woolf, Jason Allen, Jasmine Chaffee, Charles Headdress, Pam Schwend, Dennis Longknife, Sara Ricklefs, Jared Beaver, Dylan Brown, Tracy Tyner Brenda Witkowski, Gary Adams, Monica Pokorny, Michelle Cox,</p> <p>MISC staff: Liz Lodman, Anna Connerton, and Fern McBride (MCC Intern)</p> <p>Other Attendees: Russ Hartzell, Megan Hoyer, Kate Kilzer, Scott Beutelschies, Kylee Macks, Dana Harty, Austin Jaynes, , Megan O'Reilly, Dalin Tidwell, Doug Ekberg, Chrissy Web, Eliza McLaughlin, Steffany Murphy, Emilie Henry, Dona Stafford, Bryce Maxell, Becky Kington, Tahnee Szymanski, Molly Masters, Kelly Hendrix, Mark Bostrom, Erin Bjorklund, Jennifer Riddle</p> <p>**MISC voting members are underlined.</p>			
Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues			
Topic	Discussion		
Welcome & Roll Call	Steve Wanderaas (Chair) opened the meeting at 8:38 am. Wanderaas conducted a roll call and confirmed the quorum. Attendees introduced themselves.		
Administrative Business	<p>*Action: Approval of April 17th Meeting Minutes.</p> <p>Discussion: Update line one of the first topic to say “(Chair)” instead of “(Co-Chair)” regarding Steve Wanderaas’ position with MISC.</p> <p>Steve Wanderaas motion to approve the April meeting minutes with the correction.</p> <p>Motion: Jason Allen</p> <p>Second: Pam Schwend</p>		

Motion Passed Unanimously

Program Updates - Liz Lodman

- **Montana Conservation Corps Intern:** Fern McBride is the AmeriCorps intern for MISC working on the Don't Move Firewood campaign. He is building the outreach program and visiting Montana's public and private campgrounds to share information about forest pests and how firewood is a vector for their movement. He is distributing signs to display at campground kiosks about the Don't Move Firewood campaign that encourages people to buy firewood locally and never transport wood across state lines. This effort is a result of the Firewood Science Advisory Panel the MISC hosted in 2022. Advisors to this project are Amy Gannon (DNRC-Forestry), Michelle Cox (Forest Service), Maria Newcomb (Forest Service) and Leigh Greenwood (The Nature Conservancy-DMF). Fern's term runs mid-May through mid-August.
- **MISC Coordinator Position:** DNRC held interviews for this new position on June 27th. Five people were interviewed and Russ Hartzell was offered the position. Russ will be based out of Missoula DNRC office. His first day will be Monday, July 15th. The interview team was Liz Lodman, Steve Wanderaas, Mark Bostrom and Casey Lewis.
- **MISC Video:** The current MISC video was shared. This video can be found on the MISC website here: <https://invasivespecies.mt.gov/misc/reports-and-publications> under "MISC Invasive Species Video". The video content is still good but some images and websites are out of date. Some items to update include:
 - Update Squeal on Pigs Logo
 - Update number of feral swine reports in Montana
 - Check figure for \$2.5 million in damage
 - Add Noxious Weed Campaign and Certified Weed Free logos
 - Update firewood slogan
 - Check Don't Move Firewood recommended distance for firewood movement or say buy locally
 - Add another campaign or species message. Suggestions include bucket biology (kick the bucket)bullfrogs, woody Invasives, and snails.

Multi-Agency AIS MOU for AIS: Liz Lodman shared a copy of the MOU. The previous MOU expired and needs to be updated. The agencies included are AG, FWP, DNRC, and MDT. Director Kaster (DNRC) is sharing this with the other Directors for signatures. It was already signed by FWP director Temple. Updates include replacing UC3 with WMCC and listing MISC more frequently.

