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Invasive Plants Council
Tuesday, February 19, 2013
2 pm, Dept. of Agriculture
Conference Room 121
Hartford, CT

Council members present: Steve Anderson (for Katherine Winslow), Dave Goodwin, Bill Hyatt, Rich McAvoy, John Silander, David Sutherland, Jeff Ward, Katherine Winslow

Others present: Nancy Murray, Logan Senack

1. Hyatt called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

2. The minutes for the 12/11/12 meeting were reviewed.

Goodwin moved (second: McAvoy) to approve the minutes. The Council decided to approve the minutes as submitted. Ward abstained since he was not a member at the last meeting.

3. Annual report delivery

Senack reported that copies of the 2012 IPC Annual Report were delivered to the Environment Committee and other required offices on Dec. 11, 2012. As in previous years, the IPC Chair (Hyatt) sent letters to the Co-Chairs of the Env. Committee highlighting the report. The report is also available online at www.cipwg.uconn.edu in PDF format. The press release announcing the report was published by DEEP on Feb. 14. Next year, the Annual Report will be delivered mostly electronically, reducing the need for paper copies.

4. Bamboo concept bills

Hyatt reported that there are a few bills relating to bamboo being discussed by the Legislature, and that the Council's suggested legislation was delivered to the Environment Committee. If there are hearings relating to these bills, the Council may wish to submit testimony.

5. Status of Coordinator position funding

Goodwin asked about the status of the Coordinator funding for the next fiscal year. Sutherland reported that the funds specified for the position were combined with other funds into a single budget item in the Governor's proposed budget, but the new amount of the combined funds is less than the sum of the individual funds, and it is not clear which items would be reduced. Sutherland would like to meet with Commissioner Reviczky, Winslow, and others to find out the status of the funds. Winslow suggested Sutherland contact George Krivda (DoAg) directly.

6. Ongoing bamboo discussion

a. Review of NY procedure

Hyatt introduced a bamboo invasiveness analysis conducted by the Scientific Review Committee of the Long Island Invasive Species Management Area (LIISMA-SRC) in New York. The group examined *Phyllostachys aureosulcata* (yellow-groove bamboo) for invasiveness using its own criteria, and found that this species was not assessable because there was no conclusive evidence that the plants had moved from cultivated landscapes to natural areas. As in Connecticut's discussions on this species, the review did include a note that the vegetative spread of this species can cause significant impacts.

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b. Another potential site visit

Senack announced that homeowners continue to report cases of bamboo growing in the state. These reports are predominantly reports of planted stands in yards and gardens. There are one or two sites where there is the potential for the plants to have spread over larger distances, and Senack will collect more information about these locations. If a site visit is warranted, he will plan a site visit in the spring with others who may be interested.

7. Update on Coordinator Activities

a. Invasive plant walk project

Senack reported that he has coordinated with a number of organizations to develop an educational Invasive Plant Walk on DEEP property in the Town of Mansfield. The property has been overtaken by a number of invasive plants, and Senack is coordinating efforts to install a series of interpretive signs that identify and provide information about these plants. This project is scheduled to be installed on National Trails Day (June 1) with help from the CT Chapter of the Sierra Club. The Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (IPANE), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Town of Mansfield are also involved.

The designs for the trail signs will be retained and made available for other groups to use at other locations in the state. The walk will be named in honor of Les Mehrhoff, who formerly gave invasive plant tours and demonstrations at the Mansfield site. The costs of this project will be shared between the Coordinator funds and the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group. Senack noted that no invasive plants were planted at the site for the purposes of the walk; they were already present on the property.

b. Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) website revisions

Senack reported that updates to the CIPWG website were underway and a new website is expected to be launched prior to the next Invasive Plants Council meeting. Funding from UConn through Donna Ellis provided for the hiring of a student worker over winter break to assist in additional updates to the content management system of the website. The CIPWG website hosts the IPC materials and meeting minutes.

c. Connecticut Conference on Natural Resources (CCNR) presentations

Senack reported that several people will present information about invasive species at CCNR on March 18. Senack and IPANE's Dr. Stacey Leicht will present a 1-hour workshop about using online reporting with smartphones for the early detection of invasive plants. Silander added that one of his graduate students will give a presentation on urban invaders. Dr. Scott Williams from the CT Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) will present on the interaction of invasive plant control and deer browse on native and non-native plants.

8. Cultivar discussion and plan for moving forward

a. Review of NY procedure

Senack provided an introduction to New York's LIISMA's efforts to address invasive plants and cultivars. They have developed a draft cultivar assessment protocol. Hyatt reminded the group of previous IPC actions and provided copies of the letter from the Attorney General regarding cultivars from January 2008. He also redistributed DEEP's proposal from 2010 regarding the treatment of cultivars. Hyatt suggested that a cultivar subcommittee composed of Silander, Dr. Mark Brand, and Dr. John Volin could review what has been put together by

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the NY group in order to determine if it has merit and applicability in Connecticut. Hyatt stressed the need to resolve this issue for clarity regarding enforcement.

