

CT Invasive Plants Council
Tuesday, September 8, 2009
2 pm, Valley Laboratory
Windsor, CT

Council members present: Mary Musgrave, Bill Hyatt, David Goodwin, Lou Magnarelli, Philip Prelli, Les Mehrhoff, Paul Larson, Tom McGowan

Others present: Donna Ellis, Logan Senack, Nancy Murray, Jason Vokoun, Nicholas Reif

1. Musgrave called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm.

2. The minutes for the 4/14/09 meeting were reviewed. A misspelled word (“*rugosa*”) in section 5, page 3 was noted. Hyatt moved (Mehrhoff seconded) to approve the minutes with the error corrected. **The Council decided to approve the minutes.**

Paul Larson arrived at 2:07 pm.

3. Legislative Recap

a. Hyatt reported that an amendment to the Invasive Plant Cooperative Agreement between UConn and DEP has extended the agreement through June 30, 2010. DEP and UConn worked quickly to extend the agreement before the deadline passed.

b. The group discussed the current state of invasive plant work at DEP, since the \$500,000/yr in funding for invasive plant work at DEP has been removed from the newly passed state budget. Hyatt reported that extending activity on invasive plants is not likely at this time. Magnarelli reminded the group that he and Sutherland sent a letter to DEP when the funding was first awarded, urging DEP to spend the appropriated money quickly, and noted that the lack of action and use of the funds may have contributed to the loss of funds for the program, especially after the Grants to Municipalities Program was cancelled with no funds being spent. Murray reported that the agreements with the municipalities for that program were almost completed and ready to be sent out, but that they could not get signed once the CT budget situation deteriorated. Hyatt reported that once the Request For Proposals (RFP) for the Grants to Municipalities Program went out, the funds were supposed to remain with DEP, but they were swept as the budget situation worsened.

c. Prelli reported that the operating budget for the Department of Agriculture will be decreased by 60%, which may necessitate reducing or changing the process of inspections for invasive aquatics in pet stores.

Tom McGowan arrived at 2:20 pm.

4. DEP Updates

Hyatt provided several updates to the group regarding other invasives activities at DEP.

a. Water Chestnut:

DEP is continuing work on the control of Water Chestnut in drainage areas of the Connecticut River. Work this year was impeded by high flows, but Water Chestnut was removed from all but 2 sites. Fewer plants were reported this year than in any other preceding year, continuing the trend of lower plant populations over time in controlled areas. DEP continues to locate and remove plants from the Still River, Lake Lillinonah, the Housatonic River watershed area, and the Hartford Flood Control Ponds on the Connecticut River (DEP is following up on previous chemical treatment at this location).

b. Phragmites:

DEP is continuing work on 2 large Phragmites projects in Groton and Sharon, funded by WHIP grants, in addition to currently ongoing Phragmites control work elsewhere.

c. Supplemental Environmental Projects Fund:

Hyatt reported that the SEP account can be used for invasive species control work, especially for the rapid response to new invasions of invasive species. DEP is currently considering using funds from this account to fund the top three invasive species control proposals from the Grants to Municipalities Program that was cancelled earlier in the year. A Water Chestnut control project may also be funded by this account.

d. Miscellaneous:

- A grant from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for \$42,000 that was formerly to be used to hire staff will now be used to fund the Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) cooperative agreement between DEP and the Institute of Water Resources at UConn.

- The issue of enforcement of the invasive species law at DEP is still unresolved. Murray has not been trained to do civil enforcement of the invasive species law, but will hopefully be trained in the near future.

- Murray reported that Ken Metzler (DEP Ecologist) has retired. As a result, Murray is working on some of his projects, but is currently spending 60-70% of her time on invasives.

- Hyatt reminded the group that the Bureau of Natural Resources considers three issues main priorities. They are:

1. Loss of habitat due to development
2. Invasive species and associated ecological effects
3. Diminishment and loss of core constituency due to loss of hunters and anglers

- Hyatt introduced scientists from the UConn Department of Natural Resources and the Environment to provide an update to the group on the status of *Hydrilla verticillata* research and control in CT. Dr. Jason Vokoun (Associate Professor) and Nicholas Reif (Masters student) delivered a presentation titled “*Evaluating Multiple Control Methods: Hydrilla Verticillata in the Silvermine River System*”. After the presentation, those present were able to ask questions and discuss the presentation with Dr. Vokoun and Reif. Vokoun

and Reif thanked the Council for inviting them, and Musgrave thanked Vokoun and Reif for their presentation.

5. Invasive Plant Coordinator Update

Senack provided the group with an update on his activities over the summer, including the results of a campaign asking the public to help search for and report mile-a-minute vine in Connecticut. Senack reported that increased media coverage and sustained publicity had generated a high volume of responses from the public. A joint press release from DEP and UConn, along with other mile-a-minute activities, resulted in 7 CT newsletter, magazine, and other non-daily periodical sources publishing information about mile-a-minute vine, at least 28 CT newspaper articles about mile-a-minute vine, and 3 television news stories on 3 separate news networks. Senack has worked with Donna Ellis at UConn and with state and town staff, volunteers, and non-profit gardening organizations to distribute 8,200 postcards, 430 flyers, and 250 posters about mile-a-minute to businesses, residents, and the general public at various events in Connecticut. The increased attention has resulted in over 238 reports of suspected mile-a-minute populations from members of the public in CT. Most of the reports are negative (other species confused with mile-a-minute), but several new populations and three populations in new towns have been found using this system.

6. International Symposium on invasive plants update

An International Symposium on invasive plants examining the exchange of invasive species between the northeastern United States and northeastern Asia took place at UConn in August. Musgrave reported that the symposium went well and that an international collaborative working group was set up as a result of the event.

