

## Western Regional Panel Guide to Procedures

### Panel

**§1. Panel.** The Western Regional Panel is a nongovernmental advisory body to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force and serves as a forum for coordinating activities on ANS management in the West. Members of the panel may be elected or appointed government officials; staff members of government agencies; members or representatives of organizations, associations or other groups; or private citizens.

### Membership

Membership in the Panel shall consist of Voting Members, Alternate Members, and Participating Members. Panel members and Appointing Organizations selected through March 17, 1998 are affirmed, subject to the rules and term limits adopted herein. Additional and future appointments shall be made as described herein.

**§2. Voting Members.** Voting Members shall be appointed to fill Voting Positions, representing U. S. Federal Agencies, U. S. State Governments, U. S. Territorial Governments, Canadian Provinces, Canadian Federal Agencies, Mexican Federal Agencies, Tribal Regions and Other Interests, as outlined in Attachment A.

**§3. Alternate Members.** Appointing Organizations may appoint an Alternate Member to represent them, if the Voting Member may not be able to attend the regular Panel meetings. However, these organizations shall be encouraged to appoint Voting Members who can themselves fully participate in Panel meetings. Alternate Members may vote only when the Voting Member for that position is absent.

**§4. Participating Members.** Participating Members shall not vote, but may participate in panel discussion on the same terms as other Panel members. The Panel may appoint Participating Members as needed, by simple majority vote.

**§5. Appointment of Members.** An Appointing Organization selected for each Voting Position shall appoint a Voting Member and, where allowed and desired, an Alternate Member. An Appointing Organization has the authority to replace the members it has appointed; or, upon resignation of a member it has appointed, to appoint a new member.

**§6. Appointing Organizations.** The Appointing Organization for the Voting Positions for Federal Agencies, State, Territorial and Provincial Governments shall be the agencies or governments so designated in Attachment A. The Panel shall serve as the Appointing Organization for the two At-Large positions.

The Appointing Organizations for the Voting Positions for Tribal Regions and Other Interests shall be selected by the Panel, and shall serve for up to about a four-year term. At each Fourth-Year Panel Meeting as defined in the next paragraph, the Panel shall, by simple majority vote,

select a new Appointing Organization for each of these Voting Positions or re-select the existing one. The Panel may, by simple majority vote, delegate to the Executive Committee the authority to select any or all such Appointing Organizations.

The first Panel meeting that occurs more than four years after the Organizational Meeting of July 9, 1997 shall be designated a Fourth-Year Panel Meeting; and each Panel meeting that occurs next after four years after the preceding Fourth-Year Panel Meeting shall be designated a Fourth-Year Panel Meeting.

At other times the Panel may remove an Appointing Organization by two-thirds majority vote, provided that such action has been noticed in the draft agenda mailed to each member at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote takes place.

**§7. Voting Positions.** The Panel may add or remove Voting Positions by a two-thirds majority vote, provided that such action has been noticed in the draft agenda mailed to each member at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote takes place.

**§8. Term of Service of Members.** A Voting or Alternate Member shall serve until: (1) the member resigns, (2) the member's Appointing Organization completes its term of office, (3) the member is removed by or resigns from his or her Appointing Organization, (4) the member is removed by the Panel (as described below), or (5) the member's Appointing Organization is removed by vote of the Panel (as described in §6). If removed for reason (2), the member's term of service shall run through the end of the Fourth-Year Panel Meeting that completes the term of service of his or her Appointing Organization. If removed for reasons (4) or (5), the member's term of service shall end with the vote of the Panel.

A Participating Member's term of service shall run through the end of the next Fourth-Year Panel Meeting (2005).

There is no limit to the number of terms that a member may serve.

Duties of members include participation, when possible, in Panel meetings and committees. To enhance coordination of activities, members should communicate ANS management and policy initiatives to other Panel members through presentations at the annual meeting or via the list server consistent with the current policy of the Panel. Members are expected to communicate the Panel's recommended actions to the organizations they represent, and strive to improve the organization's ability to address ANS issues.

