

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Office of Invasive Species Coordination

Fifth Floor

625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-1052

Phone: 518-402-9148 • **Fax:** 518-402-8925

Website: www.dec.ny.gov



Alexander B. Grannis
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Invasive Species Council
FROM: Steve Sanford
RE: January 29 Meeting Notes

DATE: 3 February 2009

The 4th Meeting of the New York Invasive Species Council was held at the Agriculture & Markets Headquarters on Thursday, January 29. Eight of the 9 member agencies were represented:

Jackie Moody-Czub, Co-Chair, DAM
Chris Amato, DEC, Co-Chair, DEC
Mary Ivey, DOT
John Wimbush, DOS
Kurt Weiskotten, Thruway Authority
Pam Otis, OPRHP
Dan Spada, APA (and Curt Stiles on conference phone)
Howard Goebel, Canal Corporation

The Council was joined by several members from the New York Invasive Species Advisory Committee:

Jim Hood, NYISAC Chair, NYSFOLA, Lake George association
Troy Weldy, The Nature Conservancy
Beth Seme, Council of Agricultural Organizations / NYS Turfgrass Association
Meg Wilkinson, NY Natural Heritage Program
Laura McCarthy, Audubon New York
Hilary Smith, TNC / Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program
Nicole Willis, NY Farm Bureau (on conference phone)

Brian Nearing, Science & Environment reporter for the Albany Times-Union newspaper attended the first half of the meeting.

In a departure from the Council's first three meetings, this meeting was not webcast. This decision was made after receiving a legal opinion from DEC's Office of General Counsel that the Council was exempt from the requirements of Executive Order # 3. In light of the constrained budget environment, the Department cannot support discretionary expenditures.

The Council worked its way through the entire Agenda as planned. Unsurprisingly, the Spending and Budget items garnered substantial attention. There was also considerable interest in recent invasions, especially Asian Long-horn Beetle in both Staten Island and Massachusetts. Following are some of the key discussion points and deliverables:

1. Council Processes

The Council agreed to discuss, at our next meeting, how it might advise the Governor's office on budget matters. This discussion would also help the Council to clarify its mission, roles, and decision-making procedures. In the same vein, the Council will clarify the assistance it needs from the Advisory Committee.

Before the next meeting, OISC will take the lead on a) developing some alternatives regarding the Council's communication with the Governor's Office and b) getting legal advice on this topic.

2. Four-tier Lists

OISC Regulatory Coordinator Dave Adams presented an update on the progress of the Four-tier List report development. He will be asking Council members to comment upon the process, timeline and a "tool" that is designed to objectively assess the potential invasivity of plants. Ultimately, the concepts in this tool will be adapted for use with animals and also to evaluate social values. A formal request will be e-mailed shortly.

3. Voluntary Codes of Conduct

The *Voluntary Codes of Conduct for Government* were first discussed at Meeting # 2. The Council agreed to try to accomplish internal agency review by early March so that the Council could potentially announce its adoption of the Codes in time for Earth Day 2009 (late April). *Draft Codes*, along with annotations that relate them to Title 17 (ECL Article 9-17, New York Invasive Species Council), have been distributed to Council members by OISC Director Steve Sanford. Although the *Codes* were originally developed to guide the use of plants, the *Draft* expands their scope to include animals as well.

4. Economic Stimulus Projects

Many agencies have already responded to requests for projects that could be funded through a federal economic stimulus package. "Phase I" proposals have generally focused on conventional infrastructure construction projects. Although the first package has not been finalized, many anticipate additional opportunities. In order to prepare for future opportunities, both the Council

and the Advisory Committee will develop lists of potential projects; each project would be described conceptually with a rough estimate of its cost. A formal request will be e-mailed shortly.

5. Eradication Grant Strategy

The Council reviewed the past and current delivery of the eradication grants. Discussion focused on ways to increase the strategic benefit of the program. One specific recommendation was to enable the use of grant funds for follow-up monitoring. Members agreed to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

6. Next Meeting

Co-Chairs Moody-Czub and Amato will schedule Meeting # 5 about 3 months from now. An inquiry for available dates will be e-mailed soon.

Potential agenda items discussed include:

- Discussion of Council processes (as described above)
- Update on Asian Long-horn Beetle invasions and responses (invite Jerry Carlson)
- Continue discussion on eradication grant strategy
- Invasive Species Research Institute (invite Holly Menninger)
- Budget & Spending

Although these notes are not intended as complete minutes *per se*, I would welcome any corrections or suggested additions.

SJS