

## **Summary of Pennsylvania Governor's Invasive Species Council Meeting Minutes June 8, 2021**

1. Temple University and the Allegheny Plateau Invasive Plant Management Area (APIPMA) cooperative have been officially appointed by Governor Wolf as new members of the Council. Jocelyn Behm is the primary member representing temple with Matt Helmus and Amy Freestone serving as alternates. Maddie Stanisch is the primary member for APIPMA, with an alternate to be appointed soon.

2. Invasive Species Listing Committee, Andrew Rohrbaugh and Sean Hartzell

Results from the PISC survey to prioritize a list of 150+ invasive plants have been compiled. This list, along with additional relevant information will be sent to all PISC members and the Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee (CPNWC). Using this list, the Listing committee will work next on developing a top 25 list of invasive plants and a list of early detection plant species to recommend the CPNWC consider as soon as possible. Methods for communicating these lists to the public and program managers, etc. need to be determined. More species assessments need to be conducted and reviewed, particularly economic impact assessments.

Sean Hartzell has complete more aquatic invasive species assessments; see minutes for details.

3. PRISM Program Committee, Kris Abell

General background information on the PRISM program was presented. See minutes for details. The committee has nearly finished drafting all sections of a PRISM program implementation plan for Pennsylvania. The next step will be to combine these sections into one organized cohesive document. A new PRISM subcommittee will be formed to accomplish this.

4. Legislative Committee, Mike Nerozzi

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania has committed to hosting a legislative hearing on invasive species and funding a PRISM program in PA. We are working to develop and finalize a speaker list for the hearing.

5. Communications Committee, Deb Klenotic

We developed content and social media for National Invasive Species Awareness Week. Next, we will begin work on developing a PISC Newsletter. The target audience will be leaders, decision and policy makers, educators, etc. We believe this audience niche is the best fit for PISC to reach. We ask that PISC members keep us updated on any appropriate info or projects to include in the newsletter. The newsletter will be published quarterly to coincide with PISC quarterly meetings.

6. Grants Committee, Felicia Lamphere

We have finished compiling a list of invasive species related grants from federal, state and other sources. Our next objective is to post the list on the PISC website. We ask PISC members to pass along other grant opportunities to help further develop the list.

7. Invasive Species Reporting Vanity Phone Number Proposal, Sara Stahlman

PISC approved of creating a new vanity number, 1-833-INVASIV to provide a more memorable way to report invasive species. Creation of this new number will work in conjunction with all preexisting hotline numbers. Kris Abell will coordinate with PDA Telecoms office to establish the vanity number.

8. Invasive Species Management Plan Advisory Workgroup Proposal, Jeff Wagner

Jeff reintroduced the proposal to create a new workgroup composed of members primarily outside of PISC to increase capacity and expand expertise to address objectives of the Pennsylvania Invasive Species Management Plan. There was substantial discussion about the merits of the proposal. Refer to minutes for details. Decision on the proposal was tabled to allow Council members to submit written comments in support or opposition to the proposal. These comments will be reviewed and the proposal amended accordingly with the intention of reaching a final decision on the proposal at our next meeting on September 7.

9. Presentation on the Invasive New Zealand Mudsail in Pennsylvania, Sean Hartzell

Numerous new reports and observations of New Zealand Mudsail have been made recently. Refer to meeting minutes for full details as well as important background information. Currently the best actions to be taken are education and outreach and encouraging reporting in order to document and monitor the extent of its distribution in PA.

10. Weed-Free Straw and Hay Certification Program, Kris Abell

Existing laws may not provide the authority needed for PDA to administer this program. Work is ongoing to determine this and draft new legislation if necessary.

11. Presentation on Controlling the Sale of Non-Native Invasive Ornamental Plants in Pennsylvania, Michele Hensey

Michele outlined the important impacts of invasive plants that are currently still being sold as ornamentals in Pennsylvania. She recommended a framework and timeline to more quickly and efficiently add invasive ornamentals to the PA Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed List to ban their sale. A list of the top 13 invasive ornamentals recommended for banning was provided. Refer to meeting minutes for more details.

***Full meeting minutes can be found on the proceeding pages.***

Meeting Minutes of the Pennsylvania Governor's Invasive Species Council  
Tuesday, June 8, 2021 | 10:00am  
Virtual Skype Meeting

*\* All text in italics indicates additional information included by the minute taker except where scientific names are mentioned.*

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**Council Members Present:** Amy Jewitt, Andrew Ernst, Andrew Rohrbaugh, Ayanna Williams, Don Eggen, Felicia Lamphere, Fred Strathmeyer, Gary Walters, Gregg Robertson, Jim Grazio, Jeff Wagner, Jocelyn Behm, John Bell, Joseph Demko, Kate Harms, Lisa Murphy, Maddie Stanisch, Mary Beth Ruh, Matthew Helmus, Sara Stahlman, Sarah Whitney, Scott Bearer, Sean Hartzell, Piper Sherburne

**Other Participants Present:** Anni Li, Becca Manning, Bob Booth, Brant Portner, Brenda Shambaugh, Bryon Ruhl, Catherine Zeigler, Deb Klenotic, Erik Johnson, Erin Bubb, Erin Lee Frederick, Greg Podniesinski, Heather Smith, Johan Berger, Johnny Zook, Jonathan Geyer, Karl Brown, Kate Wehler, Kaylan Hubbard, Kevin Hess, Kierstin Carlson, Kris Abell, Melissa Harrison, Michael Roth, Michele Hensey, Mike Nerozzi, Rachel Reese, Ruth Welliver, Shea Zwerver, Stephen Rudman, Susan Caughlan, Tamara Peffer, Tamathy Stage, Tammie Robinson

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### **Welcome and Introductory Remarks**

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) gave introductory remarks. He mentioned the next PA Invasive Species Council (PISC) meeting may take place be in person; however, he recognizes the virtual format also works well for certain individuals. *(No official decision has been made for how meetings will be held moving forward.)*

Fred gave a general overview of how today's meeting will be run, with Council members being afforded time to conduct their business according to the agenda with a public comment period at the end. He encouraged meeting participants to use the Chat feature *(in Microsoft Teams)* as this is a communication stream that is being monitored. Pertinent comments put into the Chat will be addressed by the Council.

Fred welcomed members of the public participating in today's meeting and encouraged more people who are not PISC members to attend future meetings of the Council.

### **Announcements, Roll Call, and Approval of Minutes**

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) noted Temple University was officially appointed as a member organization of PISC. *(This was first announced at the March 2021 meeting.)* Jocelyn Behm will

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be the primary person representing Temple University at PISC meetings with Matthew Helmus and Amy Freestone serving as alternates.

The Allegheny Plateau Invasive Plant Management Area (APIPMA) was also officially appointed to PISC as a member organization. Maddie Stanisch is the primary person representing APIPMA and there is currently no alternate in place.

**ACTION ITEM:** Fred asked Maddie to identify someone who could serve as an alternate representing APIPMA at future PISC meetings.

All council seats are now filled.

Fred conducted the roll call. A quorum is present.

