Minutes from Invasive Plants Council Meeting  
2:00 pm, Tuesday June 25, 2019  
The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station  
Valley Laboratory, Windsor, CT

Present: Chm. Richard McAvoy, Darryl Newman, Paul Larson, Jeffrey Ward
Absent: Stephen Anderson, John Silander, Connie Trolle, David Sutherland, DEEP (vacant)
Others present: William, Hyatt, David Laiuppa

1. Chairman McAvoy called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m. Introductions were made around the table. Because there was not a quorum, no votes were taken.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes  
The meeting minutes from February 19, 2019 were distributed and reviewed.

3. Annual Report  
McAvoy distributed copies of the Annual Report that he has sent to legislative leaders.

4. Updates  
a. Legislative: William Hyatt (retired, CT DEEP). Hyatt suggested that the CT-IPC should strongly consider setting up a briefing with legislative leaders. The idea meant with approval of CT-IPC members in attendance.

   H.B. 6637, An Act Requiring an Invasive Species Stamp for the Operation of a Motorboat on the Waters of the State was passed into law during the 2019 legislative session. A public hearing on the bill was held by the Environment Committee on March 1. The bill was then approved by the Environment Committee and Finance Committee and was passed overwhelmingly by the House on June 1 (331-10) and by the Senate on June 5 (34-2). Subsequent to our June IPC meeting, H.B. 6637 was drafted into PA 19-190 and was signed into law by Governor Lamont on July 9. The driving force behind this legislation was the already high cost to municipalities and the State for managing aquatic invasive species (AIS), the threat posed by hydrilla now that it’s established in the CT River, recognition that AIS can be easily spread via the movement of recreational boats, and recognition that a modest user fee is the best available funding source given the State’s current budget challenges.

   The new law adds a modest $5.00 annual Aquatic Invasive Species fee to the cost of registering a boat in CT. This fee will be collected by the Department of Motor Vehicles and will be incorporated into the annual boat registration process. The bill also requires the owner or operator of any boat registered in another state to pay a $20 annual fee prior to boating on Connecticut’s inland waters. The fee paid by out-of-state boats will be collected by DEEP through its Automated License System similar to the way that out of state fishing and hunting licenses are purchased.
All revenues collected will be deposited into the Connecticut Lakes, Rivers and Ponds Preservation Account to be used for education/prevention, management, eradication, and research pertaining to aquatic invasive species. State agencies, municipalities, and non-profit organizations are all eligible to receive funding. The account will be administered by DEEP with details on the use and availability of funds to be determined by the agency. We anticipate this will be done in collaboration with advocates and invasive species experts.

An extensive proliferation of hydrilla that has occurred throughout the entire CT River since its discovery in a small area of Keeney Cove (East Hartford) in 2016.

5. Old Business
   a. Feedback on Draft BMP’s for Handling Fill, Topsoil, and Mulch: McAvoy led a short discussion on the draft Best Management Practices (BMP’s) document and public comments. Lack of a quorum prevented a vote, so the suggestion was made to send the draft copy to CNLA, CGKA, and Connecticut’s foresters. McAvoy will incorporate suggested changes and email to Council members for the final comments before a vote on final approval at the October 8, 2019 meeting.

6. New Business
   a. None.
7. Meeting Schedule for 2019
   The next Council meeting will be on October 8, with an auxiliary date of November 12 if needed. Per the Connecticut Statutes, the council only needs to meet twice per year.

8. Announcements
   a. None.

9. Adjourn
   The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Jeffrey S. Ward, Secretary
July 16, 2019