



**Executive Board Meeting**  
September 3-4, 2025

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bozeman Fish Technology Center  
4050 Bridger Canyon Rd  
Bozeman, MT 59715

**MEETING MINUTES**

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**MEETING AGENDA**  
(All times are Central)

*An option for remote participation was provided.*

Wednesday, September 3, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm, Conference Room

**Closed Session**

- 1) Roll Call and Determination of Quorum (Ben Batten)
- 2) Collaborative Interjurisdictional Fishery Management in the Mississippi River Basin (Mike Colvin and Max Post van der Burg)

Wednesday, September 3, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Conference Room

**Invasive Carp Coordination**

- 3) Invasive Carp Communications (Janet Lebson)
- 4) Invasive Carp Partnership Sub-Basin Scale Objectives (Caleb Aldridge, Jessica Howell, Neal Jackson, and Rebecca Neeley)
- 5) USACE 509 and IC Coordination (Jeremy Crossland)

Thursday, September 4, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm, Conference Room

**Reports**

- 6) Chairman's Report (Batten)
- 7) Coordinator's Report (Greg Conover)
- 8) Optional Sub-Basin and Agency Reports (All)

**Old Business**

- 9) USFWS Economic Value Report Update (Conover)
- 10) MICRA's Aquatic Habitat Action Plan (Conover)

**New Business**

- 11) Approval of January 2025 Executive Board Meeting Minutes (Batten)
- 12) Review of Action Items (Conover)
- 13) 2026 Operational Budget (Conover)
- 14) Schedule Fall Conference Call and Winter Executive Board Meeting (Batten)
- 15) Other New Business / Parking Lot (Batten)

Thursday, September 4, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Conference Room – Closed Session

**Closed Session**

- 16) Collaborative Interjurisdictional Fishery Management in the Mississippi River Basin  
– Wrap-up and Next Steps (Colvin and Post van der Burg)
- 17) Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission Planning (Workgroup)
- 18) Legislative and Policy Updates (Smith)

**Adjourn**

## DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

### Decisions

1. The Executive Board approved the draft January 2025 Executive Board meeting minutes as final.
2. The Executive Board decided to discontinue offering MICRA's Young Professionals Travel Stipend.
3. The Executive Board approved the proposed 2026 operational budget with an amendment to remove all funding for the Young Professionals Travel Stipend.
4. The Executive Board's Winter Meeting is tentatively scheduled for the week of February 9, 2026, in Alabama.
5. MICRA's 2026 DC fly-in is tentatively scheduled for February 23-27.

### Action Items

#### *Collaborative Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management in the Mississippi River Basin (Mike Colvin and Max Post van der Burg)*

1. Conover will request Mike Colvin's and Max Post van der Burg's slide deck and share it with the board members.
2. Conover will schedule a call with the Executive Board, preferably by the end of September, to decide next steps for the discussion with Mike Colvin and Max Post van der Burg.
3. Conover will follow-up with Mike Colvin and Max Post van der Burg following the Executive Board's next discussion.

#### *Invasive Carp Communications*

4. Janet Lebson will work with Monica Blaser to make three refinements to the map showing the full geographic scope of invasive carp management carried out under the Mississippi River Basin and Great Lakes Basin partnerships: 1) include the Chicago Area Waterway System, 2) correct the Red River, and 3) add language into the graphic that clarifies our work takes place in many areas where carp are not present to try to keep it that way ("Together, we are working to manage existing invasive carp populations and monitoring across the waterscape to prevent further expansion.")
5. Janet Lebson will make a recommendation to the Executive Board for a future communications project specifically to better route various inquiries related to the commercial market. This would be a content development project that would require an outside contract with an entity with expertise in business and supply

chain development. The idea is that it would help states maximize valuable uses of removed invasive carp so that they can continually increase the amount of removal and grow their capacity to distribute removed fish efficiently.

#### *Sub-Basin Invasive Carp Partnership Coordinators Update*

6. Neal Jackson will share a recommendation with the other sub-basin invasive carp partnership coordinators for the partnerships to discuss sub-basin priorities earlier in the planning process and in-person when possible.
7. Neal Jackson will follow up with Dave Smith on techniques for objective project ranking that have been used by USACE and could be considered for the sub-basin invasive carp partnerships.
8. Rebecca Neeley and Neal Jackson will develop a request from the Upper Mississippi River Invasive Carp Team (UMRICT) regarding MICRA's support for Lock and Dam 19 deterrent transfer.
9. Hansen will schedule a call to brief the Upper Mississippi River fish chiefs and request their concurrence before sharing the request for MICRA's support for Lock and Dam 19 deterrent transfer with the MICRA Executive Board.

#### *ERDC Aquatic Plant Program and WRDA Section 509 Coordination*

10. Ashlee Smith will follow up with Dave Smith to discuss how ERDC can potentially support deterrence projects.
11. Conover and Neal Jackson will follow up with Sub-Basin Invasive Carp Partnership coordinators and the USFWS internal invasive carp team regarding possible USACE ERDC demonstration project siting.
12. Dave Smith will seek clarity from Jeremy Crossland regarding USACE's effort to move BAFF acquisition into current O&M and follow up with Dreves, Batten, and Conover.

