

Wisconsin Invasive Species Council Meeting

August 24, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

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MINUTES

Meeting Attendees: Brian Kuhn (DATCP), Drew Feldkirchner (DNR), Doug Cox (Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin), Greg Long (Green Industry), Mark Renz (UW-Madison), Christa Schaefer (DOT), Tara Bergeson (DNR), Jason Granberg (DNR), Mary Bartkowiak (DNR), Amy Kretlow (DNR), Becky Gray (DNR), Jennifer Larson (FS), Rori Paloski (DNR), Bob Stroess (DNR), Liz Tanner, Brooke VanHandel (DNR)

Brian Kuhn called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

10:00 a.m. Introductions & agenda repair

- On behalf of DNR staff, Tara requested that the Aquatic Plants discussion be moved to the September 12 Council meeting agenda. Progress has been made on analyzing phragmites data (as requested by the Council at the June 7 meeting), but staff would like a bit more time to pull everything together so they can present clear and meaningful information.
- **ACTION:** Mark suggested that he and DNR staff schedule a meeting to talk through the phragmites data analysis. Tara will schedule a meeting.

10:10 a.m. Council Membership Update (Tara Bergeson)

- Mark Renz has been re-appointed to the Council.
- Brian Kuhn expressed gratitude for Mark's willingness to continue on the Council.
- We are still waiting on official appointment letter for Rebecca Szymkowski (DOT rep).
- We are waiting to hear about a new representative from Tourism.
ACTION: Tara will follow-up on the two outstanding appointments.

- 10:15 a.m. Action Item: Approve June 7, 2023 Council meeting minutes
- Drew Feldkirchner motioned to approve. Doug Cox seconded. Minutes approved. No discussion.
- 10:20 a.m. Action Item: SAG and DNR Species Expert Recommendations
- Woody Ornamentals (Mary Bartkowiak)
- Bernie Williams (retired DNR) and Mary Bartkowiak were the co-coordinators for this group.
 - Recommendation to remove the cultivar exemption for Amur maple, Japanese barberry, burning bush, black locust.
 - Asian bittersweet – currently regulated as Prohibited - recommend changing to Restricted status. Difficult to speciate from one species to another. Plant is often collected as flower to taxonomists, who still have trouble determining the species. Nomenclature needs updating for this species.
 - Amur honeysuckle - Currently split listed. Recommend statewide Restricted status. Split listing works well with well-known and documented populations (e.g. phragmites). With this plant, we don't have the survey effort to support split listing.
 - White poplar – recommend removing from regulation. No strong presence in the trade. Weak invasive and short-lived. Mostly on private property. Does form mono-specific stands but doesn't persist on landscape. There are currently no effective control methods (a criterion for NR 40 listing consideration).
 - Bristly locust – recommend removing from regulation. Common on roadsides. Short lived and has been around a long time. Not seeing significant harm. Is native to North America and is included in Chicago flora. DNR species experts recommend removing from regulation while the SAG recommended it remain regulated as Restricted.
 - DNR species expert made a suggestion that we revisit the definition of “native.” Native to what? Wisconsin? How do we incorporate changes due to climate change in considering
 - Black swallowwort – currently split listed. Recommend regulating as Restricted statewide for same reasons as amur honeysuckle.
 - Mark Renz noted there are about 130 records for this species in the state. All in the south, except some in Door County, one in Green Bay, and one near Minneapolis, in west central Wisconsin. Where is the line for split listing? Seems that we have a number of good records. Mary Bartkowiak noted that we don't know how much survey work has been done.
 - Brian Kuhn asked his staff if they are looking for Tree of Heaven as they are setting spongy moth traps. They are looking for it (not species-specific surveys), but are not recording that they looked and didn't find it.
 - Mary noted that most of DNR experts preferred not using split listing at all. However, the Council supported keeping split listing as a tool for cases where it served a useful purpose, but to use it judiciously.
 - Greg Long shared some information about burning bush cultivars. Greg tried to get some feedback from the industry on this but hasn't heard from anyone yet. Greg would like some more discussion on the cultivar exemption recommendations from above. He asked if there was industry representation on

the cultivar discussion. Mary responded that there were industry representatives, one of whom proposed the idea of removing cultivar exemptions.

- Formed a cultivar advisory committee. Idea to put the onus on the growers to prove that their cultivars are not invasive. Want to allow species with reduced seed set to be sold while not letting invasive cultivars onto the landscape.
- Cultivar group comprised of experts on genetics and breeding and from herbaria and arboreta and universities. Mary named all the group's participants.
- Idea came from New York State. They have protocols and flow charts on how to handle cultivars.
- Mike Kowalkowski (DNR attorney for invasive species) recommended making the group an advisory committee. Put the burden of proof onto the breeder (e.g. germination rates, field trials, etc.).
- Brian clarified that what is being proposed is removing the "blanket cultivar exemption" but not saying no more barberry or burning bush, for example. Show us the science and make the case. Brian thinks this is a reasonable place to be. DATCP staff spend a lot of time on barberry inspection at nurseries.
- Mark noted in the chat, "I fully support this move to require industry to provide evidence on low seed viability. Other states have a 3% viability threshold (e.g. Oregon) ..."
- Greg asked how this idea would be built into the rule. Also noted that there needs to be a way to re-visit species over time. How flexible can this be and how quickly can a species get through this proposed process?
- There will be further discussion with DNR legal staff regarding how to address this as part of the rule.
- Brian asked for a motion to approve the recommendations for currently regulated species as presented by Mary.
 - Doug Cox motioned to accept the list as is with the exception of leaving black swallowwort split-listed.
 - Mark seconded motioned to accept the list as is with the exception of leaving black swallowwort split-listed.
 - Motion passed with Greg Long abstaining.

