



WSWS Officer and Committee Report 2016 Albuquerque, NM

Office or Committee Name: Member at Large Public

Officer or Chairperson Name: Dr. Scott Nissen

Date of Preparation (include year): March 7, 2016

Committee Activities during the Year:

My charge from President-Elect Howett was to explore avenues by which the WSWS could increase membership and/or combine meeting space with a like-minded organization. WSWS membership has decreased over the past 10 years, mostly from reduced participation by state and federal land-managers. There are a number of organizations that could be compatible with the goals of the WSWS; however, several organizations I investigated do not meet annually or have their annual meeting at different times of year. President-elect Howett contacted the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA) to discuss possible joint meetings. While this group does have a significant focus on invasive plants, the group is interested in all taxa of invasive species not just plants. In addition, the group has generally met in October. Another potential meeting partner that I considered was the Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species; however, this group also meets in October.

The one group that most closely aligns with WSWS is the Western Aquatic Plant Management (WAPMS). In fact, WAPMS was originally composed of members from WSWS. I do not know the entire story, but it appears that a number of former WSWS members were not happy with being just a part of WSWS and so they decided to form their own association and became a regional chapter of the Aquatic Plant Management Society. There are seven regional chapters associated with the Aquatic Plant Management Society. WAPMS will be holding its 35th annual meeting in San Diego from March 21-23. WAPMS and WSWS will hold a joint meeting in Coeur D'Alene, ID in March of 2017. If this goes well there would be the opportunity to hold another joint meeting in 2018, because WAPMS has not yet decided on their meeting location for 2018.

So what are the major reasons that WAPMS would make the best regional society with which to establish a more permanent relationship. First, WAPMS meeting schedule is very similar to WSWS. WAPMS meets in March, 2-3 weeks after WSWS. Second, there are a number of WSSA/WSWS members who are also members of APMS/WAPMS. We have many of the same industry sponsors and both societies strongly support graduate student education. As a member of both societies, I am very hopeful that the joint meeting in 2017 will be a success and the two societies will find joint meetings to be mutually beneficial.

The typical WAPMS meeting has between 75-120 attendees, 30-35 presentations, no poster, and 4-6 graduate student attendees. Attendee numbers are highly dependent on location. In general, meeting a significant distance from the West Coast has not been well attended. The best cities for attendance have been Seattle, Portland, San Diego, Los Angeles, Reno, Coeur D'Alene. Cities

that have had poor attendance have been Salt Lake City, Denver, Phoenix, Tuscan. So one of the biggest obstacles to a more permanent arrangement between the two regional societies is likely to be meeting location. Meeting time should not be major obstacle.

President-Elect Howett's concerns about falling membership will probably not be solved by holding joint meetings with WAPMS. Industry and university researchers that work in both terrestrial and aquatic plant management are already active in both groups. There is the potential that some of the commercial aquatic and riparian weed management companies could become interested in WSWS. This interest would probably result from the need to understand the ecology and management of riparian weeds.

Recommendations for Board Action:

The biggest advantage to joint meetings will be the ability to negotiate for better room rates at larger hotels. The Couer D'Alene meeting will provide more insights into the nuts and bolts of how the two regional meetings could come together. Would we have two separate meetings at the same location or would we try to integrate the two organizations? Full disclosure, I am very interested in at least having the regional societies meet at the two locations at the same time. That would save me one meeting a year in time and travel costs.

My recommendation for the board is to consider a more permanent relationship with WAPMS for the reasons mentioned above.

Budget Needs: None

Suggestions for the Future: Re-evaluate the potential for meeting jointly with WAPMS after the Coeur D'Alene meeting.

Current Committee Members: Dr. Scott Nissen

Name of Person Preparing This Report: Dr. Scott Nissen