Liz Lodman:

3301: MISC Administration (Salary and Operations) - \$246,326

3301-MISC Administration		
	PENDING	SPENT
Personal Services	\$0.00	\$176,750.23
Other Services	\$35,486.98	\$8,465.52
Supplies and Materials	\$0.00	\$3,249.98
Communications	\$2,450.00	\$8,301.39
Travel	\$0.00	\$2,806.34
Rent	\$0.00	\$2,153.14
Other Expenses	\$257.50	\$8,996.52
	\$38,194.48	\$210,732.12

**MISC Budget
Review**

3303: MISC Council - \$50,000

3303-MISC Council		
	PENDING	SPENT
Other Services	\$10,080.00	\$2,666.03
Supplies and Materials		\$2,285.77
Travel	\$1,805.09	\$13,132.69
Other Expenses		\$19,891.07
	\$11,885.09	\$37,975.56

3304: AIS Grants (10% for Admin) – \$278,580

3309: Invasive Species Support (New from 2023 Legislature) - \$50,000

3309-Invasive Species Support		
	PENDING	SPENT

	Other Services	\$22,929.00	\$12,7500.00
	Supplies and Materials	\$2,397.61	\$4,479.70
	Operating Expenses	\$87.44	\$2,726.52
	Communications	\$1,820.00	\$3,820.00
		\$27,234.05	\$23,776.22

Committee Reports

Woody Invasives Science Advisory Panel and Impact Report - Sara Ricklefs

The committee intended to hold the second SAP this spring, but field season schedules didn't allow this to happen. The SAP will be this fall between October 15-18. Sara is reaching out to potential panelists including economists and experts on Saltcedar, Buckthorn and Russian Olive. For the Woody Invasives Impact Report Sara will solicit bids for a potential contractor; she would appreciate suggestions on who to include. The Impact Report will focus on ecological and economic impacts to Montana. She is working on a trifold brochure with information about the 3 woody invasive species, how to identify, and look-alike species.

Process to Assess Invasiveness of a Species:

No update. This will happen spring of 2025.

Communications Workshop:

No update. Looking to host after all the meetings this fall.

Invasive Species Summit Planning

MT Invasive Species Summit - Liz Lodman:

Date: November 14th **Location:** Delta Hotel, Helena

The planning committee is Liz Lodman, Anna Connerton, Tom Woolf, Steve Wanderaas, Jasmine Chaffee, Sara Ricklefs, Casey Lewis, Emilie Henry, and Stephanie Murphy. We would like to get feedback from attendees and plan to hold work sessions like we did in 2022. The potential work session topics are marked with (*).

Topic Ideas (November 14th):

- Legislators: invite to talk/learn about issues
- Woody Invasives
- Communication (coordinate with WMCC workshop)
- Climate Change*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invasive Species of Concern* • Feral Swine • Weeds – Palmer amaranth • Reporting Apps (iNaturalist, Seek, Wild Spotter, others) • Barriers to on the ground EDRR • Tribal Involvement • Regional Partnerships* <p>Work Sessions (November 14th):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct two work sessions, one AM and one PM • Use the 1-2-4-All method to generate responses to questions. • Determine questions and topics for the 2 work sessions. Possibly topics marked with * above.
<p>Feral Swine Tour and Department of Livestock Updates</p>	<p>Jared Beaver:</p> <p>The feral swine tour was held March 5-8th with speakers from Department of Livestock, USDA-Wildlife Services, and MSU Extension visiting these communities: Havre, Chinook, Malta, Glasgow, Scobey, Plentywood, and Sydney. A total of 350 people attended the meetings. A follow-up meeting was later held June 12th in Shelby with approximately 40 participants. The response from attendees was very positive. Questions/concerns from the attendees included how quick a response would be if a sounder is detected in Montana, the status and transparency of the feral pig situation Canada, and North Dakota’s feral swine status and management plan. Game wardens attended the meetings; there was concern regarding the verbiage on one of the regulations. The tour did not visit Fort Belknap and Fort Peck reservations but would like to in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MISC assisted this effort by attending planning meetings, creating an outreach flyer to promote the tour, writing a news release, and purchasing radio ad time. MISC worked with Dept of Livestock to create a new fact sheet. <p>Tahnee Szymanski:</p> <p>Department of Livestock has hired a new veterinarian, Dr. Heidi Hildahl, who will be the primary contact on feral swine going forward. Dr. Hildahl spent 8 years as an extension veterinarian in Arkansas and has a background in feral swine.</p> <p>We received a report of pigs in Richland County that appeared to be feral. APHIS-WS flew the area and didn’t find anything, and no other reports have been made. The landowner and reporter were great to work with. We received reports of pig heads but</p>