**MOTION:** Jeff Wagner (WPC) moved to approve the March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 PISC minutes. Gary Walters (DEP) seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

Kris Abell (PDA) gave a brief overview of today's agenda. (*See screenshot below.*)



Time	Item	Lead
10:00	Welcome and Introductory Remarks	Fred Strathmeyer, PDA
10:05	Announcements, Roll Call, Approve March Minutes	Fred Strathmeyer, PDA
10:15	Invasive Species Listing Committee	Andrew Rohrbaugh, DCNR Sean Hartzell, PFBC
10:30	PRISM Program Committee	Kristopher Abell, PDA
10:40	Legislative Committee	Mike Nerozzi, PFBC
10:50	Communications Committee	Deb Klenotic, DEP
11:05	Grants Committee	Felicia Lamphere, DEP
11:15	Invasive Species Reporting Vanity Phone Number Proposal	Sara Stahlman, PA Sea Grant
11:30	Advisory Workgroup Proposal	Jeff Wagner, WPC
11:40	New Zealand Mudsnail in PA	Sean Hartzell, PFBC
11:50	Updates and New Business	Kristopher Abell, PDA Council Members
12:00	Invasive Plant Legislation	Michele Hensey
12:15	Discussion and Concluding Remarks	Council Members
12:30	Adjourn	

\*Email Amy Jewitt [ajewitt@paconserve.org](mailto:ajewitt@paconserve.org) to have attendance recorded

### **Invasive Species Listing Committee**

**Spokespersons:** Andrew Rohrbaugh of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and Sean Hartzell of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Andrew commented that Gregg Robertson (PLNA) set up and distributed to PISC members an online survey of 151 plant species deemed invasive by the DCNR and Western PA Conservancy. The purpose of the survey was to prioritize these species in the order they will be considered and researched by the Invasive Species Listing Committee as potential additions to the [Pennsylvania Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed List](#). A total of 17 PISC members responded to this survey.

The goal of this committee is to put this prioritization information into a spreadsheet that will be kept on Microsoft Teams and be made available to PISC members for viewing. This spreadsheet will aid in keeping everyone on the same page regarding the listing process of these plants. The spreadsheet will also be helpful in prioritizing assessments (either general or economic) that need to be done for particular species.

The following plant species were ranked 1-20 with tree-of-heaven being the highest priority species for listing consideration. This ranking was sourced from this committee's survey results. Two of these species, Japanese barberry and Common reed, are currently being researched by this committee with the intention of having them added to the Pennsylvania Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed List. Many of the other species are already on the List.

1. Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
2. Mile-a-minute (*Persicaria perfoliata*)
3. Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)
4. Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
5. Kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*)
6. Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
7. Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*)
8. Japanese barberry (seeded varieties) (*Berberis thunbergii*)
9. Common reed (*Phragmites australis* ssp. *australis*)
10. Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)
11. Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
12. Wavyleaf basketgrass (*Oplismenus hirtellus*)
13. Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)
14. Giant knotweed (*Fallopia sachalinensis*)
15. Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)
16. European water chestnut (*Trapa natans*)
17. Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)
18. Hybrid knotweed (*Fallopia x bohemica*)
19. Parrot feather watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)
20. Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*)

After reviewing how these species were ranked in terms of an invasive species assessment (*see image below*), Andrew feels information on the top-ranked species should be provided to PISC with the intention of having a vote on which species to recommend to the Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee (CP&NWC) for listing as noxious weeds in PA. Currently there is a

lack of transparency on what plants are being considered by the CP&NWC for listing as well as species being recommended by PISC to the CP&NWC for listing.

**ACTION ITEM:** Andrew hopes that by the next PISC meeting (*in September*), all of this information will have been sent out to PISC members via email for purposes of voting on.

**Invasive Species Listing Committee - Plants**

- Provide top species with total information to PISC
  - Vote on the next 5? 10? 20? we would recommend to CPNWC
  - This will provide more clarity/standardized process for CPNWC listings

Scientific Name	Common Name	Rank	Notes	NY/WPC Assessment; Very High > 80; High 70-80; Moderate 50-69; Low 40-49; Insignificant <40	Economic Assessment	
Phyllostachys aurea	Golden Bamboo	2	On hold	71.43 if assessable (Not technically ranked)		Tabled
Phyllostachys aureosulcata	Yellow Groove Bamboo	2	On hold	71.43 if assessable (Not technically ranked)		Tabled
Phyllostachys bambusoides	Giant Timber Bamboo	2	On hold	71.43 if assessable (Not technically ranked)		Tabled
Myriophyllum spicatum	Eurasian Watermilfoil	1		100		
Fallopia japonica	Japanese Knotweed	1	Added as Class B	97.94		
Fallopia sachalinensis	Giant Knotweed	1	Added as Class B	97.94		
Fallopia X bohemica	Hybrid Knotweed	1	Added as Class B	97.94		
Elaeagnus umbellata	Autumn Olive	2		94		
Phragmites australis ssp australis	Common Reed	1	On hold	92		Tabled
Berberis thunbergii (seeded varieties)	Japanese Barberry	1		91		
Vincetoxicum nigrum	Black Swallow-Wort	1	Added as Class B	89.69		
Vincetoxicum rossicum	Pale Swallow-Wort	1	Added as Class B	87.63		
Celastrus orbiculatus	Oriental Bittersweet	1	Added as Class B	86.67		
Hydrocharis morsus-ranae	Common Frogbit	Watch	Added as Class A	85.57		

**ACTION ITEM:** The Invasive Species Listing Committee needs to conduct more economic assessments for plants.

Andrew Rohrbaugh along with members of the CP&NWC are doing some of these assessments. Additionally, a seasonal DCNR Ecological Services technician may be able to help compile information for these assessments this year too. Note: This committee adopted NY plant assessments that were already completed.

For non-plant taxonomic groups, there are concerns related to limited staff time to complete invasive species risk assessments. A new working group may need to be created to contact volunteers or other interested entities to assist with this task. Another option is to contract the work out, though funding may be an obstacle for this choice. In general, many non-plant species do not have an already-completed risk assessment.

**ACTION ITEM:** This committee should consider creating a prioritized list of early detection (novel) species for PA. Species on this list will also need risk assessments completed.

**ACTION ITEM:** PISC needs to consider how information and species lists are shared and communicated to the public, other program managers, etc.

Currently, there is no approval process in place for risk assessments completed by the Invasive Species Listing Committee (*to ensure accuracy of the assessments*), though there was a vote taken to adopt completed NY assessments. However, for assessments that Andrew Rohrbaugh has completed (*for example*), there needs to be some kind of review done by other species experts, and/or other experts may need to run their own assessments (*for use as a comparison*).

**ACTION ITEM:** This review process is something that PISC will need to decide on in order to approve individual species risk assessments that are created by members of this committee or outside entities.

*-End update by Andrew Rohrbaugh-*

Sean Hartzell commented that the PA Fish and Boat Commission has completed several draft assessments for the species listed below using the PA-modified [Generic Impact Scoring System](#) (GISS). Internal and external review still needs to occur for each of these species risk assessments.

1. Bighead carp (*Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*)
2. Black carp (*Mylopharyngodon piceus*)
3. European rudd (*Scardinius erythrophthalmus*)
4. Quagga mussel (*Dreissena bugensis*)
5. Round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*)
6. Ruffe (*Gymnocephalus cernuus*)
7. Rusty crayfish (*Faxonius rusticus*)
8. Northern snakehead (*Channa argus*)
9. Zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*)

All of these species are listed in 58 PA Code Ch. 71 & 73 as banned species that cannot be possessed in Pennsylvania. Sean plans to run an invasive species risk assessment for silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*) too, though that has not yet occurred.

