

**Illinois Invasive Species Management
Terrestrial Plants Committee
June 29, 2021
9:00AM**

Present: Chris Evans, Kellie Schmidt, Evan Barker, Aaron Hager, Tom Tiddens, Cathy Ward, Kelly Neal, Dan Connelly, Kim Shearer, Clair Ryan, Philip Cox

Agenda

- 1. Introductions** – Round the room introducing each person’s role and reason they have joined the committee.
- 2. Review of Past IISPC Efforts** – Chris Evans gave a brief overview of the efforts that have taken place in the past to manage invasive species (see attached pdf of the presentation)
- 3. Current Council Format / Bylaws** – Kellie Schmidt walked the group through the IISC bylaws document and reviewed the list of Governing Council members (see attachments)
- 4. Discussion of Committee Objectives**
 - a. Develop, implement and review Assessment Protocols for each species under review. Species listing recommendations from the IISC shall be based on the IISC Assessment Protocols. The protocols are designed to provide clear direction and processes for recommendations, evaluation, monitoring, or regulation of species across the four Committee categories as identified below;
 - b. Provide direction and recommendations to the IISC Board;
 - c. Collaborate and facilitate the development and/or distribution of educational materials and resources; and
 - d. The Committee Chair person shall be a member of the IISC Board and shall present recommendations and address any questions of the Board.

Questions Posed by Committee Members

- If the committee makes recommendations to the board about a plant being added to the exotic species list or the noxious weed list, who would take that forward? Does the council take that forward to the state legislature?
 - o We briefly discussed both lists and how those lists are updated. The committee would recommend to council, council would vote and then would make a recommendation to DNR and DOA about why those plants should be added to the list and how we came to that conclusion.
 - o We discussed the option for updating education/awareness pieces that could be a first step before adding plants to the list for regulation. We don’t want our actions as a committee to be only about working on regulating plants. We want to be sure that we’re also looking at opportunities for educating the public and moving the needle in a positive way on terrestrial plants.
- Is there already a written assessment protocol that we can draw on and use or do we need to develop something?
 - o During the formation of the council, we talked about the Ohio assessment, but we aren’t tied to that. We can make decisions as a committee about how species can be assessed and develop a protocol that works for Illinois. Ohio can be a starting point.
 - o We definitely need to have an assessment protocol in place for Illinois so that definitely needs to be an action item for the committee.

- **Follow-up Item:** Claire Ryan will create a table that compares all of the models being used by the Midwest states.
- Do we want a protocol that has a quantitative outcome (numeric score) or one that is a lit review with decisions made by group discussion?
- **QUESTION FOR COUNCIL:** Do we have a forum for sharing documents as a committee? Ex: Google Docs, Dropbox, Sharepoint, etc.
 - At present we do not have something setup, but we will ask the Council what they would like all committees to use so there is one central place for all information to be housed.
- Do we want a list of plants that are “plants with invasive tendencies” that could be used for education/awareness? We have had those types of lists developed by a group of botanists in the past.
- That could be helpful for education/awareness as it would help to influence supply/demand without regulation or before regulation had to take place. Missouri has a top 25 plants to watch list.
- It would be important to differentiate the list between plants that are relevant in the landscape space vs plants that are an issue in natural spaces. Ex: There is no demand for giant hogweed.
- Have to think about usefulness with lists that are created and how they are to be used?
- How will we allow for exemptions relative to regulation in the future so that varieties of regulated species can be exempted? Breeders are creating varieties that behave differently than the regulated species and there needs to be a protocol for the cultivar. What does that look like? What data would be required to demonstrate that the cultivar is behaving differently than its parent?
- At present, the act states that a breeder would have to apply for an exemption from DNR for the cultivar to be allowed. Fineline buckthorn was petitioned to be exempted but it was not granted because there was insufficient data submitted to prove that it behaved differently than the parent.
- May also want to consider there be a watch period for any exemptions that would be granted.
- Anything that would be regulated or recommended for regulation would need to be phased out over time (a period of 2-5 years), as other states are doing.
- Question about production/dissemination of materials – How successful was this in the first round of the council? How successful can our effort be if everything we do has to be approved by a governing council? What are the current education/awareness efforts being done and how successful are they (DNR, Extension, etc.)
 - What we recommend/suggest may be building on what Extension and DNR are already doing vs starting new things that can’t be sustained.
 - Can we create easy to share campaigns like “Plant this not that” as we’re seeing in other states? These could be disseminated through the various stakeholder groups to help spread the word.
- **Follow-up Item:** Kellie will compile examples of many of the different communication/awareness/education pieces that are being used in other states to share at the next committee meeting.

5. Other Business

- a. Propose a change to the [Exotic Weeds Act](#) from the species listed in the act to the listed in the administrative rule, similar to how it is done in the [Noxious Weed Law](#). Having species listed in administrative rule would make it easier to make corrections when necessary. Example: A big box store selling *Frangula alnus*, which just changed from *Rhamnus frangula* (honest mistake due to the name change).

- b. Create a brochure to give businesses that mistakenly sell plants listed in the acts, and/or handout before as a preventative measure.

6. Action Plan / Timeline / Next Meeting

- a. Can we take an action item to the Council that a Google Docs folder should be established for committee to have one place to review materials?
- b. Review current protocols for the Midwestern states and develop one that will work best for Illinois. Do we want our protocol to be driven by a numeric score or committee discussion?
- c. Create a watch list for educational/awareness purposes that could help communicate invasive tendencies (especially with plants commonly used in the landscape)
- d. Develop contemporary reporting mechanisms for both invasive species sales violations and new invader infestations.
- e. Explore other states' communication/outreach tactics to see what could be implemented in Illinois

Attachments:

- a. List of Invasive Plants Council Members
- b. Invasive Species Council Bylaws
- c. List of Terrestrial Plants Committee Members
- d. Review of Past IISPC efforts Presentation by Chris Evans