

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

Tuesday, March 12th, 2019

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
Andrew Rohrbaugh, PA Dept. Conservation and Natural Resources
Jessica Darr, PennAg Industries
Gary Walters, PA Dept. Environmental Protection
Joseph Demko, PA Dept. of Transportation
Sarah Whitney, PA Sea Grant
Jeff Wagner, Western PA Conservancy
Gloria Day, PA Landscape and Nursery Association
Brian Pilarcik, PA Lake Management Society (Phone)
Mary Beth Ruh, PennAg Industries Association
Tim Schaeffer, PA Fish & Boat Commission
Piper Sherburne, Conservation Districts
Terry Styer, PA State Association of Township Supervisors

Voting Agencies Absent:

PA Farm Bureau
University of Pennsylvania
The Nature Conservancy
PA Game Commission
PA Dept. of Health
PA Parks & Forest Foundation
County Governments
Philadelphia Port

Other Attendees:

Gregg Robertson, PA Landscape and Nursery Association
Bill Neilson, PA Farm Bureau

Diana Day, PA Fish & Boat Commission
Robert Morgan, PA Sea Grant
Amy Jewitt, Western PA Conservancy
Len Brylewski, PA Dept. of Agriculture
Sara Grove, Shippensburg University
Kevin Hess, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
Felicia Lamphere, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
Michael Hutchinson, PA Dept. of Agriculture
Dave Scott, PA Dept. of Agriculture, Interim Council Coordinator
Trilby Libhart, PA Department of Agriculture

Call to Order/Welcome

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer, Jr., Designated Council Chair, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Deputy Secretary Strathmeyer (PDA) opened the meeting by welcoming members and thanking them for making the trip to attend the meeting. He also welcomed and introduced PA Fish & Boat Executive Director, Tim Schaeffer, and Chris Urban, who will be filling the position that Bob Morgan left when in retired in September. Tim has pledged his support to the council and his willingness to help move things forward. Council members and others present then introduced themselves.

Council Business:

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer, Jr., PA Dept. of Agriculture, Designated Council Chair
Thirteen (13) voting members or their alternates were present for the meeting. Voting members from the University of Pennsylvania, PA Game Commission, PA Parks and Forest Foundation, PA Dept. of Health, PA Farm Bureau, Philadelphia Port, The Nature Conservancy and County Governments or 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 December 2018 meeting minutes. Deputy Strathmeyer then called for a motion to approve the minutes:

Motion to Approve the December 2018 Meeting Minutes: Mary Beth Ruh (PennAg)

Motion Seconded by: Joe Demko (PennDOT)

Comments/Discussion: No additional changes

Vote to Approve the Motion: Motion passed

Updates on Action Items:

- **Status of Search for PISC Coordinator Position:**
Deputy Strathmeyer informed the council that all the preliminary interviews were done. There was a hold-up with Human Resources and a glitch in the system. The finalist for the position will have another interview this coming Friday. Will have someone in place by the June meeting.

Updates:

Deputy Secretary Strathmeyer informed the council that two PISC members have resigned since the last meeting. Beth Brantley (Penn State) and Kerrilynn Frey (PALMS) have both left their position with the council due to career changes. We will be contacting Penn State and PA Lake Management Society for nominees for the empty seats.

Code of Conduct and Ethics Statement

A reminder to members to return your Code of Conduct and Ethics Statement asap. Please let Dave Scott know if you have submitted the paperwork. Dave also has forms available if you are in need. The statement needs to be done every calendar year.

Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee (CPNW) Meeting:

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

The last meeting of the CPNWC was held on January 23rd. The committee has been looking at assessment tools and will have a presentation of several weeds that are being considered for addition to the noxious weed list.

There will be a special meeting on March 21st at 1:00 in Room 309 of the Agriculture Building to consider hemp as a controlled plant. The 2018 Farm bill requires that everyone growing hemp be permitted or licensed, and growing locations tracked as hemp, although no longer classified as Class I Drug, is still considered a regulated plant at the federal level. The USDA will not be considering any states plans until after the scheduled listening session and propagation of their guidance and regulations.

Spotted Lanternfly Update (SLF):

Michael Hutchinson, PA Dept. of Agriculture

Spotted Lanternfly Update

There was recently a regional meeting, the Regional SLF Summit, that had speakers and discussion on operations, research, communications, and regulation. 110 people were in attendance and we expect good communication going forward. At this time there are 2400 business permits and 136,000 individual permits that have been distributed.

There is a SLF regulatory team in place with a supervisor and five inspectors. First year enforcement will be more educational than regulatory.

This year the Dept. of Agriculture has employees that are certified to pesticide applications, and these will be done later in the year. The department's applicators can also act as a "strike force" if needed. Herbicide applications to Tree-of-heaven will be done by contractors. There are 27 contractors registered to do tree work. There are also sub-grants distributed to do work – DCNR, Conservation Districts, etc.

There has been survey work done all winter and in 2019 there will be a lot of focus on high risk areas such as railways, trucking depots, football games and the like. There are 150 dedicated people working on SLF throughout the state and new partnerships are forming to work on this pest as well.

