

## MINUTES

Invasive Plants Council  
Tuesday, March 13, 2012  
2 pm, Dept. of Agriculture  
Conference Room G8-A  
Hartford, CT

**Council members present:** Bill Hyatt, Paul Larson, Lou Magnarelli, Rich McAvoy, John Silander, David Sutherland, Katherine Winslow

**Others present:** Donna Ellis, Nancy Murray, Logan Senack, Dick Shaffer, Penni Sharp

**1. Hyatt called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.**

**2. The minutes for the 2/14/12 meeting were reviewed.**

A typographical error was noted and corrected. Magnarelli moved (second: Silander) to approve the minutes as corrected. **The Council decided to approve the minutes as corrected.**

**3. Status of legislative update and bill**

**a. Copies of House Bill 5413**

Senack distributed copies of H.B. 5413, “An Act Concerning Invasive Plants” to the group.

Hyatt noted that DEEP had been asked for some additional information about the bill and added that it was important to clarify to all involved that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) does not have funds in its budget to support the coordinator position in the next fiscal year. The only way DEEP was able to provide temporary, short-term funding support in past years was by using end-of-the-year funding from unfilled vacancies; those vacancies have been eliminated and budgets reduced such that there are no funds at DEEP that can be used for this position.

Hyatt added that the University of Connecticut College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UConn) is the appropriate place for the coordinator position, considering the strong and important focus of the coordinator on outreach efforts and public education. Additionally, Hyatt clarified that it was his understanding that UConn did not have any money available for this purpose either. Funding always had come through DEEP in past years, either from legislatively-designated Invasive Plants Council funds or from DEEP end-of-the-year monies, so direct funding allocated by the legislature to UConn is necessary. The group agreed that UConn is the appropriate place for the Coordinator position and discussed the funding issue further.

*Paul Larson arrived at 2:12 pm.*

**b. Organizations providing testimony**

Hyatt reported that DEEP has prepared testimony in support of this bill, but it is not certain whether it will be submitted.

Larson reported that the Connecticut Nursery and Landscape Association (CNLA) planned to submit testimony in support of the bill. McAvoy, Silander, and Winslow reported that their organizations may also submit testimony. Ellis reported that the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) may submit testimony pending approval through UConn. Sharp added that the Connecticut Botanical Society and/or the Connecticut Association of Wetland Scientists may submit testimony, and Murray reported that the Connecticut Department of Transportation may also submit testimony. A number of other organizations are considering submitting testimony.

The group discussed the direction the bill would take if it passed in the Environment Committee. Magnarelli highlighted the need for constituent involvement and Appropriations Committee support if the bill was going to pass.

**c. Review of testimony: key points to make**

The group discussed the draft Invasive Plants Council testimony and proposed changes and edits. The importance of prevention activities, early detection, and the costs associated with species invasion were emphasized. Senack will incorporate the changes and redistribute to the group. The group discussed the importance of having someone deliver the testimony in person, if possible.

Silander added that states like Montana, with a population much smaller than that of Connecticut, spend millions of dollars per year on prevention efforts (excluding control, management or outreach efforts on invasives). Murray reported that the Aquatic Nuisance Species groups she corresponds with in other states have also reported that they spend much more than Connecticut does on invasive plant issues.

**4. Handout for legislators and other interested parties**

**- Review draft developed from PowerPoint**

The group discussed the need to provide additional information to the legislature and others regarding invasive plants, the Council, and the importance of the coordinator position. The group discussed a summary handout prepared after discussion at the February meeting. Senack will re-distribute the revised copy to the group. The group discussed submitting the handout as an attachment with the testimony and decided to include the attachment. Magnarelli reminded the group of the need to keep the testimony short and to the point.

**5. Old/New Business**

**a. Press release for annual report released**

The press release regarding the Invasive Plants Council 2011 annual report has been released via DEEP. Senack distributed copies of the press release. The story was included in some local newspapers and was posted on the DEEP website. The press release will also be posted on the CIPWG website.

**b. Coordination with Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (IPANE)**

Silander reported that IPANE was preparing at least one spring training session on invasive plants in Connecticut. Silander asked if Senack would be able to assist with this effort. Senack will contact IPANE staffer Sarah Treanor to discuss possible training sessions on IPANE, Connecticut early detection species, and reporting species using the Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System ([www.EDDMapS.org](http://www.EDDMapS.org)).

**c. Letterhead developed**

Senack incorporated the comments from the discussion on the letterhead at the last meeting and shared the revised letterhead with the group. Based on comments from the group, Senack will modify the letterhead with the CIPWG/Invasive Plants Council website link, the Coordinator's contact information and customizable fields to allow members to edit the letterhead as needed.

**d. Water chestnut in eastern CT update**

Murray provided an update on the new population of water chestnut found in a lake in eastern CT. She will be contacting the landowners around two other lakes near the lake with water chestnut. In addition, she plans to get volunteers to do a pulling party and will work with people from Joshua's Trust to hold a meeting to organize this. Murray reported that there will also be surveys of other nearby water bodies.

**e. Status of bamboo legislation**

Senack distributed copies of the Invasive Plants Council testimony provided on H.B. 5122, "An Act Regulating the Growth and Sale of Bamboo". Hyatt noted that the Invasive Plants Council did not initially plan to submit testimony on this bill, but reported that Representative Len Greene specifically requested that the Council provide information about its actions regarding bamboo.

Murray reported that she did receive a response from Dr. Lynn Clark (Iowa State University); the samples submitted were not identifiable to species. Murray also reported that Dr. Melissa Smith (Washington State University) had changed her travel plans and would not be visiting Connecticut to collect samples, but that samples could still be submitted via mail for DNA analysis.

**f. Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) representative**

Magnarelli announced that Dr. Jeff Ward would be representing CAES on the Council after the end of the year. Major construction projects at a number of CAES facilities and other duties will not permit Magnarelli to attend regular meetings, but he will still be actively interested in the activities of the Council.

*Sutherland arrived at 3:16 pm.*

**g. Delivery of testimony at March 16 hearing**

Sutherland reported that he may or may not be able to speak on behalf of the Council to provide testimony in support of H.B. 5413. He suggested another Council member deliver testimony.

**h. Other issues**

- Senack will work with DEEP staff to find out when votes on H.B. 5413 are occurring and will notify the Council as soon as possible.

- The group discussed whether the local garden clubs might be interested in submitting testimony and the need for the bill to have broad support in the legislature. The group noted that several legislators had been supportive of invasive plant issues in the past, and that the Grants to Municipalities for the Control of Invasive Plants Program offered by

DEEP in 2008/2009 had received \$978,903 in funding requests, with \$631,334 offered by municipalities in matching funds, when only \$175,000 was available. Of the 10 projects proposed for funding, only 3 were able to be funded due to the funding loss associated with the deteriorating economy.

- Hyatt reported that an email had just been received from Tom McGowan indicating that Larry Marsicano would be submitting testimony on behalf of the CT Federation of Lakes, and may be appearing in person to deliver the testimony at the hearing.

## **6. Adjournment**

Sutherland moved (second: Winslow) to adjourn the meeting. **The Council decided to adjourn at 3:30 pm.**

The next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2012, at the Department of Agriculture Building in Hartford, CT.