

Wisconsin Invasive Species Council Meeting

June 7, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

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Attendees: Drew Feldkirchner, Tara Bergeson, Mackenzie Manicki, Greg Long, Mary Bartkowiak, Amy Kretlow, Michelle Nault, Elizabeth Tanner, Rebecca Gray, Tom Bressner, Hannah Spaul, Joseph Hennessy, Lauren Leckwee, Davin Lopez, Rori Paloski, Brian Kuhn, Tom Buechel, Christa Schaefer, Mark Renz

MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 10:07AM.

10:00 a.m. Introductions & agenda repair

- Revisit Herbaceous Ornamentals SAG today or another time?
 - Agreed no time today and return to it another time

10:10 a.m. Action Item: Approve May 17, 2023 Council meeting minutes

Motion to approve minutes moved by Kuhn and seconded by Bressner. Motion carried.

10:20 a.m. ACTION ITEM | SAG and DNR Species Expert Recommendations

Fish and Wildlife Diseases (Rori Paloski)

- Had unanimous agreement on all species
- Two changes since 2020:
 - Rabbit hemorrhagic disease – Due to RHDV-2 moving closer to Wisconsin since the SAG meeting in October 2020, several members of the DNR's Mammal Taxa Team have examined the spread and recommended that the disease now be added to NR 40 as prohibited.

- Snake fungal disease – SFD was discussed at the SAG meeting in October 2020 and also at the follow-up Council meeting, however the strain of SFD impacting Wisconsin snakes was thought to be a native species. Since that time, scientific research/literature has determined that the strain impacting North American snakes is in fact an invasive species. Because the fungus is already widespread in Wisconsin, recommend listing as restricted.
- Discussion of findings:
 - How do we control the spread of SFD in practice?
 - Checking pet stores and going site to site
 - Add decontamination protocol to NR40 (similar to bats)
- Motion to approve recommendations moved by Renz and seconded by Long. Motion carried.

Fish and Crayfish (Joseph Hennessy)

- Two things:
 - Mosquito fish: Presently restricted. Recommend no change to this classification.
 - Asian swamp eel: Currently prohibited. Recommend no change to prohibited status, but recommend listing whole *Monopterus* genus (*M. albus*, *M. bicolor*, *M. dienbienensis*, *M. javanensis*) because of identification being difficult at the species level especially when trying to distinguish very similar species in a live food market. Such a listing is consistent with another similar situation within NR 40 which lists all species of snakehead (entire *Channa* genus) as prohibited.
- Motion to approve recommendations moved by Feldkirchner and seconded by Bressner. Motion carried.

Terrestrial Vertebrates (Davin Lopez)

- Not a lot of changes from last time, but still pursuing questions on legal issues and enforcement
 - Questions about how non-native species are removed from state lands
- Monk parakeet
 - Currently prohibited
 - No consensus from SAG on recommended listing (6 voted for prohibited and 5 for unregulated)
 - Possibility of species moving in from Chicago as WI begins to resemble IL or MO in the future due to climate change. Possible that in the future species could become established in Milwaukee. Limited studies investigating impact of species.
 - Possible pet exemption
- Great tit
 - Currently unregulated
 - SAG unanimously recommends listing as prohibited
 - 374 reports of bird in WI, establishing populations in Ozaukee and Sheboygan County. Likely part of Chicago pet store release in 2004. Potentially aggressive species.
 - Is best management option to list under NR40?
- Red-eared sliders
 - Currently unregulated

- SAG recommended restricted, but allow for pet trade and have an education component outlining laws that make releasing animals into the wild illegal
- Sightings in multiple areas, could be many more populations than reported. General belief is that species is nonnative. No true evidence for reproduction in WI. Questions on whether species can survive the winter.
- Discussion of findings:
 - Red-eared sliders
 - If listed as restricted, they would not be allowed in the pet trade but would allow possession for those who already have them. Unregulated would be the only option to keep them in the pet trade.
 - One of the most commonly purchased turtles in the pet trade.
 - If unregulated, could avoid issue with pet trade
 - Could still push education and outreach on invasive species and regulations related to release of non-native species
 - Previously was listed under NR40 for juveniles but not for adults
 - Under last revision, we wanted to have all listed or not listed
 - Decision was to take off the list
 - Motion to accept Red-eared slider as unregulated moved by Renz and seconded by Kuhn. Motion carried.
 - Monk parakeet
 - Would pet exemption be for people who already have them as pets, or for future pets? Or both?
 - If pet exemption is for current and future pets, then what role is NR40 serving?
 - The 5 SAG members who voted to unregulate suggested if it's ok as a pet, then NR40 really isn't serving a purpose
 - Exemption would be for those who already have them as pets
 - SAG suggested they will likely become established in Milwaukee and they don't seem to greatly impact native species. If their establishment is inevitable and their impact minimal, is it worth regulating and determining exemptions and issuing permits?
 - We have been issuing permits for these birds at rescues and as they transfer to new owners.
 - These birds tend to cause problems for utility companies. Could NR40 assist with funding when they're a problem?
 - Likely not. NR40 does not provide funding for control, only lists which species are regulated.
 - Utility bills could increase if companies were required to control this species
 - What kind of education and outreach can we do? If they're listed under NR40, can we mandate handing out educational information to pet owners?