New Species Considered:

- Norway maple – recommend it be Restricted. Sterile cultivars would be considered as per the conversation above.
- Spindle tree – recommend it be Restricted and review cultivars as requested. This tree is much more widespread than we thought.
- English Ivy – recommend Restricted, but exempt juvenile individuals (houseplants are juveniles). Keep eye on it as climate changes.
- Castor aralia – recommend Prohibited. Prolific seed producer and has an impact on human health (very large thorns). Seeds remain viable for a long time. Was planted at UW Arboretum and Olbrich gardens and they continue to emerge there.
- Dwarf honeysuckle – recommend Restricted and review cultivars as needed. A heavy seed producer and hybridize with other honeysuckles.
- Callery pear – recommend Restricted and review all cultivars.
- Buckthorn – recommend Restricted.

- False spirea – recommend Restricted and review all cultivars. Is an aggressive spreader. Reproduces vegetatively. Concern when garden waste is placed in inappropriate places like forests.
- Drew Feldkirchner asked how widespread Norway maple is. Mary responded that it is spreading the most in the southern part of the state and is being found in natural areas and forests. Found less often in northern part of the state. Many nurseries don't want to sell it anymore because of its bad characteristics.
- Mark moved to approve the recommendations as presented. Doug Cox seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed with Greg abstaining.

Herbaceous Ornamentals (Jason Granberg)

- Two *Miscanthus* species were followed up on. Currently, both are unregulated.
- *Miscanthus sinensis* was recommended to keep unregulated by SAG while DNR staff recommend it be Restricted .
- Silver grass was recommended Restricted by SAG. DNR staff also recommend Restricted.
- EDDMapS shows fewer records of *sinensis* in WI than *macroflorus*.
- Mark thinks Restricting both is a good idea. Curious about thoughts from green industry.
- There are 48 cultivars and one hybrid of *sinensis* but found none for *macroflorus*.
- Christa Schaefer noted that DOT can't control all Restricted species on rights-of-way because there are so many.
- Mark motioned to approve as recommended above by Jason (going with the DNR expert's recommendations) *sinensis* and *macroflorus* both to be Restricted. Doug Cox seconded the motion. No further discussion. All were in favor with the exception of Greg, who is opposed.
 - Greg is not sure about the *Miscanthus sinensis*. He doesn't see the silver grass in trades. He would go with the SAG recommendations as unregulated.
- Motion passed.

Aquatic Plants (Michelle Nault/Jason Granberg)

- Moved to September 12 Council meeting agenda to allow DNR staff more time to review and analyze phragmites data. Progress has been made in analysis of DOT data.

11:30 a.m. Council Meeting Schedule

- Reminder to fill out [Quarterly Council Meeting Survey](#)
- Next meeting is scheduled for September 12.
 - Main topics will be wrapping up chameleon plant and phragmites discussions and recommendations

11:35 a.m. Council Member Updates

- Drew (DNR) asked Tara to give an update on the Legislative Report. Tara noted that it is in draft form and will be shared with DND administration by September 15.

- Christa (DOT). DOT and DNR have an interagency agreement, of which invasive species is a small part. There are DNR/DOT liaisons, which are funded by DOT but are DNR staff. There has been an uptick in requests to do invasive species control on DOT projects than in the past. May need some more communication between DNR and DOT going forward.
- Christa – questions about interpretation of “not spreading” Restricted species. DOT makes an effort to not mow wild parsnip while its in seed. What about black locust? When it’s cut, it is triggered to spread through rhizomes. May need some more conversation about what the interpretation is here.
 - Mark noted that as long as the roots aren’t moved, DOT is in compliance. Christa noted that this might not be the same interpretation DOT has.

ACTION: Christa will talk with Tara about how best to address the above differences in interpretation.

Brian (DATCP):

- They are keeping an eye on spotted lantern fly. USDA has published a five-year strategic plan identifying funding priorities. DATCP focused on early detection and outreach. Visitors to the DATCP booth at the Wisconsin State Fair were aware of SLF. There will be four billboards going up in the Milwaukee area soon promoting reporting of SLF (federal funds). Held an internal response exercise. Mike Hillstrom (DNR) sat in on this. Regulation doesn’t seem to be having a dramatic impact on control of spread so far. We’re not sure of the extent of impact for this species. We know it kills Tree of Heaven (invasive) and grapes. Different than EAB. Less certainty with SLF.
- Recruiting for Unit Supervisor for spongy moth section.
- Seeing high spongy moth numbers with statewide defoliation.
- Jason (DNR) reported that a landowner in Kewaunee County found a 141” tall bull thistle, which is taller than the current world record. Jason trying to find a local partner to confirm it. He wants to submit it to the Guinness Book of World Records.

11:55 p.m. Other Business

- No other business

12:00 p.m. Adjourn

- Brian motioned to adjourn. Mark seconded. Motion passed and meeting adjourned.