#### *Aquatic Habitat Action Plan*

13. Conover will send clean sub-basin chapters to the sub-basin representatives.
14. Sub-basin representatives will review and update their respective sub-basin chapters.
15. Conover will review tables of ecological and economic statistics and adjust for consistency.
16. Executive Board members will review the Aquatic Habitat Action Plan introduction and send approval or suggested revisions to Conover.

17. Conover will scope a laser engraved plaque featuring a map of the Mississippi River Basin with the 6<sup>th</sup> order and larger interjurisdictional rivers as a gift to recognize Angela Erves' contributions to MICRA.

### *Legislative Updates*

18. Conover, Batten, and Zweifel will consider scheduling additional orientation calls with additional "new" fish chiefs.
19. Conover will work with Batten and Zweifel to send a letter regarding initiating the scoping phase of feasibility study to prevent two-way transfer of AIS between the Mississippi River and Great Lakes as authorized by GLMRIS to the new USACE Chicago District Commander following the upcoming change of command.
20. Ashlee Smith will follow up with Kirstin Wallace, UMRBA, on outreach and policy coordination. Smith will follow up with Nelson on this topic as well.
21. Conover will connect Ashlee Smith with host organizations for other ANS Task Force Regional Panels.
22. Conover will send Ashlee Smith information on the upcoming MRBP/WRP joint meeting.
23. Neal Jackson will provide Ashlee Smith with a recommended paddlefish silhouette for the Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission logo.
24. Executive Board sub-basin representatives will provide information to Ashlee Smith on invasive carp deterrence to improve legislative discussions.
25. Rebecca Neeley and Brian Schoenung will send information to Ashlee Smith regarding the Lock and Dam 19 underwater acoustic deterrent system.
26. Ashlee Smith and the 2026 DC fly-in team will consider a strategy for packaging deterrent needs (BAFF and LD19).

### *General*

27. Rob Bourgeois will follow up with Kristi Butler regarding Louisiana's 2025 MICRA membership dues.
28. Zweifel will follow up with Dave Wellman, WV DNR, regarding representation of the Ohio River Basin on the MICRA Executive Board. Conover and Batten will assist as requested.
29. Neal Jackson will share similarity of appearance news with Sara Tripp and consider the need for discussion within the Paddlefish/Sturgeon subcommittee.
30. Neal Jackson will share information on a pallid sturgeon capture in the Des Moines River with Sara Trip for discussion within the Paddlefish/Sturgeon subcommittee.

31. Conover will add the approved January 2025 meeting minutes to the MICRA web page.
32. Conover will update the Young Professionals Travel Stipend web page to reflect the Executive Board's decision to no longer award the stipend. Information on past recipients will remain on the web site.
33. Dreves, Batten, Zweifel, and Conover will explore meeting locations in Alabama for the MICRA Executive Board's Winter meeting tentatively scheduled for the week of February 9<sup>th</sup>.

## MEETING ATTENDEES

### Voting Executive Board Members

Ben Batten, AGFC, MICRA Chairperson  
Ken Cunningham, ODWC, Arkansas/Red/White Rivers Sub-Basin Representative  
Angie Rodgers, USFWS, Alternate Lower Mississippi River Sub-Basin Representative  
Kasey Whiteman, MDC, Missouri River Sub-Basin Representative  
Rich Zweifel, OH DNR, Ohio River Sub-Basin Representative  
Dave Dreves, KDFWR, Tennessee/Cumberland Rivers Sub-Basin Representative  
Kirk Hansen<sup>1</sup>, IA DNR, Upper Mississippi River Sub-Basin Representative  
Aaron Woldt, USFWS, Federal Agency Executive Board Member

\* A quorum of six voting members was present.

### Non-Voting Executive Board Members

Brad Parsons, MN DNR, MICRA Immediate Past Chairman  
Brian Schoenung, IL DNR, MICRA Past Chairman  
Greg Conover, USFWS, MICRA Coordinator

### MICRA Committee Chairs

Rob Simmonds, USFWS, Invasive Carp Advisory Committee  
Rob Bourgeois<sup>1</sup>, LDFW, AIS Committee Chair and MRBP Liaison

### Introductions

Ashlee Smith, Sequoya Strategies  
Dave Smith, USACE-ERDC  
Janet Lebson, USFWS, Office of Communications  
Neal Jackson, USFWS, OHR Invasive Carp Partnerships Coordinator  
Mike Colvin<sup>1</sup>, USGS  
Max Post van der Burg<sup>1</sup>, USGS  
Rebecca Neeley<sup>1</sup>, USFWS, UMR Invasive Carp Partnership Coordinator  
Caleb Aldridge<sup>1</sup>, USFWS, TNCR and LMR/ARW Invasive Carp Partnerships Coordinator

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<sup>1</sup> Remote attendance during a portion of the meeting.