

**Invasive Plants Council
Minutes
April 16, 2004**

Present: Dr. Anderson, Mr. Goodwin, Comm. Gresczyk, Mr. Larson, Comm. Leff , Dr. Mehrhoff, Dr. Musgrave, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. McGowan

Absent:

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 PM by Chairman Leff.

There was a motion by Mr. Goodwin to approve the minutes of March 23, 2004. The motion was seconded by Dr. Anderson. Mr. Larson wanted to note that Mark Sellow is from Pride's Corner Farms in Lebanon. He also noted that his statement about the industry needing 3-5 years lead time was for woody plants not for trees, this would need even longer. The minutes of March 23rd were adopted, as amended, by a voice vote.

There was a motion by Mr. Larson to adopt the minutes of March 31, 2004. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goodwin. Chairman Leff asked that the second sentence in the last paragraph of page 1 be deleted. Mr. Larson noted that the term in the 5th paragraph "invasive plant" should be "non-invasive cultivar." The minutes of March 31st were adopted, as amended, by a voice vote.

Chairman Leff noted that there was a motion "on the table," from the last meeting. Mr. Larson said that he felt it would be more appropriate to start from scratch and distributed a new written motion. The motion was seconded by Comm. Gresczyk. The motion was (what follows is the final version of the motion):

I present the following motion:

I move that the Connecticut Invasive Plants Council recommend to the Environment Committee of the legislature that the following species of plants be added to the existing list of seven species of plants already banned in Connecticut.

Centaurea biebersteinii
Cirsium arvense
Cynanchum lousieae
Cynanchum rossicum
Datura stramonium
Elsholtzia ciliata
Euphorbia cyparissias
Euphorbia esula
Froelichia gracilis
Glechoma hederacea
Heracleum mantegazzianum
Hesperis matronalis
Humulus japonicus
Impatiens glandulifera
Acer pseudoplatanus Kochia scoparia
Ailanthus altissima Lepidium latifolium

Paulownia tomentosa Lychnis flos-cuculi
Populus alba Lysimachia vulgaris
Amorpha fruticosa Onopordum acanthium
Berberis vulgaris Polygonum caespitosum
Eleagnus angustifolia Polygonum cuspidatum
Eleagnus umbellata Polygonum perfoliatum
Ligustrum obtusifolium Polygonum sachalinense
Lonicera x bella Ranunculus ficaria
Lonicera maackii Rumex acetosella
Lonicera morrowii Senecio jacobaea
Lonicera tatarica Silphium perfoliatum
Lonicera xylosteum Solanum dulcamara
Rhamnus cathartica Tussilago farfara
Rosa multiflora Valeriana officinalis
Rubus phoenicolasius Arthraxon hispidus
Celastrus orbiculatus Bromus tectorum
Lonicera japonica Carex kobomugi
Pueraria montana Glyceria maxima
Aegopodium podagraia Microstegium vimineum
Alliaria petiolata Phragmites arundinacea
Cardamine impatiens Poa compressa

The adoption of this recommendation will bring the total number of species of plants banned in Connecticut to eighty-one. Eight of these species are currently present in the nursery trade and an immediate ban would have a significant adverse economic effect on nurseries within the state. Because of this, the effective date of this ban for the following eight species would be October 1, 2005.

Lonicera tatarica Ligustrum obtusifolium
Lonicera xylosteum Aegopodium podagraria
Lonicera japonica Lysimachia vulgaris

The remaining plants on the list in this motion would be banned effective October 1, 2004.

In addition to the recommendation for banning additional species of plants, it is recommended that the municipal preemption in Sec. 8., paragraph (b.) be extended to October 1, 2005.

Continued efforts by the Council in the future months could then be focused on the remaining fifteen species on the state list of Invasive Plants which have not yet been fully addressed by the Invasive Plants Council. Also to be addressed would be public education efforts on invasive plants.

It is also recommended that the wording of Sec. 8., paragraph (a.) in the existing law, P.A. No. 03-136, be amended such that the word “move” is replaced with the word “transplant”, and the word “possess” be deleted from the text.

Paul C. Larson
(860) 974-0045
April 15, 2004

Dr. Mehrhoff asked what plants are on the list that are currently in the “trade.” Mr. Larson responded that the eight plants outlined as needing a phase in.

Commissioner Leff suggested removing the names of aquatic plants from the motion because the council had already recommended these plants to be banned. (This was done in the final version of the motion.)