The Panel may remove a member by two-thirds majority vote, provided that such action has been noticed in the draft agenda mailed to each member at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote takes place.

### **Meeting Procedures**

This section applies to meetings of the Panel as a whole, not to meetings of Panel committees. The Panel shall try to meet at least once a year.

**§9. Meeting Notice.** All Voting Members, Alternate Members, Participating Members and the ANS Task Force Co-Chairs shall be mailed a notice of the meeting at least four weeks prior, and a draft agenda at least two weeks prior, to any Panel meeting. A Panel meeting may not take place without such notice. The Chair of the Executive Committee shall be responsible for drafting the agenda, subject to the direction of the Executive Committee. All Voting Members, Alternate Members and Participating Members shall be mailed a notice of any mail-in vote, including the language of the motion to be voted on and the period during which votes will be accepted, at least 2 weeks before the close of the vote.

**§10. Meeting Chair.** The meeting shall be chaired by the Chair of the Executive Committee; by the Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee in the absence of the Chair; by a member of the Executive Committee selected by the Executive Committee members present, in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair; and by a member of the Panel selected by the Panel Voting Members present, in the absence of the entire Executive Committee.

**§11. Decisions.** Panel decisions shall be made by simple majority vote unless otherwise stated in these Procedures. A vote requires a motion and a second. A vote may be by voice vote, by raising of hands, or by roll call vote at the discretion of the Meeting Chair, except that a vote shall be by a recorded roll call vote if so requested by a Voting Member or by an Alternate Member serving in place of an absent Voting Member. The Panel may also make decisions by mail-in vote (which may include voting by fax or email) when a motion is submitted to the whole Panel by the Panel sitting in meeting session or by the Executive Committee. When the vote is tallied, the list of the Members who cast valid ballots and the vote that each cast shall be provided to the Panel Members.

A simple majority vote of the Panel means a vote at a Panel meeting in which more than half of the members present that are representing Voting Positions (i.e. Voting Members, or Alternate Members serving in place of an absent Voting Member) vote in support of a motion. A two-thirds majority vote of the Panel means a vote at a Panel meeting in which at least two-thirds of the members present that are representing Voting Positions vote in support of a motion. On a mail-in vote, a simple majority vote or a two-thirds majority vote mean, respectively, that more than half or at least two-thirds of the total number of members that cast a vote, vote in support of the motion.

All main or substantive motions shall be subject to debate. A motion to close debate (to "call the question") is not debatable, but requires a two-thirds majority vote to pass.

The procedures for conducting a mail-in vote shall be as follows: The Executive Committee shall specify a period of at least two weeks, with a definite closure time, during which ballots will be accepted; and shall appoint a Vote Recorder who is not a member of the Panel to whom ballots shall be mailed. Ballots may be submitted by regular mail, e mail, or fax. The Vote Recorder shall not provide any information on the ballots received, including information on the total number of ballast received, to any Panel Member, until the closure time has passed. The Vote Recorder shall reject any ballots that arrive after the designated closure time, and shall reject any ballots not cast by a Voting Member or an Alternate Member. If a Voting Member and his or her respective Alternate Member both cast a ballot, then the Vote Recorder shall reject the Alternate Member's ballot. If the total number of accepted ballots is less than half of the Voting Positions

for which Voting Members or Alternate Members are appointed, then the vote is invalid and no tally shall be made. If the vote is valid, then the Vote Recorder shall list the names and votes of all accepted ballots, tally the ayes, nays and abstentions, and provide the list and the tally to the Executive Committee to provide to the Panel Members.

**§12. Quorum.** The necessary quorum for making a decision at a Panel meeting shall be all of the Voting Positions for which Voting Members or Alternate Members are present at the meeting. On a mail-in vote, half of the Voting Positions for which Voting Members or Alternate Members are appointed must cast a vote for the vote to be valid.

