



Montana Invasive Species Council

Meeting Materials Packet for December 13, 2023

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MONTANA INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

AGENDA



Note: Agenda is subject to change and times are approximate. Actual times may vary by up to one hour.

DNRC 1529 11th Ave - Helena. Hybrid meeting.

WEDNESDAY, December 13, 2023

9:00 - 9:45 am	INTRODUCTIONS Welcome, introductions and roll call MISC Orientation
9:45 - 10:00 am	ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS *ACTION: Approve Sept. 13, 2023, meeting minutes Council Member Open Seat Updates Governor's Montana Board Resources Portal
10:00 - 10:30 am	COMMITTEE REPORTS eDNA and Meta Barcoding Information Needs - Complete Invasive Species to Watch-Fish Science Advisory Panel- access potential invasiveness of a species Communications Workshop for Natural Resource Professionals Woody Invasive Best Practices Workshop/Science Panel - Sara Ricklefs
10:30 - 10:45 am	BREAK
10:45 - 11:00 am	SPONGY MOTH UPDATE Gary Adams - USDA-APHIS-PPQ
11:00 - 11:30 am	AIS GRANT - FLOWERING RUSH UPDATE Melissa Maggio - MT Biocontrol Project
11:30 - 12:00	FWP AIS YEAR END SUMMARY Craig McLane - MT FWP
12:00 - 1:00 pm	LUNCH
1:00 - 2:00 pm	FERAL SWINE UPDATES Tahnee Szymanski - Department of Livestock Guidance Documents Outreach Events - All
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm	FERAL SWINE RISK MODEL Dr. Ryan Brook - University of Saskatchewan
2:45 - 3:00 pm	BREAK
3:00 - 3:45 pm	OUTREACH EVENTS AIS Short Course Missoula - March 4-6, 2024 Alberta-Montana Invasive Species Joint Meeting NAISMA Conference Missoula - Sept 30-Oct 3, 2024 MISC Summit
3:45 - 4:20 pm	MEMBER UPDATES
4:20 - 4:30 PM	WRAP UP & ADJOURN Location of spring meeting Final Discussion *Public Comment

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:	September 13, 2023	Time:	10:30 am
Minutes Prepared By:	Anna Connerton	Location:	Fish Wildlife and Parks - Missoula, MT and Zoom
Attendees			
<p>MISC: <u>Steve Wanderaas, Tom Woolf, Sara Ricklefs, Paul Rossignol, Steve Tyrrel, Martin Charlo, Jason Allen, Dennis Longknife Jr., Jasmine Chaffee, Jenny Pelej, Bryce Maxell, Amy Gannon, Robert Thompson, Michelle Cox</u> (voting members underlined).</p> <p>MISC staff: Liz Lodman and Anna Connerton</p> <p>Other Attendees: Casey Lewis, Emilie Henry, Stephanie Murphy, Kelly Hendrix, Jan Swanson, Arthur Potts, Molly Master, Adam Sepulveda, Joey Grewell, Stephen Phillips, Jennifer Riddle, Niah Brass, Sam Yonan, Sudah Petluri, Catey Bauer, Karen Laitala, , Phil Matson, Rebecca Donaldson, Kenny Keever, Chris Prange, Alexis Armstrong, Zach Schlanger, Haylee Pearce, Jenna Asnault, Noah Gilder, Sophiane Nacer, Bryce Christiaens,</p>			
Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues			
Topic	Discussion		
Welcome & Roll Call	Liz Lodman opened the meeting at 10:03 am, conducted roll call and confirmed quorum. Attendees introduced themselves.		
Administrative Business	<p>*Action: Approval of June 20th meeting minutes.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Motion: Tom Woolf Second: Martin Charlo Motion Passed Unanimously</p> <p>Council Member Open Seat Updates:</p> <p>Appointments Confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture: Steve Tyrrel • Conservation Organizations: Sara Ricklefs (ISAN) • Conservation Districts: Steve Wanderaas • Department of Commerce: Jennifer Pelej <p>Appointments Pending Confirmation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept of Agriculture: Jasmine Chaffee* • Dept of Transportation: Jason Allen • DNRC: Parker Osterloh • County Weed Districts: Pam Schwend • MSU Extension: Jared Beaver <p><i>*Council Members remain in place until a successor is named.</i></p>		

