

WASHINGTON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 23, 2017

Natural Resource Building, Room 172, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA 98501

Washington Invasive Species Council Members Present:

Ray Willard, Chair	Washington State Department of Transportation
Pat Stevenson	Stillaguamish Tribe
Bill Tweit	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Todd Murray	Washington State University
Clinton Campbell	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Rob Fimbel	Washington Parks and Recreation Commission
John Gamon	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Lizbeth Seebacher	Washington State Department of Ecology
Shawna Bautista	U.S. Forest Service
Steven Burke	King County
Joe Maroney	Kalispel Tribe
Allen Pleus	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Vicki Yund	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Rachel Bomberger	Washington State University
Mark Taylor	Trout Unlimited
Pat DeHaan	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Todd Hass	Puget Sound Partnership
Roy Hamblin	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Larry Hudson	Okanogan County

Guests and Presenters:

Karla Salp	Washington State Department of Agriculture
------------	--

Recreation and Conservation Office Staff:

Justin Bush	Executive Coordinator, Washington Invasive Species Council
Wendy Loosle	Board Liaison, Recreation and Conservation Office

Opening and Welcome

Chair Ray Willard opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. with welcome announcements, facility safety information, introductions, recording information, and a review of the agenda.

Ms. Bautista shared news that white nose syndrome in three species of bats was discovered in two additional states: Texas and Nebraska. A news release is scheduled for later today at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Bush reminded council members that white nose syndrome was added to the priority species list last year.

Hot Topic Reports

Item 1: Executive Coordinator's Report / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush has represented the council at several recent meetings since January. He highlighted two meetings in particular: the Washington AgForestry Leadership Program and a joint meeting with the Oregon Invasive Species Council. The AgForestry Leadership Program is looking to partner on a project regarding feral swine and monitoring legislation for an emergency response system. The Oregon Invasive Species Council joined the Washington council to discuss cross-state priorities and issues, as well as ways to collaborate in the future.

Mr. Bush attended several outreach events during the past quarter, including the Seattle Boat Show in January, and earlier this month the Washington Weed Coordinators' Conference and the Columbia Gorge Invasive Species and Exotic Pet Workshop. Upcoming events include the Columbia Gorge 1st Detector Training, the Salmon Recovery Conference, the Scotch Broom Ecology and Management Symposium, the Seattle Pet Expo, and the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Summit.

Mr. Bush discussed recent media coverage and press releases issued regarding invasive species, pointing out that WA Invasives application updates support national data-sharing and awareness. He noted that the council's social media presence continues to increase, reaching over 40,000 individuals since the past meeting. Mr. Bush shared metrics for the past quarter's invasive species reports and sightings, also continuing to increase over website and email reports.

In the current legislative session, Mr. Bush and Member Shaun Seaman provided testimony to committees regarding Senate Bill (SB) SB 5284, Natural Resources & Parks, and House Bill (HB) 1429, Parks and Natural Resources. Mr. Bush briefly highlighted other legislation and bills of interest, concluding with updates regarding the fiscal year (FY) 2017 Farm Bill Cooperative Agreement update. Regarding the Chelan City and County Comprehensive Plan comments, Member Bill Tweit suggested that King County be viewed as a model and there should be opportunity for state agencies and other entities to provide comment.

RCO is seeking a student intern that will support the council for one year. Interviews were recently conducted and Mr. Bush intends to bring the intern on board next week.

Item 2: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - Aquatic Invasive Species Unit: 2016 Accomplishments / Allen Pleus

Mr. Pleus presented information about the Aquatic Invasive Species 2016 Program Overview, beginning with the program's mission, goals, and core functions. He noted the myriad benefits provided to the environment, as well as risks introduced by invasives.

Mr. Pleus provided updates on several management actions for the following invasive species and methods for managing their introduction: zebra and quagga mussels, ballast water, African Clawed frogs, and European Green Crab. Zebra and quagga mussels remain the primary focus of the program, specifically management actions that include inspections, decontaminations, early detection monitoring, and other states' collaboration and coordination efforts. Ballast water, another ongoing program

challenge, brings the threat of invasives' introduction and require unique management actions, including data management, regulatory gap analysis, a six-year strategic plan, inspections, and monitoring the opposition to national legislation in the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act. The latter issue involves assessing the added benefit of a state-level program for ballast water management actions. African Clawed Frogs, which carry *ranavirus*, require an interdisciplinary approach. Program staff collaborate to contain and control the species using fencing and trapping practices, working towards eradication of the infestation. European Green Crab infestations, which impact shellfish and crustacean populations, have led program staff to coordinate with the Washington Sea Grant in early detection and monitoring efforts. At the national Estuarine Research Reserve in the San Juan Islands and Padilla Bay, rapid response measures involved setting numerous traps and four days of field work to manage the species.