If less than a quorum is present at a duly noticed Panel meeting, the meeting may by simple majority vote refer specific questions to the Executive Committee, except that decisions to remove an Appointing Organization (§6), Panel member (§8), or Executive Committee member (§17), to add or remove Voting Positions (§7), other decisions normally requiring more than a simple majority vote of the Panel, the election of Executive Committee members (§17), and ratifications of Executive Committee decisions (§20), may not be referred to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall decide referred questions by a majority vote of all Executive Committee members, provided that the Executive Committee (acting through the Chair) has mailed (by post or by email) the question to all members of the Panel, together with any relevant information provided by the meeting that referred the question and any additional information deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee, in order to allow an opportunity for comment by Panel members. Such mailing shall occur at least two weeks prior to the Executive Committee meeting to decide the question.

**§13. Public Attendance.** All Panel meetings shall be open to the public.

**§14. Public Participation.** At Panel meetings there shall be an opportunity for public comment on any agenda item, or on any other issue which is properly a matter for comment before the Panel, subject to these guidelines as they may be amended by the Panel. These guidelines shall apply equally to all who are not members of the Panel.

- (a) Members of the public may be required, at the Chair's discretion, to fill out speaker cards before commenting.
- (b) Public comment on any agenda item shall occur at the time of Panel discussion on the item but before any Panel vote on the item. Comments by any member of the public shall be limited to a maximum of three minutes on any agenda item.
- (c) Public comment on issues not on the agenda shall occur during the General Public Comment period. Comments by any member of the public during the General Public Comment period shall be limited to a maximum of three minutes. The Chair of the meeting shall determine whether an issue is properly a matter for comment before the Panel; however, such determination may be overturned by a majority vote of the Panel.

These requirements for enabling public participation and comment shall not apply to mail-in votes.

**§15. Committees.** The Panel shall appoint an Executive Committee and may appoint or dissolve other committees as needed. Committee Chairs are expected to participate in Executive Committee meetings as needed to keep them apprised of committee actions.

**§16. Appointed Officers or Staff.** The Panel may appoint or shall be an ex-officio member of the Panel and shall not vote, but may participate in panel discussion on the same terms as Participating Members.

### **Executive Committee**

**§17. Election of Executive Committee.** At each Panel Meeting in an odd numbered year, the Panel shall elect five members and at each Panel Meeting in an even numbered year, the Panel shall elect four members to serve as the Panel's Executive Committee. The Panel should seek to elect an Executive Committee that is representative of the breadth of interests on the Panel. The term for an Executive Committee member is two years. All Voting Members shall be eligible for nomination to the Executive Committee. The Panel shall elect a new Executive Committee member whenever a sitting member resigns, is removed, or ends his or her term of service as a Panel member for any of the reasons described in §8. The Panel may remove an Executive Committee member by two-thirds majority vote of the Panel, provided that such action has been noticed in the draft agenda mailed to each member at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote takes place. There is no limit to the number of terms that an Executive Committee member may serve.

**§18. Chair and Vice-Chair.** The Executive Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair by simple majority vote at the first Executive Committee meeting following the Panel meeting at which the Executive Committee was elected, and shall elect a new Chair or Vice-Chair when a sitting Chair or Vice-Chair resigns or is removed. A Chair or Vice-Chair shall serve until (1) the next election of a Chair or Vice-Chair, (2) the next election of an Executive Committee, (3) he or she resigns, or (4) he or she is removed. A Chair or Vice-Chair may be removed by two-thirds vote of the entire Executive Committee. There is no limit to the number of terms that a Chair or Vice-Chair may serve.

Executive Committee members or the Panel Coordinator shall provide regular reports on meetings and other activities that they attend as a representative of the Panel to the Executive Committee. A summary will be recorded in the Executive Committee meeting minutes and be made available to the entire membership. It is the duty of the Executive Committee to ensure, to the extent possible, that the purposes and procedures of the Panel, as defined in statute and in these bylaws, are carried out. Executive Committee members may not represent individual or member entity positions as those of the Panel without prior Panel approval.

The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.

**§19. Executive Committee Meetings.** The Executive Committee may meet in person or by conference call. It shall be the responsibility of the Panel Coordinator to notify all members of the Executive Committee of the time and place of a meeting at least one week in advance by mail or email. The Panel Coordinator shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee and shall not vote. The Executive Committee may invite others to participate in meetings as needed.

