

Information for SAG Teams | 2019-2020

PURPOSE OF THE SAG TEAMS

The Wisconsin Invasive Species Council periodically convenes Species Assessment Groups (SAGs) to review and assess species and make recommendations for which species should be included in [Wisconsin's Invasive Species Rule](#) (Ch. NR 40). The SAGs are advisory to the Council and are charged with recommending a regulatory (Prohibited, Restricted), or non-regulatory (Non-restricted, Caution) category to the Council for each considered species. The Council considers the recommendations of the SAGs, makes revisions if they choose, and ultimately forwards the recommendations to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR then uses the Council's recommendations as part of the administrative rule development process for revising NR 40. SAGs are convened at intervals determined by the Council.

The Council recently conducted a review of the SAG Process with the goal of ensuring an efficient, transparent, inclusive, and scientifically sound process. The resulting [process document](#) is available for SAG team members.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

SAG Process Coordinator (Tara Bergeson) | The SAG Coordinator is responsible for overall coordination of the SAG process and ensures regular and open communication among all SAGs, DNR Administration, and the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council (WISC).

Specific Tasks:

- Works with DNR SAG Team Coordinators to identify and secure meeting locations, arrange for snacks and lunches as needed. This task may be delegated to other NHC staff.
- Works with DNR Tribal Liaison to coordinate information.
- Shares progress regularly with the Council and DNR Administration, including SAG meeting summaries.

SAG Team Coordinators / DNR staff serve as Team Coordinators for each of the SAGs with overall responsibility for moving their team through the SAG process. DNR Coordinators are non-voting members of the SAGs. They can and should provide relevant data and information and expert knowledge to team discussions as appropriate. However, they must not control the direction of decisions or insert personal opinions.

Specific Tasks:

- Arrange for meeting space for their team meetings.
- Arrange for coffee, snacks, lunch as needed.
- Share data and information with SAG team members in a timely manner.
- Provide written summaries of pre-assessment and full assessment meetings.
- Log meetings with tribal members/representatives and GLIFWC staff following DNR guidelines.

- Ensure literature reviews are completed for species needing full assessments.

Team Members / Team members are expected to be engaged participants in the process, including attending meetings, reviewing materials, and sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Facilitators / Each SAG meeting will have a non-DNR facilitator to serve as a neutral guide for meetings. Facilitators are responsible for establishing and implementing ground rules with the group, keeping discussions on track, managing time, and moderating the discussion to ensure that all team members have an opportunity to participate.

Note-Takers / Each SAG team will have a designated note-taker for meetings. The note-taker is responsible for recording the recommendations and justifications made by the team. Note-taker will provide their own computer.

DECISION-MAKING

If all SAG members agree on a species' classification, that recommendation is recorded by the note-taker. If there is not total agreement about a species' classification, the group discusses the species and members provide more information. Eventually, the group either comes to agreement on a recommended classification OR members vote on the classification with the majority vote being recorded as the recommended classification. If there is significant disagreement about the classification, a minority opinion will be recorded and will be reported to the Council for their consideration.

GROUND RULES FOR SAG TEAMS

Each SAG Team should consider beginning their meeting by establishing a set of ground rules that are agreed upon by the group. This doesn't have to take a lot of time up front, but it could save time during the meeting by providing some sideboards for how the meeting will function. You may want to include both *Procedural* and *Behavioral* ground rules.

Examples of some Procedural Ground Rules

- Start and end on time
- Put cell phones on vibrate
- Shift between standing/sitting to keep yourself comfortable
- Etc...

An example of *Behavioral* Ground Rules from the [Harvard Business Review](#)

- **State views and ask genuine questions.** This enables the team to shift from monologues and arguments to a conversation in which members can understand everyone's point of view and be curious about the differences in their views.
- **Share all relevant information.** This enables the team to develop a comprehensive, common set of information with which to solve problems and make decisions.
- **Use specific examples and agree on what important words mean.** This ensures that all team members are using the same words to mean the same thing.
- **Explain reasoning and intent.** This enables members to understand how others reached their conclusions and see where team members' reasoning differs.

- **Focus on interests, not positions.** By moving from arguing about solutions to identifying needs that must be met in order to solve a problem, you reduce unproductive conflict and increase your ability to develop solutions that the full team is committed to.
- **Test assumptions and inferences.** This ensures that the team is making decisions with valid information rather than with members' private stories about what other team members believe and what their motives are.
- **Jointly design next steps.** This ensures that everyone is committed to moving forward together as a team.
- **Discuss undiscussable issues.** This ensures that the team addresses the important but undiscussed issues that are hindering its results and that can only be resolved in a team meeting.

RESOURCES | This is a dynamic list. Team members, please share additional resources you think your team should know about.

- First Comprehensive List of Non-Native Species Established in Three Major Regions of the United States
<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/ofr20181156>
- GLANSIS Risk Assessment Clearinghouse
<https://www.glerl.noaa.gov/glansis/riskAssessment.html>
- [USFWS Risk Assessment Mapping Program Species Outputs \(RAMPS\)](#)
- Predicting Invasions of Nonindigenous Plants and Plant Pests. Committee on the Scientific Basis for Predicting the Invasive Potential of Nonindigenous Plants and Plant Pests in the United States
<https://www.nap.edu/read/10259/chapter/1>