

Nebraska Invasive Species Advisory Council

Meeting Notes

Date: Friday, December 13, 2019 **Time:** 10:00AM-12:00 PM

Location: Hardin Hall Room 901, 3310 Holdrege St. Lincoln, NE 68583, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

I. Coordination with the Nebraska Nursery and Landscape Association (NNLA)

- Allison Zach recently presented at the NNLA conference and was asked if the Council could provide nursery and landscape retailers with options to suggest as better alternatives to problematic species. Often retailers are told not to sell a certain species but not told what they can sell as a suitable alternative instead of that species.
- Kim Todd suggested that retailers reach out to UNL extension to have them provide them with recommendations on alternative species to sell
 - Kim stated that creeping lily turf is a problematic plant that should be avoided. She stated it spreads through seed and through rhizomes. It was planted near a residence hall at UNL, and it is spreading into the turf adjacent to where it was planted. It is proving to be difficult to remove. The plant has been banned in the south
 - There is native and non-native Scouring rush. The non-native can be difficult to control and scouring rush is being used in landscape plantings which is a concern

II. Create a 2-page fact sheet or rack card to publicize the invasive species council

- The purpose of the document is to educate various audiences on what the Council is and what it does
- Allison Zach will draft the document and send out to members before the January Council meeting

III. Invasive species council annual report discussion item

- John Thorburn asked if the council's annual report should reference items in the council's adaptive management plan. He asked if the council has made recommendations for regulations to resource agencies in the past
- Chris Helzer stated that resource agencies are members of the Council and formal recommendations for actions agencies should take have not been made in the past
- Allison Zach will revise the report and submit it to the Governor and Legislative Ag. Committee and place it on the program's website here:
<https://neinvasives.com/2019%20Invasive%20Species%20Council%20Legislative%20Report.pdf>

IV. The Weed Watch List

- In 2000 the weed watch list was created by Mitch Coffin (Nebraska Dept of Ag.) and Chris Helzer (The Nature Conservancy) in a brainstorm session. At the time there was a noxious weed advisory committee in place. The first list had saltcedar on it as it had been found in southern Nebraska
- The Weed Watch list is seen as a recommendation to weed control authorities and the Nebraska Dept of Ag. This council creates the list annually listing invasive plant species to track acres of their occurrence which can be used to list or delist species as noxious weeds
- The weed watch list makes weed control authorities aware of invasive species to keep an eye out for and increase their awareness of those species
- Saltcedar was one of the first plant species to be removed from the weed watch list. Not all counties use the weed watch list as many of the species on it are not noxious weeds. The watch list is not even recognized in the noxious weed law and counties do not have to use it

- The watch list is a valuable tool to collect data for rapid response to evaluate whether a plant species is a problem in an ecoregion level
- 75% of counties use the watch list and report acres of species to the Nebraska Dept of Ag. annually
- The Nebraska Statute allows the Secretary of Agriculture to add weeds to be noxious at the state or county level. The weed control Assoc. enforces the county noxious weeds not the Dept of Ag.
- To make a plant species a noxious weed a local hearing must be held and forms to be completed. The Dept of Ag has not denied any noxious weeds that were brought forth. Mitch Coffin is the contact person regarding noxious weeds at the Nebraska Dept of Ag
 - There are currently 10 county listed noxious weeds in Nebraska
- **Edits to weed watch list:**
 - Shortgrass ecoregion: add Medusa head and ventenata are 2 future species for short grass ecoregion-add as future species. These species are in Wyoming-Gary Stone and Mitch were on a to you-weed associations have
 - Common mullein was discussed-in July and August is when Mitch Coffin hears about it-it is not hard to control at the rosette stage. The species has been in Nebraska since 1890. In CRP plantings heard that it is where it establishes early it can keep CRP from establishing-Forest fires go through then you find common Mullen
 - Poison hemlock is changing how it acts is being more invasive but will not be put on the watch list at this time
 - Chris Helzer stated that common mullein research is needed by UNL Extension or someone in the pan handle. The data we have from the weed watch list is at a county level and does not have any questions. Research question mentioned included does common mullein go away over time in CRP
 - Learning how to kill it is important
 - Communication with people is needed-Cheyenne county is listing it as noxious
 - Mitch Stevenson in Scottsbluff and Cody Inevinor from UNL are good contacts to discuss research on common mullein along with Cody Nevin
 - A Neb guide could be helpful
 - Sandhills ecoregion-Cherry County has yellow bedstraw, and it is moved in hay. Have not seen it spread people are worried about it and have been tracking it and how it acts if it acts. It has not become the monster it could be so far. They are reducing it but have not eradicated it.
 - April is what you should start looking for infested acres of Eastern redcedar
 - Mixed grass ecoregion-sulfur cinquefoil-spotty not really hear about spread. In the east we see it a lot and cannot allow hay that goes out of state Brent wants to leave it on. It is not that hard to control. Reports in Garden county-common and Cutleaf teasel is not too bad
 - Tall grass prairie ecoregion-
 - Autumn olive- in southern Lancaster County it is past the point of watch list. Craig Allen, we know it is a problem. There is a biological control for Russian and autumn olive which controls their seeds that is being tested and could be available in the future.
 - Backyard winter show Kim Todd could include a segment on Autumn olive and include other species like Osage orange to highlight invasive species in SE Nebraska
 - Black & Russian Knapweed- have been found in Seward County in a field and under a pine tree someone planted
 - Saint John's Wort-there is a lot of it out there is it still catchable or is it now established? It will remain on the watch list for 2020
 - **Garlic mustard-will be moved to the established category** –annual burning can be used for control

