

INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING

January 8, 2009

Room 172, Natural Resources Building
Olympia, Washington

INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Wendy Brown	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Clinton Campbell	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Dana Coggon	Kitsap County
Alison Halpern	Noxious Weed Control Board
Kathy Hamel	Washington State Department of Ecology
Mary Mahaffy	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Brid Nowlan, Vice Chair	Washington Invasive Species Coalition
Ted Smith	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
Susan Spinella	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Mary Toohey	Washington State Department of Agriculture
Lisa Veneroso	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Ray Willard	Washington State Department of Transportation

GUESTS AND PRESENTERS:

William Brookreson	Washington Native Plant Society and Pacific Northwest Invasive Plant Council
Kaleen Cottingham	Recreation and Conservation Office
John Floberg	Cascade Land Conservancy
Allen Pleus	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Lisa Younger	The Nature Conservancy

STAFF:

Clover Lockard
Gen Keesecker
Rachel LeBaron Anderson

Convene and Welcome:

Due to scheduling conflicts, Council Chair, Chris Christopher, was unable to make the meeting. Vice chair, Brid Nowlan chaired the meeting in his absence. Brid opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. with welcome announcements. She introduced Lisa Veneroso who is taking Bridget Moran's place on the Council and asked the Council and audience to introduce themselves. She then reviewed the agenda.

Hot Topics:

Kaleen discussed the Governor's budget. The Invasive Species Council submitted a supplemental decision package to fund the strategic plan. The decision package was not approved, but the Council's carry forward money remains. This means the Council will need to find additional money to move the strategic plan forward. Options include:

- Passing the hat (money from agencies, in kind, etcetera).
- Looking for grant opportunities.
- Shifting priorities around available funding.

In March, there will be a new revenue forecast, followed by the Legislative budget. Staff will keep the Council informed. If members speak on behalf of the Council they must report their discussions. Council members may be recruited for presentations to Legislative hearings.

Clover Lockard, executive coordinator to the Council, announced she will be retiring after the May meeting. She has enjoyed her work with the Council tremendously. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) will be looking for a replacement, and Clover will ensure a smooth transition. Council members all expressed their appreciation for her work and noted that Clover is wonderful and will be difficult to replace.

Allen Pleus discussed a Chinese barge purchased by Bellingham. It is a submersible barge that can be used as a dry dock. Bellingham offered to have a vendor treat the ballast water before pumping it out. The barge looks as if it has been recently cleaned. Samples from tanks are being assessed, and divers are checking the hull. They cannot force inspections unless something is found. If anything is found, they will identify it, and see how to cooperate with the shipyard. The barge could be hauled to open ocean for cleaning. They will proceed one-step at a time.

Council Business Items:

Wendy Brown moved to **APPROVE** the November 19, 2008 minutes as presented. Kathy Hamel **SECONDED** the minutes. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the November 19, 2008 minutes.

Budget Request, Impacts, and Outreach:

Council members discussed the option of passing the hat to obtain more funding for implementation of strategic plan recommendations. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has had major budget cuts and is unable to assist. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has funds remaining from 2008 and with the Puget Sound Partnership is discussing ways to spend it. Invasive Species are on the list, so the Council needs to get its species priority list ready.

The Council scheduled a meeting with Puget Sound Partnership, and will also partner with the Biodiversity Council on the information clearinghouse and scorecard. Council members decided to create a small workgroup to research future funding opportunities. Brid and Mary Mahaffy volunteered to be on this group. Lisa Veneroso may join later if the workgroup is still active. An email will go out requesting more volunteers.

Brid reviewed the budget handout. Grants may take months to set up, making them a mid to long-term solution. Ted suggested we watch stimulus packages closely. Brid feels the Puget Sound Partnership will attract money, and get people working on the ground if they know the Council's priorities.