Species for “Round 2” of GISS aquatic invasive species assessments include the following:

1. Diploid grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella* var. *diploid*) \*
2. Tubenose goby (*Proterorhinus semilunaris*) \*
3. Red swamp crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*) \*
4. New Zealand mudsnail (*Potamopyrgus antipodarum*)
5. Red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*)
6. Asian clam (*Corbicula* sp.)
7. Chinese mitten crab (*Eriocheir sinensis*) (not yet detected in PA)

8. Oriental weatherfish (*Misgurnus anguillicaudatus*)
9. Chinese/Japanese mystery snail (*Cipangopaludina chinensis/japonica*)
10. Sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)

\* = Listed within 58 PA Code Ch. 71 & 73

Species assessments listed in “Round 2” will be compiled after a silver carp assessment is done. Sean hopes to complete 40-50 species risk assessments over the next several years that are reviewed and ranked by the PFBC.

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) asked if this list is on PFBC’s website or if there is another place where this information is (or can be) posted where folks can see what you (*Sean*) are working on? Sean responded, saying none of these lists are posted on PFBC’s website or information about what future work is planned at this point, though Sean is open to having internal discussion within PFBC about posting this information. Once the assessments are reviewed and finalized, Sean could look into having them posted on the PFBC website and/or the PISC website.

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### **PRISM Program Committee**

**Spokesperson:** Kris Abell, PA Department of Agriculture

PRISMs (Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management) are statewide comprehensive invasive species management programs. They are also:

1. State funded (funding is provided for coordinators, staff, contracts, supplies, and materials)
2. Regionally based
3. Collaborative and cooperative (this part of the program puts a focus on partnership by bringing together a variety of stakeholders to address invasive species issues)
4. Locally and community focused (led by a single host organization in each designated region)

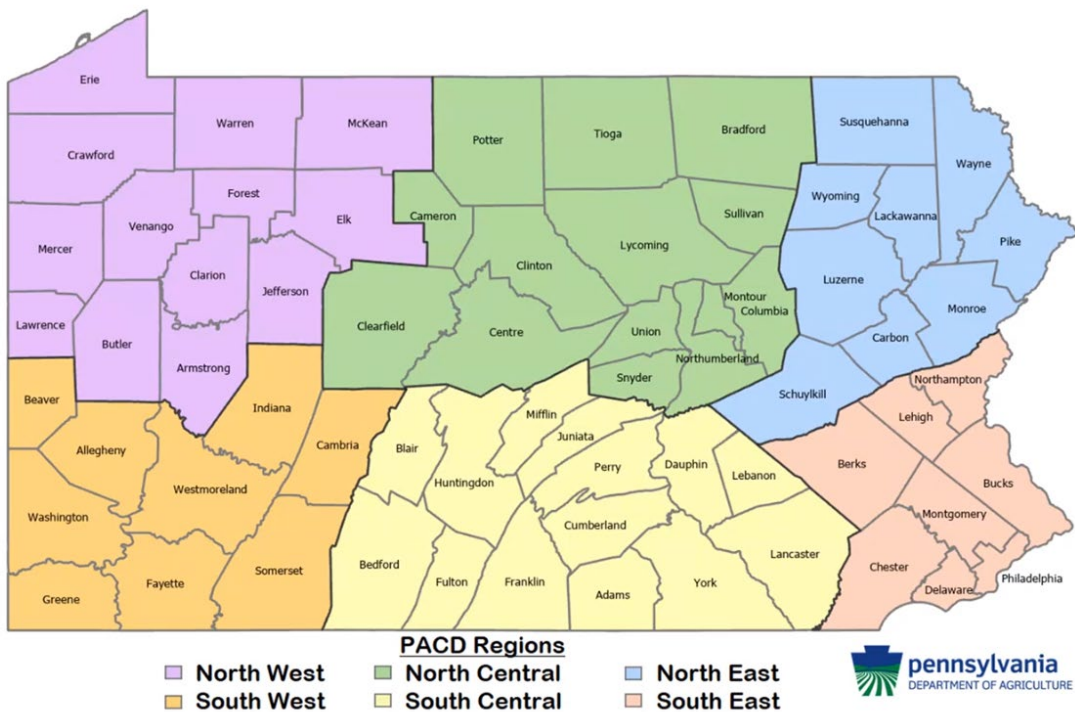
A committee on PISC is currently working to develop a PRISM program for use in Pennsylvania. PRISMs already exist in New York, Florida, and Michigan. (*The image below shows the PRISM regions of NY, FL, and MI.*)





In previous PRISM committee meetings, discussions have focused on how to break up Pennsylvania into specific PRISM regions. The committee (more or less) decided to use the PA Association of Conservation District regions (*see image below*), though this decision is not yet final.

## Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District Regions



Funding has not yet been secured for a Pennsylvania PRISM program; everything is currently in the development stage. A budget proposal has been developed, mostly by Don Eggen (DCNR).

Now we need an implementation plan in place to roll out a PRISM program across all of Pennsylvania. Five components were identified that need to be part of this implementation plan. For each of these components, a subcommittee was formed to do the work of developing their respective components of the plan:

1. Request for funding proposal (RFP)
2. Review committee and procedures for evaluating RFPs
3. Statement of work (expectations, reporting, deliverables, etc.)
4. PRISM 5-year strategic plan guidelines
5. GIS and data management (central clearinghouse)

Each of these five subcommittees are within a month of having a draft of their expected product completed. Once a final product is completed by each group, the next step will be to have one person from each subcommittee come together to form a new working group. The finished products from each subcommittee will then be reviewed by this new working group in a cohesive way to form an overall Pennsylvania PRISM implementation plan. Note: Once this final working group comes together and begins their work, all previous PRISM subcommittees will dissolve.

The last step will be to submit the finished implementation plan to PISC where it will be open for comment.

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### **Legislative Committee**

**Spokesperson:** Mike Nerozzi, PA Fish and Boat Commission

The main effort of this committee has been to work with the [Center for Rural Pennsylvania](#) (a legislative service agency of the [General Assembly](#)) to hold a public hearing on the statewide economic impacts of invasive species in Pennsylvania. The hearing will address economical, ecological, and public health concerns.

At the last PISC meeting in March, our committee was in the process of drafting a request letter and letters of support from various agencies to bolster the case for holding this hearing. We are pleased to announce the request letter was sent yesterday to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania (CRP) with support letters from PDA, DCNR, PFBC, PGC, Sea Grant, PA Landscape and Nursery Association, and the Association of Conservation Districts. Thanks to everyone for your work on this effort! Mike felt we made a very compelling case.

Within an hour of receiving the letter, the Executive Director of CRP emailed back, saying he's eager to get to work on this!

The main focus of the legislative hearing will be on economics. This angle tends to resonate more with legislators as it shows direct community impact. To the best of our knowledge, this hearing will be the first time this type of analysis (*regarding invasive species*) will be conducted by the General Assembly. The legislative committee feels there will be a lot of interest from the follow-up reports generated from this hearing (or series of hearings).

The next step is to work internally and with the Center for Rural Pennsylvania to develop a list of testifiers. We already have a working draft of potential testifiers; we just need to narrow down that list. We're hoping to provide diverse perspectives that touch on multiple regions in PA and the issues people/places are facing in terms of invasive species. As of yet, there is not a timeline for when the hearing will take place; probably September or October when the legislature returns to session after their summer recess. This will allow for the biggest attendance possible. (Attendance at summer hearings tends to be a bit lighter.) However, the hearing date will ultimately be decided on by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) commented that engaging the legislature will be an important part of potential revenue resources and additional personnel to focus on invasive species problems that are currently present in Pennsylvania. Thank you to you, Mike, and your committee.

Mike Nerozzi (PFBC) added that though the major focus of the hearing will address economic issues (and to a lesser degree, ecological and public health concerns), it will also provide a preview of what the PRISM model is and where we are trying to take Pennsylvania's invasive species management strategy using the PRISM concept. Our plan is to have testifiers hone in on this message. We also plan to bring in someone from NY to talk about their successes there with their state's PRISM program. This will help set the stage for follow-up conversations regarding funding, etc., needed for a PRISM program in PA.