- Wintercreeper is not on the watch list. It is used as an ornamental in landscape planting, but it reverts when it goes vertical. When it reverts, it gets a seed crop, and it does not have purple leaves. It can escape landscapes and in parks that are not mowed. The plant is an evergreen, and it has green leaves and purple-broadleaf evergreen
 - Backyard farmer could include this species in a segment with euyonomous and autumn olive
- Oriental bittersweet-Kim unable to ID it not sure if it is a problem-Mitch Coffin can tell the Council how many acres have been reported over the years in the weed watch list reports

V. Council Member Updates

- Kim Todd the Nebraska turf conference starts on Jan 6th and will email out the information to the council
- Steven Jara-The forest service is having events at prairie pines and horning with winter hikes. They finished hiring the fire and forest bureau chief-Head of the bureau with a complete reorganization in the same bureau in the forest health side and position open for a community and forest health chief. Goals to get boots out on the ground and partnerships with NRDs. Some people left and retired but the focus is on successional planning currently to collect knowledge before they leave. The new Forest and Fire Chief is Adam Smith. Forest products need a new person.
- Craig Allen's lab has been sampling roadsides in southern Lancaster County for Autumn olive and recorded a ton of Eastern redcedar (ERC). They documented 200 ERC per acre along with honey locust. The new Resilience center at UNL has 3 hires in process. For the ecological economic person, they received 72 apps and evaluated 10 people to choose 1. There is a position for a spatial resilience person in the School of Natural Resources and that search is underway and a third person on social science side will be coming soon
- Justin King-found and noticed spiny naiad in Sutherland reservoir will see next year if it is still as bad. Concern with power plant, if the naiad floated into the pump houses it could plug it up.
- Brent Meyer-weed superintendents had a conference in Kearney, NE and had a booth at the Power farmer conference at the Lancaster Co event center. The power farming show spans 9.2 acres and has 900 vendors. An initial meeting was held for planning the 2021 NAISMA conference in Lincoln. In January he will hire 7 people for inspectors for Lancaster County doing inspections-city side and the noxious weed inspections.
- Mitch Coffin lost an inspector early in the season and is transforming 3 people to cover 4 people's work and need to look at how they do things. Field staff are still doing inspections focusing on some mapping on upland phragmites stands. Looking at a few specific areas. The weed of Nebraska book is on sale as a new book is in production and contains some newer photos and added 35 pages total. Dept of admin services were not even allowed to bid it out had to use the State and UNL print shop, and it has taken 1.5 years to get it printed
- John Thorburn-middle Niobrara NRD is doing work on eastern redcedar taking them out of pastures and chipping them and putting them into sandy soils to build them up. Transporting the trees is an issue in several locations in Northern Nebraska. Craig Allen was wondering if the wood would raise soil pH negatively.
- Jonathan Nikkila-Callery pear is on the not recommended planting list in Kearney, NE
- Chris Helzer-needs help to fight leafy spurge on Niobrara. He asked if the biological control would work on it in the Sandhills. Mitch Coffin stated that

it depends on which bio control insect like the sandy soils-there is a lot of leafy spurge in the northeast and north part of the state. Doug Smith in Dixon County died and Scott Erthum is heading it up now. He has been watching smooth sumac in Sandhills and close to the river they see a lot of it on The Nature Conservancy properties. He is trying to get Dan Udan to look at remote sensing data to see over time how smooth sumac has been spreading-start looking at helicopter control of it. Trying to figure out how to not impact plant diversity by treating deeper rooted clones at the center of the infestation and then not treating the outside of the plant. 24D and Glyphosate or spiked pellets could work for control

- Wildfire came through in 2012 wiped out Niobrara preserve, and a student fellow wrote up a management plan-forest service planted some trees but now they want to get pines on the slope and will do some planting with larger trees

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