

**Flathead Basin Commission**

**February 10, 2011**

**DNRC, Kalispell**

**10:00am – 2:00 pm**

FBC members/staff in attendance: Bob Sandman, Jim Simpson, Ed Heger, Chip Weber, Rich Jansen, Clint Folden, Chas Cartwright, Don Loranger, Tiffany (on behalf of Susan Brueggeman), Tom Smith, Pam Holmquist, Jim Satterfield, Dan Bangeman, Jan Metzmaker and Caryn Miske.

Others in attendance: Clint Folden, Dave Burch, Greg Ames, Eileen Ryce, Erik Hanson, Joel Tohtz, Larry van Rinsum, Tom Bansak, Virginia Sloan, Kirby Campbell-Rierson, and others.

Facilitator: Denise Germann

**Minutes:** Unanimously approved with one change “asked what the appropriate role was for the FBC in regard to AIS” will replace “wanted a reduced role for the FBC” on page 2 of the draft minutes.

**AIS Letter and Resolution:** Letter and resolution unanimously approved with suggested changes. Letter will be sent to fishing interests, recreationists and the list serve prepared by Mark Reller. The letter will be sent out electronically using the FBC Letterhead listing names/organizations of FBC members.

**Pending AIS legislation:** The Commission unanimously supported continuing our existing efforts related to pending AIS legislation, and agreed that testimony regarding legislation would be provided based FBC’s Public Comment Policy and upon the language in the approved AIS letter and resolution (see above).

The Executive Director agreed to send out the public comment policy electronically to all members.

It was also agreed that the Executive Director would continue to keep up with details of AIS related legislation, and inform members of details as legislation progressed.

**AIS efforts for the 2011 field season:**

Greg Ames, from the Department of Agriculture presented the 2011 field season plan for aquatic invasive plants (plan previously forwarded to members electronically). The proposed plan would cost approximately \$199,000 and the budget is based on funding levels from 2009 as this funding level currently remains in the Governor’s budget. Mr. Ames offered to forward the Departments December 2010 AIS report to the legislature for review.

Eileen Ryce, from Fish, Wildlife and Parks presented the 2011 field season plan for aquatic invasive animals (plan previously forwarded to members electronically). The budget is based on funding levels from 2009 as this funding level currently remains in the FWP budget for AIS activities. Ms. Ryce also

explained that the Dreissenid monitoring and inspection strategy will be sent out to a broader group for review, and would include those from Trout Unlimited, the Walleye Fisherman, the Guide/Outfitters and others. Caryn Miske requested that technical staff and scientists also review the protocol, and identified specific members of the Flathead AIS work group, including the Flathead Lake Biological Station. Ms. Ryce agreed to include these folks in the subsequent review process.

Ms. Ryce also announced that FWP would be hiring a new FTE to serve as the AIS regional coordinator for FWP in Region 1 to increase existing capacity. Ms. Ryce explained that this position would be separate from the position of John Wachsmuth, and that a new position description was being written for the position. Caryn Miske inquired as to how this would differ from Mr. Wachsmuth position, and Ms. Ryce explained that this would be a BPA funded position managed out of Helena.

A question was also raised about the status of the Flathead Basin AIS Plan, and its incorporation into the State's ANS plan. Mr. Ryce explained that the plan was being treated as if it were officially part of the State ANS plan.

Several questions were posed to both Departments related to roving versus seasonally permanent check stations, and mandatory versus voluntary check stations. In particular, the Departments were asked how many seasonally permanent border check stations could be created with the funding/personnel being devoted to the roving check stations. Ms. Ryce answered that the Departments had not yet assembled that information. Several members raised concerns about the temporary roving inspection stations at boat launches favored by FWP and the continued use of voluntary inspection stations by the Department of Agriculture, as well as the limited hours of operation at inspection stations. These members were clearly concerned that the inspection station plan, as designed was not adequate to protect basin resources.

The discussion then turned to the Flathead AIS work group, and Mr. Ames asked that the work group prioritize its recommendations. Ms. Miske agreed that this could be done, and explained that the work group would also be putting together an annual work plan for work to be undertaken at the local level.

Mr. Ames encouraged the individual agencies and citizen members to submit their thoughts on the proposed plans submitted by the Departments by the end of February.

**FBC AIS Consultant:**

A description of the duties to be undertaken by an FBC AIS consultant was circulated and reviewed by members. Members were deeply divided on how the FBC should proceed on the AIS prevention effort. While some members felt that we should delay action until the FBC redefined its mission and goals in light of the recent changes related to the tranboundary Flathead MOU, others felt that the urgency of the AIS issue required immediate and continued action, especially since this would be the last meeting prior to the start of the boating season. Although one member pointedly asked how much longer the FBC was going to wait to hiring the AIS consultant, a motion for a vote was not called.

Ultimately, the job duty description draft for the FBC AIS consultant was given to Ms. Ryce so that she could incorporate the duties listed into the job description that she was in the process of drafting for the new FWP AIS Coordinator. Ms. Ryce agreed that a position description would be forwarded by members by 2/14/11.

Despite divisions within the membership as to how to proceed, it was decided that no decision on AIS consultant would be undertaken until:

- The FBC members review the FBC mission and hiring process; and
- the FWP and FBC AIS job description could be compared, and gaps identified.

Meeting adjourned.