

Wisconsin Invasive Species Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

DNR Science Operations Center – Northwoods Conference Room
2801 Progress Road, Madison, Wisconsin

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Tom Bressner (Wisconsin Agro-Business Association), James Hughes (DOT), Jim Kerkman (Council on Forestry), Brian Kuhn (DATCP), Greg Long (Needles & Leaves Nursery), Travis Olson (DOA), Ken Raffa (University of Wisconsin), James Reinartz (UW-Milwaukee), Patrick Reinsma (Department of Tourism), Paul Schumacher (Wisconsin Lakes), and Hannah Spaul (The Nature Conservancy)

Others Present: Andrea Dis-Torrance (staff, DNR), Amy Kretlow (staff, DNR), Mark Renz (UW-Extension), Eric Verbeten (staff, DNR), Bob Wakeman (staff, DNR), Dreux Watermolen (staff, DNR), Bernadette Williams (staff, DNR), Christa Wollenzien (staff, DOT), and Rose Phetteplace (DOT)

Call to Order and Introductions

Chairman Schumacher called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Council members introduced themselves and welcomed two new members.

Approval: June 4, 2015 Council Meeting Minutes

Jim Kerkman moved to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2015 Council meeting. Second by Brian Kuhn Motion passed.

Council Membership Appointments

As noted during the introductions, Governor Walker has appointed Hannah Spaul to the Council as a public member. The Department of Tourism Secretary has appointed Patrick Reinsma to represent that agency on the Council. The Department of Natural Resources has not yet named a replacement for Jack Sullivan, who retired from state service earlier this year.

Dr. James Reinartz's term of appointment ended in July 2015. Dr. Reinartz has applied for reappointment to the Council. Ken Raffa moved to endorse the reappointment of Dr. James Reinartz to the Council as a public member. Second by Jim Kerkman. Motion passed.

The term filled by Jim Kerman has ended. Mr. Kerkman is considering applying for reappointment to the Council. Motion by Paul Schumacher to endorse the reappointment of Jim Kerkman to the Council as a public member. Second by Ken Raffa. Motion passed.

Task: Dreux Watermolen will prepare letters of endorsement for Jim Reinartz and Jim Kerkman for Chairman Schumacher's signature.

Motion by Ken Raffa to acknowledge Jack Sullivan's service on the Council and noting how effective he was at keeping science at the front of the invasive species work. Second by Paul Schumacher. Motion passed.

Task: Dreux Watermolen will prepare a resolution certificate acknowledging Jack Sullivan's service and contributions for Chairman Schumacher's signature.

State Agency Invasive Species Staffing

Brian Kuhn announced that Shahla Werner was the new Chief of the Plant Protection Section at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. She replaces Christopher Deegan. Mr. Kuhn also announced that the DATCP is actively recruiting for a gypsy moth program lead, a position they hope to have filled in January 2016.

Dreux Watermolen introduced Amy Kretlow, a new LTE Invasive Species Outreach Coordinator at the Department of Natural Resources. Amy will be taking the lead on a GLRI-funded project focused on business compliance with Wisconsin's invasive species law (NR 40). Mr. Watermolen also announced that the Invasive Species Coordinator position at the DNR remains vacant. It is unknown when approval to fill the position will be granted.

Bob Wakeman updated the Council on the DNR's contract with the University of Wisconsin-Extension. The DNR funds two positions at UW-Extension: an Outreach Specialist and a Communications Specialist. Currently, Tim Campbell is the Communications Specialist. As previously announced, Chrystal Campbell left the Outreach Specialist position and has taken a position with Dane County. Mr. Wakeman is working with UW-Extension to fill the resulting vacant position with hopes of having someone on board by early spring 2016.