<p>Administrative Business</p>	<p>The Private Landowner position is vacant after the passing of Bob Gilbert. MISC can recommend a new member by majority vote and forward to the Governor’s office for appointment. (MISC Charter-Section 5)</p> <p>Governor’s Montana Board Resources Portal: See the message from Governor Gianforte: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6-FveliQK8&t=10s</p> <p>Council members are reminded to login and review the resources found here: https://robertsrulesmadesimple.com/montana</p> <p><i>Discussed watching the videos together as a group.</i></p>
<p>Committee Reports</p>	<p>eDNA and Metabarcoding Information Needs Committee: Tom Woolf and Steve Wanderaas The eDNA and Metabarcoding Information meeting is tomorrow – 9/14/23. Three guest speakers will share information and participate in the panel discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jon Amberg: USGS, Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center. How molecular techniques are used to detect invasive species, moss balls, method standardization, and lessons learned. • Gordon Luikart: University of Montana, Flathead Biological Station. Evaluating methods to improve qPCR sensitivity. • Taylor Wilcox: USFS, Rocky Mountain Research Station. Using eDNA to support invasive species eradication and delineation. <p>Invasive Species to Watch - Fish Committee: Bryce Christiaens and Tom Woolf No Updates</p> <p>Science Advisory Panel Committee: Bryce Chirstiaens, Gary Adams, Tom Woolf and Michelle Cox Planing to hold the panel next year in April or early May. Now that field season is winding the committee will start planning.</p> <p>Communications Workshop for Natural Resource Professionals Committee: Liz Lodman, Jan Stoddard and Jane Mangold Nothing to report. Jan Stoddard no longer serves on MISC and we’d would like someone to replace her on the planning committee. Jane Mangold is currently on sebatical and we hope she will still participate. Hope to hold the workhop before field season next year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Gannon is interested in serving on this committee. <p>Woody Invasives Workshop Committee: Jasmine Chaffee, Liz Lodman and Sara Ricklefs Sara Ricklefs reported on the Woody Invasives Working Group meeting held September 6th in Lewistown; 40 people attended (20 in person and 20 virtual). Meeting agenda linked here.</p>

<p>Woody Invasives Working Group Update</p>	<p>This group is addressing 3 woody invasives – Common Buckthorn, Russian Olive and Salt Cedar, with the goal of writing a state-wide management plan and seeking funding sources. The group discussed the history of treatment efforts and the scope of the problem noting there are some mapping gaps, especially for Buckthorn. There is a great need for funding and labor to accomplish this work, especially in low population areas. Topics and speakers for the science advisory panel were discussed. The science advisory panel is planned for November; the next working group meeting is planned for January, possibly during MT Weed Control Association meeting. This project is funded by a grant from the Noxious Weed Trust Fund and a contract between MISC and ISAN for the science advisory panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jasmine Chaffee reported on HB 821 that appropriated \$250,000 to fund on the ground projects for these 3 species in Yellowstone, Musselshell, and Stillwater counties. Grants are managed by Dept of Agriculture’s Noxious Weed Grant program. Four applicants applied and 3 were funded: Yellowstone County weed district (\$100K), Musselshell County Weed District (\$125K) and the city of Billings (\$25K).
<p>Big Sky Watershed Corps Report</p>	<p>Big Sky Watershed Report: Sam Yonan - Adopt-a-Trailhead Sam serves as the Adopt-a-Trailhead coordinator for the MT Dept of Agriculture. The program partners with agencies/organizations to install boot-brush information kiosks This year Sam worked in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buckthorn Bandits / Yellowstone River Parks Association (Billings) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two Moon Park Winter Wildlands Alliance (Bozeman) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College M Trail Ross Pass Trail Bridger Bowl Ski Area (Bozeman) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridger Bowl Ski Area Trail Future AATM Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Burn Alliance, Stateline Trail 738 TH Missoula Parks and Recreation <p>Sam participated in the Pull Your Share program with several schools, weed pull events and outreach events. Sam developed outreach materials including a brochure, stickers and webpage.</p> <p>Big Sky Watershed Report: Niah Brass – Yaak Valley Forest Council (YVFC) Niah’s work area is the Yaak watershed and Kooconusa reservoir where she helps with AIS monitoring and weed abatement/removal. YVFC’s AIS Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor 16 sites in the NW corner of MT on Yaak and Kooconusa rivers. Distributed educational materials from MT FWP. Delivered AIS outreach materials to 20 local businesses in Lincoln County. Distributed AIS signs at 15 locations. Held two youth education days at the McCormick and Yaak Mountain Schools. Designed social media and newspaper advertisements. Working on an ArcGIS story map that shows locations and pictures of AIS testing sites.