Brenda Shambaugh (PACD) remarked that at Ag Progress Days (an event in August that happens at Penn State), the House and Senate Agricultural Committees have a joint meeting. This meeting might be an opportunity to introduce the subject of the legislative hearing and allow members of these committees to discuss it (i.e., a second exposure to this topic). An estimated 15-20 legislators will be at this joint meeting and which also serve on the Ag Committee. Mike Nerozzi appreciated this suggestion.

Kris Abell (PDA) requested that Stephen Rudman (PDA legislative liaison) provide some general updates on what's going on with the legislature.

Stephen Rudman (PDA) commented that discussions regarding the state budget are currently happening. The hope is to have the budget done by June 25. The state received more than \$7 billion in federal funding from the American Rescue Plan. Additionally, we are ahead of our

financial estimates by about \$3 billion, resulting in an additional \$10 billion of funds to help figure out the budget. There are many competing interests on what to do with those funds (e.g., such as rainy-day funds). The Secretary of Agriculture came from a productive meeting today discussing budget and legislative priorities. Still early in the budget negotiation.

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## **Communications Committee**

**Spokesperson:** Deb Klenotic, PA Department of Environmental Protection

We are in the process restructuring the Communications committee. Deb will chair the group and Gary Walters (DEP) will co-chair as a subject matter expert. We are also in the process of developing a communications plan.

During National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW) (May 17-22), we had a nicely coordinated social media campaign. We developed content for the week and had several posts per day. There was engagement around the posts that introduced the Council itself. The DEP saw good engagement on LinkedIn and posts by the PFBC and Penn State Extension on Facebook received good traction as well. Analytics for the [PISC StoryMap](#) showed about 300 views during NISAW.

Other Facebook posts by DCNR and PFBC received significant attention (e.g., DCNR Facebook post on garlic mustard received 122 shares, PFBC posted a video created by PA Sea Grant on aquatic invasive species that received 17 shares, and a PFBC post discussing tips for anglers, boaters, hikers, etc., received 14 shares).

Moving forward, this committee is discussing at what level do we want to do communications on behalf of the Council. What is the niche in communications that PISC can meet that other organizations cannot? As we began forming our communications plan, this subcommittee noted there is interest in reaching a variety of audiences including outdoor recreation enthusiasts, gardeners (professional, backyard), municipal workers, exotic pet owners and sellers, and many others. It later became clear that we need to refine our focus and primarily target leadership decision makers and educators.

We are considering creating a PISC quarterly newsletter. We may also take a closer look at the [PA Invasive Species Management Plan](#) to determine if there is potential there for some type of communication to leaders and educators (i.e., to increase familiarity with the Plan or to show what individuals can do to help with invasive species issues in PA).

This committee may also consider creating a governor's proclamation for a PA Native Species Day, hosted by PISC.

**ACTION ITEM:** Deb said it would be helpful if PISC members could give the Communications committee a heads-up early on regarding tasks the various subcommittees are working on. This will allow for additional communications opportunities on behalf of PISC.

The question of scope is also being discussed by this committee. As a small workgroup, what can we realistically accomplish as we outline the goals of our group?

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) asked if the Communications committee intends to talk with the PA Department of Education in regards to agricultural education? Also, is there the potential for better exposure to let PA citizens know the Council exists (perhaps more than just the people that have an interest in it)?

Deb responded, saying this committee has discussed looping in the PA Department of Education; Deb has worked with Tammy Peffer in the past on some environmental education efforts. We are also interested in enlisting some other state agencies on the Communications committee. Deb feels there is a large need to get word out about the Council itself; the social media traction during NISAW was a good indicator of this. We will also need to work through the network of organizations such as legislators, county and city governments, etc., to do this. This committee will not have the bandwidth to reach out directly to the end users of communications. Instead, we will need to work through networks to get that exposure.

Fred responded to Deb's comments, saying that when you can make things personal (i.e., certain invasives located in certain areas), that is always better (*in terms of communications*). Doing so also helps get more local government officials informed of the Council and provides them with a place to come when they have questions (*about invasive species issues occurring locally in PA*). Conducting communications in this way will be another springboard for the PRISM concept.

Deb remarked that she appreciated Fred's comments and felt the most basic thing this committee could begin work on is a newsletter from the Council. Deb asked if a PISC newsletter has been done in the past.

Fred inquired to whom a previous newsletter would have been directed towards. Deb responded, saying that a target audience would likely have been people in leadership such as county/municipal governments and other stakeholders PISC works with.

Fred responded that a PISC newsletter has not been created during the time he has served on the Council (during the last six years). The concept of a PISC newsletter has been discussed previously, but just hasn't been done yet. Don Eggen (DCNR) and Ruth Welliver (PDA) both agreed with Fred that regular communication (i.e., a newsletter) from the Council to outside audiences has not occurred in the past.

Deb felt a quarterly PISC newsletter fits well into the scope of work of the Communications Committee and could be structured by topic or region. This would allow us to get news out to

local leaders on a regular basis regarding work the Council has accomplished, tasks that are underway, or goals the Council is seeking partnership on. Creating a newsletter will be a good next step for this Committee.

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## **Grants Committee**

**Spokesperson:** Felicia Lamphere, Department of Environmental Protection

Our committee has been compiling a list of funding opportunities specific to invasive species and management. The committee intends to have this information housed on the PISC website under the Resources section (*see screenshot below*) and is working with the Communications Committee to do so.



**ACTION ITEM:** Hopefully by the next PISC meeting (*in September*), our committee will have something to show to the Council.

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## **Invasive Species Reporting Vanity Phone Number Proposal**

**Spokesperson:** Sara Stahlman, PA Sea Grant

Sara submitted a formal proposal to the Council previously regarding a vanity phone number and discussed this concept at the last PISC meeting (*in March*). This proposal is part of the [Aquatic Invasive Species \(AIS\) Rapid Response Plan](#) update, specifically the section that touches on AIS reporting.

During a review of invasive species reporting mechanisms in Pennsylvania, a gap was recognized which showed many reporting options are online or digital (e.g., [PFBC AIS report](#)

[form](#), [iMapInvasives](#), [AIS field guide app](#)). This fact may present a problem for older individuals who might not be comfortable using these digital mechanisms and would instead prefer to report an invasive species via phone.

To enhance early detection and rapid response, Sara and others spoke with Kris Abell about adding an AIS voice mailbox to the existing invasive species reporting hotline that is housed at the PA Department of Agriculture. Conversations were also had about making the hotline number more memorable which was the impetus for the idea of a vanity phone number (an example being 1-800-INVASIVES). This vanity number would apply to all existing voice mailboxes that are part of the reporting hotline, not just AIS. Additionally, the existing hotline phone number would remain (not disappear), meaning any existing documents or outreach materials where the current phone number is being mentioned would not become obsolete. However, the existing phone number would likely be phased out over time, and any new outreach materials would include the new vanity phone number instead.

Sara solicited comments from PISC on this proposal and no negative feedback was received. Therefore, Sara felt it was appropriate to move forward with this proposal by asking for a formal vote from PISC regarding the hotline.

Sara also commented that it was very difficult to find an available (relevant) phone number to use as a vanity number. However, what did become available was 1-833-INVASIV. This is likely the number that will be put up for a vote.