DNR Annual Report to Legislature, Governor, and Council

Dreux Watermolen explained that the Department of Natural Resources is required by *Wisconsin Statutes* to submit a biennial report to the legislature, governor, and Wisconsin Invasive Species Council detailing Wisconsin's invasive species programs, the state's progress in controlling invasive species, current expenditures, and future needs. The report is due by October 1 in even numbered years, with an interim report required in odd numbered years. The DNR prepared a report covering fiscal year 2015 to meet the interim reporting requirement. It is available online at <http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/ss/SS1149.pdf>

Chairman Schumacher suggested including information on the fiscal impacts of invasive species to Wisconsin businesses in the next report.

Task: All council members will read through the 2015 interim report. The next Council meeting will include an agenda item related to providing suggestions for information to include in the 2016 report. Recommendations will be shared with the DNR's Invasive Species Team, which is responsible for preparing the report.

AIS Strategic Planning Process

The Council was previously briefed on the Department of Natural Resources' efforts to update the state's AIS Strategic Plan. Bob Wakeman provided an update on the effort. Discussion ensued.

While there is no established timeline for the planning effort, a first draft of the plan is anticipated in spring 2016. Certain requirements must be met for the strategic plan to be approved by the ANS Task Force. Currently the plan outline is complete, but the finer details are still being compiled by Tim Campbell.

Brian Kuhn represents the Council and DATCP on the AIS strategic planning team and mentioned that he has taken recommendations from the team and updated relevant DATCP partners.

Baitfish is one identified pathway in the strategic plan outline and specific actions will be identified for addressing that pathway. Jonathan Hansen, who works in the Bureau of Fisheries Management, serves on the AIS strategic planning team. Mr. Hansen will be leaving the DNR in early 2016 and a replacement has not yet been identified. Efforts will be coordinated with the bureau's baitfish work. Dreux Watermolen mentioned that the Fisheries Management program has hired two veterinarians in the Fish Health Section. One or both will likely be involved in future baitfish discussions.

Task: Bob Wakeman will share a draft of the AIS strategic plan with the Council in early 2016 for discussion at a future Council meeting.

Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference

Dr. Mark Renz, University of Wisconsin-Extension, provided an update on plans for the next Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference scheduled for October 17- 19, 2016 in La Crosse, Wisconsin. More than 600 attendees are anticipated. More information is available online at <http://www.umisc.net/>.

Current conference sponsors include the Invasive Plant Association of Wisconsin (IPAW), the Midwest Invasive Plant Network (MIPN), and Minnesota's Invasive Species Council. Dr. Renz requested that the Council also be a conference sponsor. Discussion ensued.

Last year, several state agencies represented on the Council contributed sponsorships at a level that allowed the Council to be listed as a hosting organization and provided several complimentary conference registrations for Council members. There appears to be similar interest this year. Dreux Watermolen reported that the DNR will again provide support, but funding sources are still being identified. Other agencies are considering sponsorship but have not yet obtained administrative approvals.

Task: Each Council member who represents a state agency will evaluate sponsorship opportunities and levels and will coordinate sponsorships with Dreux Watermolen.

Greg Long asked how Council members could be kept up-to-date on Council sponsorship. Dreux Watermolen said he could share information with the Council as agency sponsorships are confirmed.

One Council member asked if the conference organizers are coordinating or partnering with the TPOS (Tall Grass Prairie and Oak Savannah) Consortium. Dr. Renz indicated that the consortium would be involved in the conference.

It was noted that there would be a special session offered in conjunction with the ANS Mississippi River Basin Panel and state Attorney Generals, but details were not available at the time of the Council meeting.

Task: Bob Wakeman will attempt to find out which state's Attorney Generals will be in attendance through his participation on the Great Lakes and Mississippi Panels.

Wisconsin First Detectors Network

Dr. Mark Renz, University of Wisconsin, provided an update on the Wisconsin First Detectors Network. More information is available online at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/wifdn/>. Discussion ensued.

