

WASHINGTON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

December 15, 2016

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
Bill Tweit	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Shaun Seaman	Chelan County Public Utility District, Industry Panel Representative
Shawna Bautista	U.S. Forest Service
Clinton Campbell	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Pat Stevenson	
Joe Maroney	Stillaguamish Tribe Kalispel Tribe
Alison Halpern	Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
Lizbeth Seebacher	Washington State Department of Ecology
John Gamon	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Brad White	Washington State Department of Agriculture
Rachel Bomberger	Washington State University
Todd Murray	Washington State University
Steven Burke	King County
Anna Lyon	Okanogan County
Marc Daily	Puget Sound Partnership
Allen Pleus	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pat DeHaan	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Guests and Presenters:

Jim Marra	Washington State Department of Agriculture
Katherine Haman	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Abigail Tobin	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Nate Weigel	Pacific NorthWest Economic Region

Recreation and Conservation Office Staff:

Justin Bush	Executive Coordinator, Washington Invasive Species Council
Wendy Loosle	Board Liaison

Opening and Welcome

Chair Ray Willard opened the meeting at 9:02 a.m. with welcome announcements, facility safety information, introductions, recording information, and a review of the agenda.

Hot Topic Reports

Item 1: Executive Coordinator's Report / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush provided an update on the recent quarter. The first WISC biennial report was submitted to the Legislature, previously submitted annually. The report covers the accomplishments and current activity status of the council to inform legislative staff and representatives. Several new graphics were included that will also be used for other marketing and educational messaging; these graphics support branding for the council and promote awareness of the council's initiatives.

Mr. Bush summarized meetings with partners and organization that have occurred since the last council meeting. Highlights included state agency and local coordination efforts to manage feral swine, as well as the recent addition of Alaska to the regional coordination meetings which take place monthly via conference call.

Mr. Bush provided an overview of the outreach events for which he or other council members attended or delivered support, and upcoming events for 2017. As part of the Orchard School District's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Program, Mr. Bush participated on a video call with 200 fifth graders. The students were developing an imaginary response plan for a gated community, challenged with defining potential policies to address real-life modelled challenges.

Mr. Bush coordinated with the Recreation and Conservation Office communications staff to develop a press release in collaboration with other state and federal agencies to promote awareness about feral swine issues. The release received broad coverage. Two further releases will cover the economic analysis, conducted by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and the Noxious Weed Control Board (NWCB), and updates to the WA Invasives App, a collaboration between the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) and the University of Georgia.

Mr. Bust provided statistics on education and outreach efforts through social media, noting that Facebook participation has increased 6% since the September meeting. Of a summary of sighting reports this past year, 239 of 280 reports were approved, and the remaining 41 were retired (non-approved). Most reports continue to be submitted via the website versus the phone applications, highlighting the need for further promotion of the mobile platform. Mr. Bush summarized the correspondence received by the council, available in the [meeting materials](#) on pages 20-22.

Mr. Bush concluded by sharing relevant legislative and initiative updates, including the fiscal year (FY) 2016 Farm Bill Project, suggestions for the FY 2017 Farm Bill, the FY 2016 NFWF Pulling Together Initiative, and participation in the Pacific Education Institute STEM Career program which highlighted environmental professionals.

Item 2: Highway Activity Tracking System (HATS) for Invasive Species / Ray Willard

Mr. Willard provided a brief background of his education and career, as it related to his role as chair and passion for invasive species issues. He described the philosophy and research-driven motives that guide his work, leading to the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) highway management strategies. As part WSDOT's 2016 Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Plan, Mr. Willard described the economic and environmental benefits of their strategy that incorporates a significant reduction in mowing practices as a management technique.

Mr. Willard described the Highway Activity Tracking System (HATS), a new program that supports the agency's integrated vegetation management plans by allowing field crews to geographically reference and record accomplishment information using iPads. The program will allow WSDOT to implement detailed treatment plans and is anticipated to significantly improve efficiency. The use of spatial data for locating and tracking work on noxious weed target will enhance the agency's ability to reduce and eliminate weed populations on the right of way.