Oregon has agreed to share their media products including their logo. Members expressed interest in sharing the use of their reporting number "1-866-Invader". This would provide a consistent message across borders. Dana is going to check with Oregon about the possibility of

using this number. At this point, Oregon has one or two people taking phone calls and the cost is low. If it is only 3-4 calls a month, Council staff can answer and refer calls to the appropriate contacts. However, if there is a major infestation staff could get hundreds of phone calls. Members suggested that in this case a voicemail box be used and checked regularly. Staff agreed that they could respond to calls until they become more frequent; then the Council would need to hire someone. Brid said the Council should prioritize funding for this and have a plan for sudden surges. Dana will work with staff, Oregon, and University of Washington Extension to get this started by the May meeting along with a media strategy to release the logo and reporting number.

Kathy Hamel shared the name of an environmental reporter from the Seattle Times, Michelle Mah. She is eager to know more about the Council and will be a good contact when the Council is ready to launch its media campaign.

Bill Brookeson also suggested that the Native Plant Appreciation Week is coming up and the Council can use their web site and posters for advertising a reporting number. Additionally, the Council agreed to sponsor the native plant appreciation week.

Clinton Campbell passed around a calendar that showcased invasive species every month. Members agreed that this would be a great way to package an annual report for the Legislature.

Implementation Group Reports:

Brid called for workgroup reports.

Priority Species

They created a draft impact analysis tool as a quick way to evaluate species impact. They tested the tool on many species and found they needed expertise on the specific species and that a committee would do a better analysis. They have not figured out how to show magnitude or certainty of impact. They do not want decision makers ignoring species that do not make the list because not making the list does not make a species un-important. After the initial impact analysis, species should go before the Council for evaluation.

Questions for Council discussion from the workgroup:

- How would this tool be used?
- How would the list be used?
- Does the Council want a list like Oregon's 100 species?
- Does the Council want multiple lists?
- Would lists alter funding from the Legislature?
- How will lists affect the other workgroups or Council goals?

The workgroup will meet again in two weeks. A draft list will be complete in March and emailed to the Council. The final list will be brought to the May meeting. This priority list fulfills the strategic plan goal of using risk assessments. Lisa said if we are building a model around a few species to be used in the future, it does not matter which species we pick. It is hard to say which species are worst. The Council agreed to label the list "Discussion Draft" to clarify and to avoid confusion. The list is as an organizing tool for the Council.

Allen said the Council is using information from outside the state to decide the potential threats for Washington. He thinks the zebra mussel and citrus long-horned beetle would be a "high" risk, and that is as far as we can rank them, going beyond that will lead to funding impact

arguments. We must clarify that the priority list is just a tool, and that new priorities are always possible. Alison said the State Noxious Weed Control Board prioritizes for early detection and rapid response to keep from flooding the public with too much information.

Brid suggested using the priority list in the media campaign. The priority list can be used as an educational tool as well. Dana also mentioned that it is important to educate people about pathways. If they are washing their boat to remove Zebra mussels, they are probably removing other invasive species as well.

Information Clearinghouse

A meeting date for this group will be set before the end of the month. The group does not have funding to begin the design of an information clearinghouse, but will work with Susan Zemek at the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to improve the Council's current web site design. Staff has already begun the initial work on updating the council web site. This workgroup will create a new web template for the Council to review before the May meeting. Changes can then be made before the web site is up and running.

Education and Outreach

Dana spoke with Oregon and gained permission to use their "Stop the Invasion" logo. Members discussed the look and feel of the logo and discussed ideas for improving, but came to the conclusion that this logo is ready to go and we need to get it out now. Changes can be made later if needed. The Northwest Home and Garden show is in February. The education workgroup will create a poster to display at this event. There will also be an opportunity to have a booth with informational displays during Native Plant Appreciation events.