The First Detectors Network provides training and volunteer opportunities for citizens interested in taking action against invasive species. Training consists of prerecorded videos (available at no charge), interactive online sessions (\$30 for first year, then free with contributed volunteer hours), and infield training (free to variable costs). Participants are asked to volunteer 24 hours annually, with various options available. Dr. Renz summarized 2015 training and volunteer opportunities and outlined plans for 2016.

In 2014, 65 individuals participated in online training. Sixty of these continued with the program in 2015. In 2015, 50 individuals participated in online training. Workshop participation grew from 35 individuals in 2014 to 255 individuals in 2015. The educational videos developed as part of the program were viewed more than 4,500 times in 2014 and 2015. More than 1,160 invasive species reports were submitted to GLEDN and over 400 *Cerceris* insects were collected. The preliminary economic contribution of the program to invasive species management in 2014 was estimated at over \$16,450. Numerous “spin off” activities have also been documented.

Dr. Renz and colleagues will be creating additional training modules on invasive species for professional CEUs, conducting online training in spring 2016, and holding various workshops in summer 2016.

One Council member inquired if jumping worms were included on the list of species for first detectors to look for. They were and hands-on training was provided to volunteers on how to identify these worms.

DNR Invasive Species Response Framework

Bob Wakeman provided an update on the DNR’s invasive species response framework. The department previously developed a response framework for aquatic invasive species as part of a federal grant. In response to the Council’s input in 2014, the DNR’s invasive species team reviewed the AIS response framework and modified it to cover approaches for both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species and to factor in the department’s stepped enforcement process for NR 40. The response framework is now working its way through the department’s administrative approval process. Because the framework involves external stakeholders, the department considers it to be a “guidance document” subject to public input. The team hopes to make the document available for public comment in early 2016. Once approved for use in the department, others will be able to replicate it and use it.

Mr. Wakeman indicated that he is currently investigating possible use of Incident Command System (ICS) approaches to supplement rapid response plans. ICS has origins in military and firefighting and provides a centralized framework for organizing responses. One Council member cautioned that an ICS can overtake a project and make the tasks larger than needed. Another Council member pointed out that a key to successfully using ICS is to recognize where/when there is an appropriate incident requiring a coordinated response. Knowing when to use it helps avoid misuse of the approach. Mr. Wakeman pointed out that the draft invasive species response framework allows the department to assess what approach is appropriate.

Task: Dreux Watermolen will notify the Council when the invasive species response framework is available for public review and comment.

Federal GLRI Funding for Invasive Species Work in Wisconsin

Bob Wakeman and Dreux Watermolen provided an update on Wisconsin's use of federal grant funding for invasive species activities. Specifically, they described what has already been funded and what additional resources have been applied for. Discussion ensued.

Wisconsin received Aquatic Nuisance Species Plan Implementation funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from 2010 to 2013. This funding was split between the DNR (56%) and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (44%). A total of \$105,000 was received over the four years. The DNR also received \$26,400 in 2010 for zebra/quagga mussel monitoring, prevention, and containment from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Neither of these sources is currently available.

The largest source of federal funding has been the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Between 2010 and 2015, the DNR has obtained more than \$5.2 million from the Fish and Wildlife Service and more than \$1.2 million from the Environmental Protection Agency for invasive species work. GLRI funds have supported 1 permanent, 3 project, and 9 limited-term employees in the Lakes and Rivers Section and several limited-term employee positions in the Bureau of Science Services. Work has included early detection and rapid response activities (e.g. red swamp crayfish response), AIS outreach (e.g., media campaign, boat landing signs, bait dealer/angler outreach), implementation of Wisconsin's Wetland Invasive Species Strategic Plan (e.g., Phragmites control, loosestrife biocontrol), and the organisms in trade project (nursery outreach and enforcement). Mr. Watermolen noted that in addition to the funding received by the DNR, other entities in Wisconsin have also received GLRI funds (e.g., Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission's Phragmites work).