Mr. Pleus stated that continued funding is necessary to maintain and advance the program. To address funding needs, an advisory committee was created to provide recommendations on funding sources and strategies. Ultimately, the recommendations led the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to propose \$4.3 million in funding for aquatic invasives prevention, enforcement, local grant management and ballast water program funding; currently, the agency is seeking additional funding through the legislature for the next three biennia.

Item 3: Communicating with the Public: Lessons from the Washington State Department of Agriculture Gypsy Moth Eradication Project / Karla Salp

Ms. Salp, Community Outreach and Environmental Education Specialist with the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), presented information about the gypsy moth eradication program. She provided background on the program's actions, governing policies, and key messages.

The program focuses messaging on impacts that are important to local audiences; for example, how gypsy moth infestations may affect neighborhoods or homeowners, or even local parks and public spaces. Ms. Salp described the program's outreach efforts to share information via press releases, their website, open houses, and meetings with government officials and stakeholders. New methods include listserv notifications, increased social media information and postings, and informational postcard mailings that share dates and locations for open houses, treatment periods for gypsy moth (spraying, etc.), and ways that the public can participate or comment on the process. Also, the program developed an info-graphic and supporting video to engage the public in learning about the negative impacts of the species and how to manage sightings and response.

Ms. Salp shared several examples of social media inquiries and WSDA responses in regards to gypsy moth management. The proactive approach resulted in improved public relations and an absence of protests, negative press, and public records requests. She concluded by discussing future goals for continuing to improve outreach efforts.

Ms. Salp responded to council questions about how to choose an appropriate social media response that informs the public, responds to inquiries, and shares information about agency actions.

Break 10:50 – 10:55 a.m.

Discussions, Decisions, and Updates

Item 4: Washington/National Invasive Species Awareness Week Debrief / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush briefed the council on activities during Invasive Species Awareness Week. The Governor proclaimed a simultaneous "Washington" awareness week with the national version, promoting awareness and increasing the ability to identify solutions for invasive species issues. Three additional Washington State counties proclaimed the week as well: Chelan, Clark, and Skamania.

Mr. Bush shared information about additional press releases, tool kits to support implementing knowledge and awareness, and events that promoted public education and engagement. These efforts resulted in more than 23,000 social media posts and responses. Several posters were created to support various campaign messaging (e.g., "Don't Let it Loose", "Clean, Drain, Dry", etc.) and are available for dissemination and widespread use. He highlighted several events that demonstrated cross-agency and cross-state collaboration, affirming Washington's approach to education and management strategies.

Suggestions for improvement upon the weeks' successes included earlier engagement and planning, communication with other state and federal agencies and organizations to extend campaigns, and requesting a Governor's proclamation in future years.

Item 5: Aquatic Invasive Species Legislation Update / Bill Tweit

Mr. Tweit updated the council on efforts to elevate aquatic invasive species legislation in the state's House and Senate. He encouraged council members to engage their legislators, noting that urban-centered representatives need to better understand the urgency behind the economic and recreation impacts to state resources.

Mr. Tweit also attended the National Invasive Species Awareness Week in Washington, D.C. He shared that the focus centered on middle-ground legislation that supports states' autonomy and ability to collaborate on invasive species issues.

Item 6: Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Annual Summit / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush announced the dates of the upcoming PNWER 27th Annual Summit, scheduled for July 23-27, 2017 in Portland, Oregon. The summit will bring together leaders from Pacific Northwest states and Western Canada to discuss opportunities for growth within the region and address major challenges to the economy and regional environment. He shared a potential list of session presentations and workshops which will be refined as the summit approaches.

Mr. Bush requested volunteers for supporting the planning process and ranking of potential topics.

Item 7: Scotch Broom Ecology and Management Symposium / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush shared the dates for the upcoming Scotch Broom Ecology and Management Symposium, scheduled for May 23 at the Snoqualmie Casino in Snoqualmie, WA. Hosted by the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe Environmental and their Natural Resources Department, the symposium will focus on sharing information that can be used to address and mitigate impacts to Washington's economy and natural resources.

