

Connecticut Invasive Plant Council
April 8, 2008

Approved Minutes

Present:

Members: Mary Musgrave, Bill Hyatt, Lou Magnarelli, Tom McGowan, David Sutherland.

Others: Sara Kuebbing, Donna Ellis, Marie Lipski, Nancy Murray, Bob Heffernan, Richard Shaffer

Mary Musgrave called the meeting to order at 2:15pm.

March Minutes: In absence of quorum, the minutes were discussed and changes were collected for later approval by email ballot.

Legislative Update: The bill is still sitting with the Judiciary Committee. David Sutherland will check-up on it and report back to IPC.

Invasive Poster Update: Nancy Murray presented the posters with the corrections/changes from the March meeting. She had 1 smaller poster with 16 aquatic plant photos and a larger one with 66 terrestrial plant photos (which was 2 inches shorter in length than the original draft poster). She suggested that it would be possible to add the “invasive but not banned” species at the bottom of the terrestrial poster, with color identification to clarify that they are not legally banned (such as a bright red border around all). This could be accomplished by either removing the pictures of the grasses and listing them instead (because they would be challenging to identify with the pictures provided) and/or adding back the 2 inches to the poster and decreasing the size of the logos and text at the bottom.

Donna Ellis reminded the group that there were 4 additional aquatic plants that are banned and should be added to the aquatics poster. Nancy Murray noted that the Federation of Lakes is interested in getting copies of the aquatic invasive poster – a good sign that it will be well received.

Mary Musgrave noted that Les Mehrhoff was upset that the council was not going to add in the pictures of the “invasive but not banned” plants like they had promised but she explained to him, and to the group, that it was more of a steric issue, than political one. Bill Hyatt wanted to make sure that a complete message comes out in this year’s poster because there may not be another poster out for a while, but only if it is aesthetically possible to fit them in. David Sutherland agreed and would be okay with listing invasive cultivars of the not-banned plants; most agreed that this may get too complicated. Mary Musgrave said that Les had told her he would be happy with a list of the invasive, sans

pictures, if that was the final vote. A big concern for all is that it is clear to the public what is actually illegal and what is just invasive.

Bob Heffernan believed that if there are 81 banned plants, that there should be 81 banned pictures on it. He would rather try to add 2 inches back and re-jigger it to fit in the extra information.

There was not a quorum of voting members present at the meeting so no vote was called. All present agreed that a vote by electronic means, via email, was acceptable so the poster could be ordered and printed before the fiscal year end. Mary Musgrave will send an email, saying that vote needed on the poster. Lou Magnarelli suggested adding the March minutes for people to approve as well, which Musgrave agreed to do.

Update IPC position: Bill Hyatt reported that the position has been approved by State Human Resources and it is one more step through the entire process. The Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) position is still within the DEP and the decision was on hold until the federal funds are in place (approximately 2-3 more weeks). Where the position will reside within the department is still not definitive but the position will be under Nancy Murray, which will insure program continuity.

Overall Budget: Bill Hyatt reported that with the fiscal year drawing to an end and the \$500,000, which were supposed to go to the 2 positions and a invasive removal grant program, not being used yet will be rolled over to the next fiscal year. However, there is risk that it will not, due to the current fiscal situation. Thus, to save some of the money, DEP will place \$150,000 (\$75,000 allotted for each fiscal year) in an account allotted to Hydrilla removal work. This was already approved by the IPC in the December/January meetings. UCONN is interested in working on a Hydrilla project, where they will take out Hydrilla in the Silvermine watershed. A work contract with UCONN would include treating the hydrilla population by hand pulling and herbicide application, getting any herbicide permits necessary for treatment, evaluating the effectiveness of these control measures, and subsequently providing a detailed report for the IPC. DEP already has an umbrella contract with the University and would be able to make this contract happen. The overhead rate for these contracts is 20% to the University – assuming original intent – which would make the total costs approximately \$180,000. The overall project's goals would be to eliminate the Hydrilla from the watershed. Bill Hyatt reported that the hurdles over next few weeks are as follows: 1) To move the allotted funds to a secure account; 2) To insure that UCONN is still interested in undertaking the project; 3) To insure that the project is signed off by May, or at least by the end of the current fiscal year.