DNR staff recently applied to U.S. EPA for additional GLRI funding in two categories: control and prevention. The control grant application would allow the DNR to continue work on Phragmites control, focusing control activities on the western front of the invasion to keep the species from spreading into the lakes region up North. The proposal also enlists the support of Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) in controlling Phragmites and manna grass. The prevention grant application requests funds to repeat outreach work with nurseries and aquatic plant retailers, focusing on newly regulated species. On the consumer side, the work would identify alternatives that can replace invasives with non-invasive species. If funded, the DNR would also replicate the approach used with nurseries to take inventory of invasive species available in pet stores. Finally, the proposal includes a project with the Milwaukee County Zoo to install a kiosk to inform zoo attendees about various invasive species in trade. The decision timeline for the grant applications is uncertain but DNR staff anticipates learning the outcome of the competition sometime in early 2016.

One Council member commented that if the GLRI funding begins to dry up, the State will need to look for other funding sources. Mr. Watermolen commented that the DNR's invasive species team has looked at how surrounding states are addressing invasive species funding needs and shared the resulting information with agency administration. The team has also forwarded various budget initiatives to address highest priority needs beyond current funding.

One Council member asked how secure the State's dedication of \$4.5 million gas tax dollars to AIS work (grants, staffing) has been. Mr. Wakeman noted that this state funding has been fairly stable, but has not increased in the recent past.

A question has asked regarding any complications that have arisen from the split listing (restricted/prohibited) of Phragmites in NR 40. Mr. Watermolen noted that the most significant challenges have been with communicating the differences so the public can understand what prevention/control efforts are necessary. Having the species listed as prohibited has been helpful in getting some citizens to cooperate

with eradication efforts in western Wisconsin counties. There remain concerns about distinguishing between the native Phragmites and the non-native, invasive Phragmites. The DOT and other partners have been helpful in the fight against this species along roadsides.

Chairman Schumacher indicated that there has been a heightened awareness in Door County in detecting and controlling known areas of Phragmites as a result of the GLRI-funded work.

National Plant Board's Wisconsin Pilot Project for a Systems Approach to Nursery Certification

Brian Kuhn, DATCP, gave a presentation to the Council on the National Plant Board's Wisconsin pilot project for a Systems Approach to Nursery Stock Certification (SANC). Discussion ensued.

SANC provides an alternative method for certification based on *how plants are produced* rather than exclusively on how those plants look at the time of a single inspection (current approach). The National Plant Board is developing a process for incorporating a voluntary SANC into existing plant regulatory programs. Work began in 2010 as a cooperative effort between AmericanHort, the Society of American Florists, U.S. Department of Agriculture APHIS, and National Plant Board (state departments of agriculture). A pilot project, one of eight nationally, was launched in Wisconsin in November 2014.

The SANC involves five steps:

- 1) facility (nursery) conducts risk assessment (identifies hazards and mitigation strategies for them),
- 2) develop SANC facility manual (document procedures, BMPs, etc. to be implemented),
- 3) approve SANC facility manual (ensure planned approach meets standards),
- 4) implement components of the facility manual (e.g., recordkeeping, training, BMPs, etc.), and
- 5) conduct audits (ensure manual implementation). Nursery inspectors can assist nurseries throughout the process.

The risk assessment approach is a whole system approach focusing on critical control points where BMPs can be used to address inputs (incoming plants), propagation practices, media and containers, site, shipping, water, production practices, and disposal. Each nursery's pest prevention plan includes components focused on exclusion (keep pests out), detection (find pests ASAP), identification (know what you're dealing with), and eradication/control (treat pests). Eight states have SANC pilot projects. Wisconsin is working with McKay Nursery Co. Risk assessments are being conducted by the growers, AmericanHort, and state agriculture departments.

