

Quarterly Meeting of the Governor's Invasive Species Council of Pennsylvania

Wednesday, June 14th, 2017

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Conference Room 309
2301 North Cameron Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110

Meeting Summary

Drafted by Trilby Libhart, PA Dept. of Agriculture

Voting Agencies Represented:

Fred Strathmeyer, Jr., PA Dept. of Agriculture, Designated Council Chair
Robert Morgan, PA Fish & Boat Commission
Gregg Robertson, PLNA
Sarah Whitney, PA Sea Grant
Lisa Murphy, University of Pennsylvania (via teleconference)
Mari-Beth DeLucia, The Nature Conservancy
Don Eggen, PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Barb Lathrop, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
Joseph Demko, PA Dept. of Transportation
Enzo Campagnolo, PA Dept. of Health

Voting Agencies Absent:

PA Game Commission
PennAg Industries Association
PA Forest Products Association
PA Lake Management Society
Penn State University
Western PA Conservancy

Other Attendees:

Sara Stahlman, PA Sea Grant
Andrew Rohrbaugh, PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Sven-Erik Spichiger, Pa Dept. of Agriculture
Kevin Hess, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
Andrew Shelly, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
Jocelyn Behm, Temple University
Matthew Helmus, Temple University
Bill Neilson, PA Farm Bureau
Trilby Libhart, PA Dept. of Agriculture
Dave Scott, PA Dept. of Agriculture, Interim PISC Coordinator

Call to Order/Welcome

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer, Jr., Designated Council Chair, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Deputy Secretary Strathmeyer (PDA) began the meeting by talking about the new meeting format that the council is trying.

The meeting will consist of a short business meeting followed by a working lunch with a break-out session for roundtable work. The idea is that the council can get more “actual” work done if it is done at the meetings when everyone is together.

Also at this meeting there are new name cards for the voting members of the council and their alternates. This will allow council members to be more easily recognized and make it easier to see who is present for voting and attendance purposes.

Dave Scott (PDA) is back from retirement and has stepped in as interim council coordinator. Trilby Libhart’s time had ended due to issues with the union and workload. Dave has graciously stepped as “hemp man” and “quasi-coordinator” for the council during his time back and the department.

There is currently a “holding” pattern on hiring a new coordinator for the council. The candidates that were interviewed were sent a letter to let them know of the circumstances- a hiring freeze with a compliment ceiling and lack of a new state budget. All of the candidates are still in the running. The candidates interview were all external and outstanding choices for the position. All are energetic, ready and willing, and have good experience.

The council representative from the Pa. Game Commission, Eric Miller, has moved on to another position. We will be looking at replacing him asap.

After confirming a quorum count was attained, Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer, Jr. (PDA) called the meeting to order, thanked the group for coming, welcomed members and interested parties. He asked all attendees to introduce themselves and their affiliations.

Council Business

Ten (10) voting members or their alternates were present for the meeting. Voting members from the PA Forest Products Association, PA Lake Management Society, Penn State University, The Nature Conservancy, and the PA Landscape and Nursery Association, and their designated alternates were absent from the official quorum count. Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer, Jr. (PDA) asked for any additions or updates to the agenda and called for any additions or changes to the March 2017 meeting minutes. No changes were added.

Deputy Strathmeyer (PDA) then called for a motion to approve the minutes:

Motion to Approve the March 2017 Meeting Minutes by Gregg Robertson (PLNA)

Motion Seconded by Robert Morgan (PA Fish & Boat)

Comments/Discussion: None

Vote to Approve the Motion: Motion Passed Unopposed

Presentation- Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician Training at Plum Island, New York

Dr. Enzo Campagnolo, PA Dept. of Health

Dr. Campagnolo, Acting State Public Health Veterinarian, gave the council and visitors a presentation on the Plum Island Disease Center at Plum Island, NY. Dr. Campagnolo spent time there to be trained in foreign animal diseases when the USDA hosts Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Schools to train state and federal veterinarians. The well patrolled island, under the Dept. of Homeland Security, is home to a very restricted, high security lab. Dr. Campagnolo explained that there is a lot of mystery and gossip surrounding what happens on the island.

Routine for those working at the lab includes a shower when you go in, a shower when you leave, and a shower before you get your street clothes. Visitors are always with a chaperone.