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) felt that because Sara already presented this proposal to the Council and received no negative feedback, a formal vote did not need to be taken today by Council members (unless someone spoke up now).

Based on Fred's feedback, Sara remarked that she will proceed with this project. Kris Abell (PDA) said he will work with her to get the phone number changed by working with others at the PA Department of Agriculture.

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### **Management Plan Advisory Workgroup Proposal**

**Spokesperson:** Jeff Wagner, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Jeff remarked this proposal had been discussed and shared with the Council previously.

The purpose of forming this new workgroup (i.e., a Management Plan Advisory Workgroup) was to increase the capacity of the Council to do work on tracking and encouraging the implementation of the [PA Invasive Species Management Plan](#) (which is one of the Council's

primary functions). To this end, the Council has made great progress by forming several working groups which address various aspects and goals of the Plan; however, there is still much to do.

When the PISC Nomination Committee met earlier this year to replace an open seat on the Council (left vacant by TNC), members of the Committee talked to a number of people from various organizations and came to the conclusion there's a lot of expertise outside of the Council that could help contribute to the work being done by PISC. Unfortunately, only one organization could be selected to fill the vacant seat on the Council. This realization was the genesis for creating a new PISC workgroup that would help make progress on some of the Plan's goals and for goal tracking.

## A New Workgroup for PISC: Management Plan Advisory Workgroup

Jeff Wagner, WPC

**Purpose:** Provide a framework and strategy for evaluating progress in implementing the PA Invasive Species Management Plan (PISMP).

**Need:** PISC capacity is limited for developing meaningful measures of progress that are critical in its overall reporting function.

**Composition:** Chaired by one PISC member and totally 5 to 10 individuals who are strongly involved in invasive species issues.

**Evolution:** Initially working with various contacts and information sources but eventually working with PRISMs to glean information.

**Specific Goals to Address:** Those goals in the PISMP that can be addressed without statewide, detailed data and knowledge.

This proposed committee could be flexible in terms of what goals are worked on, though likely the Council would recommend what goals/tasks this working group would tackle (i.e., likely goals that PISC has not had time or capacity to work on previously). In this way, a collaboration would exist between PISC and the Management Plan Advisory Workgroup. Results from this working group would be presented to PISC and discussion and approvals would be done as needed.

This working group would need to be chaired by a current Council member. As desired, other PISC members could also be part of this group. However, the working group would primarily be comprised of people who are not members of PISC as this would help increase capacity of the Council.



Jeff Wagner (WPC) has volunteered to chair this working group; however, if someone else wants to take on this task, that is fine. Also, if anyone from PISC would like to be part of this group, please make your interest known.

The intention would be to have 5-10 people serve on this working group (no more than 10). People would be contacted (who are not currently Council members) to see if they would be interested in serving on this working group and helping PISC make continued progress according to goals outlined in the Plan.

John Bell (PA Farm Bureau) inquired if PISC has ever refused input/presentations/programs from other entities on matters relevant to the Council?

Jeff Wagner responded, saying that the Council is open to input from anyone. Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) also remarked that in the six years he has been part of this Council, he's never seen any time when input or information was pushed aside.

John clarified his question, asking why the Management Plan Advisory Workgroup couldn't act independently as an ad hoc group by providing information and recommendations to PISC? Then using that information, PISC could move forward in a similar fashion. Why does PISC formally need to create yet another working group to be an advisory body to this Council which is an advisory board itself?

Jeff responded, saying that ad hoc groups that bring information to the Council would certainly be appreciated. However, Jeff feels that PISC should guide the work being done by an outside entity in order to provide the most benefit to the Council and the goals outlined in the Plan. By forming a Management Plan Advisory Workgroup, we can branch out and expand the Council's capacity while also guiding the tasks performed by such a group. It would be a working group of the Council.

Based on Jeff's feedback, John feels these things can be accomplished regardless of whether or not PISC forms a new working group.

Jeff responded, asking who would initiate this type of work (*that an Advisory Workgroup would do*) and who would keep it together? John responded, saying that the independent body would manage itself.

Jeff responded, saying he isn't aware of a group that would do that. He also doesn't see the difference between having an outside entity that has to communicate with PISC, and having an advisory workgroup like we have for a number of other PISC tasks/goals.

Ruth Welliver (PDA) remarked on the conversation between Jeff and John by reframing the concept Jeff presented on. She clarified by describing it as the recognition of a "hole" in the work of the Council and the evaluation of how we are doing with the PA Invasive Species

Management Plan. A PISC workgroup would need to do this work, but Jeff is recommending that this workgroup not be made up exclusively of current PISC members. Instead, we invite others outside of the Council (who are interested in invasive species management and may have a different perspective on this work) to join this Advisory Workgroup. Jeff commented that he felt that was a good summary of his proposal.

John remarked on Ruth's comments, saying he is assuming the Council will have discretion to appoint members of this new workgroup. Jeff responded, saying he would suggest that the workgroup bring a list of invitees to the Council for review and approval.

Jeff also clarified that this proposed Advisory Workgroup would hold no voting power. They would simply provide PISC with recommendations.

Don Eggen (DCNR) commented this proposal is focusing on the implementation and progress of the PA Invasive Species Management Plan. Non-PISC members could certainly participate in the working group, just like they do on many other PISC committees we currently have in place. This would just be another workgroup of the Council that would be tasked with keeping the Council on track with its goals and intended tasks.

Don also commented that the Council is an advisory board to the Governor and is unsure how an independent group would fit in with the Executive Order that created the Council.

John remarked that he wasn't suggesting members of the proposed workgroup couldn't be people outside of the Council. He may or may not be clear on the directives or purposes of this workgroup (*hence his questions*). Is it just to review the existing PA Invasive Species Management Plan and make administrative recommendations?

Don remarked that the purpose of the proposed workgroup is to provide a framework and strategy for evaluating progress of implementing the Plan. The Plan is updated every five years, so as tasks are accomplished, how is PISC measuring progress? This analysis (*provided by the proposed working group*) would lead into the next review and update of the Plan.

John asked if the role of the proposed workgroup is more administrative?

Don commented that the role of the workgroup will not be just administrative; they would also be collecting data from the various PISC committees and especially from the PRISMs (*once PRISMs are set up in PA*). The workgroup would then compile reports to be given to PISC and discussed at Council meetings.

John thanked Don and others for their comments.

Kris Abell (PDA) pointed out this new proposed workgroup would have the advantage of identifying other people who have an interest in participating in PISC endeavors. Moving

forward, Kris asked if Council members are ready to vote on this proposal, or if perhaps a short survey should be created (*and sent out after today's meeting*) to gauge whether Council members agree or disagree with this proposal.

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) commented that based on the conversation from today, it would be best to allow for additional comments from Council members by creating a short survey. Several other Council members agreed (via Chat).

Fred also asked if the purpose of this proposed workgroup is to: 1) provide a framework and a strategy as part of the Plan, 2) evaluate the progress of PISC, or 3) bring in a different mix of people into PISC conversations to identify gaps where the Council is not able to identify other issues?

Fred thought that the PRISMs were going to be the entity that evaluated the effectiveness of the Plan at the local level (if we can get PRISMs going in PA) and felt that perhaps this proposed workgroup might be one more thing on top of all the others tasks the Council is already doing.

Kris Abell sent a link to the short survey in the meeting Chat box.

**ACTION ITEM:** Kris will send out the survey link via email after the close of the meeting today and will include information about the proposal for reference within the email. Fred requested that Council members be given two weeks to complete the survey; deadline will be June 22.