Advantages of SANC for state agencies include a reduction in the spread of plant pests (less reliance on "snapshot" inspections, reductions in stop sales and plant destruction orders and reductions in trace-back investigations), improved time management, and more productive partnerships with growers. For growers, benefits include reduction in spread of pests, reduced costs, voluntary participation, and fewer regulatory issues. The National Plant Board will seek to make SANC scalable to accommodate all sizes of nurseries, address consistency across states, and reduce burdens associated with participation.

One Council member asked a question about offshore inspections done at green houses at facilities in other countries. Mr. Kuhn explained that the goal is for nurseries to request their products be SANC-certified upfront to assure their products are free of flaws and won't be destroyed, costing the company money down the road.

Additional information about the SANC is available at <http://sanc.nationalplantboard.org>.

EAB Quarantine Areas and Firewood Movement

Dr. Andrea Diss-Torrance, DNR Forest Health Program, described efforts to limit firewood transport as a means of preventing the spread of the emerald ash borer. She also described the current EAB quarantine areas and associated regulations. Discussion ensued.

Firewood is transported widely by members of the public. This can be problematic because much of the firewood is not dried or otherwise treated and can therefore transport disease organisms and insect pests, like the emerald ash borer (EAB). The DNR has found that successful behavior changes can occur when light enforcement of reasonable transport regulations, along with education and teachable moments, is used to address firewood transport.

The DNR conducted surveys of state park and forest campers in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014. Approximately 600 campers were surveyed in each year, with relatively high response rates (62%). Survey results show that compliance with firewood regulations has gone up over the 8-year period, with both improvements in use of certified firewood and transport within acceptable ranges. These improvements coincide with a drop in the transport of wood from home to camp areas. Bulk movement of firewood for use at home also decreased in the initial periods, but showed an increase from 2013-2014. The survey found a significant decrease in the average distance large amounts of wood were moved. Results achieved with campers on State lands have translated into improved behaviors on private lands.

Some keys to changing firewood behavior: 1) Increase awareness (state park staff are valued and trusted sources of information, regulation mentioned in reservation process, occasional reminder postcards, etc.), 2) Appeal to motivations (normative - moral obligation, “most campers doing the right thing”; social – what those important to you want; calculated - price, quality, convenience and reliability); 3) Consistency in promoting message is important to keep relevant; and 4) Visual indicators of firewood quality are important.

The successes in reducing firewood, coupled with other tools (e.g., quarantines), has slowed the spread of EAB. In 2014, EAB finds had resulted in 37 counties being quarantined. New finds in 2015 resulted in only 2 additional counties being quarantined. Dr. Diss-Torrance also presented two maps noting that it is important for the public to see the actual areas of incidence compared to the county quarantine map. The typical person thinks EAB is nearly everywhere because of the manner in which the county quarantine maps are shaded. The county map is more important for management tactics than understanding the actual locations where EAB occurs. Township-level maps depicting the actual distribution are in the works.

Chairman Schumacher noted that some towns are interested in using local jurisdiction to do something about EAB. Dr. Diss-Torrance emphasized how highly effective voluntary efforts can be.

For more information, see <http://datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/eab/>.

Reasonable Precautions for Jumping Worms: Lessons from First Year Experience

Bernie Williams provided basic biological information and described the development of “reasonable precautions” for preventing the introduction and spread of jumping worms (*Amyntas* spp.), species regulated as restricted in ch. NR 40, Wis. Admin. Code. Ms. Williams also presented lessons learned from the first year experience with the reasonable precautions. Discussion ensued.

Jumping worms were likely introduced through the horticultural trade. Detection is difficult because operators, nursery inspectors, and others cannot always visually detect them in the soil (i.e. worms are

only visible at certain times of the year). A single jumping worm stowed away in a potted plant can go home with a customer and start a new infestation. Activities associated with community mulch piles are likely a significant vector for the transport and spread of jumping worms that have become established.

