

*INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL*  
*MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING*

August 20, 2007

Center for Urban Horticulture  
Seattle, Washington

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**INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Kate Benkert	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
Wendy Brown	Department of Natural Resources
Joan Cabreza	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Barbara Chambers	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Chris Christopher	Department of Transportation
Dana Coggon	Kitsap County
Bob Koch	Franklin County
Gene Little, Vice Chair	Washington Noxious Weed Control Board
Bridget Moran, Chair	Department of Fish and Wildlife
Brid Nowlan	Washington Invasive Species Coalition
Melodie Selby	Department of Ecology
Pat Stevenson	Stillaguamish Tribe
Mary Toohey	Department of Agriculture

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**Call to Order:**

Bridget Moran opened the meeting at 9:07 a.m.

Welcome announcements and review of the agenda were done by Bridget.

**Hot Topics:**

- Allen Pleus, Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) discussed the ballast water bill. The process is moving along nicely. He was recently in Washington D.C. talking about this issue. The senate is in summer recess and will be coming back in September to evaluate this issue.
- Clover Lockard reported on a call discussing the Western Governor's agreement on water health.
- Allen Pleus noted that ballast water came up in this discussion, as well as the need for a coalition of west coast members. Allen wanted the Council to be aware of this issue as the Council is to be a coordinator for many of these efforts.
- Joan Cabreza reported that the Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee has completed a priority species list.
- Bridget made staffing announcements that are new for the Council.

**Council Business Items:**

Bob Koch **MOVED** to approve the May 17, 2007 meeting minutes. Gene Little **SECONDED**. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the May 17, 2007 minutes.

### **Public Comment:**

Jo Roberts, Washington Invasive Species Coalition, congratulated the Council on their formation and the work that they are doing.

### **Vision Statements :**

- Brid Nowlan did some background work on vision and mission statements. She noted that there is not necessarily a lot of consistency among the examples she researched.
- The vision should be what you dream to create, where the mission explains the meat of what you are here to do.
- Brid recommended that the Council think about how they are explaining themselves to their audience. She asked the Council members to share comments and provide feedback on the examples she presented.
- Barbara Chambers expressed some concern around the word prevent in the vision statement.
- Gene Little also provided feedback and word placement suggestions to the Council.
- The Council discussed the idea of removing or keeping the word harmful, as it could be interpreted differently among different audiences. Other members commented that they would like to remove the word local, where others would like to keep the term local.
- The Council concluded that the vision statement can change overtime.

Bridget called for a vote on the vision statement.

Kate Benkert, Mary Toohey, Pat Stevenson, Brid Nowlan, Dana Coggon, Bridget Moran, Bob Koch, and Melodie Selby voted in favor of the revised vision statement, "Sustain Washington's human, plant, and animal communities and our thriving economy by preventing the introduction and spread of harmful invasive species".

Wendy Brown, Chris Christopher, and Joan Cabreza **OPPOSED** the revised vision statement. Motion carried. Vision statement **APPROVED**.

### **Mission Statement:**

- Gene compiled the four suggested mission statements and created a new statement, using examples of all four, using bullets to keep the mission short and concise.
- Mark Sytsma, Chair, Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) noted that they adopted specific language from legislation for their mission statement.
- Lori Williams, Executive Director, National Invasive Species Council (NISC) stated that they also adopted language for their mission statement from their executive order.
- Some of the text in the mission statements that Brid provided uses language from the Washington Invasive Species Council founding legislation as well.
- Some Council members were concerned with the interpretation of the word "empowering". It was noted that the word "empowering" was used to mean that there will be coordination efforts, and the Council will work to strengthen the efforts that already exist. It should be interpreted broadly, as more specificity would only lengthen the mission statement.

- Some members would rather simply adopt the goals that are listed in the legislation as the mission statement.

Bridget called for a vote to approve the nine goals in the legislation as the mission statement. Chris Christopher voted in favor of the motion. All other members **OPPOSED**. Motion failed.

Bridget called a vote to adopt the revised mission statement.

Chris Christopher **OPPOSED** the motion. Council **APPROVED** the revised mission statement. The Council provides policy level direction, planning, and coordination that will:

- empower those engaged in the prevention, detection, and eradication of invasive species,
- include a strategic plan designed to build upon local, state, and regional efforts, while serving as a forum for invasive species education and communication.

### **Guest Speaker Presentations:**

Bridget Moran introduced Lori Williams, National Invasive Species Council.

Lori provides overall direction on national and international invasive species policy development and serves as the principle Council contact at the national level with other Federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, States and local governments, and tribes. She supervises the Council staff, reviews and recommends legislative proposals, and briefs top Federal officials regarding invasive species issues. Lori is particularly interested in improving coordination and building partnerships with State and local governments. Lori graduated from the University of Georgetown's Foreign Service and School of Law. She has been the legislative counsel to both House Senate committees, directed the congressional relations office and been Special Assistant to the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the Department of the Interior, and served as Vice President for ocean programs at the Center for Marine Conservation.

