

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:	April 17, 2024	Time:	8:30 am
Minutes Prepared By:	Anna Connerton	Location:	MT State Capitol - Helena & Zoom
Attendees			
<p>MISC: <u>Tom Woolf</u>, <u>Sara Ricklefs</u>, <u>Andy Welch</u>, <u>Paul Rossignol</u>, <u>Pam Schwend</u>, <u>Jasmine Chaffee</u>, <u>Charles Headdress</u>, <u>Dennis Longknife</u>, <u>Steve Wanderaas</u>, <u>Jennifer Pelej</u>, <u>Jason Allen</u>, Jake Chadwell, Gary Adams, Monica Pokorny, Dalin Tidwell</p> <p>MISC staff: Liz Lodman and Anna Connerton</p> <p>Other Attendees: Lori Witham, Dan Rostad, Don Youngbauer, Arthur Potts, Karen Laitala, Steven Phillips, Joe Kremer-Herman, Noelle Orloff, Naija Farhat, Dale Knouse, Darby Warner, Jay Bodner, Mark Bostrom, Bryce Christiaens, Jennifer Riddle, Amy Gannon, Brent Smith, Kasydi Lucas</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 8:32 am. Wanderaas conducted a roll call and confirmed the quorum. Attendees introduced themselves.		
Administrative Business	<p>*Action: Approval of December 13th Meeting Minutes. Motion: Jason Allen Second: Pam Schwend Motion Passed Unanimously</p> <p>Council Member Open Seat Updates Confirmed Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sean Fritzler: Representative of the Crow Nation • Tracy Tyner: Rocky Boy Representative <p>Pending Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jake Chadwell: DNRC Designee <p>*Council members will remain on the council until a successor is named.</p>		
Saskatchewan Feral Swine	<p>Saskatchewan Feral Swine Management – Dale Knouse, Manager of Strategic Operations and Darby Warner, Executive Director of Insurance - Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corp (SCIC)</p> <p><i>Management Program:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corp (SCIC) coordinates sighting, monitoring, and removal of wild boar in Saskatchewan. • SCIC collaborates with many stakeholders from industry and other government organizations. 		

Saskatchewan Feral Swine

- SCIC employs qualified hunters and trappers, located in strategic areas, to work with landowners and rural municipalities.
- Activities focus on removal of full sounders using corral traps. They discourage public hunting of feral swine.
- 1,008 feral swine have been removed since 2017.

How did they get to Sask?

- Imported from Europe in the 1980-90s as part of livestock diversification efforts.
- Canadian populations have established due to intentional or accidental release.

Technology Adoption:

- SCIC uses technology to efficiently monitor and trap wild boar. Use of judas pigs was ineffective.
- Mobile network enabled monitoring and trapping cameras provide live images.
- Remote triggering of trap gates.
 - Cell cameras on sight. Traps send a notification to cell phones then trappers can close it when all the animals are inside. Have been successful in capturing the ones that have escaped. Deep snow helps, pigs can't move through snow, so they use trails making them vulnerable and easy to catch. Sounders used to have 25 animals and now have only been 5-6.
 - Corral traps are the most efficient method to trap numbers of pigs.
 - As of January 2024, SCIC has over 25 trapping systems, some are permanent.
 - SCIC is significantly increasing camera monitoring network in 2024.
- Thermal images UAVs.
 - Thermal imaging UAVs provide aerial reconnaissance capability for wildlife species verification. Cold nights are best for spotting animals.
 - Large areas can be scanned from a single location with UAVs.

Wildlife Damage Compensation:

- Saskatchewan has approximately 40 million acres of arable crop land.
- SCIC provides compensation for any crop or livestock loss.
- Producers can receive up to 100% compensation on the value of land damage. Receive 1,500-2,000 claims per year for all types of loss.
- Compensation to producers for feral swine damage has been insignificant compared to payments for losses resulting from other species.
- Damage by feral swine is primarily to grain crops.
- SCIC adjusters inspect every wildlife claim and are trained to identify the cause of loss (species).
- Most significant damage to crops caused by big game and waterfowl (elk, moose, deer, bear, geese) and gophers – over 26.6M paid to producers in 2022.
- Compensation for wild boar damage in 2022 was less than \$10,000.

US-Canada Border:

- To date SCIC has not received a wild boar sighting near the US border.
- Domestic escapes continue to be an issue (mostly pot-bellied pigs).