The workgroup would like to educate people on pathways. The goal is to have the public clean their boats, even if they cannot identify the species on their boats. This group is also in need of funding to accomplish many of its goals and will be on the lookout for grants. The posters generated by the workgroup could be posted in parks and botanic gardens designed to educate the public on invasive species. There is an invasive species display at Point Defiance Zoo Maybe the Council can add their logo and information to the display. Ted says the Council can use the State Park bulletin boards to display educational information. They can size posters to fit. However, funds are needed to print these posters. Dana also suggested adding articles to local magazines. RCO has magazine, newsletters, and media lists available for Council use. The education workgroup will work to create these articles.

Baseline Assessment

Alison will use information gathered from the priority species workgroup, and gather more information about species distribution, economic impact, and global warming information to begin assessing the State's invasive species. This group is also in need of funding, but will meet before the end of the month to discuss what work they can begin to do with the resources available. Brid reminded Alison that the baseline assessment will tie into the Biodiversity Scorecard. Group members include Ted Smith, Allen Pleus, Greg Haubrich, and Landon Udo.

Communication and Tools

Mary Toohey does not have a report at this time; however, once formed they will talk about communication between different entities and tools to look at regulation (permits, etcetera) to make progress more efficient.

Emergency Funding

Wendy Brown does not have a report at this time. She has been focused on the priority species workgroup. She will schedule a meeting of the emergency funding workgroup before the end of the month to begin implementation efforts.

Workgroup Guideline Discussion:

There will be a meeting of workgroup leads in February to review charters and workgroup progress. Brid discussed workgroup organization and guidelines. She showed the Council the workgroup charter template; this should be the workgroups first task. When charters are complete they will be reviewed with the leads group and Council staff. Brid reminded Council and workgroup members to please copy council staff on all emails.

Not every Council member is in a workgroup. Council members should join workgroups to be more involved. Please consider stakeholders when creating workgroups, outside participation is important. It is important that workgroups meet even if they only have a couple members. Lisa volunteered for two workgroups: Communication and Tools, and Emergency Funding. Susan volunteered for Education and Outreach workgroup. Mary Mahaffy and Kathy Hamel volunteered for the Emergency Funding workgroup.

Legislative Update

Senate Bill 5070 directs the Council to collect and distribute invasive species-related information and to begin implementing elements of its Strategic Plan including the top recommendations, such as the baseline assessment and internet clearinghouse. The bill also establishes a grant program to address invasive species issues. Brid asked Council members to keep staff and the Council Chair aware of any testimony related to this bill. Staff will keep the Council updated about the progress of various bills this legislative session.

Cascade Land Conservancy

John Floberg, from the Cascade Land Conservancy (CLC) presented a PowerPoint about the Green City Partnership. He would like the Council to use King County as a pilot project in partnership with Cascade Land Conservancy. He reviewed ideas from the Cascade Agenda. Green city partnerships restore natural areas and combat invasive species. This public education program could mobilize more constituents and volunteers.

Bill Brookeson discussed work he has done on these projects. He worked on 2 ½ acres replanting native plant species. John said volunteer groups are the backbone of the partnership. They are working to increase volunteering in areas like South Seattle.

Brid says projects such as this one need to expand from city, to county, to state. If this model is already in place and working then it could be used as a model for the state. John reminded the group that this model has already been used statewide by the Biodiversity Council. It is important to keep our goals in mind, we want to see these efforts payoff in our lifetimes. Having a timeline, and showing where the work is done is bringing in more volunteers because they can see an end in sight.

Dana asked how they would address new invaders if the focus is primarily on English Ivy and Blackberries. John will follow up with Department of Agriculture to focus on more animals and

insects. He would really like to see more action in port cities. Ray Willard said he would like to work on highly visible areas at entrances to Seattle. The Department of Transportation might have some funding for this project. John stated that the Council could track information, so if one private landowner is working on a problem, he will also know what his neighbor is doing.

John would like to establish areas with invasive species of most concern and natural areas of greatest economic impact as pilot areas. Green King County could use the recommendation to do more effective fundraising, restoration, and community involvement. Brid suggested the workgroups discuss this and come back in May with a decision. Brid said that the amount of organization this project has in place sets it apart from others; steps, communication, and reporting are clearly defined.

