

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 29, 2025	Time:	8:30 am
Minutes Prepared By:	Russ Hartzell, Nicole Hallsten, Liz Lodman	Location:	Lakeside Resort, Trout Creek Zoom
Attendees:			
<i>MISC: <u>Steve Wanderaas</u>, <u>Pam Schwend</u>, <u>Karen Laitala</u>, <u>Paul Rossignol</u>, <u>Jake Chadwell</u>, <u>Dylan Brown</u>, <u>Taylor Tidwell</u>, <u>Michelle Cox</u>, <u>Jason Allen</u>, <u>Andy Welch</u>, <u>Craig McLane</u> (proxy for Tom Woolf), <u>Dennis Longknife</u>, <u>Martin Charlo</u></i> <i>Virtual MISC: <u>Brenda Witkowski</u>, <u>Jared Beaver</u>, <u>Jasmine Chaffee</u>, <u>Jessica Zarate</u>, <u>Robert Thompson</u>, <u>Sara Ricklefs</u>, <u>Monica Pokorny</u></i> <i>MISC Staff: <u>Liz Lodman</u>, <u>Russ Hartzell</u>, <u>Mia White</u></i> <i>Absent members: <u>Charles Headdress</u>, <u>Mike Bias</u>, <u>Sean Fritzler</u>, <u>Tracy Tyner</u></i> <i>Partners & guests: <u>Megan Hoyer</u>, <u>Becky Kington</u>, <u>Arthur Potts</u>, <u>Nancy Mehaffie</u>, <u>Kim McMahon</u>, <u>Rick Niwa</u>, <u>Megan Evans</u>, <u>Ashlee Atchison</u>, <u>Terry Hightower</u>, <u>Darin King</u>, <u>Cole Allen</u>, <u>Chuck Haugen</u>, <u>Sean Moran</u>.</i> <i>Virtual partners & guests: <u>Onno Wieringa</u>, <u>Brent Smith</u>, <u>Autumn Coleman</u>, <u>Nicole Hallsten</u>, <u>Lindsay Barnett</u></i> <i>*MISC voting members are <u>underlined</u>.</i>			
Agenda & Notes, Decisions, Issues			
Topic	Discussion		
Welcome, Role Call & Minutes	Steve Wanderaas (Chair) opened the meeting at 8:32 am. Wanderaas conducted a roll call and confirmed the quorum. Attendees introduced themselves. *ACTION: Approval of minutes from November and February meetings. Motion made by Dylan Brown, seconded by Jason Allen, no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.		
MISC Staff Update Liz Lodman Russ Hartzell Mia White	MISC Staff Update: <u>Council Member Updates:</u> - Terms for 3 members have ended, but they remain on the council until they are replaced. - Encouraging Charles Headdress, Tracy Tyner, and Mike Bias to submit applications for reappointment.		
	<u>Don't Move Firewood:</u> - Mia White is an MCC intern serving with MISC. She provided an update on her efforts this summer to educate campground managers, hosts, and the public about forest pests and how they can easily be transported long distances in firewood. - She has been to 108 sites so far and distributed 185 signs. - Her term ends August 13.		
	<u>ICS Training:</u> - Hosted in partnerships with Montana DES in April - Well attended by many agencies and organizations		