The group discussed the documents. Silander noted that the LIISMA group must have had financial resources available to enable the project and that their system is more quantitatively based than Connecticut's. Goodwin noted that examining cultivars of plants that are already banned would not be as important as looking at cultivars of plants that are on the invasive list but are not prohibited. Sutherland noted that only a few of the listed plants have cultivars. McAvoy asked where the burden of proof about the invasiveness of a cultivar should fall. Senack asked if it would be possible for a cultivar of a non-prohibited species to be taken off the invasive list if it was demonstrably sterile. The group discussed the potential development of a cultivar definition. Silander will take the lead in coordinating the cultivar subcommittee. Hyatt will also participate and Paul Larson will be asked to participate. Silander and Hyatt will speak in March about developing this plan further. Silander will report back at the June meeting.

Hyatt will call Winslow later in the week to discuss some developing federal legislation that may affect DoAg.

Winslow left the room at 3:27 pm and was replaced by Steve Anderson (DoAg).

9. Aquatic Nuisance Species update

Murray updated the group on the status of ANS efforts. Funding has been used to hire a part-time ANS coordinator. Murray distributed documents for the Council's information, including documents about mitten crabs, hydrilla, and zebra mussels. Murray has asked Bob Heffernan to provide feedback on one public education document about water gardens. The new hire, Maura Robie, is developing a table-top display about invasive aquatics and the importance of cleaning boats and equipment. Nancy Balcom and Maura Robie prepared a Hazard Analysis-Critical Control Point Evaluation document on mechanical harvesting and suction harvesting. Murray may invite Robie and Balcom to a future meeting.

10. Inspection plan for 2013

Hyatt reminded the group that DoAg, CAES, and DEEP should coordinate regarding inspections for the upcoming 2013 year.

11. Old/New Business

a. McGowan request for invasive plant spread report

Hyatt reminded the group that McGowan asked if it would be possible to obtain an annual report detailing the spread of invasives to new areas in Connecticut. The report could help to illustrate how various species are moving throughout the state. Hyatt will follow up with the National Invasive Species Council about this issue. IPANE and CAES may also have some relevant data. Observations about aquatic plant distribution may be more prevalent than for terrestrial plants. Greg Bugbee (CAES) may have some information available in a report.

b. Federal invasive species legislation update

Hyatt reported on two proposals for funding invasive plant activities at the federal level. One proposal, by the Healthy Habitats Coalition, would request \$1.4 billion per year for 20 years for invasive species control, but 80% of the funds would be required to be used by the federal

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government on federal lands. The funds could be used for species in terrestrial and aquatic environments and would not be limited to plants. A second proposal titled “The Invasive Fish and Wildlife Prevention Act of 2012” contains assorted mandates and legal changes but no funding. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) is seeking funding to build a collaborative effort to coordinate with government and industry in order to pool similar proposals and build consensus. The effort to garner funds to establish these first steps has received approval from all states Virginia to Maine.

Murray noted that last year the ANS program received only \$22,000 in funding from the federal government and will receive even less support this year. The group discussed the problems associated with limited funding for invasive plant actions.

c. Invasive Species Awareness Week in DC

Hyatt plans to attend events occurring during National Invasive Species Awareness Week in Washington, D.C. These events will provide an opportunity to coordinate on many invasive species issues. Senack may also attend for a portion of the conference.

d. Sportsmen’s Caucus presentation

Hyatt was asked to participate in an invasive species presentation and briefing for the Sportsmen’s Caucus. The meeting was originally scheduled for Feb. 14, but was postponed and a new date has not yet been determined. A representative from the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus in DC has the primary responsibility of organizing the event.

e. The Council decided that it will meet next on June 11 and will not meet in March.

f. Sutherland reported that he has been asked to speak at a session about invasive species policy in Connecticut at the New Issues in Environmental Law Conference at Yale University on March 2.

g. Ward distributed a booklet that was produced by CAES and UConn discussing the relationship between Japanese barberry and ticks. The document is also available online.

h. Senack will contact George Knoecklien to invite him to present at the June 11 meeting.

i. Hyatt reported that residents of the area around Candlewood Lake have become very engaged in invasive species issues. They are concerned about zebra mussels in the Lake and the spread of zebra mussels via the Housatonic River. There is interest in a boat sticker program, a registration charge to boats, or funds redirected in order to fund ANS actions, such as education or research. Hyatt would like to meet with Jim McAllister, a resident who contacted Hyatt about this issue, as this may be a potential opportunity to engage new groups. Hyatt will share the meeting information so that people have notice to attend.

12. Sutherland moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 3:59 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2013, 2-4 pm, in room G8-A at the Department of Agriculture building in Hartford, CT.