7. Invasives List review and next steps*

Mehrhoff provided the group with an updated list of species he would like to discuss. Mehrhoff stressed that he is not proposing banning any of the species on the list at this time.

Mehrhoff also requested that the group consider the issue of selecting a defined source of reference for invasive plant nomenclature, as species names can change over time, leading to confusion as to which name should be used. Additionally, Mehrhoff requested that the group discuss issues which arise when non-invasive and invasive plants share common (but not scientific) names.

Mehrhoff will prepare more detailed information about the first 8 species on his list for the October meeting.

Prelli left the meeting at 3:41.

8. Meeting frequency discussion, goals for remainder of the year

The Council discussed plans for the remainder of the year and for preparing the Annual Report. The Council is only required to meet twice per year but agreed to continue to meet monthly to prepare the annual report and to discuss the update to the invasive species list.

9. Chairman succession and nominating committee

Musgrave reported that it is time for the Council to find a new Chairman since she has chaired meetings for the past two years. Musgrave requested that Larson and Sutherland work on the nominating committee and prepare suggestions for the October meeting.

10. Other old or new business

Mehrhoff asked that the Council consider adopting a formal definition of “species”. Mehrhoff feels that a clearer definition of “species” is needed.

Murray reported to the group that a plant labeled “*Myriophyllum propium*” has been made available at some CT stores for use in water gardens. The species *M. propium* does not appear in any of the scientific literature and the actual species of the plants for sale is unknown. Research at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) indicated that the plants are not mislabeled *Myriophyllum aquaticum*, but the species appears very similar and may be equally aggressive. *M. propium* does not appear on any state list, so as a precaution CAES has put out an advisory suggesting the plant not be purchased until more information can be obtained.

Musgrave reported that there is a definite downside to having cultivars automatically included in a species ban. The blanket banning of Barberry and Winged Euonymus by Massachusetts and other states has made it more difficult to get grant funding from USDA for the development of sterile cultivars of these species. Musgrave also reported that USDA is reluctant to fund research on these species now because all cultivars are automatically banned in some states, making the marketing of future sterile cultivars problematic.

Ellis noted that one of the deliverables of the Invasive Plant Cooperative Agreement between DEP and UConn is that Senack will provide recommendations on inspections based on reports from CAES invasive plant inspections. Ellis expressed concern that to date Senack has not received enough information from the reports to make recommendations.

McGowan requested that the Council discuss at a future meeting a new Minnesota/Wisconsin law requiring boaters to inspect boats before leaving a boat launch and again before boats enter a new body of water. Additionally, McGowan requested that the council discuss and make recommendations about differences between town and state level ordinances for boats and boat launches, and that the IPC consider taking action to assist/support towns drafting their own ordinances for invasive plant prevention on a larger statewide level.

11. Next meeting: Tuesday Oct. 13, 2009, 2pm Valley Lab, Windsor, CT

12. Adjournment: Goodwin moved (McGowan seconded) to adjourn at 4:06 pm. The Council decided to adjourn the meeting.

Comments on the Connecticut list of Invasive and Potentially Invasive Plants

Les Mehrhoff

14 APR 2009 (rev. 8 SEP 2009)

Raise from Potentially Invasive to Invasive:

| | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| <i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i> | Porcelainberry | Vitaceae |
| <i>Bromus tectorum</i> | Drooping brome-grass | Poaceae |
| <i>Froelichia gracilis</i> | Slender snake cotton | Amaranthaceae |
| <i>Polygonum cespitosum</i> | Bristled knotweed | Polygonaceae |
| <i>Rubus phoenicolasias</i> | Wineberry | Rosaceae |

Drop??:

| | | |
|--|------------------|--------------|
| <i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i> | Russian olive | Elaeagnaceae |
| (does not usually escape; similarity; common name problem) | | |
| <i>Glyceria maxima</i> | Reed manna grass | Poaceae |
| (voucher specimen at CONN can't be located. Duplicate of this has been tentatively Identified by grass specialist from Canada, Stephen Darbyshire, as hybrid. | | |
| <i>Rosa rugosa</i> | Rugosa rose | Rosaceae |
| (problem only near the coast) | | |

Keep:

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Tussilago farfara</i> | Coltsfoot | Asteraceae |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|

Add as Potentially Invasive??:

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Glossostigma cleistanthum</i> | Mudmat | Scrophulariaceae |
| <i>Oplismenus hirtellus</i> | | Poaceae |
| subsp. <i>undulatifolius</i> | Wavyleaf basket grass | |
| <i>Phellodendron amurense</i> s. l. | Amur cork tree | Rutaceae |
| <i>Pyrus calleryana</i> | Callery pear; Bradford Pear | Rosaceae |

Questions on distribution and/or status in CT:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Actinidia arguta</i> | Hardy kiwi, Tara vine | Actinidiaceae |
| <i>Akebia quinata</i> | Fiveleaved akebia, Chocolate vine | Lardizabalaceae |
| <i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i> | Amur silvergrass | Poaceae |
| <i>Rhodotypos scandens</i> | Jetbead | Rosaceae |
| <i>Symplocos paniculata</i> | Sapphire-berry | Symplocaceae |
| <i>Syringa reticulata</i> | Japanese tree lilac | Oleaceae |

Nomenclature issue – do we need a policy about our nomenclatural standard?:

Polygonum vs. *Persicaria*, *Fallopia*
Glossostigma diandrum vs. *G. cleistanthum*

Common name use problem:

Star of Bethlehem (*Onithogalum umbellatum* vs. *Ornithogalum* 'Bethlehem')

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