Escaped Domestic Animals:

- Saskatchewan regulations will be updated regarding escaped farm domestic pigs.

Saskatchewan Feral Swine

- Domestic pigs that have escaped are not considered feral until ownership can be disproven.
- Lawful fence requirements fall under the *Stray Animals Regulations, 1999*
- Undergoing regulatory changes.
 - Allow wild pig hunting, boar farms and hunt farms, but new farms must be registered and can't expand.
 - Fences must meet a standard, but SCIC can't enforce regulations. New regulations will allow SCIC to enforce regulations. Staff does inspect fences.
 - Landowners are required to report animals.

Sighting and Trapping Statistics:

2023 Reported Sightings:

- 7 domestic pigs
- 4 wild boar
- 8 unverified

Animals Removed:

- 2021 season – 186
- 2022 season – 186
- 2023 season – 128 (low snow year and sounders are getting smaller)

Sighting Strategy:

- Anyone can report a sighting via phone, email or sici.ca. Use the ***Squeal On Pigs!*** campaign.
- SCIC investigates every sighting.
- SCIC manages appropriate strategies for response and/or follow up for each sighting.

Feral Swine Impacts/Risk to Sask:

- Wild Boar are primarily located in wastelands and use adjacent agriculture crop for feed and habitat. Not usually found in provincial forests.
- Pigs in Saskatchewan are primarily found in remote treed locations on land with swamps and marshes, mostly in northern and eastern Saskatchewan.
- Little habitat for swine exists in the southern part of the province – open prairie.
- Wildlife Damage Compensation rates indicate the current impacts to agriculture are minimal.
- Impacts to industry as the result of disease could result in significant reduction of export in Canada.
- According to Sask Port, if African Swine Fever is introduced, industry predicts they can expect an immediate threat to 50% of Saskatchewan exports.

Sask Climate and Conditions:

- Saskatchewan weather, cold-harsh winters, and Saskatchewan's natural predators (wolves) do impact the wild boar population in the province.
- SCIC will conduct an aerial survey next winter over the main populated areas.

SCIC phone: 1.888.935.0000 email: customer.service@scic.ca

Comments:

Liz Lodman: Does using the cell link to notify the trappers work in remote areas? Is it still a good connection? How does it work in the winter?

Darby Warner: In the beginning there was some trouble during the winters, but it ended up being the memory cards that was the issue. This happened at -40 degrees Celsius. We have since overcome this by changing the type of SD card. They now have directional antennas, and the traps can be closed automatically instead of 3–4-minute lapse.

Paul Rossignol: Are you able to salvage the meat from the pigs?

Darby Warner: Yes, we talked about donating the meat to a food bank but to be donated it must be CFIA (Canada Food Inspection Agency) inspected, it would have to be run through a plant and tested for diseases, but the cost was high. We can abandon carcasses on sight, but it seems like a waste – we called the band office, and they took them. This has been done with landowners – if they want the meat, they are welcome to it. Anything that is salvageable we have a couple of processing plants where we have contract there is no profit but once it is done, they can take it and give it to needy families.

Paul Rossignol: What are the regulations for shooting or hunting them?

Darby Warner: Saskatchewan residents can hunt them anytime (no season or limits) but must follow wildlife hunting regulations (no night hunting). You can't accompany someone hunting another big game animal, must be exclusively hunting boar. To remove any profit, there are no boar hunting tags.

Liz Lodman: Following up on the rules, can you tell us about the neighboring provinces?

Dale Knouse: Alberta and Manitoba are similar to Saskatchewan. They are trying to curb hunting. In Manitoba the industry organization manages wild boar, and they engage more with landowners to remove pigs. Alberta uses their Agriculture department and staff.

Steve Wanderaas: Are wild pigs found in/near the Wood Mountain Areas (headwaters of Poplar River)?

Dale Knouse: Nothing verified. Our adjusters cover this area every year and producers are helpful in reporting pigs, but nothing has been reported. We plan to step up surveillance in this area.

Sara Ricklefs: Do you leave open bait around the camera areas?

Dale Knouse: Bait is allowed when used under our program. Bait can become cumbersome as you must check regularly, and some areas are remote. Our trappers and landowners can assist us with baiting.

Lori Witham: What food do you use for trapping?

