

Minutes – Invasive Plant Council
Wednesday, June 14, 2023
2-4 pm
(Approved at October 18, 2023 IPC meeting)

Attendees: Darryl Newman (Planter's Choice Nursery, LLC), Victoria Wallace (UConn), Dustyn Nelson (CNLA), Denise Savageau (non-profit environment association), Bill Moorehead (CT DEEP), Eileen Underwood (Dept. of Ag, replacing Simon Levesque)

Absent: John Silander, Connie Trolle, Jatinder Aulakh

Non-voting attendees: Alyssa Siegel-Miles (notetaker), Barbara Thomas (Chair of Monroe's conservation commission), Josh Tracy, Brandon Hayden, Paul Aresta (CEQ), Nick Velseboer, David Laiuppa, Holly Kocet (Newtown Conservation Commission)

A. Call to order. Victoria Wallace called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes: February 28, 2023

Amendments needed:

- Amend bill number 5555 → 5595
- **Savageau** – in the minutes when she was talking about farm bill, take out “as an herbicide”.
- **Motion to accept amended minutes by: Nelson. Second by Savageau. Minutes approved as amended.**

C. Updates from Council members

D. Savageau: Foresters and watershed professionals across the northeast region are looking at the relationship between forest health and water resources. The effort is being led by the National Association of Conservation Districts Northeast Region in coordination with USFS and EPA. The regional group is looking at forest health, forest restoration and reforestation, as well as climate change impacts and drinking water supply/watersheds. Invasive species have a big impact on forest health. A grant is being sought. Also assessing drought and insect impacts.

D. Nelson:

- He had mentioned in the last meeting HB5278 and HB 5595 – bills that were proposed but did not pass.
- Working with CT Nursery and Landscape Assoc (CNLA) on recommendations for an industry phase out of Callery pear. They started the process and will have a press release when the phase out program is determined. When CNLA had an industry phase out of Japanese barberry, it required a 3-year phase out.

V. Wallace:

- The revised MOU for the Invasive Plant Coordinator is moving forward. Paperwork between DEEP and UConn approved. The next step is posting of the position on the

UConn HR website. We anticipate the search for the position will begin soon and remain open for 4-6 weeks. The search committee has been formed. We hope there will be someone in the position by early fall, if not, by the next IPC meeting in October.

- **Wallace and staff** worked with Pete Picone at DEEP to update the [Native Plant Availability List](#), which had last been updated in 2005. All CT registered nurseries were asked to supply their native plant list so that we could collect and develop the list. We intend to survey nurseries and update the list later this fall or in the 2024 winter.
- The UConn Native Plant and Pollinator conference will be held at UConn Storrs campus on November 2, 2023. Registration site will be up soon. Applying for pesticide re-certification credits now.
- Developing an invasive species module for the UConn Custom Grounds Ornamental and Turf review class that is taken by CT stakeholders that intend to take DEEP's Supervisory Pesticide Applicators license exam. **Wallace** teaches the turf management, weed management and "Laws" classes, and there was little information about invasives, so invasive plant information will be expanded.
- Wallace also mentioned that the CIPWG steering committee met and a subcommittee was formed to evaluate the early detection and research lists. Hoping to make clarifications/reduce confusion, ultimately reviewing and making recommendations for the IPC re: the IPC Prohibited list updates that would be forwarded to the Environment Committee. CIPWG wants to gather information from the surrounding states; as we review what is on their respective lists, it will help with the CIPWG recommendations. Each state has different criteria that define their determination as to what is invasive. We intend to develop a spreadsheet with neighboring state information – what their criteria for invasives are; which plants are on their invasive and watch lists, etc.

Newman: no report

Moorehead: no report

Underwood: no report

Trolle update – read by **Wallace:**

- Process for permit applications to treat invasive plants in water bodies is becoming more stringent. It is required that all plants (native and non-native, not just the problem invasives) in the water body of question be identified before a permit is approved.

D. Old Business

- None

E. New Business

- **Savageau:** asked about the review of the invasive plant list. If CIPWG aims to have a list of plant recommendations in October, would it be ready by the time of the legislative session? Is there more that IPC can or should be doing to move the process along? IPC should be more engaged in the process.

- **Wallace:** We are attempting to follow the protocol that has been done in the past – CIPWG does the research on the plants that might be considered for the IPC Prohibited list, IPC votes on their recommendations.
- **Newman:** expressed concern with the amount of time (lack of) that IPC members might be able to devote to this prior to CIPWG’s study. Our role is not to do the research. We are hampered by not having an invasive plant coordinator.
- **Savageau:** we need to provide language to legislature for update of state statute language.
- **Nelson:** now that the legislative session has ended, should we meet with environmental committee?
- **Savageau:** Environmental groups can work through CT League of Conservation Voters. This group helps push through issues or concerns, and representatives can meet with legislators. They are set up to help facilitate issues through the legislature. People bring issues to them, and they help with lobbying. **Savageau** is on the board; she can reach out to them and put us in touch with them.
- **Wallace:** mentioned that IPC can also work with lobbyists that support other member interests such as UConn, CAES, or Dept. of Ag to also support IPC concerns and recommendations. Need to be more organized in our efforts.

F. Announcements:

- **Savageau:** provided link for recommended document that was mentioned in the last meeting. https://www.conservect.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Invasive_guide_2020_web.pdf
- CAES has Ag Day coming up in August. CIPWG will have a booth there.
- Meeting times in the future: **October: 18th of October 2-4 pm** (online only) (Second Tuesday) from 2-4pm.

G. Community comments:

Barbara Thomas:

- Concern about spread of Japanese knotweed. Are municipalities spreading it? Is there education that can be done about proper disposal? Is there a best practices document used by public works?
- **Wallace:** Japanese knotweed spreads by seed and rhizomes, with seed dispersing over distance. We could send a request to public works listserv and ask that they post recommendations for proper disposal for town constituents. Invasive plant disposal guidelines also are on the CIPWG website. Wallace also replied that most municipalities have or are developing best practices related to or include invasive plant management. Typically, such information is part of standard operating procedure for towns.

Holly Kocet:

- She saw recommendations from Europe that cutting knotweed encouraged it to grow more. Are CIPWG recommendations up to date?

- **Wallace:** Yes, CIPWG is up-to-date with recommendations regarding invasive plant management, although research is ongoing. Wallace also mentioned Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) hosts professional meetings where weed research, including invasive plant research is discussed.
- **Nelson:** as a landscape professional, the cutting method has worked well for my company. Cut, placed thick tarp. 3-5 years have had eliminations on many properties. Removed the stalks; they were dried on site.
- **Kocet:** Question about the Native plant availability list – did it reference straight species or were cultivars were included? **Wallace** replied that the list focused on straight species. Link - https://ipm.cahnr.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3216/2023/05/CT-Native-Plant-Availability-List_UConn_CTDEEP_May2023.pdf
- **Kocet:** Question about Asiatic dayflower – has it been considered for the invasive list? Wallace mentioned that Jatinder had mentioned it during a previous meeting. It has been discussed but not gone further than that.

Paul Aresta – with Council on Environmental Quality: appreciates the updated info about invasive species coordinator. There is an upcoming Hydrilla public stakeholder meeting about a future project in the lower CT river.

Savageau: There are people who are looking into using biochar as part of a disposal program of invasives.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm