



Executive Board Meeting

January 30-31, 2024

Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute
175 Baylor School Rd
Chattanooga, TN 37405

MEETING MINUTES

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MEETING AGENDA
(All times are Eastern)

An option for remote participation was provided.

Tuesday, January 30, 8:30-5:00, Classroom

Call to Order / Welcome

- 1) Roll Call and Determination of Quorum (Brad Parsons)
- 2) Welcome to Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute (Bernie Kuhajda)

Approval of Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes

- 3) Approval of February 2023 Executive Board Meeting Minutes (Parsons)
- 4) Approval of August 2023 Executive Board Meeting Minutes (Parsons)
- 5) Review of Action Items

Chairman and Coordinator Reports

- 6) Chairman's Report (Parsons)
- 7) Coordinator's Report (Conover)

Sub-basin Updates

- 8) Arkansas-Red-White Rivers (Ken Cunningham)
- 9) Lower Mississippi River (Vacant)
- 10) Missouri River (Kasey Whiteman)
- 11) Ohio River (Rich Zweifel)
- 12) Tennessee-Cumberland Rivers (Dave Dreves)
- 13) Upper Mississippi River (Kirk Hansen)

Federal Entity Updates

- 14) Federal entity updates

Policy Coordinator Update

- 15) Legislative, Policy, and Outreach Next Steps (Smith)
- 16) 2024 DC Fly-in preparation (Smith)

Afternoon Break

Committee Updates

- 17) Invasive Carp Advisory Committee (Rob Simmonds and Brian Schoenung)
- 18) Sub-basin Invasive Partnership Coordinators (Caleb Aldridge, Neal Jackson, and Rebecca Neeley)

Partner Updates

- 19) Wildlife Forever (Pat Conzemius)

Wednesday, January 31, 8:30-5:00, Classroom

Site Visit

- 20) Tour of Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute (Kuhajda)

Committee Updates

- 21) Paddlefish Sturgeon Committee (Sara Tripp)
- 22) Mississippi River Basin Panel on AIS (Rob Bourgeois)
- 23) Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (Rob Bourgeois)

Lunch

Old Business

- 24) Webpage Dashboard Demonstration (Rebecca Neeley and Ross Ruehmann)
- 25) Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission Next Steps (Parsons)
- 26) USFWS Economic Value Report Update (Conover)
- 27) MICRA's 2024-2028 Priorities Document (Conover)
- 28) MICRA's Aquatic Habitat Action Plan (Conover)

Afternoon Break

Nominations and Installation of New Officers and Executive Board Members

- 29) Passing of the Gavel: Installation of MICRA Chairperson 2024-2025 (Parsons)
- 30) Nomination for MICRA Chair-elect 2024-2025 (Batten)
- 31) Nomination for Lower Mississippi River Sub-Basin Representative (Batten)

New Business

- 32)** 2024 Workplan Development (Batten)
- 33)** Young Professionals Travel Stipend (Conover)
- 34)** Interjurisdictional Fisheries Symposium Discussion (Batten)
- 35)** Schedule Spring Conference Call and Summer Executive Board Meeting (Batten)
- 36)** Other New Business / Parking Lot (Batten)

Adjourn

DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

Decisions

1. The Executive Board members agreed that only the meeting minutes need to be formally approved. Meeting notes will be considered final following a 30-day review period by the Executive Board members and requested revisions addressed.
2. The Executive Board approved the February 2023 Executive Board Meeting minutes as final.
3. The Executive Board approved the August 2023 Executive Board meeting and August 2023 MICRA Delegate meeting minutes as final.
4. The Executive Board requested USFWS and the sub-basin coordinators to continue building out the invasive carp data on the dashboard that La Crosse FWCO has begun developing.
5. A small workgroup was formed with Batten, Parsons, Zweifel, Gaikowski, and Conover to work on operationalizing the fishery commission between Executive Board meetings.
6. The Executive Board approved final revisions to the 2024-2028 MICRA Priorities Document.
7. MICRA Chair-elect, Ben Batten, was installed as MICRA Chair for the 2024-2025 term and Brad Parsons stepped-down as Chair and will serve as MICRA's Immediate Past Chair on the Executive Board for the 2024-2025 term.
8. A motion was made and approved to accept the nomination of Jason Henegar as the Lower Mississippi River sub-basin representative to the MICRA Executive Board.
9. The Executive Board approved a \$500 donation to the Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute for the use of their facility for the board's meeting.

Action Items

1. Conover will update the MICRA Executive Board membership and mail list to include Jason Henegar as the LMR sub-basin representative on the board.
2. Conover will let the sub-basin representatives know which states have not responded with a vote on the proposed By-Laws changes.