Darby Warner: Oats and wheat

Liz Lodman: Do you do disease testing?

Darby Warner: The *Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative* takes about 100 of the removed pigs to do necropsy and disease testing every year. Their information is available online.

Liz Lodman: What is the Canadian mapping effort?

Dale Knouse: *Animal Health Canada* is bringing together all provinces to develop standards for sightings and removal data.

Steve Wanderaas: If there is any way we can collaborate with you and make things work better please let us know. Do you have any parting advise?

	<p>Darby Warner: Montana’s regulations and outreach are right – keep doing what you are doing.</p> <p>Liz Lodman: Reminder that Montana held a feral swine tour in March visiting towns along the highline to inform landowners about the issue, what to look for, and how to report sightings. The tour missed visiting the Fort Peck and Fort Belknap tribal community and need to follow up with these areas. Montana has a new feral swine fact sheet available. Canada and US developed a new <i>Squeal On Pigs!</i> website at www.squealonthepigs.org.</p>
<p>Science Advisory Panel Updates</p>	<p>Sara Ricklefs - Woody Invasives The first SAP held in November 2023 discussed best management practices for salt cedar, Russian olive, and common buckthorn. The Woody Invasives Working Group met in February followed by a core planning group meeting, and we decided that the next SAP would be on environmental and economic impacts. The next SAP will be delayed until after field season. The goal is to have economists talking about invasives as a whole if we can’t find experts on the specific species.</p> <p>Bryce Christiaens – Assessing Invasiveness of Species Intentions of this SAP are to revisit the working definition of “invasive” and review existing risk models to develop a process to assess the potential invasiveness and impact of a species to Montana’s economy and environment.</p> <p>Draft panel outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) determine if the definition of “invasive” currently used by MISC captures target species or potentially misses economically, culturally, and/or ecologically important species (e.g. regionally native species moving due to climate) 2) Review existing models and current work being done in North America to assess the risk of a species being invasives based on the definition, 3) From outcomes 1 and 2 develop a process for Montana to assess the risk of introduction and establishment of an invasive species in Montana, 4) develop a process to address the potential economic and ecological impact of the highest risk species if introduced to Montana. Find the SAP committee notes here. <p>Potential Panel Members: Emily Fusco, Evelyn M Beaury, Aimee Agnre, Nicole Hernandez, Deah Lieurance, Dean Peterson, Tony Koop. These are to be discussed further.</p> <p>Does MISC want to pursue as an SAP or has this evolved into another effort, maybe have a speaker at the Summit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of discussion is happening around this topic but it’s not specific to Montana. If we do the SAP we will have good specific information to Montana, especially around the climate component. • Potential next step is to hold a virtual session with potential panel members to answer questions and get a better agenda for an SAP we could hold spring 2025. • Bryce will organize the next committee meeting to address next steps.
<p>NAISMA Conference Update & Sponsorship</p>	<p>Jasmine Chaffee The North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA) conference is Sept 30 – Oct 3 in Missoula. The conference will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn on Reserve Street. Usually, 300-400 people attend and speakers from all over talk about different invasive species topics,</p>

**NAISMA
Conference
Update &
Sponsorship**

monitoring, prevention, mapping, technology, management, etc. Field trips will be held on Wednesday. Tuesday there is a special track regarding Invasive Annual Grasses and Thursday a special track on forest pests. We encourage Montana folks representing all the invasive species to attend as the conference won't be in our areas again for many years.

NAISMA was awarded a Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant to help comp registrations for 60 people if you are from a Montana conservation district, extension office, or county weed district office. Be looking for more information about how to use the comped registration.

Liz Lodman: MISC can help pay for registration if council members want to attend. I'd like to complete registrations by June 30 before end of fiscal year if possible. The early bird registration fee ends July 31. If you attend, MISC voting members can be reimbursed for their lodging.

MISC shares a NAISMA membership with the Western Montana Conservation Commission. The MISC's NAISMA memberships are Liz, Anna, Steve, Tom, and Jason. Four more spots are open to MISC. There are many perks to NAISMA membership such as recordings of webinars, discounts on products, post job openings, discounts on the conference, etc.

- Sara Ricklefs wants NAISMA membership. Ask Dylan Brown if he wants membership.

