



Center for Invasive Species Management

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I. MISSION

The mission of the Center for Invasive Species Management (CISM) is to promote proactive, ecologically sound management of invasive species in western North America by sponsoring research, conducting public education, and facilitating collaboration and communication among researchers, educators, policy makers, natural resource managers and the concerned public.

II. STEERING COMMITTEE

A. Representation – Steering Committee members shall represent diverse geographical areas, constituencies, and approaches to natural resource management from throughout western North America. The Steering Committee shall have up to 15 members (from a broad spectrum of representatives including but not limited to: universities, tribes, state agencies, federal agencies, Industry, conservation organizations, and private landowners), plus the Montana State University/Land Resources and Environmental Sciences Department Head (*ex officio*). As the two foundational federal agencies that helped to initiate and continue to support the Center, USDI Bureau of Land Management and USDA Forest Service representatives will always hold two of the 15 Steering Committee member appointments.

B. Terms of Office – Steering Committee members shall be elected for three-year terms with the opportunity for re-election for an additional three-year term. Terms of office commence on membership start date.

C. Appointment – Steering Committee members shall be appointed by the CISM Director in consultation with current Steering Committee members. The participation of agency/organization representatives must be approved by the agencies/organizations that they represent.

D. Officers – Steering Committee members may elect among themselves a Chair to help facilitate decision-making and get quorum decisions from the Steering Committee, and to run Steering Committee meetings. The Chair may serve a two-year term with a spring or fall election.

E. Voting – Proposals and initiatives will be recommended for approval with a positive vote of two-thirds of the Steering Committee, working toward consensus.

Votes may be registered in person, by phone, by e-mail, or in writing. Votes may be conducted via e-mail/fax between meetings.

F. Expectations – Steering Committee members shall advise the CISM Director and the LRES Department Head; participate in semi-annual Steering Committee meetings; advocate CISM programs; identify new partnership opportunities; and support funding existing and new initiatives.

G. Conflict of Interest – Steering Committee members shall abstain from voting on issues or providing direction that directly affects their financial or legal standing personally or professionally.

III. MEETINGS

A. Time – If possible, one in-person meeting of the Steering Committee will be held in the fall and conference call meetings will be held as needed.

B. Notification – Steering Committee members will be notified at least 30 days in advance of meetings.

C. Quorum – A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the voting Steering Committee members.

IV. DECISION-MAKING

A. Long-term decisions – The entire Steering Committee shall be solicited for their advice and votes on issues regarding long-term vision and planning for CISM, as well as programmatic focus and financial support.

B. Immediate decisions – The Center Director shall have the authority to make day-to-day decisions, hire staff, and act in the best interests of CISM when immediate action is required.

V. COMMITTEES

A. The Steering Committee may form subcommittees as needed.

B. The Education Advisory Committee shall: 1) advise the CISM on the informational needs of educators/land managers who work on invasive plant issues; and 2) review and advise in the development of educational materials and programs produced by CISM. Members shall be appointed by the Director for two-year terms.

VI. CENTER DIRECTOR

A. Hiring and Dismissal – The Steering Committee, in partnership with Montana State University, shall select, interview, and hire the Center Director. The LRES Department Head shall be the hiring authority and lead the search process. The

LRES Department Head shall provide direct oversight of the Director as far as university policies, office space, grants and contracts, personnel, and administration. The Steering Committee, according to MSU policies and procedures, may recommend termination of the Director to the LRES Department Head.

B. Responsibilities – The Center Director shall: conduct Steering Committee meetings; communicate regularly with and follow the intent of the Steering Committee; facilitate collaboration among researchers, educators, and land managers to restore, maintain, and protect healthy ecosystems by managing invasive weeds; coordinate CISM research and education activities; negotiate agreements; generate funding; manage personnel and budgets; and facilitate correspondence among all interested regional and national partners.

C. Oversight – The Center Director is responsible to his/her LRES Department Head and to the CISM Steering Committee. Written annual reports, including financial reports, shall be provided by the Director to Steering Committee members and the LRES Department Head, as well as to Center funders.

D. Other staff – With justification provided to the CISM Steering Committee and LRES Department Head, the Center Director may hire and terminate CISM staff as needed.

VII. RELATIONSHIP WITH MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

A. Partnership – Montana State University will support CISM by providing office space and facilities, janitorial services, administration (personnel, grants and contracts, fund administration), legal advice, purchasing agreements, computer network services, and other benefits and services associated with the university.

B. Funding – As established with other MSU centers and institutes, MSU upper administration may fund with broad earmarks to MSU-CISM high-priority university programs that complement and support CISM activities, provided that the allocation does not impinge on CISM's historical baseline funding. Plans for and outcomes of that funding will be reported to the Steering Committee. The MSU LRES Department Head will communicate with the Steering Committee concerning such funding.

VIII. BYLAWS

A. Changing – Bylaws may be added, amended, or deleted with a two-thirds vote of the entire Steering Committee, either in writing or in person.

B. Notification – Proposed bylaws changes shall be provided to Steering Committee members in writing at least 30 days preceding the vote.