	<p>YVFC weed abatement projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of YVFC private land restoration program they removed knapweed (#80), thistle, and reed canary grass along the Yaak River and will continue working through the fall. • YVFC will plant native riparian species on riverbanks to help combat the presence of invasive weeds and shade out reed canary grass.
<p>Feral Swine Updates</p>	<p>Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Report Out</p> <p>Liz Lodman and Steve Wanderaas attended the PNWER conference in Boise, Idaho. PNWER is a unique collaboration between the United States and Canada. PNWER members are Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Yukon and Northwest Territories. Representative from Manitoba attended. PNWER is a gathering of legislators, policy makers, businesses, academia, government agencies, nonprofits and others that address cross-board issues and collaboration. PNWER has an invasive species committee that has discussed AIS for several years. The first feral swine session was held in 2022. Feral swine sessions are co-hosted by the Cross-Border Livestock committee because of potential disease transmission to livestock. Providing information about the threat of feral swine to this audience is very beneficial because the northwest US and Canada does not have a huge problem with feral swine and action can be taken to prevent or eliminate feral swine.</p> <p>Liz moderated a feral swine discussion panel and helped organize the technical assistance workshop. Feral swine meeting agenda linked here. After the workshop, and informal gathering of the Transboundary Feral Swine Working group shared information and advocated for the creation of a one-page information sheet that can be shared with political leaders.</p> <p>Steve sat on a panel for an aquatic invasive species session and shared how Montana partnerships (FWP, conservation districts, governor’s office, legislature) makes our program a success; there are a lot of states that don’t have those partnerships.</p> <p>Other notes from PNWER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A field rep for Senator Steve Daines attended the technical workshop and joined the working group discussion. • Mike Honeycutt, executive officer for Dept of Livestock, attended the session and workshops and was very receptive to feral swine efforts. • Steve and Liz met Representative Galloway from Great Falls. He serves on financial and energy committees (not natural resources), but he was interested in learning about the feral swine issue. We discussed invasive Eastern Heath Snail in his district, which he had never heard about. • The next PNWER conference will be in Whistler, British Columbia -- July, 2024. <p>Transboundary Feral Swine Working Group</p> <p>Liz Lodman reported on this group. It is made up of mostly western US and Canada states and provinces but welcomes anyone. MISC received a grant from USDA-APHIS to fund the feral swine portion of PNWER conference and to create new “Squeal on Pigs!” banners, stickers, and website. The website will be created by the University of Georgia. The website is intended to be a hub of</p>

information to share damage control options, research, and maps, and how to report feral swine with links to the state or provincial authority. The goal to have the website done by the end of the year.

Discussion:

- MISC is working with Department of Livestock to update the Montana feral swine fact sheet with the new Squeal on Pigs logo.
- Montana needs a feral swine management action plan, something to show the public that a plan is in place with control options other than shooting; and the completion of MOUs.
- Can APHIS funds be used for a feral swine coordinator in Montana to develop EDRR plans, organize exercises and complete agreements? Shift money away from places that will never eradicate pigs to places with the ability to do prevention. Possibly use infrastructure or farm bill dollars to jump start programs.
- Everyone should review the Missouri feral swine plan that was presented at Sydney meeting in June.

Department of Livestock

Tahnee Szymanski is the new state veterinarian, starting a few months ago. Dept. of Livestock (DoL) is interviewing for a new Assistant State veterinarian who would be the lead on feral swine issues. DoL is the authority for management of feral swine in Montana.

Feral Swine Updates

After the Feral Swine TTX held in June 2021, DoL updated the Montana Feral Swine Response Plan guidelines and created a list of action items and the lead organization responsible for implementing them. DoL works with and relies heavily on USDA-Wildlife Services, MT Fish Wildlife and Parks, and with MISC.