**§20. Decisions by Executive Committee.** The necessary quorum for making decisions is five of the elected, voting members. The Executive Committee shall make decisions by simple majority

vote. The Executive Committee may decide on procedural or operational questions as needed, and on questions referred by the Panel (§12). All questions decided by the Executive Committee shall be submitted to the next Panel meeting for ratification by a simple majority vote; if a quorum is not present, the questions shall be resubmitted to the following Panel meetings until a quorum is present. Any Executive Committee decision which fails ratification by a Panel meeting at which a quorum is present shall thenceforth be void.

### **Budget Procedures**

The section applies to Panel funding for activities and administration. These guidelines are intended to provide a framework for management of Panel financial resources, including accounting and reporting requirements.

**§21. Funding Sources:** The National Invasive Species Act authorizes funding for the Department of the Interior to be used by the US Fish and Wildlife Service to fund regional panels and other similar entities and for making grants to states for aquatic nuisance species management plan implementation. The Panel may also partner with individual members or other organizations to fund projects or Panel activities.

**§22. Annual Plan:** The Panel develops a work plan at an annual meeting, based on input from the Coastal and Inland Committees, and with agreement from the Panel members in attendance. The plan includes proposed work items, estimated costs, and background information for prioritization within the program. The Executive Committee is responsible to assure that Panel activities and administration are conducted in accordance with the work plan or to approve changes based on Panel program priorities. This includes commitments of Panel financial resources.

**§23. Additional Funding Requirements:** If additional funding is needed to carry out priority Panel work items, those additional needs will be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is responsible for reviewing the request to assure that it is consistent with the Panel work plan. The Executive Committee will then determine the appropriate potential source for funding and prepare a request. Once secured, the additional funds will be managed along with the existing Panel budget.

**§24. Reporting:** The Executive Committee will monitor budget status throughout the year. They will provide a financial report to the Panel at the annual meeting. This report will include funds received, funding commitments, and the status of any available remaining money.

### **Other Procedures**

**§25 Amendment of Procedures.** These Procedures may be amended by two-thirds majority vote of the Panel; or by simple majority vote if such action has been noticed in the draft agenda mailed to each member at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote takes place.

**§26. Other Procedures.** Any question of procedure that arises that is not specifically covered by these Procedures as they may be amended by the Panel, by specific decisions of the Panel, or by superseding law or regulation, shall be resolved by reference to the Sturgis Standard Code of

Parliamentary Procedure, Third Edition.

**Attachment A**

**Western Regional Panel  
Voting Positions as of September 8, 2005**

**U. S. Federal Agencies**

1. APHIS
2. NOAA
3. USCG
4. USCOE
5. USFWS
6. USEPA
7. BOR
8. NPS
9. USGS

**U. S. State Governments**

1. Alaska
2. Arizona
3. California
4. Colorado
5. Hawaii
6. Idaho
7. Kansas
8. Montana
9. Nebraska
10. New Mexico
11. Nevada
12. North Dakota
13. Oklahoma
14. Oregon
15. South Dakota
16. Texas
17. Utah
18. Washington
19. Wyoming

**U.S. Territorial Governments**

1. Guam

**Canadian Provincial Governments**

1. Alberta
2. British Columbia
3. Manitoba
4. Saskatchewan

**Canadian Federal Member**

**Mexican Federal Member**

**Tribal Regions**

1. Alaskan Natives
2. Coastal Tribes
3. Inland Tribes
4. Native American Fish and Wildlife Society

**Other Interests**

1. CALFED
2. Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council
3. Puget Sound/Georgia Basin International Task Force Exotics Work Group
4. San Francisco Estuary Project
5. Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
6. Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
7. Western States Water Council
8. The Nature Conservancy
9. Academia-Coastal
10. Academia-Inland
11. Aquaculture-Coastal
12. Aquaculture-Inland
13. At Large-Coastal
14. At Large-Inland
15. Conservation-Coastal
16. Conservation-Inland
17. Industry-Coastal
18. Industry-Inland
19. Western Aquatic Plant Mgmt Society