MISC Staff Update Liz Lodman Russ Hartzell Mia White	• Focus on how to incorporate the ICS principles into response plans • Attendees asked for more training and exercises, discussed holding a training every other year moving forward Montana DES Spongy Moth Tx After Action Report <u>Science Advisory Panel (SAP) - Assessing Invasiveness:</u> • Held in Missoula on May 5-6, 2025 • Goal: explore assessment tools and legal language for invasive species. • Actions from the SAP: 1. Change wording of the MISC definition of invasive species 2. Review and discuss assessment tools 3. Look at pathways not just species 4. Work with the Montana National Heritage Program • Executive committee and SAP committee will guide the next steps <u>Eastern Heath Snail:</u> • Judith-Basin held community event on July 16th ◦ Planning integrated management and prescribed burns • Need more outreach and surveying <u>Aquatic Invasive Species:</u> • New FWP AIS management plan: MISC is mentioned in section G. • Flowering Rush on Flathead Lake ◦ No one manages flowering rush on the northern half of Flathead Lake ◦ A work group is needed to provide coordination for the entire lake ◦ Columbia River Basin Flowering Rush Management Plan • Bucket Biology: prevent illegal introduction of fish ◦ MISC and FWP working on video PSA to be released next spring • Celebrating Watercraft Inspectors: go to stations and say thank you ◦ Other options to show support <u>Invasive Species Expert Database:</u> • Montana experts are needed for the Siren database http://siren.fort.usgs.gov/findexperts <u>Outreach:</u> • Story Map – on the MT Natural Heritage Program dashboard • T-shirts – new shirts have arrived, 3 designs (zebra mussels, EHS, bullfrogs) • SWAG – MISC branded tote bags, coffee cups, Grow Wild coloring books • Events attended: boot brush installed at M Trail in Missoula, Pet Rehoming event at UM, Roman snail roundup near Missoula, presentation to Madison CD in Ennis. <u>Budget:</u> • FY25 ended on June 30. Year-end budget reports were not available in time for this meeting. The report will be provided at the October meeting.
2025 Legislative Recap	2025 Legislative Recap: <u>Passed</u> AIS Bills: • HB 242: Increased AIS fines • HB 74: Revised private fish pond laws • SB 409: Revise Dept of Commerce laws, small increase to AIS funding

	Weed Bills: • HB 932: Revised laws funding conservation • SJ42: Noxious Weed Study Bill Failed/Vetoed • HB829: Require AIS education and AIS Prevention Pass for resident boaters • HB57: Define California quail and Gambel’s quail as upland game birds • SB167: Funds for Noxious Weed Trust Fund (passed, vetoed; veto override failed)
MISC Work Groups/Committees	Citizen Science: • Look at ways to enhance reporting efforts throughout the state ○ Developing materials, tools, or training with Bryce Maxell at MTNHP ○ Encourage this effort through social media, events, and training Communication: • In-person communications workshop – work with planning committee • Webinars - survey topics of interest Woody Invasives: • Next working group meeting in Lewistown on September 10th • MISC will add woody invasive pages to the MISC website • Working group outreach campaign: social media, radio ads, sponsored article directing to people MISC webpage
Sanders County Aquatic Invasive Plant Taskforce Kim McMahon	<u>Sanders County AIP Taskforce Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) Project:</u> • EWM discovered in 2007, task force formed in 2008 to address management • Also have curly leaf pond weed and flowering rush in Noxon and Cabinet reservoirs • Deploy bottom barriers, herbicide treatment, and education/outreach • Initial Goal – eradication (2010-2016) cost \$1,000/acre (not sustainable) • 2017 Assessment – analyze treatment alternatives and change course ○ Prioritize treatment based on public access areas ○ Chemical treatment is most effective and cost efficient • 2025 Update to Management Plan: ○ reduce presence of aquatic invasive plants at or near high-use public and private access sites (12 public boat launches and 2 known high-use shoreline areas) during peak use season ○ Reduce or prevent expansion into other waterbodies ○ Establish measurable metrics to evaluate success • Challenges: spring run-off, water clarity/temperature/levels, boat traffic, application expenses/funding • Budget: around \$60-\$80K for herbicide treatment depending on funding • Sanders County Aquatic Invasive Plant Task Force sanderscountyaais.com • Western Aquatic Plant Management Society conference: March 9-11, 2026 in Coeur d’Alene, ID
Chronic Wasting Disease in Montana Bevin McCormick Wildlife Health Program Montana FWP	<u>Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Science, Surveillance, Management :</u> • Neurodegenerative disease of deer, elk and moose – always fatal • Infectious misfolded protein called prion- affects central nervous system • Spread: animal to animal contact (direct) or animal to contaminated surface contact (indirect); prions can last 2 years in the environment • Signs: stumble, drool, weight loss (wasting), head droop, seek water • First detected in Montana in 2017, found around the world