Other approved budget expenditures are:

- Funding towards the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group fall conference. Bill Hyatt is waiting for Les Mehrhoff to prepare a justification request as per request in February meeting.
- Approximately \$20,000 for the printing of the invasive plant posters – this cost may change due to change in poster design and additional aquatic poster.

- \$15,000 transferred to Department of Agriculture and Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station for invasive plant work.
- This leave some funds unspent – Hyatt looking for ways to creatively spend the money

David Sutherland has not heard anything about the \$500,000 not being available next year and believes it is still in the Appropriation Committee's budget. He said that if a coordinator is in place this fall, then the money will keep coming, though he projected that it is more likely that it will happen for IPC position rather than ANS position. If it happens that the IPC money is not appropriated, but federal money for the ANS is still flowing, that the bureau will find the funds to make up the difference.

Bill Hyatt said that by using this year's money on hydrilla, there will be more money next year for the invasive control grants programs that did not happen this year.

Mary Musgrave asked Hyatt if he saw any way to see a limited grants program for 2008, using this year's funds. Hyatt did not think that it would be possible because of the length of time it takes to get everything approved. He said that it is at least a 4-6 month process – so work could only begin in November. It could not happen by the end of this fiscal year. Nancy Murray assured that DEP is working with some towns on invasive control projects and that they will be getting financial aide. Mary Musgrave worried that IPC is missing a boat for people to get money in the fall for fall control. Hyatt and Murray agreed that they needed staff to allocate the money and file the paperwork but that Chuck Lee is already on board to help this staff person get started. Murray said that a stable grant program for Long Island Sound will be the base for CT's program. David Sutherland suggested that if there is anything small to be done, to get the legal side going, it would be good to do that. Bill Hyatt will check about that and report back at next meeting.

BMP Roadside Control Documents:

Mary Musgrave was most impressed by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation roadside control document and thought it would be most applicable for Connecticut. She reminded the group that at the meeting with CT DOT, Ed Hurle mentioned that there were a few items that DOT would be able to implement without a lot of extra overhead cost – like leaving plant material on site with black plastic covering. She liked the idea of picking a poster invasive and a work site to set up a demonstration site in conjunction with the DOT. She reported that Leslie Mehrhoff was also interested in this and said he would help pick a species and site if the council wanted.

Mary Musgrave thought that selecting a plant that was already described in the NH DOT document - Japanese knotweed, purple loosestrife, *Phragmites*, Asiatic bittersweet, or spotted knotweed - may be the best for IPC to choose. Route 2 may be a good road (as suggested at a previous meeting). Nancy Murray says that it would be important to bring this idea to DOT before too much planning so IPC and DOT can plan together.

Donna Ellis offered a great contact for the group, if they are interested and asked if there were any internal documents DOT used for management to which IPC could add invasive management planning.

Mary Musgrave passed around an article “State readies herbicide spraying plan” from the Massachusetts paper *The Recorder*, Saturday March 29, 2008 for the group to read and consider. The group discussed briefly the use of herbicides in invasive plant management. Nancy Murray said the DEP works with utility companies in their right-of-ways, allowing them to use herbicides but working with them to avoid native rare plants. She said that a similar program would work for roadsides, utilizing integrated management, a technique the council should approve.

Old/New Business

Mary Musgrave brought up the topic that the USDA will be voting to approve herbicide resistant bent grass for golf courses. She will find a speaker to attend a future council meeting so IPC can be informed of the consequences of this ruling.

Future Meetings:

This is the last scheduled meeting for the winter/spring. Future meetings are scheduled for the Valley Lab in Windsor, CT at 2:00pm. Dates are as follows:

- September 9, 2008
- October 7, 2008
- November 6, 2008
- December 9, 2008

Mary Musgrave asked Bill Hyatt and Nancy Murray if they would like to schedule a summer meeting after an IPC coordinator is hired. Hyatt and Murray agreed that would be a good idea and will let the council know a date for that event.

Lou Magnarelli motioned to adjourn the meeting. Tom McGowan seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.