

**Invasive Plants Council
Minutes
December 23, 2003**

Present: Dr. Anderson, , Mr. Goodwin , Comm. Gresczyk (Melanie Atwater attended for the Comm.), Mr. Larson, Comm. Leff, Mr. McGowan, Dr. Mehrhoff, Dr. Musgrave, Mr. Sutherland.

Absent:

The Meeting was called to order at 10:38 AM by Chairman Leff in Room 1A of the Legislative Office Building.

Chairman Leff had the members of the council introduce themselves to members and the audience.

There was a motion by Dr. Anderson to accept the minutes of the December 11, 2003 Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Larson. Mr. Sutherland asked that the minutes be amended to change the language about The Nature Conservancy's "successes and failures, " to "successes and challenges." The minutes, as amended, were adopted by voice vote.

Dr. Anderson said that he felt it would be a good idea to have a presentation on control issues and the effects on the forest in CT.

Dr. Musgrave said that someone from UCONN could give a presentation on the issue of sterility in plants.

Presentations:

Mr. McGowan gave a presentation on Lake Waramaug. He explained the coordination and involvement of local boards and commissions as well as private non-profits. He also explained that originally they had pursued grant funding but at present they do all of their activities through private funds.

They have four areas that they are concentrating on. Education is the first way they are fighting invasives. They put up signs at the boat launch and at access points to the lake. They also do newsletters and run seminars to inform landowners of the threat to the lake. The second line of defense is Monitoring. They have a Lake Keeper who monitors activity in the Lake and looks for problems. They also work on Growth Suppression using filters that clarify the water. The fourth area is to use Boat Inspectors that look at every boat (and trailer) that goes in the lake.

From the Department of Environment Protection talked about efforts the Boating Safety people do to combat invasives. The manual for the mandatory boating safety course discusses the problem of aquatic invasives. They don't cover the issue of kayaks and canoes because the DEP does not register these boats. They also have a clean boater program that also covers aquatics as

well. Mr. McGowan suggested that maybe the DEP can assess an additional fee that could cover some of the expenses involved in fighting invasives, especially for education efforts (signs and such) and local efforts such as lake associations and municipalities.

Chairman Leff suggested the council further discuss the issue of cultivars that was discussed at the previous meeting. Mr. Larson noted that the green industries have a proposal for language on the invasive list.

Chairman Leff asked for specific species that the industry is most concerned with. Mr. Goodwin outlined the species as : Euonymus alatus, Rosa Rigosa, Ligustrum, Porcelain berry, Lonicera japonica, Acer ginnala, and Norway Maple. Mr. Goodwin's big concern is that to educate the public that certain species are invasive when in fact they may not be casts too large a net and could keep consumers away from perfectly safe plants. This damage would be irreversible. Dr. Mehrhoff expressed his appreciation for this concern but stressed once again that researching every single cultivar is impractical considering there are dozens and dozens of cultivars for some of the more popular plants available. They can't all be tested. Dr. Mehrhoff suggested that he will work on getting researchers in for a presentation on what goes into this research and why it is so impractical.

Mr. Sutherland expressed confusion over the sterility of these cultivars. He said that if these cultivars are not sterile then he can't understand why the council would even consider exemptions. Cultivars can be very similar to the original and shouldn't be assumed to be completely different than the original.

Dr. Musgrave expressed that she supports the idea of an explanatory text at the top of the list and that the council should seriously consider either the one from the green industry or Dr. Mehrhoff's. She is still concerned about the economic impact of this list because state agencies will be banned from using these plants. Chairman Leff said he agrees there will be economic impact but again stated that this is not to be considered for the invasive list.

Dr. Mehrhoff suggested that the council consider guidelines for how we could exempt cultivars if that is the direction the council wants to take.

Chairman Leff suggested that the council have subcommittee to look into the language for the explanatory text at the top of the list. Mr. Larson suggested that this subcommittee come up with two proposals that the council can then choose between. The subcommittee will consist of: Comm. Grescyk, Mr. Larson and Mr. Sutherland.

There was a motion by Mr. Sutherland to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Larson. The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emanuel Merisotis
Clerk- Environment Committee