Vote on NAISMA sponsorship amount:

There are different levels of sponsorship, usually the host state provides a \$10,000 sponsorship. Proposal is for MISC to allocate \$10,000 as a special event sponsorship for the NAISMA conference. This level would include 4 full in-person registrations, exhibit table, listing in the program, 5-minute speaking opportunity, logo and recognition during event, and social media post on our behalf.

***Action: Motion to approve NAISMA sponsorship in the amount of \$10,000**

Motion: Sara Ricklefs

Second: Pam Schwend

Motion passed unanimously.

**APHIS
Presentation**

Lori Witham, Plant Health Trade Compliance Officer – USDA-APHIS-PPQ

The *Smuggling Interdiction and Trade Compliance* (SITC) program seeks to prevent unlawful entry and distribution of prohibited products that may harbor diseases or invasive species. These harmful organisms could seriously damage America's crops, livestock, and environment.

Objective:

- **Detect and interdict** prohibited or restricted products in the marketplace or at ports of entry
- **Trace** them back to the importer (identify the pathway)
- **Process** violations
- **Close down** the pathway

Why are we here? Preventative Measures, Early Detection, Emergency Response

Some examples include:

- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

APHIS Presentation

- H5N1 is mainly spread by domestic poultry, both through the movements of infected birds and poultry products and through the use of infected poultry manure as fertilizer or feed
- Since outbreak in Aisa in 2003, 45 countries now have HPAI H5N1
- Mediterranean Fruit Fly
 - In 1993, APHIS estimated that annual losses attribute to the Medfly in the continental US would be about \$1.5 billion annually if this exotic pest were to become established
- Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)
 - December 25, 2003, BSE confirmed in US
 - Over 50 countries banned importation of US beef
- Citrus Canker
 - Since 1995 over 2 million citrus trees have been destroyed in Florida
 - It has since cost over \$200 million to eradicate
 - The quarantine area is over 1,000 square miles
- Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)
 - 2001 outbreak in Britian cost over \$4 billion
 - 1997 outbreak in Taiwan cost over \$19 billion.
 - FMD was last eradicated in US in 1929

Exotic Animal Diseases

- BSE – “Mad Cow” Disease
- African Swine Fever
- Avian Influenza
- Vesicular Disease
- Exotic Newcastle Disease
- Food and Mouth Disease

Inspections

Locations include commerce sites, warehouses, weigh stations, land border ports (in cooperation with US Customs and Border Protection), international airports, maritime cargo, passenger busses. Commodity inspected include fresh/frozen/shelf-stable fruits, veggies, and meat products; plants; soil; bark, etc. APHIS doesn't regulate fish.

Other Activities:

- Intelligence collection and analysis
 - Databases
 - Targeting staff
 - Internet surveillance (eBay, Amazon, mail order)
- Other Pathways
 - Overnight Couriers (Fed Ex, UPS)
 - Internet sales
 - International mail
 - Foreign students

<p>APHIS Presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 officers nationwide: 70 full-time SITC and 30 plant health trade compliance officers. • County sanitarians are part of the network to respond • The public is important to reporting – see something say something. See the APHIS Stakeholder Registry. <p>Sara Ricklefs: Are you using AI to review online purchases or are people doing most of that?</p> <p>Lori Witham: I don't know. The analysts do that work. Sometimes items that are banned in a specific state will say "not for sale in the following states" to prevent sales.</p> <p>Jennifer Riddle: As far as home visits, how do you find out about illegal products? Is monitoring done on smaller scale online operations like Craigs List or Facebook Marketplace?</p> <p>Lori Witham: The analysts find out about the product and trace it back to the seller who is usually cooperative and gives us a list of the purchasers. If they're not cooperative it can get bad for them. I think analysts do monitor Craigs List on large scale. I could do on a localized scale, but people will tag me on questionable items to look at. For plants the Dept of Ag Nurse person reviews those posts. There is an MOU that state and federal agency will assist and act on each other's behalf regarding plants.</p>
<p>Climate Change Discussion</p>	<p>Steve Wanderaas I want the opinion of this group on whether we are doing enough regarding climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dennis Longknife: I brought several copies of the tribe's climate plan if anyone would like to look at it. • Pam Schwend: Has MISC don anything been done yet? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steve: MISC hasn't done anything except mention it in an SAP. • Jason Allen: The MTNHP has maps predicting how climate change and different species will affect the state. • Gary Adams: Climate change is real and things on the PPQ pest distribution and risk list that we didn't think would be a risk, now their potential occupied range is expanding. • Sara Ricklefs: Could we adjust the MISC top invasive species to watch to include climate change information, range shifts and impacts? • Liz Lodman: This topic could fall within the SAP that Bryce is chairing. There are many webinars that discuss climate change and invasive species. • Tom Woolf: Nationally our federal partners are doing a lot of work on climate change, range expansion, and hot spot analysis. We could include in our conversations that what was isn't what will be and reflecting that on invasive species and the risks. • Karen Laitala: It would be good to include this topic in future meetings.
<p>Vice-Chair and Council Member Vote</p>	<p>Elect 2nd Vice-Chair Jason Allen and Jasmine Chaffee are both willing to hold the office if elected. Jason offered to take the position and would accept the nomination.</p> <p>*Action: Motion to nominate Jason Allen as MISC Vice-Chair</p>