DoL has committed to getting staff on the ground within 6 hours for reports of live animals. So far, every feral swine report involving a live animal has proven to be an owned animal (not feral).

Responses don't all require the same kind of action; the response plan outlines different scenarios and the action taken for that scenario (i.e., damage consistent with feral swine, loose pigs outside urban area, pig carcass with feral swine features). The plan also includes primary and secondary notification contact lists as well as a stakeholders list. It's important that we have consistent talking points regarding any actions/response that happens in Montana. We need to continue to share information across the state and hold public outreach meetings.

Discussion:

- What are the training and equipment resources from USDA-Wildlife Services? Unknown. Traps may not be housed in Montana but are accessible if needed. For any response action it would take time to determine the location and number of pigs before deploying traps, thus giving time for transporting resources.
- There is interest in another meeting with Montana partners to discuss updates and review current status. Invite the same agency representatives who attended the 2021 TTX. This meeting could coincide with next MISC meeting.
- Montana Feral Swine

[Fact Sheet Draft](#)

<p>Big Sky Watershed Corps Report</p>	<p>Big Sky Watershed Corps Report: Sophiane Nacer: FWP & AIS</p> <p>Sophiane conducts AIS outreach for Fish, Wildlife and Parks. She has traveled to all FWP Regions except Region 6. She attended 23 outreach events; the best event was the State Fair in Great Falls. Outreach at state parks is least effective because visitors are focused on going to their campsite. She created social media for the FWP-AIS Facebook. She visited 10 marinas around Flathead Lake for the industry outreach program. She is starting to work in classrooms again this fall and plans to simplify AIS reporting process.</p>
<p>Outreach & Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Regional Panel: Sept 20 & 21 in Salt Lake City or virtual • Lakes Conference: Oct 16-19 in Whitefish • NAISMA Conference: Oct 16-19, 2023 in Lincoln Nebraska <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attending will be Liz Lodman, Jasmine Chaffee, Jason Allen, Karen Laitala. <p>*Action: Send Steve Wanderaas to the NAISMA conference in Nebraska</p> <p>Motion: Bryce Christiaens Second: Paul Rossignol</p> <p>Motion Passed Unanimously</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MWCA Fall Manager Training, Oct 17 & 18 in Livingston • AIS Teacher Workshop: Oct 20-21 in Flathead Lake Bio Station • MT Association of Conservation Districts Conference: Nov 14-15 – Billings • Wild spotter Workshop, Dec 4 – 7 in Coeur d'Alene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greta Digge and Karen Laitala are attending. • MT Stockgrowers Convention: Dec 6-8 • Eastern Heath Snail presentation: Dec 12 in Lewistown • NAISMA Conference: Sept 30 - Oct 3, 2024 – Missoula
<p>Big Sky Watershed Corps Report</p>	<p>Big Sky Watershed Report: MCC/CSKT/FWP Bullfrog Project Haylee Pearce, Jenna Asnault, Noah Gilder:</p> <p>Haylee shared bullfrog identification (egg mass, meta-morphs, froglets, adults). Bullfrogs are native to eastern US and are extremely invasive in the Western US. They are voracious predators that will eat anything they can fit into their mouths. Bullfrogs are detrimental to wetlands and native species in the west.</p> <p>In the fall of 2020 Montana Conservation Corps; Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; and CSKT partnered to address invasive reptile and amphibian species in Western Montana. From 2021 to 2023 the MCC crews have conducted bullfrog removal efforts; in 2023 efforts were focused on the Mission Valley.</p> <p>Jenna discussed the 2023 field season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 11 nights of acoustic calling surveys to determine the presence or absence of bullfrogs at different wetlands across Mission Valley. • Focused work on 4 wetlands where there is evidence of bullfrogs breeding; mostly on private land. • CSKT has reintroduced native leopard frogs in the Lonepine area and bullfrogs threaten their recovery.

**Big Sky
Watershed
Corps Report**

Noah discussed their control efforts using gigs as the primary method used to remove adult bullfrogs. The bullfrog team used kayaks to paddle at night and spear adult frogs with the gig or capture smaller frogs by hand. The crew of four can get 200-300 frogs (different age groups) per night. They have caught 285 adult bullfrogs. To capture bullfrog tadpoles, they dragged a seine net through the water and pulled the catch onto shore. They get 50 tadpoles in one pull and up to 200 tadpoles per day; they caught 800 tadpoles one day. They have experimented with different traps for catching tadpoles and adult bullfrogs with varying success.