- NISC defines invasive Species as mentioned in their executive order "a species that is nonnative to the ecosystem under consideration."
- Lori suggested getting as many examples of how invasive species affect local real estate or the economy to report to the Legislature.
- There are ways to show economic impacts through photographs and mapping. She suggests partnering with other agencies for these examples.
- She provided pictures of insect infestations that ports have to deal with.
- It is increasingly important to show what you can do to deal with invasive species rather than to only show the problems.
- NISC was also established to coordinate existing efforts. The Council is going to be as good as the players behind it. NISC can provide an opportunity for this forum and help to facilitate this discussion.
- Over 30 federal agencies deal with invasive species. Lori advised the Council to become familiar with what each of these agencies can provide to the Council and to stay in tune with what is happening internationally.
- Two times a year, they have high-level meetings, to coordinate what is being addressed.
- NISC has six staff members who primarily are focused on planning and coordination.

- The Invasive Species Advisory Committee is made up of university professors, industry representatives and environmental groups. It is a very diverse group. They meet two-three times a year.
- Their management plan is based on five strategic long term goals and consists of what the agencies think they can accomplish in the next five years, while still considering the mission and vision of the Council.
- Lori explained to the Council that the formation of the Strategic plan will take most of your time and much of your resources. She also suggested bringing in a facilitator to help the process move along.
- Over the years the federal government has increased their expenditures on invasive species, not as much as they would have liked, but nonetheless they have increased.
- The most cost effective way to deal with invasive species is to deal with them quickly (prevention) using early detection and rapid response (EDRR).
- APHIS Quarantine 37 is something that USDA is working on for preventing certain pathways.
- The federal government hopes to provide more tools to help with state eradication methods.
- Most of the bills that are introduced for invasive species work are focused on prevention.
- 26 states have established invasive species councils. Lori would like to see more of the bordering states that have established councils to work together.
- Garden Club of America and other industries have done a lot of outreach work to the public with campaigns like Habitattitude. They have partnered with the pet industry to put labels on products such as fish bags, to inform owners and customers about protecting the environment and not releasing pets into the wild.
- Lori suggested that WISC show examples of what even one significant pest can do to recreation activities, or to quality of life.
- They are launching a new website soon [www.invasivespecies.gov](http://www.invasivespecies.gov)

### **Mark Sytsma, Oregon Invasive Species Council**

Mark Sytsma is an Associate Professor of Environmental Science and director of the Center for Lakes and Reservoirs and the PSU/Smithsonian Aquatic Bioinvasion Research and Policy Institute. He has a Masters degree from the UW, where he worked on eurasian watermilfoil in Union Bay, and a PhD from the University of California-Davis. He was a founding member of the Oregon Invasive Species Council and served as Chair of the Council in from 2002-2004. He will begin his second term as Chair in 2008. Mark wrote and is responsible for implementing the Oregon Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan and conducts a variety of limnology and aquatic invasive species projects in the western USA.

- Mark noted that it is important to scale the Council's activities to something that is accomplishable.
- The Council was established in 2001. They were a bit of pioneer of these state invasive species councils.
- Most of their efforts have been focused on prevention. Their budget is limited to \$12,000 per biennium.
- They have 5 permanent ex-officio members and 8 appointed members.

- They have 3 meetings a year. At the meetings, they provide updates and reports or presentations.
- They have an outreach/education committee that focused on creating a list of 100 most threatening invasive species.
- OISC releases news releases and they hold an annual awards ceremony to recognize local efforts.
- They hired a marketing firm to help them build a public awareness campaigns. To do this effectively they decided to determine their key audiences. To determine this they did a phone survey and asked 2 questions. "Are invasive species a concern?" and "Are they being dealt with?" In general they found that most of the public seems to have some awareness about this topic.
- They also have a legislative committee that passed several bills last session.
- An action plan committee works on an annual report card. They would also like to take a cue from Idaho and do an assessment to determine where there are gaps.
- Lastly, they have a feral swine committee. Feral swine are very damaging to riparian areas.
- Their hotline number is 1-888- INVADER and the website is: [www.oregon.gov/OISC](http://www.oregon.gov/OISC)
- They have a joint meeting annually with the state weed board.

