

***DRAFT***

Minutes – Invasive Plants Council

Wednesday, June 18, 2025, 2-4 pm

Attendees: Victoria Wallace (UConn), Jatinder Aulakh (CAES), Bill Moorehead (CT DEEP), Bryan Connolly (IPANE), Dustyn Nelson (CNLA), Denise Savageau (Environmental Planner/non-profit environment association)

Absent: Darryl Newman (Planter's Choice Nursery, LLC), Simon Levesque (Dept. of Ag),

Non-voting attendees: Lauren Kurtz (Invasive Species Outreach Specialist - UConn), Alyssa Siegel-Miles (Program Assistant - UConn), Jacob Ricker (CAES), Raffaella Natri (CAES), Chris Valley (Prides Corner), Paul Larson (CT Farm Bureau)

A. Call to order. Victoria Wallace called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes: **October 16, 2024**

October 16, 2024, D. Savageau calls motion, B. Connolly seconds; Motion passes

C. Updates from Council members

**J. Aulakh:** Continued Japanese knotweed research. Best control seen with higher percent glyphosate; inconsistent results overall. Research included stem injection and cut stem techniques. Milestone herbicide more effective on mugwort when applied mid-summer, with significant rhizome kill compared to fall treatment. Working on herbicide-resistant weeds (horseweed) and investigating resistance mechanisms.

**D. Savageau:** CT River Coastal Conservation District invasive species pamphlet being updated and reprinted by fall. Shared details from the Long Island Sound Partnership's updated CCMP (Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan): Focus on healthy watersheds, forest stewardship, riparian buffer protection. Includes input from UConn Extension faculty, Tom Worthley. \$40M/year in federal estuary funding will support related implementation. Reported that two new CT climate resilience bills emphasize nature-based solutions. These may direct additional resources toward invasive species management and biodiversity preservation. National Estuary Program funding is one of few programs to not be cut from the federal budget in upcoming legislation. CT State General Assembly passed two important bills on climate resiliency. Both focused on nature-based solutions.

**B. Moorhead:** Initiated internal agency discussions on sterile hybrid policies. Will represent DEEP in official capacity in future deliberations on this topic.

**B. Connolly:** No report.

**D. Nelson:** No report.

**V. Wallace:** UConn leadership changes: Collect of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources Dean Indrajeet Chaubey and Plant Science and Landscape Architecture Department Head Sydney Everhart are both resigning from their positions this month. Interim replacements named Associate Dean Kumar Venkitanarayanan and Professor Julia Kuzovkina respectively, starting

July 2025. Invasive Plant Coordinator (Lauren's) funding uncertain beyond November 2025. Sydney Everhart reached out to DEEP and CAES about sources of continued funding for Invasive Plant Coordinator. No funding has been identified for this position and it might not be continued if a funding source is not identified. There is a hiring freeze at UConn for faculty and staff due to budget shortfalls.

IPM team approved for Year 2 grant funding. Developing invasive plant certificate program. Nursery survey indicates decline in invasive plant sales compared to 2006–07; more data from recent survey will be available later this year. School grounds IPM workshop in July and Native Plant and Pollinator conference in November 2025.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Sterile cultivar exemption enforcement challenges:**

**V. Wallace:** Continued conversations about sterile cultivar exemptions of prohibited invasive species. Questions remain on specifics of sterile cultivar allowances, enforcement, labeling, and sterile cultivar identification. Potential collaboration with CAES nursery inspectors warrants further conversations. Enforcement feasibility and labeling requirements are still under review. Will need input from the Department of Agriculture and others.

**Department of Agriculture:** No current representative attending meetings. Outreach to Department and Commissioner Hurlburt to identify a new point of contact.

### **New Business:**

HB 5013 An act adding certain plants to the invasive plant list - passed the house and senate, now public act PA 25-126.

- **Star-of-Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum umbellatum L.*)** immediately prohibited from sale.
- **Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), winged euonymus (*Euonymus alatus*), Glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), European privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), miscanthus (*Miscanthus sinensis*)** –prohibited from sale with a 3-year phase out period (effective October 1<sup>st</sup> 2028).
- **Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*)** prohibited from sale with a 5-year phase out period (effective October 1<sup>st</sup> 2030).

Sterile cultivars exemptions were not mentioned in the final bill; timeline set to develop related recommendations no later than January 2028. Earlier recommendations (before next legislative session in 2026) are preferable to avoid economic disturbances to the nursery industry.

- CIPWG subcommittee researching how other states in the Northeast, handle sterile cultivar exemptions. Findings to be shared with CIPWG Steering Committee in October, then relayed to IPC for further recommendation to the legislature. Possibility of additional species being added to the CIPWG research list; CIPWG continuing to monitor and research. Will provide an update for the October meeting regarding if plants on the research list should be recommended to be added to the Invasive Plant List.

- Further discussion on sterile cultivar exemptions and sustainable funding for Invasive Plant Coordinator position scheduled for October meeting.
- **V. Wallace** seeking a new candidate for IPC chair to replace herself as chair. Nominations to be sent to **V. Wallace**.
- Chris Valley (Prides Corner Farms) will replace Daryl Newman as the representative for a company that grows or sells flowers and plants, pending formal approval from the CT minority leader of the House of Representatives.

**Next meeting:** October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 2-4pm

**Meeting adjourned at 3:11 pm**