Mr. Sutherland stated that he would be voting against the motion. He said that it seems as if the council is taking a step backwards from the discussions they had a few meetings ago. He was under the understanding that there would be only 7 exempted plants and that total has grown to 15. He also noted the amount of time and money The Nature Conservancy has spent on dealing with this problem. (\$1.75 million)

Chairman Leff noted that P.A. 03-136 says that the council may consider sales impact and clean up.

Mr. Goodwin cited a report that states that some cultivars are non-invasive. Dr. Mehrhoff says that he read the report differently. Just one cultivar is said to be non-invasive not the other and the report clearly states that the species is invasive.

Dr. Mehrhoff asked if there is more research being done than he is aware of that would show progress in the next two years.

Dr. Musgrave expressed concern that being “under the gun” from the Environment Committee has changed the focus of the council. She will support the motion and hopes that the council will return to more thoughtful discussions on the remaining plants.

Comm. Gresczyk stated that he believes in the work of the council and that the council’s work should continue after the passing of this motion. He also stated that he supports the motion.

Mr. Larson said that he agrees with Dr. Musgrave. He feels that this list represents the low hanging fruit and that the rest of the “fruit” are open to discussion.

Mr. McGowan wanted to make sure that there was language in the motion to state that the council would be considering the rest of the plants. (This language is in the final motion.)

Mr. Goodwin said that the council will continue its work.

Dr. Mehrhoff stated that he is less convinced than others about the amount of research being done. He wants to know what will the industry commit to if research says that cultivars are invasive?

Chairman Leff asked if Mr. Larson would be willing to change his motion to ask for only a 1 year extension on the pre-emption. Mr. Larson said that he doesn’t think this will change votes and he doesn’t want to go through the process of getting an extension next year.

Chairman Leff stated that the council has worked well so far but that a deadline will provide the incentive for the council to continue to work hard. Chairman Leff also stated that he feels the

Council should think more about the tax issue. Such a tax could support a fund that could support efforts at the Agricultural Experiment Station, help with preventing new invasions, and fund eradication efforts among other things.

Mr. Sutherland stated that he hopes the council will continue and that they don't submit to pressure.

Dr. Anderson questioned why Mr. Sutherland could not support this motion as a start with the understanding that the council will revisit the other plants. Mr. Sutherland said that the extension of the pre-emption was a major problem for him. Mr. Larson noted that Mr. Sutherland wouldn't support the motion if they changed it to 1 year extension.

Mr. Larson agreed that the motion should be changed to include language regarding the council's intention to revisit the remaining 15 plants.

Dr. Mehrhoff asked why not add language that if research shows other plants are invasive then they should be banned. Mr. Larson says that future decisions will be based on future information, we can't make that decision now. Mr. Larson pointed out that no doors are being shut at this point, everything is still up for discussion.

Chairman Leff stated that his personal opinion is that it is better to get half a loaf than none at all. This motion will be good progress. He feels that banning all of them would be an ideal solution but it just won't happen. These invasions did not happen overnight and the solutions won't happen overnight either.

Dr. Mehrhoff stated that he couldn't support the list part of the motion.

Mr. Goodwin stated that he felt this motion was a good first step.

Mr. Larson proposed an amendment to delete the plants that were already recommended and change the deadline for pre-emption to October 1, 2005. (This language is in the motion provided above.) The motion was seconded by Comm. Gresczyk and adopted by voice vote.

The original motion (as moved by Mr. Larson and seconded by Comm. Gresczyk) passed on a 7-2 roll call vote with Mr. Sutherland and Dr. Mehrhoff voting no.

Mr. Sutherland distributed information on the work that The Nature Conservancy has done to combat invasive plants recently.

Chairman Leff noted that he received a letter about an upcoming event by the Invasive Plant Working Group to take place in October.

Chairman Leff stressed that the industry should really consider the idea of a tax. Comm. Gresczyk noted that agriculture makes up for 10% of the land in CT. Any work that the Council could do to develop eradication methods would be a great help. Mr. Larson said that it was his hope that the council spend more time on investigating education issues and developing an education strategy.

The next meeting of the Council was set for June 21, 2004 at 10:30 at a location TBD.

Rep. Widlitz (Co-Chair of the Environment Committee) thanked the Council for their hard work and dedication.

There was a motion by Comm. Gresczyk to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goodwin. The meeting was adjourned at 2:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emanuel Merisotis
Clerk- Environment Committee