#### **Amy Ferriter, Idaho Invasive Species Council**

Ferriter received her Master's degree in GIS/Remote Sensing from Florida Atlantic University in 1993. She worked nearly 14 years as a Senior Environmental Scientist in the South Florida Water Management District's Operations and Maintenance Department, specializing in the development of broad scale invasive species monitoring programs in the Everglades. Amy has administered integrated operational control programs for weed species such as Melaleuca and Old World climbing fern in South Florida. She moved to Idaho two and a half years ago to work at Boise State University. She now serves as Idaho's Invasive Species Coordinator.

- Amy worked for a long time in Florida and reviewed the topic of snakes as a key invasive species, rather than focusing on weeds only. Pythons are a large problem. The pet industry is a large pathway, especially since you can purchase many of these species on the internet.
- The council operates under an executive order. They recently received an extension for another 5 years.
- At the April meeting they approved bylaws. All of the state agencies are voting members.
- They need to produce an annual report, which will be done by this December.
- Their role is to coordinate, to provide policy level direction, and to implement Idaho's invasive species action plan.
- Their goals are focused on an Eurasian water milfoil program that has been allotted 8 million dollars.
- They are trying to get approval for the Idaho aquatic nuisance species plan.
- They are focusing on creating a list of invasive species that they need to focus on.
- Because they have many geothermal areas there is the potential for tropical species to establish themselves. She recommends that we undertake a similar survey for geothermal areas in WA.
- Amy would like to partner with us on a communication plan and participate in a national summit with other invasive species council.

### *Discussion with Presenters:*

- Council members asked for more information about Oregon's marketing/communication plan. Mark noted that the more targeted your communication plan is towards a particular audience the more successful they are.
- NISC is willing to provide information about what is happening at the international level. Lori would like to develop a source of funding to support new state councils.
- Mark agrees that a regional meeting of invasive species councils would be helpful to coordinate marketing strategies regionally.
- Council members would like to see the national level provide more information to be conducted like an "information clearinghouse" The NISC website will include a page about particular success stories. The idea of a list-serve for the invasive species councils can be useful, as long as it is not overly used.
- Council members asked about a document that includes guidelines to determine if you need to use control methods. These guidelines can be adopted for WA. Is there a national level baseline assessment to determine what is out there and what are we doing about it? Idaho has done just that including an action plan. It cost Idaho about \$30,000 to hire a consultant to do this. The office of Technology assistance did an analysis of what the federal agencies are doing on invasive species efforts.
- The center for disease control and the FDA are focusing on impacts from invasive species to human health. NISC is partnering with them on this. The Oregon feral swine program is really focused on diseases.
- What has made your management plans successful? Oregon, recommends that the assessment determine what gaps exist and then focus on how the Council can work on those goals. NISC suggests that we focus specifically on the nine goals listed in our legislation. Pick a few things that are important to do within these goals and then try to make the document under 20 pages.
- Can you talk more about the advisory committees and list the pros and cons of these groups? How do you get people interested in these committees? Lori noted that if you get the word out about these groups people will most likely be interested in membership. They pay all of the expenses for these groups to get together, which helps with participation. Mark noted that they have a hard time getting folks to participate in these groups.
- Maybe there is the potential for a regional advisory committee. There might even be an opportunity for regional collaboration to work on outreach materials.

### **Workgroup reports:**

#### *Lead workgroup:*

Bridget Moran provided a brief update about the lead workgroup meetings. Their goal is to help facilitate work for the strategic plan. To do this they looked at existing strategic plans from other states. From this research they developed an outline for the framework for the plan. Bridget explained the sections of the framework to the Council.

### **Strategic Plan Framework:**

#### *Current Status Section*

- Focuses primarily on what we know now. The baseline assessment could help to identify these issues so that action plans and gaps can be identified.

### *Action agenda*

- Will represent the recommendations identified from the baseline assessment.
- Emerging issues could be placed under the recommendations section.
- The action agenda, if repeating information in the recommendations could be a stand alone document.
- The action agenda will include both short and long term goals.

### *Discussion*

- The council will need to address partner agencies and who needs to be involved in the process or included in an advisory group at some point within the document. It could also be listed in the vision statement section of the strategy.
- The council recently sent out a letter to key stakeholders with a fact sheet to build that partnership.
- Lori suggested that we mention how this plan will be dovetailed with our other strategic plans.
- Under section two you could include legislative tasks after the vision and mission statements, so that a legislator could quickly identify how the council is meeting their goals.

Bridget Moran called for a vote on the framework of the strategic plan. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the framework for the strategic plan.

### **Coordination workgroup:**

- They are in the process of approving their charter, and they are hoping to have their next meeting during the first week of September. Each member is working on assigned tasks.

### **Technical workgroup:**

- Have had one meeting so far and are scheduled to have another meeting next week. They are working on finalizing their charter. Will review their ability to analyze or recommend needed research. The group is intending to add members after conducting the first few meeting with the original members.