	<p>Motion: Pam Schwend Second: Andy Welch Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Council Member Recommendation Vote The Agriculture representative is open since the passing of Steve Tyrrel. Steve spoke to Dylan Brown, and he is interested in filling the remaining term of this position. The term goes until May 2027. Liz Lodman read the MISC bylaws regarding incomplete terms. *Action: Motion to recommend Dylan Brown to fill the remaining term of Steve Tyrrell as Agriculture Representative</p> <p>Motion: Sara Ricklefs Second: Pam Schwend Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>The Private Landowner position is still open due to the passing of Bob Gilbert and we someone to fill the remainder of that term.</p> <p>Pam Schwend: What does Private Landowner represent or do? I have a person in mind. Steve Wanderaas: It can be any private landowner but hope it's not someone who has just one acre of land. We followed up on several leads but none of them have worked out. Please send recommendations to Liz or Steve.</p>
<p>Summit Planning</p>	<p>Tom Woolf: An AIS meeting will be held adjacent to the Summit. We had a couple of dates chosen for this. How do people feel about one day meetings for each?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anna Connerton: We contacted the Delta hotel in Helena and the dates we want are still open for November 13-14. But we haven't reserved these dates yet. We'll have 1 day for AIS (Nov 13th) and 1 day for the Summit (non-aquatic) (Nov 14th). • Steve Wanderaas: I hope we have a legislative panel so we can communication with them. What else would we fill the day with? The Communications workshop if we don't have anything else? • Liz Lodman: Let's get a planning committee to help plan the summit? Then we can discuss topics. <p>Planning Committee: Liz Lodman Anna Connerton Sara Ricklefs Steve Wanderaas Tom Woolf Jasmine Chaffee WMCC Team</p>

PWNER Discussion

Liz Lodman: The [Pacific Northwest Economic Region](#) holds a conference every year. This year it's in British Columbia on July 21-25, 2024. PNWER has an invasive species committee that holds a session at the conference every year. PNWER has had AIS on their agenda for years but recently added Feral Swine in 2022. Last year I helped plan the feral swine session at PNWER in Boise. This year my Canadian colleague will plan the feral swine sessions. The agenda can be found [here](#). Monday afternoon is the AIS and Feral Swine sessions. The Cross-Border Livestock Health Foreign Animal Health tabletop exercise could be of interest to MISC as well. A lot of good work gets done after the meetings so it would be advantageous to have someone from MISC attend. There is a virtual option to attend for \$75/day.

- **Tom Woolf:** I have received an invite from PNWER to attend. I may look into attending virtually. When Steve attend PNWER in Boise and Calgary, he represented AIS very well so he would be a good person to represent MISC.
- **Steve Wanderaas:** I estimate it would cost \$3,000/person to attend. MISC has the funds to cover this. I would be willing to go. Should we OK two spots incase someone else decides they would like to go like Tom or Liz?
- **Liz Lodman:** I'd like to see someone representing MISC so I would support Steve attending.

MISC Presence at PNWER

***Action:** Motion to approve two MISC members to attend PNWER in British Columbia

Motion: Pam Schwend

Second: Jason Allen

Motion passed unanimously.

Comments:

Andy Welch: I request that when we talk about funding items, we should have a snapshot of our current budget so we can decide where this fits.

2024 AIS Grant Review

Tom Woolf: There were great application and more requests than funds, so we had to decide on recommending funding or not on some applications. The grant review committee makes recommendations to the MISC members to vote on. We haven't got a lot of participation from the council members to participate in the grant hearings and we really encourage council members to attend the deliberations.