Veterinarians are trained at this facility to see the progression of foreign animal diseases that could affect animals in the U.S. The work at Plum Island may be moved to a new facility in Manhattan, Kansas in 2020.

General Announcements

Dave Scott, Interim Council Coordinator, PA Department of Agriculture

In recognition of Flag Day, June 14, Dave Scott (PA Dept. Of Agriculture) asked that the Pledge of Allegiance be recited council members and those attending the meeting.

Agency Updates:

PA Fish & Boat Update

Robert Morgan, PA Fish & Boat Commission

Northern snakehead, an invasive fish from Asia which has escaped from the aquarium and food trade were seen in the Susquehanna at the Conewingo Dam at the Holtwood fish ladder cams. The ladders were shut down to prevent any further movement. We currently don't know the relationship to native species in the area. The fish was first found in Maryland in 2003. They are voracious predators, ~ 3-4 feet long with nasty teeth. Appears that bass are eating as many snakeheads, as snakeheads are eating bass.

Increasing Number of Council Members

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer Jr., PA Dept. of Agriculture

It has been approved to increase the number of members of PISC from 10 to 14. It would be nice to make this an event such as during National Invasive Species Week, but it is more important to get people added to the council. Would look to adding PSATS (Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors) and Conservation Districts. That would leave two open spaces for organizations that members felt a need to add to the council.

Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Law

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer Jr., PA Dept. of Agriculture

The Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Law has passed through the house and is presently in the Senate Ag & Rural Affairs Committee. The Department of Ag recently had a meeting to clear up some of the questions that the committee had about the potential law. The bill will need to pass through the Senate Ag & Rural Affairs Committee and then be considered 2 additional times in the Senate before going back to the House for final approval.

Entomology Update

Sven-Erik Spichiger, PA Department of Agriculture

Spotted lanternfly update- Hops and grapes now being affected. The last year and a half work well for eradication if we ramp it up. We currently don't have resources and have a short window of opportunity. Are currently seeing a 98% reduction in populations on properties that have had treatment. This rate is not feasible with state resources. Currently looking at different strategies to keep the population contained. Do have a 24(c) exclusion for Dinotefuran to treat all trees. Looking to get another one million but this will not be enough to eradicate, just keep it at bay. Have relationships with PennDOT, DCNR, and DEP, but could use the council's help to talk with congressional staff about funding. Need additional funding going forward. Forest pest monies to be potentially cut by 50%! Have been able to keep the population fairly well contained but there is need for additional control. Potentially economically devastating to fruit and hardwood trees, and a potential major Ag impact

Possibility to draft a letter asking for future funding?

The sheer number of lanternflies and honeydew is not pleasant. It has a mind-blowing affect to see a population explode in a new area.

Allium leafminer update- this pest is causing problems for onion and allium growers. It is not going to be listed as a regulated pest.

Visitors from Temple University

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer Jr., PA Dept. of Agriculture

Jocelyn Behm, new professor with a background in aquatic invasive species. Matthew Helmus, new professor in aquatic invasive species as well. We are happy to have you here.

Events and Meetings

- **Water Chestnut Chasers Challenge-** through iMap invasives, July 1- July 31, 2017
- **Binational Great Lakes Aquatic Invasive Species Meeting-** June 21, 2017 (still happening even though federal government saying that advisory committees need to be reviewed)

PennDOT Roadside Vegetation Management Conference

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer Jr., PA Dept. of Agriculture

The new coordinator is being asked to attend and speak at this conference. An invitation to the conference needs to be sent so that the coordinator is aware of the time and place. Please let Deputy Secretary Strathmeyer know if there is a need.

Next Meeting Date and Location

- Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Conference Room 309, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA on Thursday, September 7th 2017 from 10-2. Meeting will be brief with a breakout workgroup session afterwards.

Special Announcements

- None

Ongoing Invasive Species Response Updates

Hydrilla -Harvey's Lake

Hydrilla was found at Harvey's Lake in 2014. It has now spread to ~40 acres of the 630-acre lake in 2014, to a near 100% shoreline coverage in 2016. They have received funding for one year of treatment (2017) to begin their efforts to control hydrilla in the lake. An application has been made for a second year of treatment. Concern of 2-3 endangered plants that are present in the lake.

Boat Ramp Inspections- continuing this year at Pymatuning. No one knows if there will be additional parks added in the future.