### **Education workgroup:**

- They have had one meeting and their next meeting will take place by the next meeting of the Council in November.

### **Regulation workgroup:**

- Jeanne McNeil from the Washington Nursery Association has joined the group. They have invited someone from the shipping industry, but are waiting to hear back. They would like to include someone from the environmental sector to the group. They are hoping to piggy back on some of the coordination workgroup's results from their interviews. The group wants to lay out priority gaps, where things need to be adjusted, and discuss how that will be formulated.

### **Funding workgroup:**

- They have one meeting so far, and have another meeting scheduled for the end of the month. They have added members Bill Robinson from The Nature Conservancy, David Baumgartner from Washington State University and Deborah Feinstein from The Office of Financial Management. The group reviewed Bill Brookreson's report on funding for noxious weed, and they would like to expand efforts on this report to include more data. They also discussed the supplemental budget. The group agreed that there is a need for funding to implement web development, a baseline assessment and extra staffing needs.

### *Discussion*

- The coastguard is not currently listed in a workgroup, and after their transition period for Council membership is finalized someone will be assigned to a workgroup.
- Council members requested that they receive notes from the workgroup meetings. Staff will send out the notes from previous lead workgroup meetings for staff to review.

### **Budget Report:**

- Now that the Council has decided on what they need to implement the strategic plan, additional funds will be needed. In order to do this, they would like to submit a supplemental budget request. To get a comprehensive look at Washington's invasive species inventory, Council members are proposing that a baseline assessment be conducted to determine where the gaps are.

There are three pieces of the supplemental budget request that include:

#### *1) Baseline Assessment Discussion*

- The assessment will determine what is most at risk from the invasive species that are in the state, or have potential to be in the state.
- Some members feel that there is not a need for a baseline assessment, since so many other entities already have done this work. Our role is to coordinate rather than to define a list that many other agencies have worked on.
- A baseline could start with identifying the many databases and lists that have already been put together. There is not one place at this moment that has all of this information together.
- What if some of those lists don't include the gaps that exist? Rather than this assessment being an inventory, it is a statewide view of what is going on and will help to set priorities and to coordinate with other agencies.
- While an inventory is a useful tool, it would also be beneficial to think about what we do not have yet. Because many of the potential risks could be more devastating than what currently exists in the state. If we prioritize too many of the species, will we be without the flexibility to deal with new emerging threats?
- The point of the repository is to hold inventories that already exist. We do not want to recreate the wheel.

#### *2) Web site development*

- We need more material and funding to build capability in our website. The baseline assessment could be housed on the website for user accessibility.

### 3) *Special Project Position*

- Council members would like to add one FTE position to support the Council.
- Council would like the staffing funding to be higher than listed in the budget document.

At this point we are developing a high-level concept and by the next Council meeting will have the actual package which will be submitted to OFM. If funds are approved we will work out many of the details that will be included in the baseline and website development.

Bridget Moran called for a vote on the supplemental budget request concept presented with a cap of \$250,000. Council unanimously **APPROVED**.

### **Biodiversity Conservation Plan:**

The Council and staff have worked on the development of this document over the past few weeks, however, at this point it is unknown as to what will be used in their plan, as the Biodiversity Council is still putting the conservation plan through review. Once staff hears more the Council will be informed.

### **Questionnaire Report:**

- Jen Dial provided an overview of the questionnaire and process that it went through. Sixty-six responses were received, with 100 projects covered. Of the 66 responses, 20 only provided contact information. Jen reviewed the graphs developed from the answers.
- Jen will further review the data received and do some follow-up for each of the workgroups if they would like her to.
- The Council suggested that the questionnaire be sent out again in the winter (November) to people asking for updates, or people that have not already had time to fill out the questionnaire.

### **Next Steps:**

Bridget reviewed the November 15<sup>th</sup> agenda items.

- Legislative strategy needs to be included in the annual report section. Hot Topics will be listed in the announcements section.
- Council supports the partner report section in the agenda. The weed board has their partners report to them once a year. The Council would also like to implement this idea. This will have to be fairly limited on the agenda, as we have to stay focused on the deadline of writing and producing the strategic plan.
- Joan Cabreza can report on the Aquatic Nuisance Species list and explain how they got to the point to finalize the list, what they struggled with, etcetera.

### **2008 meeting calendar:**

Schedule three meetings prior to June in order to get the strategic plan done.

- Wednesday, January 23, 2008
- Thursday, March 13, 2008
- Wednesday, May 7, 2008
- Monday, August 20, 2008

- Monday, November, 19, 2008

**Adjourned:**

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Next Meeting:

November 15, 2007

Natural Resources Building, Room 172

Olympia, WA

Washington Invasive Species Council Approval:

  
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Bridget Moran, Chair

Nov. 15, 2007  
Date