Overall Accomplishments and Total Numbers:

Total Tadpoles Removed: 3,657

Total Meta morph and Froglets removed: 1,005.

Total Adult Frogs Removed: 285

Total Egg Masses Removed: 6

Number of Wetlands Covered: 7

Discussion:

- Are the traps baited with an attractant? No
- For seine nets do you sort thru the catch and remove non-target species? Yes, they pull the net on shore, sort thru species, and remove/return the non-target species.
- For the survey do you have absence data on the maps? Yes, there are maps with more extensive data points.
- They created a poster and brochure with QR code so people can report where they spot bullfrogs. They would like to put posters up at fishing access sites around the valley.
- Landowner response has been very positive, they were able to access nearly all the private land.
- They look at stomach contents for a percentage of the adults and have found insects, frogs (cannibal), crayfish, feathers (possible bird) but no fish.

Partner Updates

Tom Woolf: FWP AIS update:

Tom sends a newsletter, if you don't get it but want it let Tom know. Inspections so far this year = 88,000; mussel fowled vessels = 45, both slightly behind last year's numbers. Stations are starting to close for the season. No new species detected this year but did identify an extensive population of Eurasian Milfoil in Pablo Reservoir. FWP is working with CSKT on a treatment plan because there is no EWF in Flathead Lake. Over 1500 samples have been processed with no mussels detected in Montana but the lab did identify two new populations in Nebraska. They did 2 rounds of samples for eDNA at high-risk waterbodies; 60 eDNA samples are at the lab and results should be available soon. The FWP AIS annual partner meeting is November 29-30 at Montana Wild. They are looking at transition next season including new conservation districts partners and moving station locations to improve operations. South Dakota asked for help to inspect boats coming off the marina at Pactola reservoir. FWP is sending 2 teams of 2 people to assist over the next 2 weeks. Montana has a response plan if there was a mussel detection and has conducted a couple exercises. Next year working with the Pacific State Marine Fisheries to conduct an exercise on Koochanusa with British Columbia.

Bryce Christiaens: Flowering Rush biocontrol:

Biocontrol has been approved for release in Canada. ARS in Sidney rearing the weevils and the first batch will go to Canada this fall or next spring. Approval has been received from CSKT to

establish pre-release monitoring sites on Flathead Lake. We hope biocontrol will be approved for use in the US this winter or spring and so they can release weevils next year and perhaps do mass rearing. They found a lot of submerged Flowering Rush on Flathead Lake and weevils need emergent plants to be success. Research is also being conducted on smut for flowering rush. It's important to continue funding this biocontrol research.

- Do we need a follow-up on houndstongue biocontrol? Another weevil has been found promising better host specificity (not mogulones crucifer). We should ask for update next spring.

Steve Tyrrel: CEMIST

CEMIST is putting together a resin sample of Eastern heath snail on vegetation.

Steve Wanderaas: Invasive Grasses

Do we need an update on invasive annual grasses? Coordinate with MT Weed Control Association and Extension?

Michelle Cox: Forest Service Invasive Species Infrastructure Funding:

Received \$314,000 out of \$2M. Forest Service has a new agreement with FWP for outreach / education and rapid response; and an agreement with DNRC for feral swine, Eastern heath snail and Don't Move Firewood program. Funding is limited to prevention, protection and eradication efforts. Michelle is working with Gary Adams to develop an eDNA assay for Eastern heath snail so we can sample our gravel.

- Chris Prange - Great Burn Alliance received America the Beautiful grant that covers two national forests in two states. Activities in Lolo National Park include roving crews who map/inventory spotted knapweed.

Sara Ricklefs: ISAN:

Received a grant from the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Council to reach visitors coming into the Yellowstone area (MT, ID, WY) and share aquatic and terrestrial invasive species prevention. ISAN was awarded a QZAP grant to continue their nonmotorized boater outreach. They are expanding outreach into other languages (Spanish and French). They met with Zoo Montana and talked about a partnership and a possible rehoming event.

Jasmine Chaffee: Dept. of Ag

This has been the season of new infestations.