	• Impact: decline in animal populations; decrease to wildlife recreation activities • Management plan (2020): management, not eradication; surveillance and monitoring; prevent spread from human activities • fwp.mt.gov/cwd
Invasive Species Council of British Columbia Lindsay Barnett	Community Science and Reporting: • ISCBC mission: to take action to build healthy landscapes, habitats, and communities through education and responsible practices to prevent the spread of invasive species • More than a fun way to get the public involved or contribute to local projects ○ Science strategy analytical and monitoring tools can address knowledge gaps related to conservation, restoration, and sustainable management • Tools for community reporting: ○ Report Invasives App – BC area only ○ iNaturalist.ca – global reach ○ ISCBC reports by email or phone • Projects: ○ Community Stewardship: host nature walk and ID species, then hold bio blitz, weed pull, plant non-invasive species ○ regional focus, low barrier to access, partner with others ○ Conservation Planning: help create invasive species management plans, make sure survey data is shared ○ Early Detection, Rapid Response: normalize reporting and community science as social responsibility, awareness and reporting ▪ Social norm, make quality reports • Will provide 1-pager with links
Alberta Invasive Species Council Megan Evans	Alberta Invasive Species Update • Weeds: will update list of regulated invasive plant species, last updated in 2010 ○ Currently 75 regulated weeds in 2 groups – enforced by municipal weed inspectors 1. Prohibited noxious weed - landowner required to destroy 2. Noxious weed - landowner required to control • AIS: 52 prohibited species, 11 inspections stations + one roving ○ Must stop at inspection stations and pull the plug • Campaign under development – awareness between wildflowers and weeds • New invaders: Dutch elm disease, common carp, largemouth bass, and pumpkinseed • Rat on Rats campaign success - Alberta has been rat free for over 75 years • Abinvasives.ca
Montana Department of Agriculture Megan Hoyer	Montana Invasive Species Education Program • Working on a variety of projects with many partners

Montana Department of Agriculture Megan Hoyer	• Suggests a flow chart of who to contact about invasive species • Outreach efforts have reached 5,453 people over 125 hours ○ Outcomes: increase knowledge, become familiar, learn about resources, and overall awareness ○ Education Events (QR code) ○ Noxious Weed Awareness Week successful ○ National Bumble Bee Project ○ Pull Your Share project ○ Real Estate & noxious weed workshops ○ Sell Clean Go on NAISMA ○ Indian Education for All and Invasive Plants curriculum development ○ Russian olive & buckthorn removal at Billings Two Moon Park i. Successful removal, transitioning to monitoring • I Do – We Do – You Do modeling at every outing I Do (Modeling): •Introduce the concept of invasive species and their impact on ecosystems. •Demonstrate how to inspect and clean hiking gear to prevent the spread of invasive species. We Do (Guided Practice): •Engage students in a group activity where they practice cleaning gear using provided tools. •Discuss the importance of each step. You Do (Independent Practice): •Students encouraged to practice on their own •Encourage audience to teach peers the PlayCleanGo or CleanDrainDry principles.
Montana Department of Agriculture Jasmine Chaffee	<u>Invasive Annual Grasses Work Group Update</u> • History of Invasive Annual Grasses Working Group • Three invasive grasses on Noxious Weed List ○ Phragmites listed 2015 ○ Medusahead listed 2017 ○ Ventenata listed 2019 • Cheatgrass has been on regulated weed list for long time • Japanese Brome & Bulbous Bluegrass continues to be of concern • 2022 Bipartisan infrastructure law provided needed funding for invasive species ○ UM Spatial lab received grant to research best practices for remote sensing of Ventenata ○ MSU conducted research on effective control methods of Ventenata • Working Group members: USFS, UM, NRCS, MSU, BLM, MDA, MDT • Education ○ Management plan is based on one from University of Wyoming ○ Focus area – south central Montana ▪ Understand distribution ▪ Develop landscape scale management strategies ▪ Treat and monitor infestations ▪ Facilitate data sharing ▪ Increase awareness with managers and public • Need to expand the working group ○ Who to include, what are the next step, where to house, who will coordinate? MDA doesn't have the time and this isn't EDRR • Education ○ 2018-2019 Ventenata presentation and tours across state ○ Invasive grass information guide



24-25 Outreach Spreadsheet

	○ NAISMA Ventenata campaign and added to certified products list ○ 2023 Ventenata and palmer amaranth tour in eastern Montana (6 counties) ○ Invasive grass workshop in McCone county
Wrap Up & Adjourn	Final Discussion: None Public Comment: Ashlee Atchison/Montana Salinity Control: explore offering continuing education credits for future MISC meetings since many topics are covered. *Action: Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion: Pam Schwend Second: Paul Rossignol No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.