

DRAFT

Minutes – Invasive Plant Council
Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 1-3 pm

Attendees: Victoria Wallace (UConn), Jatinder Aulakh (CAES), Bill Moorehead (CT DEEP), Bryan Connolly (IPANE)

Absent: Dustyn Nelson (CNLA), Denise Savageau (Environmental Planner/non-profit environment association), Darryl Newman (Planter's Choice Nursery, LLC), Connie Trolle (Bantam Lake Protection Association), Eileen Underwood (Dept. of Ag)

Non-voting attendees: Lauren Kurtz (UConn)

A. Call to order. Victoria Wallace called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes: October 18, 2023

- **No quorum - will vote to approve October and February meeting minutes at the next meeting (6/20/2024)**

C. Updates from Council members

J. Aulakh: Introduced himself to new members. Weed scientist at CT Agricultural Experiment Station - invasive plant management, nursery weed management, Christmas tree farm weed management, and herbicide resistance research. No update from experiment station.

B. Moorehead: A new second state botanist/ecologist, Vince Long, who previously worked at DEEP working on hazardous materials/site assessment/emergency responses of hazardous materials joined the Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) group. Another biologist (Anna) will be hired on Feb 23rd - has an animal background. DEEP gets a lot of inquiries from the public about invasive plants (especially bamboo) in yards.

B. Connolly: New IPANE representative to IPC. Background in ecology and horticulture; State botanist in Mass for 6 years. Former member of Mass Invasive Plant Advisory Group. Former president of New England Botanical Society. Currently, Eastern CT University Botany professor. Does ad hoc surveying and thinks he saw a new Mile-a-Minute population in Columbia, CT; reports on iNaturalist and other places. Has many undergraduate students who are interested in getting involved in research projects or other opportunities for student credit.

V. Wallace: Applied for and received a mini grant to complete a needs assessment to inform the development of an Invasive Plant Certificate Program, which is ongoing. Group has completed three focus groups (CT Nursery and Landscape Association, CIPWG, Master Gardeners) and ongoing surveys to compile information to help develop this certificate over time. Attending and educating at many tradeshows, presentations, extension events, and other outreach events this time of year.

L. Kurtz: Working with DEEP Fisheries department on reviewing Aquatic Invasive Species grant proposals. Meeting with DEEP Wildlife NDDDB 2/15. Has met with Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Office of Aquatics Invasive Species to get more involved with the work they are doing.

Old Business

V. Wallace: Invasive plant list has not been updated for 6 years. CT Environmental Committee (EC) has to vote on it and bring it to the legislature in order to update the list. Vickie asked EC to move to reinstate the statute that individual municipalities be exempt from invasive plant restrictions, which expired in 2014. The IPC has recommended jurisdiction at the state level so there is less confusion for people doing business. Current legislative session is 2/7/24-5/8/24.

Questions and Discussion

- National Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) state permits protecting state-listed species (including plants and animals, but not fungi and bryophytes) are completed before applying for pesticide permits through the pesticide management division of DEEP. Some NDDDB requirements include habitat surveys to determine if state-listed species are present, or historic data and maps are used to determine critical habitats and presence of state-listed species. Best Management Practices are recommended to applicants so they can reduce their impact to listed species in the area. DEEP NDDDB requires pre-protection measures, such as allowing a certain buffer between the known occurrences of state-listed species and treatment area, reduced concentrations of herbicides that do not affect non-target species, selective herbicides, etc. NDDDB permit process takes around two months. Aquatic pesticide NDDDB applications critical timeframe and busy time is now through the growing season. NDDDB request system was revamped about a year ago to streamline the process and speed up approval.
- What is a state-listed species?
 - Three categories - special concern, threatened, and endangered. 'Endangered' is less than five occurrences, 'threatened' is less than nine occurrences, 'special concern' is roughly between 10 and 20 occurrences in the state.
 - Do you have a list of species that are endangered, threatened, or special concern in Connecticut? Yes – see [Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Plants at portal.ct.gov](https://portal.ct.gov/Endangered,Threatened,andSpecialConcernPlants)

New Business

- **2024 Meeting dates and times:**
 - Thursday, June 20, 2-4 pm; Wednesday, October 16, 2-4

Announcements – none

Meeting adjourned at 1:50 pm