Dreux Watermolen noted that there are likely multiple species of *Amyntas* present in the state based on observed various sizes and behaviors. Recent work with the public has identified many populations in Wisconsin. Ms. Williams shared a map of the currently known distribution. Jumping worms are widespread in Dane Co. urban areas (particularly Madison), Milwaukee and surrounding counties, and along the intervening corridor. Other populations are scattered, with most being in the southeastern third of the state. In sites where jumping worms are present, no other earthworms are found nearby.

Jumping worms impact everyone: homeowners, gardeners, composting operations, landscapers, nurseries, cities, towns, and municipalities. There is simply no way to quarantine entire areas of soil that may be infested. Few predators eat jumping worms due to secretions that are undesirable to potential predators. They are generally not good for fishing bait. There are no known kinds of mulch that seem to suppress jumping worms as they can occupy a variety of habitats (They even occur in litter in pine plantations). A fertilizer (tea seed meal) used on golf courses may have some potential for controlling jumping worms. The recommended BMPs and reasonable precautions appear to be the best way to combat the spread of jumping worms.

The DNR is continuing with outreach activities. Staff talked with hundreds of citizens at State Fair and handed out thousands of pamphlets to raise awareness. DATCP nursery inspectors are also helping get the word out. Staff are making presentations at various professional meetings.

NR40 Implementation

Dreux Watermolen gave an overview of recent implementation efforts since the ch. NR 40 rule revisions were adopted in May 2015. Consistent with the Council's Invasive Species Strategic Plan, priority efforts have focused on prevention, response, control, and permitting.

In the prevention arena, the DNR has updated its disinfection protocols to prevent the spread of AIS. The newly updated protocols apply to all department staff, as well as its volunteers, contractors, and various permit holders. Training on the protocols is being carried out by Lakes and Rivers staff and other invasive species team members. Department staff are reaching out to various professional associations to make them aware of the updates to ch. NR 40 and means of complying with the rule, including using the disinfection protocols. Staff have proposed presentations at state chapter meetings of the American Fisheries Society, The Wildlife Society, and American Water Resources Association. Staff have also been working with the DOT to do outreach to highway maintenance crews and landscapers. The development of reasonable precautions for jumping worms discussed earlier in the meeting has also been an important prevention effort.

Early detection efforts have focused coordination on the First Detector Network discussed earlier in the meeting and the River Alliance's Project RED, as well as DNR statewide surveys of lakes and rivers. Detection of prohibited species remains a priority.

Control efforts have included updating the DNR's pesticide use protocol which provides internal guidance to DNR staff on appropriate uses. The DNR has funded control projects for a number of ch. NR 40-listed terrestrial plants through the Forest Management and Natural Heritage Conservation bureaus (see written Updates document for additional details).

Mr. Watermolen reported that since 2009, more than 47 permits have been issued for the possession and transport of invasive species. Only six permits were for sale of invasive plant species or parts of plants. The remainder of the permits were for research and education efforts. As word has gotten out about NR 40, the DNR has seen an increase in permit requests from educators for use of invasive crayfish species. Mr. Watermolen indicated that he was doing outreach through the Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers to provide alternatives to invasive species in the classroom.

Follow-up inspections for permit holders have generally found good compliance. DNR staff have responded to several allegations or complaints of individuals or companies being non-compliant with either the rule or various permit conditions. Coordination with DATCP on enforcement at registered nurseries has been good, with few repeat violations being found. An inter-agency DNR-DATCP meeting has been scheduled for later in the week. To date, enforcement actions have included a limited number of notices of non-compliance.

Invasive Species Updates

A written “Invasive Species and Issues Updates” document was distributed to the Council. See that written report for additional details and staff contact information.

Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

Adjourn

Brian Kuhn moved to adjourn the Council meeting. Second by Chairman Schumacher. Motion passed. Chairman Schumacher adjourned the Council meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Note: PowerPoint presentation slides and handout materials from several of the meeting presentations were distributed to Council members via email following the meeting.