Item 3: Gypsy Moth Program 2016 Update / Jim Marra

Dr. Marra provided an update on the Washington State Gypsy Moth Program, noting that 2016 proved to be one of the worst years for infestation in several states. The moth finds its way to the US primarily through international shipping practices and US ports. Dr. Marra summarized the life and characteristics of Asian versus European moths, both species of concern in Washington. The Washington Department of Agriculture conducted several eradication programs during 1991-2000, and has not seen a moth in fifteen years. Last year, 2015, a total of 42 moths were captured, with ten Asian captures constituting a state record. Dr. Marra described the eradication protocol and treatment areas for 2016, including the Automated Flight Following (AFF) Internet Aircraft tracking system and TRACMAP (an automated precision guidance system) which allowed staff to monitor the process remotely. In 2016, zero Asian moths were captured. Public education received a heavy focus, in order to promote support for eradication efforts.

Item 4: White Nose Syndrome/Pd / Katherine Haman & Abigail Tobin

Ms. Haman and Ms. Tobin lead the initiative through Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to research and manage White-nose syndrome in bats, and the potential for listing as an invasive species. Ms. Haman described the ecological benefits of bat species, additionally noting the common threats imposed by humans. She summarized the causes and symptoms of White-nose syndrome, caused by the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd) which disrupts physiological processes and hibernation patterns. The syndrome is transmitted between bats and their environment where conditions are conducive to the causal Pd fungus and affects multiple species of bats; one species has been listed as endangered due to White-nose syndrome.

Ms. Tobin described the initial infestation in the eastern US and the growing spread westward, including Washington confirmations near North Bend and Seattle. WDFW is concerned with documenting the life cycle of Washington bats, identify existing areas of fungal infestation, and conducting surveys in order to monitor for potential spread within the state. A public outreach and citizen science effort is underway to support rapid response and identification.

Using the council's assessment tool, the team determined the potential for listing the disease as an invasive species, highlighting the economic, ecological, and human health impacts. Ms. Haman described the incentives and benefits for listing the disease as an invasive, including increased authority that would support detection and management.

Break 11:20 – 11:30 a.m.

Discussions, Decisions, and Updates

Item 5: Top 50 Species Prioritization Process / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush summarized the intent and purpose of the priority species list, then outlined the process for updating the list which the council does periodically about every five years. Prior to the meeting, several teams conducted a review of current species, identified the removal or addition of species, and developed recommendations for the council to consider ([supporting materials](#) are included on pages 23-36). Process suggestions included beginning with recommendations for removal from the list, updating the scoring

criteria, create species groupings, and review recommendations for additions. The council discussed the potential for adjusting the list to include more than fifty species, using response capacity as a tool for determining what priority species may be, and supporting the council's role (primarily coordination, policy guidance, education, and outreach) in how to inform response, surveillance, and management efforts.

The council reviewed recommendations for removal as listed in the Combined Review Team Recommendations (pages 34-36), noting that Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*) was listed for removal by mistake. Mr. Tweit made a motion to adopt the recommendations for removal as listed, including cherrybark tortrix (*Enarmonia formosana*). Mr. Maroney seconded the motion. The council discussed the recommendation to remove Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), opting to keep it on the removal list. The motion carried.

Chair Willard stated that is the council's agreement that the list is not permanent; the goal is to monitor the species included on the list periodically and adjust the list as necessary.

Break 12:00 – 12:40 p.m.

Item 6: Top 50 Species Prioritization Discussion and Decision / Ray Willard

The council discussed proposals for updating the proximity ranking and scoring for impact and prevention as listed on the additional recommendations. Mr. Tweit moved to adopt the current recommendations, scores, and ranking. Ms. Lyon seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The council discussed the process for grouping species on the ranked list. Mr. Daily moved to accept the grouping, minus the three species with no data under grouping #11 "Infectious Fish Diseases." Mr. Tweit seconded the motion, with the amendment to rename the grouping #21 "Infectious Frog Diseases" to "Infectious Amphibian Diseases." The motion carried.

The council discussed the remaining fifty-five species on the currently ranked list, as well as whether to keep the list at fifty or allow flexibility in exceeding the historical number. Suggestions included reviewing the impact scoring as a criterion for whether a species remains or is removed from the list. Mr. Tweit moved to adopt species ranked 1 through 51 (noting that #32 Himalayan blackberry was removed), keeping the list at 50 species. Mr. Maroney seconded the motion. The council discussed the option of having a species candidacy, adding the suggestion as an amendment to the motion. Additionally, though not part of the motion, the council agreed to maintain a list of species that were previously listed. The motion carried.