- Nothing in NR40 requires a pet store to educate on invasive species
- Can't stop people from releasing pets, so NR40 wouldn't help
- Motion to accept prohibited ranking for Great tit and unregulated for Monk parakeet moved by Renz and seconded by Kuhn. Motion carried.

Aquatic Plants (Michelle Nault)

- Species new to NR40
 - Almost in complete agreement with SAG for new species - only one species not
 - Eurasian waxy manna grass
 - Currently unregulated, SAG recommended restricted, DNR recommended prohibited
 - SAG believed it to be more widespread than previously thought because Canada geese are thought to be a vector, hence they recommended restricted
 - However, only two confirmed locations in the state and they are isolated. Therefore, recommend prohibited based on known population data.
- Species that were re-assessed (listed on NR40 previously)
 - Reed manna grass
 - Currently split listed, SAG and DNR both recommend restricted
 - Much more widespread and well-established than previously thought
 - Floating marsh pennywort
 - Currently prohibited, SAG proposed restricted, DNR recommended prohibited
 - SAG suggested changing status from prohibited to restricted because there is some question as to whether or not this species is truly non-native to Wisconsin. Minnesota considers it to be native; Illinois used to consider it endangered and now considers it adventive/invasive.
 - Only two verified & isolated populations known in WI and given very sparse current distribution, leaving status as prohibited is more appropriate.
 - Water primrose
 - Currently unregulated, SAG and DNR would like to prohibit
 - More occurrences in the US in recent years, including in Northwest and Northeast U.S. It is regulated in Canada.
 - Phragmites
 - SAG and DNR recommend leaving as split listed
 - Highly invasive but control is expensive and seems to have low long-term effectiveness.
 - Statewide eradication is certainly not possible but may be good to continue control on more isolated populations in western & north central WI.
 - Current agreement with DOT to control this species when detected within ROW within prohibited counties.
 - Spiny naiad

- Currently restricted, SAG and DNR recommended unregulated
 - Unclear if species is non-native. Has been present in southeast WI for many decades. Assumed to not be native to WI since collections prior to 1941 do not exist.
 - Species does seem to be potentially increasing its range.
 - Rarely seen to form dense populations in WI. Having the species listed under NR40 leads to lake groups wanting to pursue controlling it, even if it is not documented as acting invasively in WI.
- Federal noxious weeds
 - Making NR40 consistent with fed regs was original idea but water spinach is widely used for food
 - Killer algae
 - Currently prohibited, SAG and DNR recommended unregulated
 - Species is a marine algae (not a plant) which is on the FNWL. Proposed FNWL would not cover algae, but based on salinity requirements this species poses no risk to WI waters.
 - Water spinach
 - Currently prohibited, SAG was unsure of recommended status but was ok with consumption, DNR recommended unregulated
 - Federal noxious weed list; anecdotal evidence suggests the plant is very temperature sensitive, and likely to not survive in WI.
 - It does set seed which could allow it to come back as an annual. However, no evidence currently exists that this is happening.
 - It is already occasionally grown here (illegally) but has not invaded waterways, so unlikely to establish. If we notice this species spreading, we can tell USDA that we will no longer allow permits.
 - DNR would like to allow for a mechanism for USDA permitting consumption, which is in line with other Midwest states (and in line with the SAG recommendation).
 - Arrowleaf and Heartshape false pickerelweed
 - Currently unregulated, SAG recommended unregulated, DNR recommended prohibited
 - If the FNWL clause is added, this species would be included as prohibited
 - Exotic bur-reed
 - Currently unregulated, SAG and DNR recommended prohibited
 - Federal noxious weed list; Eurasian species that is likely winter hardy.
 - Unconfirmed record in Devil's Lake but it's probably a misidentification. Original report lists 'S. chlorocarpum' in parenthesis, which is synonymous with S. emersum (native), not S. erectum (non-native).
 - SAG has agreed to adopt either one of the following for all Federal Noxious Weeds:
 - Alternative #1: Adopt Minnesota's invasive species rule language and remove individual FNWL aquatic plant species from being listed as Prohibited under ch. NR 40. "Federal noxious weed list. For purposes of this part, the aquatic plants

listed in Code of Federal Regulations, title 7, section 360.200, are also designated as prohibited invasive species except for Chinese water spinach (*Ipomoea aquatica*).”