	<p>it's hard to follow up on these cases. We assume it's like the Kooconusa pig where someone dumped a carcass.</p> <p>We want to continue to work with MISC on creating MOUs with tribal agencies and quarterly reporting on feral swine activities.</p>
Climate Discussion	<p>Open Discussion:</p> <p>We will keep this on our radar. Expectations for the past aren't the expectations for the future for these species.</p> <p><u>Next steps:</u> Invite a speaker to discuss climate change at our next quarterly meeting and/or at the Summit.</p>
Annual Grasses Discussion	<p>Open Discussion:</p> <p>Steve Wanderaas: I travel all over Eastern Montana and have seen an explosion of invasive grasses especially Japanese Brom. The McCone Conservation District hosted a about annual grasses in Circle. It appears agencies have bought into new technology and treatments, but it hasn't reached the producers.</p> <p>Brenda Witkowski: I am waiting for the BLM to approve Rejuvra for use on invasive grasses. For the Miles City field office and counties that border Wyoming we are seeing a lot of Ventenata and are treating it. The farthest north is in Fallon County. We are working with University of Montana special analysis lab on using satellites to map invasive grasses. Have seen</p> <p>Dylan Brown: I work in ID, WY, and CO see a lot of Ventenata on roadsides. In Western Montana there are little pockets that the local weed districts are good at identifying and treating.</p> <p>Jasmine Chaffee: Cheatgrass and Japanese Brom are not on the noxious weeds list so we can't spend state and federal money to treat them. It's too much of a burden to make them noxious because then these species must be managed and enforced.</p> <p>Steve Wanderaas: This appears to be a gap we might want to look into.</p>
Tribal Outreach	<p>Pam Schwend and Tracy Tyner:</p> <p>Pam has adopted information from the Invasive Species Council of British Columbia.</p> <p>Culturally Responsive Curriculum for Indigenous Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit for Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Foster an understanding of invasive species and their impacts on ecosystems and traditional practices. ○ Cultivate a sense of stewardship and responsibility towards the environment and ancestral lands.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integrate traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and cultural practices into invasive species management strategies. ○ Empower Indigenous children to become active participants in conservation efforts within their communities. ○ Promote cross-cultural understanding and collaboration between Indigenous communities and external stakeholders in invasive species management. ● Looking to the Future: create a curriculum or STEM that could be used in all schools across Montana. Form a task force or working group: Pam Schwend, Dennis Longknife, Charles Headdress, Tracy Tyner, Anna Connerton, Megan Hoyer, and Russ Hartzell. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact all tribes across the state. ○ Start learning language, culture, and traditions. ● Charles Headdress expressed support for this idea. Dennis Longknife suggested adding the impacts invasive species have on buffalo and adding this curriculum to the summer cultural camps.
<p>Conference Updates</p>	<p>PNWER:</p> <p>The Pacific Northwest Economic Region is holding their 33rd Annual Summit in Whistler, BC on July 21-25, 2024. MISC voted previously to send Steve Wanderaas to the Summit. Tom Woolf is on the AIS agenda. Tahnee Szymanski is on the Cross-Border Livestock Health meeting. This meeting has an in person and a virtual attendance option</p> <p><u>Sessions that were discussed are:</u></p> <p>Monday, July 22nd: Aquatic Invasive Species: Threat to Pacific Northwest Economy and Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the strategies implemented to combat the invasive zebra and quagga mussels, which remains a top AIS priority across the PNWER region. The session will showcase the multifaceted approach taken to increase prevention, early detection, rapid response readiness, and collaboration between all jurisdictions. <p>Monday, July 22nd : Hog Wild: Tackling Feral Swine Across Borders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This session will cover how states and provinces are addressing feral swine management. Speakers will highlight the recent cross-border exercise and the importance of regional coordination. Speakers will share expertise and

insights. Attendees will learn innovative strategies, engage with fellow experts, and contribute to the enhancement of feral swine management efforts.