Piper Sherburne (Conservation Districts) explained that they have 200+ requests for assistance for help with SLF in Berks County. They are hoping that they grant money will hold out and if not will apply for more. Work will start in May for control, education, banding, and tree removal.

Commercial Plants which may be considered by CPNWC

Gregg Robertson, PLNA

A survey of 120 plants was sent to members to rate according to their perception of their economic value to the landscape, nursery and garden center industry. The plants listed were ones that could possibly be considered for regulation by the Pennsylvania Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee. PLNA has a seat on this committee. Possible regulation could range from a requirement to

obtain a permit from the Pa. Department of Agriculture to propagate or grow the plant to an outright ban on propagation, sale or transport. Members were asked to rate each species as having “No Value” (0), “Some Value” (5), or “High Value”(10), and to take in to account the whole industry, not just their own business when rating a plant. There is no definition of “value” and it was just the responder’s perception, so the responses could be subjective.

This survey was for information only. PLNA does ask that if a plant were to be put through the assessment protocol used by the CPNWC and the decision is made to eliminate environmentally damaging plants that the committee would allow a phase out period.

2019 Farm Show Booth

Dave Scott, Interim PISC Coordinator, PA Dept. of Agriculture

We had another successful year at the Farm Show in 2019. The booth had a new location this year but not far away from where it was in previous years. The booth was very busy throughout the show. A “thank-you” to all that helped and to PSU Mont Alto for volunteering two day at the booth!

First Finds:

Beech Leaf Disease Update:

Andrew Rohrbaugh, PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources

Andrew provided a map of the current spread of Beech leaf disease which is now present in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Ontario, Canada. The disease showed up in Lake County, Ohio in 2012 and was initially slow to spread.

Symptoms include dark areas in between the veins on the leaves. As the disease progresses, the leaves become thick and somewhat leathery and eventually crinkle up. Young trees seem to be especially hard hit sometimes succumbing in as little as three years.

PDA has found nematodes in the affected leaves that were sampled in Crawford County. The USDA also found the same nematodes in other samples that they received. Should soil in the affected areas be sampled? Research is ongoing.

Organization and Agency Updates:

Pennsylvania Hardwoods Development Council

Wayne Bender

Wayne Bender gave us some background on the WoodMobile which has been in existence since 2011. The WoodMobile came to be because of a Forest Pest Outreach Grant that provided the trailer and outreach materials. The Pennsylvania WoodMobile is a traveling exhibit that provides information on the state’s forest resource and the state’s forest products industry. It travels to many events where it provides an opportunity to school age children where they can learn about forest insects, invasive plants white-tailed deer and identification of trees. Approximately 80,000-90,000 visitors, with 10,000-14,000 students and teachers visit the WoodMobile every year. It does most of its outreach in the months of April through October and is always present at the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Pennsylvania Farm Bill

Deputy Secretary Fred Strathmeyer, Jr.

Governor Tom Wolf introduced the Pennsylvania Farm Bill which provides \$24 million to invest in agricultural industry and business development. It also includes the Pennsylvania Rapid Response

Disaster Readiness Account, funded at \$5 million, to allow for a quick response to agricultural disasters, including utilizing animal or plant health officials to contain an outbreak or threat, such as Spotted Lanternfly or Avian Influenza. This is advantageous to the council and the work the council does.

PA Fish & Boat Commission

Tim Schaeffer

PA Fish & Boat will be revealing their new strategic plan at their meeting in April. Invasive species will be included in this new plan. The commission is working on filling Bob Morgan's position, Aquatic Invasive Species Ecologist. Chris Urban will be the contact for this position until the vacancy is filled.

PennDOT

Joe Demko

Ailanthus are very labor intensive and PennDOT has been working on them for many years. Dormant basal stem treatments are being done. Some years resources are limited so a district may do east, north, south or west depending on the year and the budget. Can call district roadside manager to find out schedule. Joe will give Trilby district roadside manager county/contact list to distribute to PISC. Deputy Secretary Strathmeyer noted that PennDOT has done an incredible job in accommodating the SLF efforts. We are happy to have them as partners.

Meetings and Events:

Special Meeting of the Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee to consider hemp as an addition to the controlled plant list. Thursday, March 21st, PA Dept. of Agriculture Building, Rm 309, 1:00 pm.

Incident Response Planning for the New Zealand Mud Snail in Pennsylvania. Thursday, March 21st, PA Fish & Boat Commission Northcentral Region Office, 595 East Rolling Ridge Drive, Bellefonte, PA, 9:00 am-2:00pm.

RoundTable Working Groups Reports:

Web Group: Gary Walters (Dept of Environmental Protection) noted that they have a prototype for the website information. Ideas include a video of the Governor commenting on the Invasive Species Council, Invasive species of the month, photos of PISC members. Site may be up in January.

Additional Comments:

Look forward to doing something for **National Invasive Species Awareness Week** (February) in coming years. Please note this and other important event dates for new council coordinator.

Sarah Grove from Shippensburg University- The research report which was looking at what other states do for invasive species funding was submitted to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania. The board must vote on the final submitted product which will happen at their June meeting. The report will then be made available for review.

Next meeting is June 11, 2019.

Motion to Adjourn: Terry Styer, PSATS

Motion Seconded: Gregg Robertson, PLNA