- Garden loosestrife in Ravalli County and Lake County; small infestations have been treated.
- Rush Skeletonweed in Helena (Fort Harrison and East Helena subdivision); this is the only infestation east of the divide in Montana. Sites have been clipped, bagged, and treated. Fort Harrison site reported thru iNaturalist – reporting works!
- One Palmer Amaranth plant in a flower box. It didn't have seed and couldn't repopulate but was pulled. Probably came in bird seed.

Partner Updates

- Tim Seipel from MSU confirmed 3 Palmer Amaranth plants in a field in Daniels County, no seed. They swathed the area and will check again later with the landowner and make sure no more plants are popping up.

Andrew Lamm, Certified Materials Program Coordinator, left in June and his position will not be filled. Jasmine will do this program for the time being. The Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council meets November 8th in Helena. All council positions have been filled; Steve Tyrrell is the new Chemical representative.

Representative for Amy Gannon: DNRC

For the *Don't Move Firewood* campaign we are working with FWP to send postcards to all non-resident hunters and planning to visit watercraft inspection station next year, provide a brief overview of program and give water bottles to inspectors as a thank you. We placed ads in RV magazines, fishing/hunting regulations, and updated signage on inspection stations.

Dennis Longknife: Fort Belknap Community

A study group (UM-Forestry, Canadian Prairie Adaptation Research) visited the Little Rockies mountains and established study sites. We're going to identify and cataloging any invasive species we find. The tribe wants to identify priority species of cultural significance and find areas in need of restoration for plants used for food and medicine. Also working with UM on a climate change mobile exhibit where students from Hayes Lodgepole High School will research and develop the exhibits. Then they will be displayed in the community.

Casey Lewis: Western Montana Conservation Commission (WMCC)

We're officially the Western Montana Conservation Commission as of July 1st; a combination of UC3 and Flathead Basin Commission. We've hired new staff and worked on new brand and website. The first meeting will likely be on November 2-3. We have several MISC members who have been appointed to the WMCC (Tom, Martin, Michelle). Participated in watercraft inspector appreciation week. We will share a Big Sky Watershed member with Missoula County Ecology and Extension again next year who will continue with industry outreach. We wrote an article for a fly-fishing magazine. We are working with a contractor on AIS videos.

Phil Matson: Flathead Lake Biological Station

Last June we worked with FWP to hold a 2-day early detection training working; 20 participants from a dozen agencies attended. Hope to offer again next year. Worked with lake association groups on eDNA sampling and gave them tools. Worked with Missoula County to collected water samples at Browns, Upsata, Lindburg, and Holland lakes. Collected 8 samples on Flathead Lake. Did outreach events with CSKT.

Liz Lodman

- The posters for MDT rest areas are complete.
- MISC reports to EQC in 2 weeks. Liz will draft a 1-page report for review by the executive committee.
- The Alberta Invasive Species Council has asked if we'd like to have a joint meeting.
- AIS grants for 2024 will open in November.

Partner Updates

<p>Wrap-Up and adjourn</p>	<p>Location of December meeting: Capitol Building in Helena, MT.</p> <p>Final Discussion: None</p> <p>Public Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phil Matson: The Pactola reservoir mussel detection is in close proximity to Montana I implore this council to keep on it, keep looking for solutions. <p>Motion to adjourn the meeting Move: Steve Tyrrel Second: Paul Rossignol Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Meeting Adjourned at 4:09 pm.</p>
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DRAFT

