

## INVASIVE PLANT COUNCIL MEETING

**Minutes of February 15, 2005**

**Regular Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Invasive Plants Council was held on Tuesday, February 15, 2005. David Leff, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. in the Ensign Conference Room of the Department of Environmental Protection on 79 Elm Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

**Present:** Nine members of the Council were present: Dr. Louis Magnarelli, Mr. David Goodwin, Mr. Bruce Gresczyk, Mr. Paul Larson, Mr. David K. Leff, Mr. Tom McGowan, Dr. Leslie J. Mehrhoff, Dr. Mary Musgrave and Mr. David Sutherland.

**Absent:** No Absences

### **Minutes**

**Approved:** Minutes of the January 18 meeting were read and approved with minor corrections. Mr. Paul Larson made a motion to accept the minutes; the motion was seconded. Council was in favor with no opposing votes. Motion carried.

### **Report of**

**The Chairman:** Chairman stated to Council members that he would like to proceed with agenda item number seven and number five due to the possibility of his early departure from the Council meeting to attend a meeting with DEP Commissioner McCarthy at 3 p.m. Council members agreed.

Second Annual Invasive Plants Council Report was distributed to Council members.

### **Old/New**

**Business:** Senator Stillman granted the time of Susan Driscoll, Clerk of the Environment Committee, to take the minutes for the Council's meetings.

Chairman reported to the Council what the potential cost would be to create an invasive plants pamphlet like the Pennsylvania brochure.

| <u>QTY.</u> | <u>#100 Dull</u> | <u># 100 Gloss</u> |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1000        | \$775.           | \$770.             |
| 5000        | \$1120.          | \$1115.            |

10,000

\$1545.

\$1135.

No decision on producing the pamphlets was made.

Chairman Leff discussed his desire to testify on two proposed bills referred to the Environment Committee, an Act concerning eradication efforts for invasive plant species and an Act concerning a ban on the sale of Brazilian Eldea. Chairman Leff commented that this opportunity would also be used as a springboard to explain to the Environment Committee what the Council is doing and that it does exist. Much discussion took place on what would be discussed and presented to the Environment Committee. Dr. Mehrhoff will provide Chairman Leff a write-up on Phragmites for his testimony.

**Boating Fees:** Ms. Eleanor Mariani, Director of the DEP Boating Division, addressed the Council and gave a summary of Maine and New Hampshire's invasive species management strategies through boating fees. Ms. Mariani explained in detail how Maine and New Hampshire are in the front running for collecting boating fees annually and how they structured their fee schedules. Maine assesses boating fees through a Lake and River Protection Sticker Program. New Hampshire assesses its fees through boater registration. She discussed how the revenue is used and penalties are handled for each state.

Dr. Mehrhoff questioned if New Hampshire's lake monitoring program was funded through this program. Ms. Mariani will verify with New Hampshire.

Chairman Leff addressed Council and they discussed in detail how this strategy would benefit Connecticut. A lengthy discussion took place on a variety of aspects of dealing with many issue surrounding the boating fees and the boating community. Much emphasis was put on how Connecticut should collect fees and whether it would include both inland and marine vessels. Ms. Mariani offered to have DEP staff hand out brochures on clean lakes as an educational outreach to boaters.

Mr. McGowan made a motion to have the legislature consider acting on a boating fee to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species similar to Maine and New Hampshire. The motion was seconded. Setting a \$5.00 fee increase to boaters through boater registration was up for discussion. Council agreed to the \$5.00 fee and the Chairman asked for a vote. All members were in favor with no opposing votes. Motion carried. Chairman Leff will contact Mr. Grant Westerson from the Connecticut Marine Trades Association to alert him of the decision.

**Plant Parts:** Mr. Robert V. Heffernan, Executive Secretary, from the Connecticut Nursery & Landscape Association was invited by the Council to act as a resource expert with regard to the topic of using plant parts from banned plants. Mr. Heffernan discussed four specific plant species with the Council and their impact to the environment.

- Oriental bittersweet
- Phragmites -
- Purple loosestrife
- Star-of-Bethlehem

A discussion by the Council followed with regard to each species and the threat each species has on Connecticut's environment and the use of these plants by the florist industry verses the public. Mr. Heffernan stated that Bittersweet was used more commonly by the public and less by florists. Mr. Heffernan stated that public education is the biggest problem with bittersweet. Star-of-Bethlehem was not considered a big problem due to the way it was used by the florist industry. Council discussed the use of bittersweet by the florist industry and the seed longevity. Each plant was discussed in detail with regard to the viability of the seeds germinating. Dr. Mehrhoff said he will talk to experts about germination of Phragmites.

Chairman Leff turned the meeting over to Dr. Magnarelli at 2:50 p.m.

Mr. Heffernan and the Council members concluded their discussion on plant parts with a discussion of the florist industries process of freeze-drying plants.

Dr. Magnarelli asked Council members if there were any further comments. Hearing none, Dr. Magnarelli moved to the next item on the agenda.

**New/Old  
Business:**

Dr. Mehrhoff addressed the Council with a name change from *Phragmites australis* to subsp. *Phragmites australis*.

Dr. Mehrhoff stated to Council that the Connecticut Invasive Work Group Steering Committee will be attending the Hartford Flower Show, which is scheduled soon. The Steering Committee would like to make copies of the official list of banned plants for their exhibit. The Steering Committee would also like to suggest to Council Members to have DEP, Agriculture and the Agricultural Experiment Station supply lists of banned plants to all essential and current groups and the legislation. Discussion of this mailing was heard and Mr. Heffernan and Commissioner Gresczyk agreed to mail the Invasive

Species Ban List and the legislation out to concerned groups. Mr. Heffernan agreed to mail to Green Industry organizations and Commissioner Gresczyk to seed, feed and fertilizer groups. Dr. Mehrhoff will put together a statement on behalf of the Council and Agriculture and the Agricultural Experiment Station and distribute it to the various organizations

Dr. Mehrhoff reminded the Council that an invitation from the Peabody Museum for a Council meeting was still open along with a tour of the invasive species exhibit. Council decided to wait until after the legislative session was over to hold a Council meeting at the museum.

Paul Larson made a motion to change the schedule for the Council's April meeting; the motion was seconded. Discussion by Council members to put April's agenda items off until May unless Chairman Leff would like to add them to the March meeting. All Council members were in favor with no opposing votes.

Dr. Magnarelli asked if there were any other comments. Hearing none, Mr. McGowan motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and all members were in favor with no opposing votes. Motion carried.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Lynn M. Tobin  
Department of Environmental Protection