3. Executive Board members were requested to provide Gaikowski with input on how they see their agency interfacing with USGS as part of the technology transfer process for the various technologies that are currently in development.
4. Smith will send the Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission draft legislation sign-on letter without any state agencies listed to Batten with a request for the states to seek approval for their agencies to be added to the letter and their agency's logo added to the coalition website.
5. Batten will send the Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission draft legislation sign-on letter and request the state delegates to seek approval for their agency to be added to the sign-on letter and their agency's logo added to the coalition website.
6. Executive Board members were asked to send the Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission draft legislation sign-on letter to any groups that might sign-on in support of the commission and approve their organization's logo being added to the coalition website.
7. Batten will share the 2024 DC fly-in talking points with the Executive Board members for review once a final draft is ready.
8. Executive Board members were requested to talk with their staff that have been involved in the sub-basin invasive carp partnership planning process to get their feedback and share it with the respective partnership coordinator.
9. Smith will send Zach Burnside the sign-on letter for the Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission and the most recent version of the Mississippi River Restoration and Resiliency Initiative legislation.
10. Smith will share MICRA's Congressional talking points with Zach Burnside and Pat Conzemius at Wildlife Forever before MICRA's fly-in in March.
11. Executive Board members and the invasive carp coordinators (sub-basin partnerships and ICAC) will encourage agency staff to provide science-based content, pictures, and videos to Wildlife Forever for sharing with the public through their Citizen Carp Control platform.
12. Neeley will share the Excel table that was provided to Ruehmann with the UMR invasive carp project data with the other sub-basin invasive carp partnership coordinators to add new tabs with the respective data for the remaining sub-basins. Coordinators were also asked to provide a breakdown of project funding by state.
13. La Crosse FWCO was requested to make the following updates to the dashboard: 1) change the Tennessee River to the Tennessee-Cumberland; 2) change all sub-basin headings from 'Region' to 'Sub-Basin'; 3) add a data layer

for the bigheaded carp distribution map that is used in the USFWS's Report to Congress; 4) add USEPA's impaired waters data layer; and 5) add data layers for MICRA's list of 6th order and larger IJ rivers including ceded territories, tribal lands, and federal nexus (once complete and provided by MICRA).

14. Conover will setup a call with Batten and Caudill to discuss MICRA's interest in an economic value estimate and to better understand Caudill's request for creel data from the basin states.
15. Conover will post the 2024-2028 MICRA Priorities Document on the MICRA web site.
16. Batten will email the 2024-2028 MICRA Priorities Document to the MICRA delegates.
17. Conover will check with Erves to see if the Hatchie River is included in her data files as having a federal nexus.
18. Conover will send the sub-basin maps and lists of 6th order and larger interjurisdictional rivers to the sub-basin representatives along with a description of how federal nexus was defined and determined.
19. Executive Board members will collaborate on final definitions of "interjurisdictional", "tribal nexus", and "federal nexus" for the identification of interjurisdictional rivers in the Mississippi River Basin.
20. Sub-basin representatives will review the sub-basin maps and lists of 6th order and larger interjurisdictional rivers and provide recommended additions, changes, and/or questions for Conover to address with Erves.
21. Parsons will follow-up with the Missouri River sub-basin delegates in an effort to recruit a chair-elect.
22. Sub-basin representatives will consider potential options for recruiting a chair-elect from their respective sub-basins.
23. Conover will send an email to the MICRA delegates to inform them that nominations remain open for the 2024 Young Professionals Travel Stipend.
24. Conover will inform the Paddlefish/Sturgeon Committee chair that the Executive Board has agreed to support a Mississippi River Basin focused interjurisdictional fisheries symposium at an upcoming national or regional meeting if the committee has interest and sees benefit in organizing a symposium.
25. Zweifel will explore meeting and fishing options in Ohio in late August and report back to Batten and Conover.
26. Batten and Conover will schedule a Spring conference call as needed after the MICRA DC Fly-in is complete.

MEETING ATTENDEES

Voting Executive Board Members

Ken Cunningham, ODWC, Arkansas/Red/White Rivers Sub-Basin Representative
Kasey Whiteman¹, 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 Hansen¹, IA DNR, Upper Mississippi River Sub-Basin Representative
Aaron Woldt¹, USFWS, Federal Agency Executive Board Member
Mark Gaikowski, USGS, Federal Agency Executive Board Member
Ben Batten, AGFC, MICRA Chairperson-Elect

* A quorum of six voting members was not in attendance throughout the meeting.

Non-Voting Executive Board Members

Brad Parsons, MN DNR, MICRA Chair
Brian Schoenung, IL DNR, MICRA Immediate Past Chairperson and ICAC Co-Chair
Greg Conover, USFWS, MICRA Coordinator

MICRA Committee Chairs

Rob Bourgeois, LDFW, AIS Committee Chair and MRBP MICRA Liaison
Rob Simmonds, USFWS, Invasive Carp Advisory Committee Co-Chair
Sara Tripp¹, IL DNR, Paddlefish/Sturgeon Committee

Introductions

Dave Smith, USACE-ERDC
Clint Jones, TVA
Lyn Williams, TVA
Rebecca Neeley, USFWS, UMR Invasive Carp Partnership Coordinator
Corey Oakley, NCWRC
Jason Henegar, TWRA
Bernie Kuhajda, Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute
Angie Rodgers, USFWS, LMRCC Coordinator
Caleb Aldridge, USFWS, LMR/ARW Invasive Carp Partnerships Coordinator
Neal Jackson, USFWS, OHR and TNCR Invasive Carp Partnerships Coordinator
Robby Maxwell, LDFW

Cole Harty, TWRA

Dan Carnahan, IN DNR¹

Ashlee Smith, Sequoya Strategies¹

¹ Remote attendee during a portion of the meeting