Tuesday, July 23-24th : Cross-Border Livestock Health – Foreign Animal Disease Tabletop Exercise

- Animal agriculture is an important industry within the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), and a critical link in its food supply. For this reason, PNWER is taking steps to help the region prepare for a response to a foreign animal disease (FAD) outbreak. This exercise is a key step in response preparedness and in protecting our livestock and agricultural economy throughout the Pacific Northwest. The discussion-based exercise is designed around communication and incident coordination during an emerging threat of transboundary disease outbreak (Foot-and-Mouth Disease) along the US-Canada border. While threats to agriculture, such as an FAD outbreak, may be unintentional or intentional, states, provinces, territories, and the aligned industries must understand their roles and the actions necessary for an effective response, as well as how to prepare to mitigate the impact of a disease outbreak. This tabletop exercise will help protect and prepare the region, its citizens, and its agriculture industries. Funding for the exercise is provided by the Washington Dept of Agriculture through the state Homeland Security grant program.

NAISMA:

Liz Lodman: At the last MISC meeting, we asked council members if they would like to attend NASIMA and use one of the free registrations MISC received for sponsoring the event. We

registered Steve Wanderaas, Pam Schwend, Sara Ricklefs, and Dennis Longknife. If anyone didn't

get registered and wants to attend it's not too late. The early bird registration ends on July 31st. This conference is all taxa. On Tuesday there is an all-day session on invasive annual grasses. On Wednesday there are field trips to Mission Valley and Bison Range, Traveler's Rest State Park and Lolo pass area, Ovando and Blackfoot Challenge area, and a forest pests tour. Some MISC members will be presenting include Tom Woolf, Pam Schwend, Sara Ricklefs and Liz Lodman. Montana education trailers will be showcased including the FWP-AIS ballast training trailer, Southwest MT Weed Control education trailer, Grow Wild education trailer.

The Noxious Weed Trust fund grant sponsored the registration fees for Montana Weed Districts, Conservation Districts, and Extension Agents. There are 70 spots available for people to apply for the scholarship.

<p>Invasive Species Videos</p>	<p>These new videos were shared during the meeting.</p> <p>Western Montana Conservation Commission: Stephanie Murphy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Our Waters • Monitoring Aquatic Invasive Species • Fly Anglers: Protect Our Waters from Aquatic Invasive Species <p>Yellowstone Conservation District: Chrissy Webb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Elmo Clams <p>Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing the Blackfoot with Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist
<p>MISC Member Updates</p>	<p>Gary Adams – APHIS-PPQ: The MWCA convention is the last week of January in Great Falls. I’m the keynote speaker and am looking for topic suggestions.</p> <p>Charles Headdress – Fort Peck: We have an AmeriCorps lady named Olivia working for us who we hope to have a position for. I was going to bring her to this meeting, but she went home for the holiday.</p> <p>Pam Schwend – Weed Districts: I’m busy managing 2 trust fund grants and an Elk Foundation grant; and doing educational things with Megan Hoyer. I will be retiring at the end of the year a will likely work with the Stillwater Valley Watershed Council as their education and outreach person.</p> <p>Jasmine Chaffee – Dept of Ag: Megan Hoyer is now our invasive species education campaign coordinator at the Department of Agriculture; the noxious weed campaign will change to all taxa. Megan will work from Billings. The Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council has a meeting this week. The council is looking for 2 members – a Noxious Weed Free Materials producer/owner representative and a Recreationist/Wildlife representative. We have 3 meetings a year (one tour meeting) and look at about 80 grant applications a year.</p> <p>Dylan Brown – Agriculture Rep: I’m new to the council and still trying to learn the ropes. I travel throughout the northwest region and see a lot of country for my business. I’m using drones for mapping. I own a lot of boats and am tuned into AIS. I can be a resource to help tackle problems.</p> <p>Jason Allen - MDT: I’m wrapping up FY24, the counties did a good job spending \$1.7 million budget spraying highway right of ways. We have more Rush Skeleton weed than we thought. We are dealing with a ton of Ventenata, but it is not going away. And we are treating Blue weed.</p> <p>Sara Ricklefs – Conservation Organization Rep : Since our last meeting we have hired a new outreach coordinator Erin Bjorkland. You can meet her at NAISMA or one of our outreach events. We have a new Clean-Drain-Dry branded kayak that we are dragging</p>