Item 7: Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Winter Meeting Debrief / Bill Tweit

Nate Weigel, PNWER, and Mr. Tweit briefed the council on the recent [PNWER meeting](#) held on November 17, 2016 in Boise, Idaho. Key issues covered at the meeting regarding invasives included a focus on zebra-quagga mussel response efforts, resources development act funding, and recent sightings of mussels in Montana. Mr. Weigel summarized the actions leading to a state of emergency declared by the governor of Montana to respond to the infestation. He shared that the incident commander encouraged information sharing and welcomed participation in all forms.

Mr. Weigel shared that PNWER worked for funding to be approved under the [Water Resources Development Act](#) (WRDA) to establish new and maintain existing watercraft inspection stations to protect the Columbia Basin. He described clause changes that continue to support aquatic invasive species response efforts, as well as consistencies in other key documents that reinforce these actions.

The council discussed preparations and planning for the next PNWER Annual Summit, scheduled for July 2017 in Portland.

Break 1:50 – 2:00 p.m.

Item 8: WA Invasive Data Viewer Discussion / Ray Willard

**Postponed due to time limitations*

Item 9: National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW) 2017 / Justin Bush

Mr. Bush shared in alignment with the upcoming NISAW scheduled for February 26-March 4, 2017, he is working to have the governor proclaim a similar week for Washington and recognize NISAW across the whole region. He encouraged agencies to highlight actions they may already be doing to support NISAW, and shared the website for further action: www.nisaw.org.

Item 10: Council Business / Chair, Justin Bush

Outgoing Chair Recognition: Chair Willard read the resolution written in recognition of Mr. Tweit's years of service as chair on the council. John Gamon moved to approve the resolution recognizing Mr. Tweit. Ms. Lyon seconded. The motion carried. Mr. Tweit thanked the council.

Vice Chair Nominations: Chair Willard requested the council to discuss and provide suggestions for a rotating vice chair position, explaining the potential responsibilities and commitments of the role. Mr. Tweit moved to nominate Pat Stevenson as vice chair. Mr. Daily seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Executive Committee Membership: Current members of the executive committee currently include: Ray Willard, Bill Tweit, Brad White, and Alison Halpern. Mr. Bush shared that the committee consists of the Council chair and/or vice-chair and up to four additional Council members, as selected by the full Council. Chair Willard requested additional volunteers. Mr. Murray volunteered, making a total of six for the executive committee with the new addition of Pat Stevenson as Vice Chair. Mr. Tweit moved to adopt the list of six members for the executive committee. Mr. Daily seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Strategic Plan Accomplishment Update: Mr. Bush summarized the progress made in tracking strategic plan accomplishments for Tiers 1-3, noting that the council is on track for accomplishing tasks as set forth in their two-year work plan. The council provided feedback, suggesting that a more detailed overview of accomplishments could be shared once or twice a year.

Meeting Minute Approval: No additions or corrections were requested for the previous meetings minutes from September 2016. Bill Tweit moved to APPROVE the September 2016 minutes, as amended to update the attendance list by removing Shaun Seaman (he noted difficulty in attending by phone and dropped off the call during the last meeting). John Gamon SECONDED. The Council unanimously APPROVED the September 2016 minutes.

Pacific Education Institute / Margaret Tudor

Margaret Tudor provided an overview of the PEI Invasive Species Education Plan's recommendations for 2017-19. She shared that the goal is to bring awareness to classrooms that may be using invasive species regarding responsible use and disposal of organisms. Other efforts include a new program – Career Connected Learning – that will use tools from WISC in tandem with STEM and other science programs. She promoted FieldSTEM, an extension to STEM and CCL that aims to create an integrated learning model. The program uses real professionals as examples for teachers to share with students who are planning STEM careers. Embedding invasive species prevention continues to be a priority for PEI

programs. Kathryn Kurtz, the new PEI Executive Director, emphasized Ms. Tudor’s message, encouraging the council to reach out, participate, and share opportunities for PEI education and engagement.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at the meeting.

Next Steps

The next meeting will be held March 23, 2017 at the Natural Resources Building in Olympia. The location may change; current information may be found at: <http://www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/meetings.shtml>.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Minutes approved by:



Ray Willard, Chair

March 23, 2017

Date