Current Appointments

Last Name	First Name	Board	Position	Term Start	Term End
Bias	Michael	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Fishing Organization Representative	6/15/2021	5/31/2025
Charlo	Martin	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Representative of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)	6/15/2021	5/31/2025
Christiaens	Bryce	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Representative of County Weed Districts – PAM SCHWEND	8/1/2017	5/1/2023
Cloninger	Bob	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Department of Transportation Director or Designee – JASON ALLEN	9/13/2019	5/1/2023
Cobell	Gerald	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Representative of the Blackfoot Nation	10/16/2020	5/1/2023
Gannon	Amy	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	DNRC Director or Designee – PARKER OSTERLOH	8/1/2017	5/1/2023
Gopher	Brandon	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Rocky Boy Representative	6/15/2021	5/31/2025
Headdress	Charles	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Fort Peck Representative	6/15/2021	5/31/2025
Longknife	Dennis	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Representative of the Fort Belknap Indian Community	5/1/2021	4/30/2025
Mangold	Jane	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Montana State University (MSU) Extension Representative – JARED BEAVER	8/1/2017	5/1/2023
Pelej	Jenny	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Designee of the Department of Commerce	7/14/2023	6/1/2025
Reimer	Jasmine	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Department of Agriculture Director or Designee	3/13/2020	5/1/2023
Ricklefs	Sara	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Conservation Organization Representative	7/25/2023	5/1/2027
Rossignol	Paul	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Wildlife Organization Representative	6/15/2021	5/31/2025
Tyrrel	Steven	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Representative of Agriculture	7/25/2023	5/1/2027
Wanderaas	Steve	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Chair and Representative of Conservation Districts	7/25/2023	5/1/2027
Welch	Andy	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Representative of Hydropower Utility Industry	6/15/2021	5/31/2025
Whiteman	Gail	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Representative of the Crow Nation	1/5/2018	5/9/2021
Woolf	Tom	Invasive Species Council (ISC)	Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks Director or Designee	6/15/2021	5/31/2025

2023 Missoula County Department of Ecology Flowering Rush Biological Control

Attachment A - Scope of Work

Project Contact:

Madeline Gaffigan
Missoula County Department of Ecology and Extension
MT Biological Control Coordination Project
2825 Santa Fe Court
Missoula MT 59808
303-646-7994
<https://www.mtbiocontrol.org/>
mgaffigan@missoulacounty.us

Background:

Missoula County Department of Ecology and Extension – MT Biological Control Coordination Project will help coordinate biological control agents for flowering rush. The weevil *Bagous nodulosus* is approved for release in Canada and is expected to be approved for release in the US by late 2023 or early 2024. In anticipation of field releases, rearing techniques for the weevils are being improved at the ARS quarantine facility in Sidney, MT. Successful rearing techniques will help to create larger populations of weevils viable for eventual release. Pre-release monitoring protocol will be created to determine whether infested sites are suitable for releases of *B. nodulosus*. CABI will continue to investigate and test the suitability of the agromyzid fly *Phytoliriomyza ornata* and a strain of white smut as other potential biocontrol agents for flowering rush.

Scope of Work:

Task 1: Collect and rear *B. nodulosus* weevils

Weevils have been delivered to the USDA, ARS quarantine facility in Sidney, MT. Rearing of insects will be done in preparation for the first field releases in Montana. (CABI)

Task 2: Host specificity tests with agromyzid fly *Phytoliriomyza ornata*

Maintain rearing of the fly at CABI in Switzerland and use emerging flies for additional no choice tests and for additional impact experiments. Prepare and submit technical report of findings. (CABI)

Task 3: Continue testing of white smut

Continue host specificity tests with the white smut for signs of virulence towards various populations of Flowering Rush. Specifically, populations of genotypes 1 and 4. Continue targeted field surveys to find other strains of smut. (CABI)

Task 4: Pre-release preparation for *Butomus umbellatus*

Fine-tune and establish a pre-release monitoring protocol for use at field sites in MT. Release sites will be monitored monthly, collecting general site variables such as plant density, generalist damage, water depth, and disturbance.

Project Administration - Missoula County Department of Ecology and Extension at 10%

Project deliverable: – Document outcomes of tasks in report.

Schedule:

Task Name	Task Start Date	Task End Date
Collecting and rearing improvement for <i>Bagous nodulosus</i>	1 May 2023	31 October 2023
Agromyzid fly host specificity testing	1 May 2023	31 October 2023
White smut testing	1 May 2023	31 October 2023
Pre-release preparation	1 May 2023	31 May 2024

Attachment B – Budget

2023 Missoula County Department of Ecology Flowering Rush Biological Control

Task	DNRC Funds	Match Funds	Total
Task 1: Collect and rear <i>B. nodulosus</i>	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Task 2: Host specificity tests with agromyzid fly	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Task 3: Continue testing of white smut	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Task 4: Pre-release preparation for <i>B. nodulosus</i>	\$3,000	\$11,873	\$14,873
Administration	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
Total	\$20,000	\$11,873	\$31,873

See the grant application for budget detail and below.