Jeff Wagner mentioned that Don Eggen made the suggestion of removing the word “advisory” from the proposed workgroup name (i.e., “Management Plan Workgroup”). Jeff isn’t sure if there is concern from other Council members if this term is included or not. Jeff doesn’t think it has to be included.

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## **The Invasive New Zealand Mudsail in PA**

**Spokesperson:** Sean Hartzell, PA Fish and Boat Commission

Several new records have been reported for New Zealand mudsnail (*Potamopyrgus antipodarum*) in PA over the past two years. Spread of this species has been noted and is causing concern. The NZM is a novel species in our part of the country.



Photo Credit: USGS



Photo Credit: Washington State University

The NZM is part of the “minute” snail family Tatidae. NZMs are very tiny; 20 or more can fit on the head of a penny. They are native to New Zealand and some of the surrounding islands. NZMs are naturalized in portions of Australia and portions of Europe (like how dandelions are naturalized in the United States). It is very common in those parts of the world.

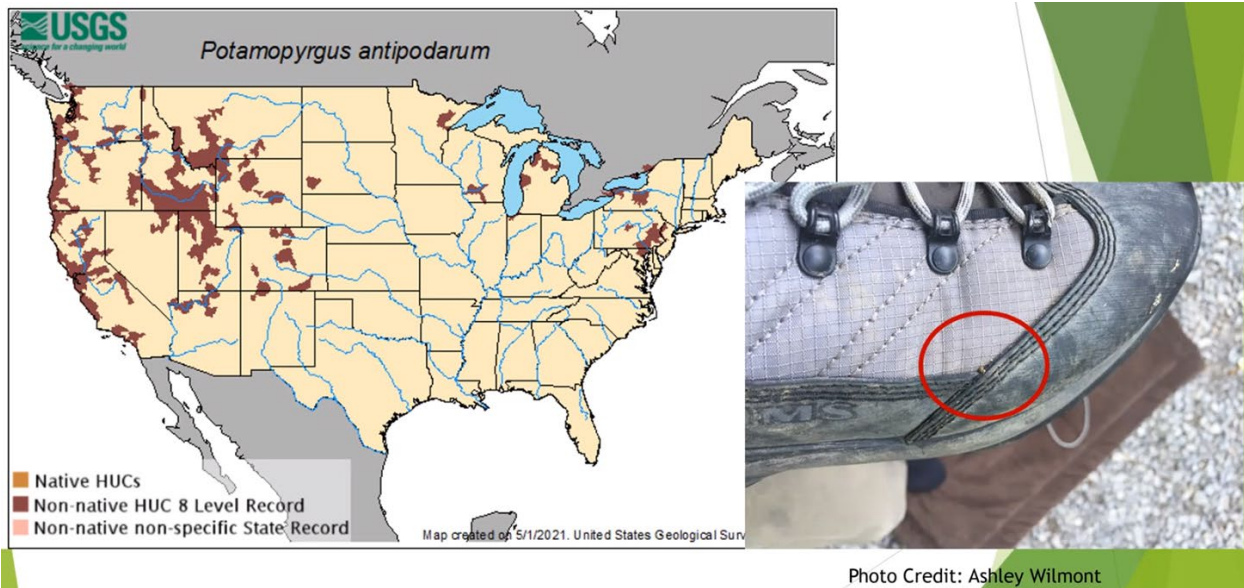
Populations of NZMs in the United States are typically 6 mm in length or less. In their native range, they can be twice that size. The shell of an NZM spirals to the right (some species have shells with spirals to the left), so this is a distinctive feature. Shells have 7-8 spirals (whorls) and deep grooves separating them.

NZM has clear tentacles; a microscope or magnifying glass is needed to see these features. NZMs also have a yellow operculum (“trap door”) which closes the opening on their shell. This feature allows NZM to be fairly resistant to chemical treatments and drying out.

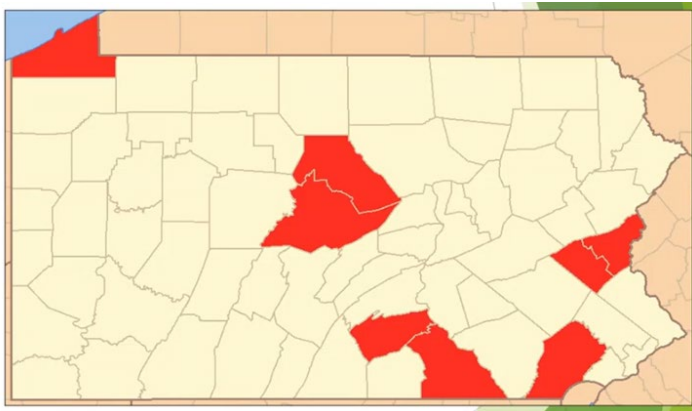
NZMs can easily be confused with native snail species found in PA. Typically an expert is needed in order to make an accurate identification.

NZMs reproduce very quickly and all known U.S. populations are asexual clones. Once established in an area, NZMs can completely cover a waterbody’s substrate. This causes competition for native species such as native snail populations and native macroinvertebrates including mayflies. There is suspected trophic disruption impacting sport fish (i.e., trout), but impacts are largely unknown. Most studies on this species have been conducted in the western United States. Streams and waterbodies here in Pennsylvania are a bit different, so we are dealing with some concerns as well as some unknowns.

Regarding habitat, NZMs prefer waterbodies with high conductivity (i.e., a high amount of solutes dissolved in the water) which goes hand in hand with the amount of calcium present in a waterbody (an important component that allows NZMs to develop their shell). Limestone streams in PA tend to be at high risk for NZM invasion.



NZMs are primarily an issue in the western United States. In the eastern United States, there are some populations associated with the Great Lakes which likely arrived via ballast water on ships coming from Europe. Specifically in Pennsylvania, NZMs have mostly been found in the southeastern and central portions of the state.



NZMs can hitchhike locally from waterbody to waterbody on boots or waders of anglers. In many instances in PA, NZMs have been found in many popular trout fishing streams.

Within PA, NZMs have been known to exist in the Commonwealth for almost two decades. Recently, there has been some concerning spread of NZMs.

- Lake Erie, Erie Co. (2006)
- Spring Creek, Centre Co. (2013) \*
- Bald Eagle Creek, Clinton Co. (2018) \*
- Little Lehigh Creek, Lehigh Co. (2018) \*

- Trindle Spring Run, Cumberland Co. (2020) \*
- Codorus Creek, York Co. (2020) \*
- Lehigh River Mouth, Northampton Co. (2020) \*
- Valley Creek, Chester Co. (2020) \*
- Bushkill Creek, Northampton Co. (2021) \*
- Saucon Creek, Northampton Co. (2021) \*

\* = Popular trout (*fishing*) waters

Note: The findings of NZMs in Lake Erie are not abundant.

PFBC has ongoing surveys for NZMs in parts of PA. Sean Hartzell is fearful NZMs may be detected in other places, particularly in the Lehigh Valley region.

NZMs can resist desiccation for over a week. They are difficult to kill because they can close their operculum. Cleaning gear such as waders or boots with bleach, soap, or other substances is not effective. Allowing gear to dry to the touch for up to a week is also not effective in killing NZMs. This makes NZMs a high-risk invasive species that is easily spread.

No options currently exist (according to published literature) regarding treatment of NZMs in a waterbody. Unfortunately, once NZMs invade a new area, they are generally there to stay.

In NZM-invaded waters, PFBC is posting signage (*see image below*) to help inform the public of this invasive species. PFBC's primary focus of containment for NZMs is to conduct outreach by working with partner organizations and local watershed groups. PFBC is working to educate anglers on how to properly clean their gear to kill NZMs and prevent the spread of NZMs via boots of fishermen.

