

INVASIVE PLANT COUNCIL MEETING
Minutes of June 14, 2005

Draft: Subject to Council Review

Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Invasive Plants Council was held on Tuesday, June 14, 2005. David Leff, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. in the Ensign Conference Room of the Department of Environmental Protection on 79 Elm Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Attendees: Nine members of the Council were present: Mr. David K. Leff, Dr. Louis Magnarelli, Mr. David Goodwin, Mr. M. Philip Prelli, Mr. Paul Larson, Mr. Tom McGowan, Dr. Leslie J. Mehrhoff, Dr. Mary Musgrave and Mr. David Sutherland.
David introduced the new Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Mr. F. Philip Prelli. Also, introduced Ms. Nancy Cohen of CT Public Radio. The following organizations were represented at the meeting: CT Agricultural Experiment Station; CT Invasive Plants Working Group; and Audubon Society.

Absent: No Absences.

Minutes

Approved: Minutes of the May 10, 2005, meeting were read and approved with minor editorial changes. Dr. Magnarelli made a motion to accept the minutes; Mr. David Goodwin seconded the motion. Council unanimously voted in favor by voice vote with no opposing votes. Motion carried.

Legislative Update:

Mr. Thomas Tyler, Legislative Liaison from the Department of Environmental Protection addressed Council Members with regard to Senate Bill 590 on invasive plant species. The Bill ultimately failed in the House and now leaves the state with current law, which is a moratorium until October 1, 2005.

Mr. Heffernan stated that the Green Industries was unhappy the Bill did not pass.

Chairman Leff stated that the Bill would have also included the authority of the Commissioner of Agriculture and the Experiment Station to enforce the invasive plant laws and that has failed as well.

Council discussed at great lengths what they have learned from this year's legislative process and what they could do differently for the next legislative session. Next year, propose same piece of legislation. Work with lake associations and The Nature Conservancy. Need a unified game plan in place before legislation begins in 2006. Tom Tyler to provide one page deadlines to Council before 2006 legislative session.

Council members are encouraged to e-mail Chairman Leff about how to proceed and look at issues thoroughly before the Legislative Session commences.

**Aquatic
Invasive Plants:**

Mr. Greg Bugbee, from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station gave a presentation on the Experiment Station's work on Aquatic Invasive Plants. The presentation's primary focus was on the management of lakes and ponds. Discussion topics included:

- Lake/Pond Survey sent to every town to complete. To date, approximately 70 towns have replied to the survey.
- Types of Invasive Plant Species
- Aquatic Plant Management
- Out-reach Programs
- Publication – *A Guide to invasive Aquatic Plants in Connecticut*
- Workshops for the Public that live around the lake/ponds
- Development of a web page – All the work that has been done is posted on the web site: www.caes.state.ct.us/aquaticplants
- In the process of developing a database in cooperation with DEP's National Diversity Database with Nancy Murray. - Information on plants will be posted for the public's use.

A lengthy question and answer session with Council members followed the conclusion of Mr. Bugbee's presentation. Discussion Topics included:

- Non-Invasive Plant Management
- Pesticide Application
- Volunteer Program/Training for Individuals to Identify Invasive Plants in Lakes and Ponds (CAES held 3 workshops for volunteer training.)
- Aquatic Funding and Criteria/benchmarks for the Funding
- Request for signage at each Boat Launch indicating the types of Invasive Plants in a particular lake or pond for Public Awareness

Cultivars:

Mr. Wayne Mezitt from the State Massachusetts addressed the Council members on Massachusetts' strategies, research, legislation and funding efforts with regard to dealing with cultivars and invasive plants. There was a discussion about the Horticulture Research Institute, which has provided private funding to the State of Massachusetts for research on cultivars.

Chairman Leff thanked Mr. Mezitt for his presentation and asked him to stay and join the Council members in further discussion of cultivars.

Hand-Outs:

Chairman Leff gave handouts to the Council Members on invasive species – Parade Magazine article *Can They be Stopped?* Dr. Magnarelli supplied a list of the nursery dealer's, which will help in thinking of our funding sources in terms of determining a fee or assessment. A handbill was distributed about the public meetings for the CT aquatic nuisance

species working group plan. Updated Council membership list. A summary of management strategies that had been handed out previously by DEP Boating staff and deals with aquatic species that shows Maine and New Hampshire impose boating fees. DEP Draft Funding Request for invasive plant project meant for a discussion piece only.

New Business:

Meetings – No meetings scheduled for July and August. Meetings will be scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. at the DEP Headquarters, conference room to be determined. **Remaining meetings scheduled for 2005:**

- September 6, 2005
- October 11, 2005
- November 1, 2005
- December 13, 2005

Mr. Goodwin motioned to table the agenda item on funding and fees until the next Council meeting on Tuesday, September 6, 2005. The Council voted unanimously by voice vote. Motion carried.

Mr. McGowan personally thanked the CAES representatives for their presentation because it is very important to CT. Asked Chair if he could meet with CAES as a follow up on a regular basis. The Chair agreed to this.

The Council deemed it could be more effective if each member met individually with legislator leaders and lake associations.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.