Summary of Match Funding	
Funding Source	Amount
Montana FWP	\$9,873
WSU	\$2,000
Total	\$ 11,873

Task 1: Collect and rear *B. nodulosus* weevils

Task 1 Budget: \$5,000 – CABI

Task 2: Host specificity tests with agromyzid fly *Phytoliriomyza ornate*

Task 2 Budget: \$5,000 –CABI

Task 3: Continue testing of white smut

Task 3 Budget: \$5,000 –CABI

Task 4: Pre-release preparation for *Butomus umbellatus*

Task 4 Budget: \$14,873

- AIS Grant: \$3,000
- In-Kind funds: \$2,000
- Matching funds: \$9,873

Project Administration

November 22, 2023

Megan and Liz brainstorm session for joint meeting in 2024

Who:

- Montana Invasive Species Council (and partners)
- Alberta Invasive Species Council Directors and Members
- Customs and Border Protection (invite)
- Glacier & Waterton Park officials (invite)

Purpose: Cross border meeting to discuss current issues, understand challenges, learn about successes, and share information regarding invasive species.

Possible Scenario:

- Hold meeting in one country this year and other country next year.
- Hold meeting in June, July, or August.
- Find a location within driving distance from border for a 1.5 day meeting.
- Find a location with lodging, meeting space and possible field trip opportunity.
- Consider charging a fee to cover expenses (meeting space, food, bus)

Topics:

- Noxious weeds & invasive grasses
 - We would be very interested to see Medusahead and Ventanata, we could also benefit from seeing large infestations of other invasive annual grasses because they are largely ignored and not prioritized for control here, which is a big problem.
 - We could even go through a list of species and identify species that are present in Montana and not yet in Alberta? Find locations and Focus on those?
- AIS, watercraft inspection stations, tribal and park operations,
 - could visit [Northern crayfish infestations](#) Lee Lake might be closest (1 hr from Chief Mtn Crossing)
 - the only known location of Chinese mystery snail in [Western North America](#) is in Lake McGregor (2.75 hrs from Chief Mtn border crossing; 2.25 from Coutts Crossing). There is a CD3 machine there also.
- Feral swine prevention (Transboundary working group, BC/Washington response event)
 - Could invite Hannah and Seuss and or Alberta pork. Could even look into getting a trap set up for a demo of how they work.
- Biocontrol
 - Could show how we collect leafy spurge flea beetles depending on timing. There is a good location 1.25 hours from the Chief Mtn Crossing (on the way to Lee Lake crayfish)
- Firewood and tree pests
 - Might be worth looking more into this. I know we are concerned about spongy moth and mountain pine beetle (which we don't consider invasive in the south but it quite problematic). We could invite state/provincial forest health folks
- Invasive woody shrubs/bushes: saltcedar, Russian olive, common buckthorn, caragana, cattails.

Megan will check on Southwest Invasive Managers group and their Montana scouting tour from Eureka to Babb in mid-July 2024.

- Met with Lindsey Davidson on Nov 23. The SWIM group was somewhat interested in a more formal transboundary tour, similar to what had been put on before but no one had the capacity to organize it. Decided instead to go on a one-day trip to go look at Ventana and Medusahead and any other relevant species, issues, successes, etc.
- I explained what Liz and I had chatted about and I think our efforts could be combined. A possible scenario:
 - o We could have a Montana day to look at species of interest (the Montana folks might be less interested in this)
 - o And an Alberta day could look at species of interest there (the Alberta folks might be less interested in this day).
 - o Could plan a central evening/overnight where everybody meets
 - o Folks could attend one or both days.

Megan will check on Pincher Creek as a meeting location. Some options;

- Twin Butte Hall \$550, 30 minutes north of the north of Chief Mtn border crossing, capacity 145. Catering available nearby
- Waterton Park Community Association North Classroom \$375, in the park capacity 89
- Island Lake Christian Retreat Centre Crowsnest Pass (1.5 hours from Chief Mtn border crossing and 1.5 hours from Eureka crossing) - venue PLUS accommodations (bring your own bedding) (no internet?), full kitchen available for use or catering from town, bedrooms plus dorm style rooms \$40/night per person. Capacity 90

Liz and Megan will share this idea with their councils at upcoming meetings.

- Megan meets with her board on Nov 30.
- Liz meets with her council on Dec 12.