Roundtable Summaries (Separate detailed notes)

Work Plan –

- Don to contact a NY rep to speak
- Be in touch PSATS and Conservation Districts
- Other 2 entities to add to council
- Develop a list of accomplishments to supply letter to Governor
- Review Tier 1 action items and give assignments

Legislative Outreach-

- Get legislators out in the field to see the firsthand problems caused by invasives
- Event notices out-engage citizens and legislators
- Hand pulling invasives Bucks Co. in July- publicize
- “Ducks in a row” to get some legislators into PISC meeting. Find stakeholder in legislature (fisherman, boater, etc.). Hear different issues.
- Short presentations on what is happening in state to combat invasive species.

Legislative Executive Directors-communication to come to PISC meetings. Need meetings to flow and have meaning for being here. Want legislature to know what PISC is doing and not be sight unseen.

Micheaux State Forest and Japanese angelica tree infestation makes a point arguing against invasive species.

Additional Comments

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) – worthwhile going to this format? Email thoughts and please send roundtable ideas. “Only going to get out of it what we put into it.” Will really be helpful to have full-time coordinator.

Thank-you to Enzo for his presentation on Plum Island. More ideas for speakers? Could have a speaker from Temple. Would be good to hear what they are thinking.

Also think about Philadelphia and Pittsburgh for field trips as they influence what happens. Need to remember them and also think urban-minded.

Adjournment

Deputy Strathmeyer (PDA) asked for a motion to adjourn:

Motion to Adjourn by Gregg Robertson

Motion Seconded by Robert Morgan

Meeting adjourned.

Governor's Invasive Species Council of Pennsylvania Roundtable Notes

Wednesday, June 7th, 2017

Recorded by: Barb Lathrop, PA Department of Environmental Protection

Legislative Outreach and Invasive Species on the Radar- Site Visits with Local and State Representatives – topics and Action Items:

- To get Legislatures interested and up to speed on Invasives impacts:
 - Get them out in the Field to see firsthand the problems caused by Invasives
 - For events, we should cater to their schedules
 - Especially target Bucks Co area & Phila area Legislators – they are keyed into urban issues but lack knowledge about rural issues – or the other side of the State. Get them just 50 miles out of their area to look at problems. Education is key.
 - There's potentially a lot of problem areas to show them and get on their radar-
 - PFBC named several, hot fishing spots included, in the 4 corners of the state & mid-state. Fishing activities spread a lot of invasives around the state – on fishing gear, boats, trailers...,
 - We also have some projects going on soon, good places for official visits:
 - Towhee Lake water chestnut pulling event July 18-20. Target Legislators around the Bucks County area, especially the Philadelphia region (lake is located near Quakertown PA. A flyer is available, attached)
 - Harveys Lake - Get the Pocono reps there. May have a July event for Lakes Appreciation Month. The Poconos Is an economic hot-spot w/ tourism
 - Specifically targeting legislators in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh because they are crucial in swinging power in the House and Senate.
 - **Coordinator** could contact and meet with specific legislators we target but getting a coordinator is key!
 - Get interested legislators or staff or the executive officers in the agencies (should be 4 of them) to the PISC meetings
- There's still a lack of signage about invasives and "Clean Your Boat" on public lake and river launches – why?
 - PFBC reported they have the signage but in garages – the Regions are not following through with posting
 - We need to do more outreach
- Where is invasive species data? Two main (three?) areas where invasive data is stored in PA
 - USGS and IMap (PA Western Conservancy) keep electronic data available on the web
 - Of the two iMap is easier and more effective to use but more recent with not all occurrences accounted for yet. Future is to include management practices and success/failure accounts.
 - USGS database is older but has lost some capability from lack of funding. Still useful.