- **Andy Welch:** It's good to see the increase in the application rates and the quality of applications is getting better over time. People see this as a valuable source of grant funding to get programs on the ground.
- **Jasmine Chaffee:** The AIS Grant is a task responsibility of the council, not just the grant review committee.
- **Liz Lodman:** We've thought about having the AIS Grant Hearing the day before a MISC meeting next year.

There were 15 applications for the FY24 AIS Grant Cycle. The hearing was held on April 11th at the DNRC Headquarters in Helena. The funding recommendations were sent to DNRC director Kaster for approval. The review committee is Jasmine Chaffee, Tom Woolf, Jason Allen, and Andy Welch. [AIS Grant Committee Funding Recommendations](#)

<p>Committee Reports</p>	<p>Invasive Species to Watch – Fish: No update. Group discuss about how the 2022 Summit identifying a fish as a species to watch, the lead agency (FWP) should provide guidance on a sport fish as an invasive species to watch, and people moving fish and bucket-biology is the concern. The council should approach this based on science and impacts rather than political/social desires. Discussion with FWP director could be based on process. Steve will follow up with Bryce.</p> <p>Communications Workshop for Natural Resources Professionals: No update. Liz Lodman reported that since Jan Stoddard and Jane Mangold left MISC we need additional members on this committee. Don't anticipate this happening until 2025.</p> <p>Woody Invasives Best Practices Workshop/Science Panel: Sara Ricklefs stated the draft report of the first SAP is done and very few comments have been received. Not sure if people are ok with report or they haven't read it. Report might be ready to publish. Plan to have 2nd SAP after field season. Finding the right panel members is difficult as it's experts we don't commonly hear from, like economists. We are looking for an extension of Noxious Weed Trust fund grant.</p>
<p>Member Updates</p>	<p>Tom Woolf: Most all watercraft inspection stations will be open next week. Have conducted 1,800 inspections so far this year with 7 mussel fouled boats. None of the mussels were found alive but one boat was out of the water for only a couple days. Two new AIS to report: DEQ found New Zealand Mudsnaills in Silverbow Creek near Butte about 25 miles upstream from a previous detection, and a reproducing population of Mystery Snails off Finley Point in Flathead Lake. FWP's AmeriCorps member is focusing on both outreach events and early detection training and reporting (how to look, where to look and how to report).</p> <p>Jasmine Chaffee: Dept of Agriculture has 5 Ag Corps members this year, 4 working on noxious weeds and 1 on apiary. Members are working on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and building capacity in eastern counties where there aren't full-time coordinators, building our website, creating a blog series, and building education trunks. • Adopt-a-Trailhead program, helping with media for certified materials program, and taking on the Pull Your Share program. • Helping get county mapping and monitoring data digitize in GIS, building a dashboard for grant projects, get a drone program for the certified materials program. • Helping with trapping for plant pests and working with hobby beekeepers. <p>We have an EDRR webinar on May 22nd where we'll talk about what we expect to see this summer and what we'll work on (rush skeleton weed, phragmites, garden loose strife). We will host a group from Alberta in Lincoln County to see Ventenata, Medusa head, and Rush Skeleton weed. We just posted the Invasive Species Education Coordinator position then we'll do a strategic plan to see where we want to take this program.</p>

Dennis Longknife Jr.: We developed noxious weed strategic plan in 2013 and it's due for an update. Fort Belknap will hire someone to do the update and start a noxious weed program on the reservation. BIA is supposed to oversee weeds and they haven't been very active. We need help with our Earth Day Event on Monday, April 22.

Gary Adams: Most of our time is spent on non-invasive species – grasshoppers; we have 5 more meetings. The last week of April we'll start our pest detection trapping program mostly along the highline, looking for something that hasn't been detected here. Spongy moth grids will be put out by the Forest Service near Bozeman and DNRC near East Missoula, based on positive catches last year. We monitor airports for Japanese beetles. I attend the EAB conference April 2nd in Billings where 70 arborists were trained to identify emerald ash borer. In the evening the public was invited to learn more about EAB, about 100 people attended.