Implementation Discussion Continued:

Brid reviewed the draft workplan, and asked for feedback. Brid reminded the Council to be realistic about what they can achieve in the coming year. The Council must work hard the first 6 months to prepare for the Legislature. Staff will update the work plan with information from today's meeting and send it to the Council along with complete notes from the workdays. Some timelines will need adjusting to be feasible within current budget constraints. This will be a multi-year process.

The charter details for each workgroup charter is already laid out within this document. Clover asked workgroup members to list tasks with a corresponding timeline, similar to the Biodiversity work plan. It is an easy way to keep track.

May Agenda

Wendy asked if the Council would be interested in doing a Legislative tour during the summer, it is important to go out and show them instead of just talking about invasive species. It might be hard to get legislators during the summer, but September would work. It is mandated that the Council have a pilot project yearly. Suggestions included:

- creating posters with Ecology,
- a flow chart clarifying responsibility and invasive species authority,
- a more concrete project. The tour can be tied in with our project. Any of our goals could be a project.

Lisa Veneroso feels that the CLC has presented the Council with a great opportunity. They are only asking for support of their project. Mary feels that the rest of the state may not be able to relate to the Seattle project. CLC has land on the coast, so the project may not have to focus on Seattle only. Brid suggested that Council members and staff create a list of potential sites and projects to consider for our pilot by May, preferably existing projects willing to have Council support. Brid asked Council members to have a list of projects at the May meeting. Ted asked if we can email suggestions between now and May on this subject. Ted will send out the first email. Staff reminded the Council that decisions must not be made in email discussions, all decisions must be made at public council meetings.

Proposed change to operational Ground Rules:

Brid referred to the handout on the revised operational ground rules. The suggested change is to the length of time served for Council Chair. Previously there was no term limit listed for Council Chair and Vice Chair. The revised version limits the term to one year.

Wendy Brown moved to **APPROVE** the revision to the Operational Procedures. Mary Mahaffy **SECONDED** the revision to the Operational Procedures. The Council unanimously **APPROVED** the revision to the Operational Procedures.

Next Steps

These will be completed before the May 7, 2009 Council meeting:

- Each Council workgroup will compile a list of possible funding sources or leads to possible funding sources. For example, outer coast ocean policy efforts, climate change task force, Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference, etcetera.
- The Council agreed to pursue the 1-866 reporting number using a voice mailbox for messages.
- All work associated with the development of the priority species list is to be framed as a “discussion draft” or “organizational tool”.
- The priority species impact analysis template will be ready for Council review by the end of the month. The priority species list should be ready sometime in March.
- Staff will put the “Stop the Invasion” logo on the Council web site.
- Work groups will meet before the end of the month and develop their charters with timelines.
- Leads will meet in February to share charters and staff will develop a new work plan format.
- Education work group will write draft articles for newsletters, media, magazines, etcetera.
- Staff will prepare a targeted contact list from the Council’s “interested parties” list.
- Council members agreed to compile a list of potential projects for the Council that demonstrate agency collaboration. Ted Smith will begin that effort by email.
- Work groups will discuss the proposed collaboration with the Cascade Land Conservancy Green City Program and bring recommendations to the May Council meeting.
- Staff will keep the Council updated regarding SB5070.
- Education work group is going to begin rolling out the new logo during the Northwest Home & Garden Show and the Native Plant Appreciation Week.
- Council members need to compile a list of their agency links to invasive species information.
- Develop a media strategy to launch the new logo and the reporting number.

Adjourned:

The meeting adjourned at 2:10p.m. Brid thanked everyone for attending.

Next meeting:

May 7, 2009

Natural Resources Building

Room 172, Olympia, WA

Invasive Species Approval:

Chris Christopher, Chair

Date