- Morris Arboretum (U. of Penn in Phila, PA) for botanical species only. They keep an herbarium of specimens, bit aquatic and terrestrial, including natives and invasives and protected species of special concern.
- How to get to the Legislators for a funding avenue: First they need to be informed of the Problem:
 - get in front of them w/ some issues
 - Target Fish & Game Caucus Reps.
 - Ones on other pertinent Caucuses (Timber,...)
 - Biggest problem is that Legislators lack education on invasive species problems including economic costs – both of controlling them, and as a result of not controlling them (i.e. allowing them to get control). The spotted lanternfly is a good example to follow going forward since its potential damage will be devastating and painfully noticeable economically.
 - Pat Stefano, Fish and Game: will push the envelope – invite him to a PISC mtg where we target some problems and need for funds. Message is we need \$\$ help.
 - Good starting point – get Tim Schaeffer, Fish and Boat to the PISC meetings. He can speak to legislators and be very effective. Knows the Capitol, how to go, where to go, and who to target for a financial avenue for PISC. Need him at the next PISC meeting.
 - PISC needs more members to attend meetings! Especially the executive directors!
 - The message is – how to get funds!
 - How about a deal where a forest contractor gets sales tax exemption for large equipment like farmers get? (I missed what the contractor does for this deal – does he contribute some fund\$ to PISC upfront??)
 - PISC has a funding nightmare because it is an unfunded mandate
 - Other states like NY and Vermont manage to get funding for invasive initiatives (a \$13M budget in NY was cited). NY uses a portion of real estate transfer tax as their source of funds. In PA that brings in \$450M and most goes to the General Fund. DCNR gets some for facilities etc.
 - Ask advice on how to set up a budget like NY's based on a land transfer tax.
 - Could PISC get 1%, 10%??
 - Rapid Response Initiative: Representatives out of the NY council: Have a successful set up against invasive species outbreaks and respond very quickly. NY also has a line in their state budget for the council for invasive species control.
 - Get someone from NY to a PISC mtg to explain how they obtain funds, their budgeting & how they respond to infestations
 - Ask not just the Agencies to contribute to PISC funds, but ask the 10 organization memberships to contribute their Fair Share, like say \$2,000 each. Between the Agencies and 10 organizations annual contributions, the PISC Coordinator's salary and travel/conferences/seminars and efforts to get the message out -are paid for.
- How do we show the legislators that combating invasives is important?
 - Show Economic impacts of doing nothing (review studies)
 - Review what other states are spending on AIS impacts/control
 - Highlight industries that may be impacted: Timber and fishing for instance. Could show an impact to the present \$4.5B fishing industry (Didymo, hydrilla)
 - Show Environmental impacts: show them what happens when invasives take over a forest or a lake
 - Explain how “ecosystem services” are impacted
 - Engage the public and provide more education: Then the public can rile up pressure on the local legislators
 - One may only get 10 minutes with a legislator or staff, so the message must be concise. They will ask “What will it cost?” – but it's really – what is the cost if we don't do anything.

- Example: the marmorated stinkbug – no one did anything about it, and today the impact on homeowners and ag products is phenomenal. (Perhaps get hard numbers on this).
 - Future example to keep data on – the spotted lanternfly. Wine and beer industry potential impact.
 - Zebra mussel controls – a lot of industry funds spent; could get that documentation as a selling point
 - Fishing industry is threatened by AIS with potential high economic impact
 - Boils down to educating legislators as to what they are losing. They are stakeholders too as lake users, sailors, landowners, hikers, ..., think about field trips they could be invited on to see things first-hand
 - Phila and Pittsburgh legislators are key people in caucuses etc. but they aren't keyed into rural issues. They need to know what other parts of the state are dealing with.
- **Steps to take before the next meeting**
 1. Get event notices out for awareness including seminars/ conferences whenever there's an opportunity to get the word out
 - a. Have press people from DEP, DCNR, Ag, PFBC, and PGC engage one another. Contact Outdoor News!
 - b. Target legislators (like those around Bucks county) for the Towhee Lake water chestnut pull event July 18th-20th
 - c. DEP: Get Towhee flyer to Fred w/ write-up
 2. Get Tim Schaeffer and executive directors to September meeting
 - a. Bob will get Tim and Fred will get executive directors
 3. Get Legislative Directors to reach out to other Legislative Directors and get them on the invite list for PISC mtgs.
 4. Get someone from NY to discuss their AIS funding and control efforts.
 5. For September meeting have short presentation on how the Lake Towhee cleanup went/ and/or Hydrilla treatment in Harveys Lake/ Pymatuning Hydrilla control efforts
 - a. Use as an example to legislators why invasives must be controlled
 6. Give feedback to Roundtable items for discussing when asked for input to next meeting. Email responses!
 7. Fred says – don't wait – reach out to your legislator or communicate to their staff – or let them go home and get them to a nearby problem example or project.