- Would “remove” 10 aquatic plant species off the NR40 prohibited list (& prevent 1 additional FNWL species from being added to list).
- Would still allow WDNR to maintain some regulatory authority to respond to FNWL aquatic plants if they showed up for sale or on the landscape.
- Language would also exempt Water spinach and allow for USDA to issue permits for consumption, per SAG recommendation.
- Alternative #2: Move forward with what SAGs proposed recommendations. Keep current FNWL aquatic plant species listed in NR40 except:
 - Remove Water spinach (allow for consumption)
 - Remove Killer algae (marine algae which cannot survive freshwater)
 - Add Exotic bur-reed (not assessed previously)
- Discussion of findings:
 - Species new to NR40:
 - Chameleon plant
 - SAG recommended to change status from unregulated to prohibited
 - 1 unverified occurrence in Milwaukee. Unknown extent in the state, not considered established but there are known occurrences in backyards/gardens
 - One of the SAG members has this species planted in their garden and it overwinters. Did not realize it’s invasive potential when purchased.
 - Plant hardiness zone includes WI. Does have invasive potential.
 - Found in the trade. Restricted status would allow sellers a 3-year phase out period but there are likely few/no growers in the state.
 - This species has long been widely sold in the trade
 - Not many states regulate this species
 - Seems like this falls more on the herbaceous side – could reach out to herbaceous SAG for their input
 - Would like more information on this species before proceeding with vote on recommendations
 - ACTION: Michelle to reach out to SAG coordinator for Herbaceous Ornamentals for additional input on this species
 - Motion to approve recommendations for “Species new to NR40” group – except Chameleon plant (need more information) – moved by Kuhn and seconded by Renz. Motion carried.

- Species that were reassessed:
 - Phragmites
 - Can we continue to rely on DOT to be able to control this species in Right-of-Ways where prohibited?
 - As long as funding is still there, yes. Could potentially end at any time though.
 - Are we making progress with control in ROWs? May recommend restricted status instead unless we're making progress on populations.
 - Would need to review the data, but would say that there is progress in preventing further spread and decreasing population size, but not eradicated after 5/6 years
 - If an AIS is listed as prohibited, you have much greater access to funding for control than if restricted
 - Listing on NR40 should be about definitions of restricted and prohibited, not funding potential
 - New GLRI project on western side of state with goal of eradication or much more manageable populations
 - People are counting on this species remaining prohibited in the places it is currently listed
 - Seems like this species is out of the bag already and should probably be restricted because it no longer fits the definition of a prohibited species
 - Floating marsh pennywort
 - Currently prohibited but recommended to restrict because we don't know if it's native or not
 - Don't want to completely unregulate because has been sold in trade in the past
 - If we're not sure if something is native, how should we proceed? We can't list native species on NR40.
 - If something is on the list but we find out it's native, use discretion on enforcement
 - Propose approval of the "Species that were reassessed" group with caveat: leave Phragmites as is (split listed) if evidence suggests it can be eradicated, if evidence does not support eradication potential then will need to reassess and motion does not pass
 - Motion to approve moved by Renz and seconded by Kuhn. Motion carried.
 - ACTION: Schaefer to send Phragmites control data to Renz for analysis
- Federal noxious weeds group
 - Motion to approve Alternative #1 moved by Kuhn and seconded by Renz. Motion carried.

Woody Ornamentals

- Ran out of time – will need to schedule another meeting
- ACTION: Mackenzie to add this SAG to next meeting agenda (Herbaceous Ornamentals as well)

11:30 a.m. Council Member Updates

- Drew Feldkirchner:
 - Wild parsnip bill is still alive and has bipartisan support
 - Focus on human health aspect, not invasive plant aspect
 - Being asked for more input
- Brian Kuhn:
 - Spongy moth
 - Treatments done for year, had seven spray days and finished treatment
 - Reduced program compared to previous years
 - Out setting traps for Spongy moth currently on west side of state
 - Mating disruption June 29th spraying
 - Hired 4/5 vacancies, still working to fill supervisor position
 - Chris previously led Spongy moth efforts, Nick Clemmons ran it this year and has done great
 - Chasing infected seeds in trade right now of federally regulated pests
 - Tests at federal labs waiting on confirmation related to some diseases
 - USDA testing – likely some will be positive and will need to trace plants in commerce
- Mark Renz:
 - Matthew Wallrath is new WIFDN coordinator
- Greg Long:
 - Invader Crusader Award plaque funding from AIS, FH, and NHC – thank you!

11:50 a.m. Other Business

- Should we schedule another special meeting to go over the Herbaceous Ornamental and Woody Ornamental SAGs? Or should we include these on the agenda for our next regularly scheduled meeting in the fall?
 - No deadline for having all SAG recommendations approved, but would be ideal to get through these and keep the momentum going
 - Let's schedule another special meeting to finish up with these last two SAGs
 - ACTION: Mackenzie to schedule online meeting for final SAG presentations

12:00 pm. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn moved by Kuhn and seconded by Renz. Meeting adjourned at 12:08PM.