Pam Schwend: Carbon County has received two Noxious Weed Trust Fund grants and applied for an REMF grant. Will co-host an Invasive Species Day at Riverfront Park with 200 7th graders and 10 stations. Will attend Conservation Days, Ladies on the Range in Winnett, Stillwater Valley

Watershed Council. Working with extension agent to start a community garden to offer landowners to replace noxious weeds with native plants. The Invasive Species Council of British Columbia has a resource for invasive species that affect native communities, especially noxious weeds. Would MISC be interested in creating a similar program to work with native communities about invasive species with an understand of their culture, history and language.

- Dennis Longknife is identifying and prioritizing the first foods in Little Rockies and welcomes this effort.

Sara Ricklefs: ISAN is hiring an Outreach Coordinator, accepting applications until April 30th. ISAN received a grant from USDA-PPA for the forest pest program, will work with fly tyers to make fly box of forest pest and native look-a-likes. Have an agreement with Forest Service to do on the ground AIS outreach in ND, MT and ID; provide more DLIL signage and conduct in-person outreach at boat launches. Our Q-Zapp grant is aimed at paddlers to understand Clean-Drain-Dry and to stop at inspection stations. Applied for a MISC AIS Grant for DLIL forging a new partnership with Zoo Montana. Waiting on a grant from Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Council to do AIS and terrestrial outreach to visitors before they leave home. Outreach order forms CDD and DLIL materials are due soon for stickers, fish bags, and high-risk waterbody signage.

Jason Allen: MDT received an increase to our budget from last legislature, transferred most of that to our county partners. We will treat scotch broom near Idaho border with help from Dept of Ag EDRR program. Posters should be up at rest areas, but please check if you are stopping at them this summer and let me know if posters are missing.

Andy Welch: We are following the Idaho mussel response very closely. Northwestern Energy works with Idaho Power and Avista on operations to compare notes and learn from each other. We hold public meetings in Ennis and West Yellowstone every year and I'll talk about mussels just across the border and to safeguard those areas.

Charles Headdress: Fort Peck Reservation hires 6 high school and college students to work on water projects like shock fish, collect water samples, survey insects and fish. Last summer in a 100-meter stretch of Poplar River we caught 16 small mouth bass.

Jake Chadwell: DNRC Forest Pest Management Program We have been presenting at the AIS Watercraft Inspection training about the Don't Move Firewood program so inspectors can share with traveling boaters. Next week is the Western Forest Insect Work Conference and we help with local planning committee. We start trapping for Spongy Moth soon.

- **Amy Gannon:** Jake Chadwell put together invasive beetle corn hole boards; one board has holes in D-shape for EAB.

Monica Pokorney: We did monitoring efforts last year. We will do training for staff at field offices on invasive plants, management, and tools to use. Let me know if anyone want these training materials.

Anna Connerton: We sent a survey for MISC members to get MISC-logo shirts, vests, hats and backpacks. We ordered samples and will share those when the order comes in.

Liz Lodman: I want to make sure new members are getting the MISC e-bulletin newsletter. We helped Dan Wilkins with outreach for the Pull Your Share program, created brochures and a billboard on the interstate near Great Falls should be up soon. We applied for a Montana Conservation Corps member for a 3-month term to work on the Don't Move Firewood outreach to campgrounds, hang posters, and educate campground hosts. DNRC has approved hiring a MISC Program Coordinator to assist with outreach and planning efforts.

Steve Wanderaas: I met a farmer in Nebraska an asked what they grow, his response was they must stick to the basics because of the "super weed" Palmer Amaranth. Are we doing enough outreach? Should we contact Grain Growers and ask to be on their agenda?

Gary Adams: I want to point out Noelle Orloff with the Schutter Diagnostic Lab (plant diagnostic lab) at MSU where they receive things for identification (plants, insects and pathogens). She led a conversation between MT Dept of Ag and APHIS on the process of what to do when you find something that is in the regulatory arena. MISC used to do Incident Command training and it would be good to work with MT DES to conduct another training.

- Noelle Orloff: Our lab is a plant diagnostic clinic, and one mission is to identify and detect new and invasive species to Montana. We talked about MISC coming to Bozeman to tour the lab or I could come to your meeting to do a presentation.

Location of July meeting: Billings, MT

Final Discussion: None

Public Comment: None

**Wrap-Up and
Adjourn**

***Action: Motion to adjourn the meeting.**

Motion: Pam Schwend

Second: Charles Headdress

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:11 pm