



**Nebraska Invasive Species Council
Meeting Minutes**

December 13, 2024

**Turpin Outdoor Education Center
4703 N 44th St, Lincoln, NE 68504**

Online Meeting Link: <https://outdoornebraska.zoom.us/j/96975885516>

Meeting ID: 969 7588 5516

Voting Members Present:

Justin King
Trevor Johnson
Jon Nikkila
Dennis Schroeder
Kris Stahr
Kim Stuhr
Kim Todd
Jon Spurgeon

Voting Members Absent:

Steven Jara
Brent Meyer
John Thorburn

Non-Voting Members Present:

Travis Connot
Ritch Nelson

Non-Voting Members Absent:

Chris Helzer
Justin Krahulik
David Nielsen

Advisory Support Members Present:

Jeremy Gehle
Carson Jones
Kassie Karssen
Mitch Renteria
Gary Stone
James Thiele

Advisory Support Members Absent:

Natalia Bjorklund
Lorri Grueber
Mike Koenig
Bret Schomer
T.J. Walker
Jennifer Weisbrod

Guests Present:

Keith Koupal
Josh Nelson
Jena Paugels
Blayne Renner
Rob Schultz

1. Call to order – Stahr called the meeting to order at 10:01 am CST.
2. Review and approval of [November 2024 Meeting Minutes](#) – Schroeder moved to approve the minutes, Todd seconded, motion carried.
3. Council member/supporter updates:

Stahr – 11 full-time (40 hours/week at \$17.45/hour) temporary positions have been posted for the Aquatic Invasive Species Program. Position duties include watercraft inspection, zebra mussel veliger detection sampling, aquatic invasive species education and outreach, and aquatic vegetation management. Positions are 3 to 7 months with flexible start and end dates.

J. Nelson – NWCA hosted a noxious weed information booth at the Nebraska Ag Expo from December 10-12 at the Sandhills Global Event Center in Lincoln. 830 exhibitors from 27 states and 6 Canadian provinces participated in the expo. Working on year-end reports due to Johnson.

Karssen – One new staff member joined the Wood River office while two others left, so their job duties have been distributed among current team members.

Todd – Received a USDA-NRCS grant for BYF, which was used to hire a website editor, Brock Lore. For grant, BYF uses NRCS practice standards weaved into the urban environment. There is a new monthly newsletter from BYF. The goal is for the new BYF website to be a hub of consistent information for central and local southeast NE. BYF is also posting 90-second reels on Facebook and Instagram. If any councilmembers have ideas for reels or the newsletter, they can provide information to Todd. BYF will also have a new intern starting January 2025 that will work 20 hours/week. BYF is also considering applying for another grant to expand on education and outreach.

Schultz – NWCA counties are working on state reports for NDA. Johnson is working on an updated weed watchlist with Helzer and Dunn. The 2025 watchlist will be revised per region. Preparing for the next legislative session in January. Attended some recent farm shows. There will be education opportunities for weed county superintendents at NACO in Kearney on December 18-20, 2024, the annual conference in Kearney on February 3-5, 2025, and the spring training in Norfolk on March 25-27, 2025.

Nikkila – Serving on City Council in Kearney, please reach out if you need municipal support.

Schroeder – Volunteered at the Nebraska Ag Expo. There were over one thousand attendees.

King – Imported fish screens from Germany are back on-site after an invasive insect concern and will be installed next summer.

R. Nelson – NRCS gave NCPP grant to Rainwater Basin Joint Venture of \$25 million to work on eastern redcedar invasion on grasslands through the central part of the state.

Stone – Dr. Mitch Stevenson, UNL Range Specialist, is putting together a cheatgrass meeting towards the end of January in 2025. Will get more information and solid date to forward to the Council in case members are interested in attending. [An article](#) came out in UNL Cropwatch on December 5, 2024, about drone requirements related to the Nebraska Pesticide Act to answer commonly asked questions related to drone use and pesticide applications. UNL Extension also created a [factsheet](#).

4. [Nebraska Invasive Species Awareness Week Proclamation](#) – Paugels prepared a new proclamation with the new dates suggested by the Council to include both terrestrial and aquatic species. If any council members have suggestions or feedback, please provide them by the next meeting on January 10.
5. [Voting Member \(Governor-Appointed\) Applications](#) – Smith requested that all voting members fill out and submit the application to the Governor’s Office by Friday, December 20, 2025. There is no deadline, but the sooner applications are submitted, the sooner members can be appointed. Once voting members apply, please email Smith to let her know.
6. [NISC Member Renewal Term Survey](#) and Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson Nominations – Smith received 19 completed surveys from current members and will reach out to those who haven’t submitted a survey to determine if they still want to remain on the Council next year. The new chairperson is Trevor Johnson, and the Vice-Chairperson is Justin King. Their terms will run for two years beginning 1/1/2025 through 12/31/2027.
7. [2024 Annual Report](#) – Smith will submit the final draft of the annual report by 4 PM today, so please be sure edits or changes are sent over by 3 PM.
8. Interagency Response Chart Workgroup – January 2025 – Smith wants to begin working on the interagency response chart next month to determine what individuals/agencies/organizations are responsible for specific invasive species-related issues and which federal/state rules/regulations apply in different situations. She requests that council members consider joining this workgroup next month, preferably those involved in state/federal agencies. The workgroup will meet virtually/in-person at a frequency determined by the workgroup members. Duties on the workgroup will include researching federal/state laws related to invasive species management, contacting federal/state organizations to determine individual contacts for specific invasive species-related information.
9. Website Content Update Workgroup – January 2025 – Smith will also begin a workgroup to determine content for updated NISC website based on the Council’s goals and objectives for a public audience. The workgroup will meet virtually/in-person at a frequency determined by the workgroup members. Duties will include determining relevant content/information to go on updated website related to NISC goals and objectives to educate public on invasive species awareness and related issues.

10. Next meeting date – Friday, January 10, 2025, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm CST – Nebraska Department of Transportation, 1500 Nebraska Pkwy, Lincoln, NE 68502.

11. Goals/objectives for next meeting:

- a. Establish Interagency Response Chart Workgroup
- b. Establish Website Content Update Work Group
- c. Determine possible candidates to fill UNL representative position

12. Adjourn – Stahr adjourned the meeting at 10:50 CST, Johnson seconded, motion carried.