Item 8: Flowering Rush Project Update / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush provided an update on the flowering rush project, including the last year's actions of convening an interagency workgroup in the spring, a regional workgroup in the summer, and submission of a grant proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation last fall. In December 2016, the council received a grant award and entered a grant agreement in late January 2017. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) will facilitate the process, but a contractor will be brought on to implement and manage the work.

Break 11:45 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.

Item 9: WA Invasives Data Viewer / Ray Willard

Mr. Willard described the vision for having a comprehensive data viewer, perhaps available in two to three years, which will provide the ability to understand the distribution of invasive species at a site level, assisting all residents and agencies within Washington to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive

species. The goal is to collaborate across agencies to share and view data in a state-wide GIS layer, database, or portal that connects datasets.

Council members discussed the benefits of such a tool for conservation planning, connectivity and communication, and sharing information in an open, easily accessible manner. To reach this goal, communication, funding, and data-cleaning are a few of the issues to address. It was suggested that the level of data shared be monitored to maintain privacy and security as needed.

Several members volunteered, including representatives from WDFW, DNR, RCO, WSDOT, and State Parks, as well as suggestions of other state and federal agencies and organizations that may be able to contribute. A working group will meet in summer 2017 to discuss and create a roadmap for the project.

Item 10: Washington Invasive Species Council 2017 Outreach Plan / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush described the process for implementing one of the council's strategic plan goals: developing a communication and outreach plan. He outlined the anticipated timeframe for a one-year plan, messaging focuses, social media strategies, press releases, and outreach and education events. Council members discussed continuing to collaborate on regional messaging to strengthen outreach campaigns and seeking expert guidance on implementing social media strategies. Additionally, the council discussed how to balance staff support at large conferences or events, while providing indirect support for smaller workshops or events. Mr. Tweit suggested using an alternate speaker or panel list that can support events in other areas of the state when a council member is not able to attend.

Break 1:10 – 1:30 p.m.

Item 11: Council Business / Ray Willard

Todd Hass Welcome and Introduction: Chair Willard welcomed Mr. Todd Hass of the Puget Sound Partnership, assuming the position previously held by Marc Daily.

Discussion and Approval of 2017 WISC Outreach Plan: Mr. Bush will accept comments over the next week before officially adopting the plan. Mr. Tweit moved to adopt the plan. Ms. Yund seconded. The council unanimously adopted the plan.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Member Replacement: Chair Willard opened a discussion regarding adding a new council member, Ian Sinks, who represents the Columbia Land Trust and would assume a position as alternate for the TNC. This position would alternate with Mr. Taylor (Trout Unlimited) as the non-profit representative member. Mr. Tweit moved to approve the alternate position. Mr. Maroney seconded. The council unanimously approved.

Travel Meeting Discussion and Decision: Chair Willard opened a discussion regarding the 2017 travel meeting. Mr. Bush followed up on a previous discussion to host a meeting in British Columbia, however, a response was not received from representatives of the area. The council discussed options for alternate travel meeting locations, landing on Arlington, WA for the June 2017 meeting. The council also agreed to plan early for a 2018 joint meeting with Idaho and Montana in Spokane.

Discussion and Approval of Updated Interagency Feral Swine Response Plan: Mr. Bush shared the updated response plan, including adapted protocols, communications, and strategies for incident reporting. After sharing that the intent is to leave the plan open as a living document, Mr. Bush open the discussion to council comment. Mr. Tweit moved to approve the updated March 2017 draft of the Interagency Feral Swine Response Plan. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved.

Economic Impacts of Invasive Species to Washington State: Chair Willard recognized the efforts of Alison Halpern and Greg Haubrich to conduct and complete the study.

Meeting Minute Approval: No additions or corrections were requested for the previous meetings minutes from December 2016. Joe Maroney moved to approve the December 2016 minutes. Bill Tweit seconded, after a friendly amendment to correct a typo. The Council unanimously approved the December 2016 minutes, as amended.

Next Steps

The next meeting will be held June 8, 2017 in Arlington, WA. As the date approaches, current information may be found at: <http://www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/meetings.shtml>.

Item 12: Public Comment

There were no public comments at the meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Minutes approved by:



Ray Willard, Chair

6/8/17

Date