**Aquatic Invasive Species Alert  
New Zealand Mudsnail**

New Zealand mudsnail (NZM) is in this waterway. The snails are very small, measuring less than 1/8 inch, with a dark, narrow, coiled shell with deep grooves. Like other Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), NZM disrupt ecosystems by rapidly multiplying and competing with native species for space and food. NZM have the potential to decrease the food supply for fish in this stream. The snails are found on rocks and vegetation and can attach to fishing gear, boats and other equipment where they can easily go unseen.  
**Anglers, boaters, swimmers and tubers can unknowingly spread NZM!**

**Help Stop the Spread of NZM.  
Clean Your Gear!**

**Check these areas**

- Clothing
- Fishing rod, reel and line
- Fishing vests
- Nets and tackle
- Shoes or boots

New Zealand mudsnail requires specialized disinfection measures:

- Visually inspect gear and remove and dispose of any clinging matter in the trash. Do not move mud, organic matter or NZM from this area!
- To kill NZM, three methods are effective:
  - ✓ Freeze gear for a minimum of 8 hours
  - ✓ Soak gear in hot water (120°F to 140°F) for 5 minutes. This method is not recommended for GOR-TEX®
  - ✓ Soak gear for 5 minutes in a 1 to 1 solution of Formula 409® Cleaner Degreaser Disinfectant and water. After soaking, thoroughly rinse the gear with plain water. Simply spraying gear with the disinfectant or the mixture does not work. Also, general cleaners (including other 409 products) have not been shown to be effective against NZM.

**STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!**

For more information about New Zealand mudsnail, visit <https://seagrant.psu.edu/section/fact-sheets-brochures>

Sea Grant

PFBC is also doing surveys in parts of PA to determine the spread of NZMs. There is some prevention work going on at PFBC hatcheries, particularly near the PFBC office in Bellefonte. PFBC is also working on a NZM control plan in conjunction with plans for other high priority invasive species. This plan will be forthcoming.

**ACTION ITEM:** PFBC encourages the public to report this species if found. Reports can be directed to the [PFBC website](#), [iMapInvasives](#), or by calling the PA invasive species hotline.

Amy Jewitt (WPC) inquired about potential biocontrols for NZM. Sean remarked there are no good biocontrol options for this species (as far as he knows). He has only primarily researched chemical controls.

For fish that consume NZMs, about 50% of the time, NZMs will pass through the digestive system of the fish and come out the other end alive.

Kris Abell (PDA) thanked Sean for his report and remarked NZM is definitely a species Council members and others need to be more aware of, especially since we are not fully aware of the impacts it may have.

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## **Member Updates and New Business**

Kris Abell (PDA) began the discussion by giving an update on the proposal for a Pennsylvania Weed-Free Straw and Hay Certification program.

### **Update: Weed-Free Straw and Hay Certification Program**

**Spokesperson:** Kris Abell, PA Department of Agriculture

Folks involved in this project have been working under the assumption that the Plant Pest Act would provide the ability for the PA Department of Agriculture to establish this program in PA. However, there's been some concern that this may not be the case.

**ACTION ITEM:** This issue is currently being looked into and the group hopes to have an update for the Council soon.

Andrew Rohrbaugh (DCNR) commented that he and Kelly Sitch (DCNR) have been trying to attend meetings concerning this matter. However, they are more interested in the NAISMA list portion of this effort rather than the legal side, which is more related to the PA Department of Agriculture. Kris thanked Andrew for his comments and remarked that DCNR will be an important partner in the effort to create this program in PA.

## **New Business: Controlling the Sale of Nonnative Invasive Ornamental Plants in PA**

**Spokesperson:** Michele Hensey (No affiliated organization)

Michele began her presentation by thanking the Council for allowing her the opportunity to speak during today's meeting. Her presentation is being made on behalf of many concerned citizens regarding nonnative invasive ornamental plants in PA. (Note: Michele and others have been communicating with Council members regarding their concerns related to the sale of nonnative invasive ornamental plants in PA and have participated in meetings of the Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee [CP&NWC] as members of the public.)

The main objective of Michele's presentation is to get a ban on specific plants in the near term. *Screenshots from Michele's presentation are being included in these minutes for reference purposes.*

This background is shared to consider the role of the CPNWC and GISC regarding non-native, invasive ornamental plants sold by the nursery industry. We appreciate that the majority of those involved are conservationists and care deeply about our environment.

Nonnative invasive plants are responsible for substantial degradation of native habitat and the resulting destruction of biodiversity. The economic damage caused by invasive alien species remains underestimated by the general public, stakeholders, and decision-makers. (See [High and Rising Economic Costs of Biological Invasions Worldwide](#), Diagne et al., *Nature*, pub. online 3-31-21.)

Since January 2021, a group of concerned citizens have been engaging with the CPNWC and GISC members to determine the most effective way to ban the sale of non-native, invasive ornamentals in our Commonwealth.

The CPNW law and the PISC 5-year Invasive Species Plan have been in effect since 2017, with no action taken on ornamental invasives sold in the industry, whereas quick and immediate action has been taken on other invasives (aquatics, insects, and noxious weeds that impact agriculture).

In fact, the PISC 5-year plan highlights prevention as a key element of the framework to control invasive species. Banning the sale of non-native, invasive ornamentals is the most effective way to prevent further invasion of these species

2

Michele mentioned she and other concerned citizens are strongly aligned with the PA Invasive Species Management Plan and the effort to prevent the spread of invasive species in our state.



A review of all GISC meeting minutes for the last 3 years reference updates and action taken on all other invasive categories except nonnative invasive ornamental plants.

Although stand-alone legislation may still be pursued, it was suggested in a March 2021 meeting that using the existing CPNW law would be quicker than new legislation.

It is concerning, however, that the existing law limits the representation on CPNWC and includes only PLNA as a representative of the nursery industry, even though PLNA represents a constituency that includes large out-of-state growers. Most states' stand-alone laws are governed by a conservation and scientific backed consortium whose concern is the degradation of biodiversity vs. industry profits.

At the April CPNWC meeting, it was shared that the CPNW Law can legally and effectively facilitate a ban on the sale of selected nonnative invasive ornamental plants if the committee followed protocol for posting to the PA Bulletin and notification in accordance with the Sunshine Law. It was also confirmed that plants could be added with enforcement set for a future date. *All present agreed to that approach going forward – this is a very encouraging step in the right direction!*

3

Michele commented that we can prevent future problems with ornamental plants (or at least stall their damage) by preventing their sale by the industry in our state.

Michele and others have been closely following the work of the CP&NWC as well as PISC and have noticed that different committees will report back to the Council on their progress regarding various initiatives. Michele commented that swift action has been taken on issues related to aquatic invasive species (e.g., zebra mussels in moss balls – stop sale in pet stores immediately) as well as invasive insects. Michele and others are requesting to stop the sale of invasive ornamental plants in a similar fashion, and that the CP&NWC agrees this is the right action to take.

Michele and others were initially suggesting the creation of legislation (similar to stand-alone legislation currently in place in the state of Delaware); however, it was suggested in a Spring 2021 meeting that using the existing CP&NWC law would be quicker than creating new legislation.

To maintain consistent progress and prevent further and increasingly costly damage, we are recommending that CPNWC adopt a project plan and timeline, ensuring commitments and goals are met.