all over the state. We will be at the Neptune Brewery in Livingston this Thursday. We are doing the Protect Park County campaign and distributing invasive species and responsible recreation materials to business. We have an Adopt-A-Launch event at Georgetown Lake on August 3- 4 which will include the CD3 unit. We are planning the first pet rehoming event to be held at Zoo Montana tentatively October 12th. This is funded by a MISC AIS Grant. We will need volunteers if anyone is interested in helping. Our staff has been on the road doing AIS secret shopper stops. ISAN has a grant to tie flies that look like invasive pests including a murder hornet, Asian longhorn beetle, stink bug, spotted lantern fly.

Tom Woolf & Russ Hartzell - FWP: The AIS program has been very busy with 50,000 boat inspections statewide. Yesterday a watercraft inspection station intercepted the 27th mussel-fouled boat of the year. There is new language for fish tournament permitting that requires AIS inspection be required for out of state boats. New Zealand mudsnails have been found in a new location and mystery snails have been found in Flathead Lake. The FWP-AIS Lab has processed over 400 veliger samples with no mussel detections nor in eDNA samples. We have a couple successful eradication projects for Eurasian Watermilfoil in a lake near Whitefish and at Nylon Reservoir on Rocky Mountain Front. Our state aquatic nuisance species plan, that is required by USFWS, hasn't been updated since 2002. We have an updated document for preliminary review by stakeholders and I will provide a copy to Liz. Then it will go out for public scoping. Early detection/monitoring training events were held at the Flathead Lake Bio Station and Glasgow. A rapid response exercise was held in British Columbia on Lake Koochanusa that FWP was involved in.

Jared Beaver – MSU Extension: No update other than the feral swine update mentioned before. Great Plains extension network is working on woody (juniper, cedar) encroachments negative impacts on wildlife species. Plan to move onto cheatgrass and other grasses.

Brenda Witowski - BLM: I will be the official BLM program lead for invasive species starting on Monday.

Michelle Cox – Forest Service: The CD3 units have been customized for Montana. The fire operations hose and foot value AIS decon trailers were built by Clean Wake LLC out of Utah. There are 2 trailers in this region, one in Livingston and one in Missoula, waiting to be deployed. They were designed to fulfill the mandatory AIS decon protocol that was issued by the Northern Rockies Coordination group.

Monica Pokorny - NRCS: We have been providing invasive species training for new staff. Herbaceous weed treatment for terrestrial weeds continues to be one of our most contracted conservation practices. Last fiscal year we had 178 contracts with private landowners to manage weeds that totaled approximately 3.6 million dollars in financial assistance.

Dennis Longknife – Fort Belknap: No update.

	<p>Bryce Maxell – MNHP: They have updated predicted invasion risk model on 39 plant species. They now have 1,326 non-native species in data base and are approaching 1 million observation records. They have the noxious weed status of surrounding states and provinces. Escargot snails have been reported north of Missoula. Please promote iNaturalist as one of the tools for the public to use for reporting invasive species.</p>
<p>Billings Woody Invasives Removal Project</p>	<p>Billings Woody Invasive Removal Project - Megan Hoyer:</p> <p>Megan presented information about the Yellowstone County woody invasive removal project for Russian olive, saltcedar and buckthorn. They also remove honeysuckle and barberry. They use “Stewards of the Land” volunteers at Two Moon Park and grants to fund mastication at Riverfront Park. She showed before and after photos of tree removal at the two parks and discussed the treatment and removal techniques (chemical, cut stump, masticate, EZ-ject lance). Follow up treatments are necessary. See the PowerPoint Here</p>
<p>Wrap-Up and Adjourn</p>	<p>Location of next meeting: No date or location was discussed for the next meeting. This will be discussed at one of the upcoming Executive Committee meetings.</p> <p>Final Discussion: None</p> <p>Public Comment: None</p> <p>*Action: Motion to adjourn the meeting.</p> <p>Motion: Steve Wanderaas</p> <p>Second: Jared Beaver</p> <p>Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Meeting Adjourned at 2:57 pm.</p> <p>Following the meeting Megan led the council on a toured of Two Moon Park to view the woody invasive removal project.</p>