**Controlled Plant Ban Framework:**

- › A priority list for consideration will be actioned at each meeting. At least 2 species will begin being actioned each quarter.
- › If needed, science-backed research and assessment will be done before the following committee meeting.
- › Notice of a vote will be published a week ahead of each meeting.
- › Determination of economic impact will be based on statistical data (not a subjective survey) and will be balanced by the economic impact of the harm being done and the cost of eradication in our forests and public lands.
- › No ban will carry an enforcement date greater than 9 months from the date the plant is added to the law. This provides industry with 12 months' notice.

4

Michele and others put together a measurable framework to help achieve their objective of swiftly banning the sale of invasive ornamentals in PA (*see screen capture above for details*).

Michele's proposed framework states that at each CP&NWC meeting, a priority list of species should be discussed by committee members. At least two species will be ready for discussion at each follow-up quarterly meeting of the CP&NWC. If needed, science-backed research and assessment will be done prior to each CP&NWC meeting to ensure at least two species can be effectively discussed and voted on. Public comments should also be part of the CP&NWC's decision making process regarding votes to potentially add a species to the PA noxious weed list.

## Example Timeline:

CPNWC meeting – Plants on potential ban list agreed to and assigned for research/feedback

Prior to next CPNWC meeting – Any required research is conducted and circulated

2 weeks prior to next meeting --- Notice published in PA Bulletin and website(s) regarding plants to be voted on

1 week prior to meeting -- Public comments received to date are circulated; one committee member is assigned to represent public position

CPNWC meeting – Vote on plants to be banned and enforcement date for each. Select next batch of plants to be evaluated.

Following each CPNWC meeting -- Notification and public education.

*Note: this is a rolling, concurrent process vs. consecutive, until all plants suggested to be banned are reviewed and voted on.*


5

An example timeline that takes into Michele’s proposed framework is provided above (*see screen capture*).

The [PA Sunshine Act](#) and [PA Bulletin](#) notifications can be used for voting in a way that allows more plants to be assessed, added to the PA Noxious Weed Law, and have a reasonable enforcement period included as needed. This process was agreed to at the most recent CP&NWC meeting in Spring 2021.

It is Michele’s hope that when the CP&NWC meets again in July, research will have been done on Japanese barberry and Callery pear (since a lot of public comments were submitted to the CP&NWC at the Spring 2021 meeting regarding these two species). She and other concerned citizens hope they can start agreeing with the CP&NWC on what a reasonable timeline and framework will be, and use the PA Sunshine Act to take action.

She and a group of experts (botanists, conservationists) came up with a proposed list of species to be banned from sale in PA (*see screen capture below*). This list was reviewed by a dozen or more people with experience in forestry, agriculture, and botany.



Species	common name
Berberis thunbergii	Japanese Barberry
Pyrus calleryana	Callery Pear
Lonicera japonica	Japanese Honeysuckle
Nandina domestica	heavenly bamboo
Euonymus alatus	Burning Bush / Winged Euonymus
Acer platanoides	Norway Maple
Wisteria floribunda	Japanese Wisteria
Hedera helix	English Ivy
Wisteria sinensis	Chinese Wisteria
Celastrus orbiculatus	Oriental Bittersweet
Buddleja davidii	Butterfly Bush
Hemerocallis fulva	Orange Day-Lily
Ficaria verna	Lesser Celandine

Michele mentioned this list was created in an unscientific way, but took rankings produced by the experts she collaborated with and ranked the species based on the expertise of those individuals. She noted the species that constantly rise to the top are Japanese barberry and Callery pear. Michele and others seek progress to get these species added to the PA Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed List.

*-End of Presentation-*

Andrew Rohrbaugh (DCNR) mentioned that as part of the Invasive Species Listing Committee, folks will be pulling together species recommendations to CP&NWC for PISC to vote on (*many of which are listed in Michele's proposed ban list*). He intends for some of these recommended species to be ornamentals, although final action on that will be up to PISC and eventually the CP&NWC. As noted, Japanese barberry and Callery pear are being run through the CP&NWC process currently. Hopefully both of those species will provide a roadmap for future ornamental invasive species.

Michele commented that she appreciated Andrew's comments. She also mentioned that it's important to let the general public know action is being taken to get these species listed as noxious weeds swiftly.

Deb Klenotic (DEP) asked what kind of list can be shared with the public regarding priority species that are being considered, banned species, etc.? What species is the Council/administration prioritizing? This information would be very valuable to the PISC Communications Committee. Deb went on to mention there are several lists already available to the public including the [PA Noxious Weed List](#), [PFBC's list of invasives](#), [DCNR invasive plant list](#), etc. However, Deb thinks many people are probably not aware of these lists.

Michele responded, saying she couldn't respond directly to Deb's questions, but that Michele and others have committed to partnering with the PA Landscape and Nursery Association, the Mid-Atlantic Audubon Society, and West Chester University on work to ban ornamental invasive species in PA. In this way, she can help provide needed lists to the PISC Communications Committee specifically on invasive ornamentals, as needed. '

Deb asked a follow-up question about Andrew Rohrbaugh's list that he mentioned earlier. Is this an effort to move forward an all-taxa list of priority species? Andrew responded, saying the hope is that PISC will have a more holistic list for everything, but he admits to his personal bias towards plants. The goal is for PISC to compile a list of problematic species and to make recommendations to the CP&NWC.

Tammie Robinson asked (*via Chat box*) if there has been any effort to make incentives for property owners to remove invasive species from private property?

Amy Jewitt (WPC) responded to Tammie's question by providing information on an Invasive Species Buy-Back Program currently happening in Jasper County, Indiana. (*See below for more information on this program.*)

"The Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) announces the Invasive Species Buy-Back Program available to Jasper County residents. The SWCD is providing financial assistance up to 50% of the cost to replace your invasive with a native plant, up to \$300 for the replacement of species including: Callery Pear, Ornamental Pear, Norway Maple, Tree of Heaven, Siberian Elm, Buckthorn, Winged Burning Bush, Japanese Barberry, Asian Bush Honeysuckle, Privet species, Autumn Olive and more. They are partnering with the Indiana Invasives Initiative Regional Specialist to help provide free landowner surveys that will help identify what is on your property and recommendations for management. If you are interested in applying, the application can be found at [www.jaspercountyswcd.org/invasive-species](http://www.jaspercountyswcd.org/invasive-species)."

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) commented that he and others attending today's PISC meeting appreciated Michele's presentation as well as her time and efforts (as well as that of her colleagues) regarding this topic of banning the sale of invasive ornamental plants. In regards to John Bell's earlier comments, PISC is fully transparent and encourages this type of exchange with the public. State agencies have limited staff capacity and resources, and so because of this, work with community members has certainly contributed to the success in slowing the spread of invasive species in PA (such as the spotted lanternfly).

Fred also mentioned that PISC members should applaud themselves on where we are today (*with the work of this Council*) and where we are going as we move forward into the future with the help of Michele and others like her.

### **Discussion and Concluding Remarks**

Fred Strathmeyer (PDA) wrapped up the meeting by thanking everyone for a good meeting and outstanding participation (a key to the success of this group). He thanked everyone for their time and effort and is looking forward to the next PISC meeting.

**MOTION:** Gregg Robertson (PLNA) moved to adjourn the meeting. Gary Walters (DEP) seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

Meeting adjourned.

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**Next PISC Meeting**

Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 10:00am via Microsoft Teams

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*Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Amy Jewitt, Invasive Species Coordinator with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program.*

*Questions concerning these minutes should be submitted to Kris Abell ([krabell@pa.gov](mailto:krabell@pa.gov)), Council Coordinator. If you are a member of the public and wish to attend the next PISC meeting, please contact Kris for more information.*

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