

Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee Minutes

October 10, 2012

TWDB SFA Building Room 170

Austin, Texas

The meeting was convened by David Villarreal, Texas Department of Agriculture on October 10, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. Committee members attending were Dr. Ron Billings of Texas Forest Service, Mel Davis of Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, Dr. Barron Rector of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Kelly Bender (Alternate for Dr. Earl Chilton) of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Katherine Bruce Clanan of Texas Water Development Board, and Dr. Shashank Nialkhe of Texas Department of Agriculture.

Guests: Johnny Oswald (TSSWCB), Bob Gruner (TSSWCB), Scott Walker – President (TIPPC), Justin Wall (USDA), Sky Lewey-Jones (NRA), Gene T. Miller (National Wild Turkey Federation), Jared Timmons Feral Hog Specialist (Texas AgriLife Extension), Amy Beussink (USGS – Fort Worth), Jonathan P. Doherty (ESRI San Antonio), Dr. Tom Sidwa (Texas Department of Health Services), Dr. Travis Miller (Texas A&M College Station), Damon Waitt (CBJWC), Charlotte Reemts (TNC), Janet Fults (Texas Department of Agriculture), Dr. Awinash Bhatkar (Texas Department of Agriculture), George Nash (USDA), Justin Wall (USDA), Jessica Strickland (LBJWC), Mateo Scoggins (City of Austin), Loren Warrick (TSSWCB), Anne Rogers (TCEQ), Dennis Markwardt (TxDot), John Mason (TxDot), Susan Baggett (NRCS), Alex Duncan (COA-WPD), Lance Williams (TDA), John Bumgarner (USGS), Meghan Hope (CPA), Pat Raimondo (CPA), Neal Carlton (Texas Department of Agriculture), and Luke Sanders (SRA-TX)

April 26, 2012 meeting minutes were unable to be approved due to the inability to locate the information. New business was brought about by Dr. David Villarreal; it began by introducing the proposal to list China Berry by Dr. Damon Waitt. Dr. Waitt's presentation shared information about what it means to regulate China Berry trees and the effects that this tree has in Texas. He also shared that the China Berry tree meets 13 different criteria on the invasive species list. He recommended that it be added to the database of invasive plants. Dr. Awinash Bhatkar updated the group on laws and the process of listing invasive species. David Villarreal opened to the committee the need to vote for a new Chair and Vice- Chair. Mel Davis (TSSWCB) nominated Dr. David Villarreal (TDA), Katherine Bruce Clanan 2nd the motion, the remainder of the committee voted and agreed, making Dr. David Villarreal Chairman. Dr. David Villarreal (TDA) nominated Dr. Earl Chilton (TPWD) to be Vice –Chair, Katherine Bruce Clanan 2nd the motion, the remainder of the committee agreed, making Dr. Earl Chilton Vice-Chairman. Dr. David Villarreal recommended a vote be made to list China Berry as TDA noxious plant, Dr. Ron Billings agreed (TFS), and Kelly Bender (TPWD) 2nd the motion all five committee members endorsed the recommendation. TDA will open for public comment once the package is received by the executive office. Dr. Villarreal spoke to the committee about the next legislative session and that our next meeting will be held sometime in March of 2013. This concluded the New Business agenda items.

Ongoing projects, updates, and briefs were brought forth to the committee. Kelly Bender (TPWD) updated everyone on Aquatic Invasives; a presentation was given on zebra mussels on how they have now be found in Texas waters, also Bighead Carp, Lionfish, Armored Catfish, Tiger Prawn, Raspberry Crazy Ant, and Giant Salvia.

Damon Waitt (UT Wildflower Center) spoke for Scott Walker in regards to Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Council Update and needing feedback from the committee about bastard cabbage, spraying of Johnson grass with the use of hay production, and golden bamboo. The committee decided to discuss and place on the agenda for the next meeting.

Justin Wall (USDA) updated everyone on USDA-APHIS Federal Noxious Weed Programs regulation and baron propagation explaining to the group there must be a permit. Dr. Ron Billings (TFS) gave an update about Emerald Ash Borer, and TFS's effort to bring about awareness of not transporting firewood across state lines. Gene Miller (National Wild Turkey Federation) gave a quick update about the Canadian River Invasive Control project. Jared Timmons Feral Hog Specialist (Texas AgriLife Extension) updated everyone on his efforts in the Plum Creek watershed in controlling feral hogs and the outreach he has done with the community and helping the state of Texas track populations of feral hogs. Amy Buessink (USGS – Fort Worth) updated the group on zebra mussels in Texas and the efforts of USGS to monitor and detect zebra mussels and the effects they have on water quality and their habits and how we can manage them.

Dr. Todd Sidwa (Texas Department of State Health Services) came to update the group on the West Nile outbreak in Texas the efforts that they are trying to take in educating the public on the virus and what precautions need to be taken since the outbreak has occurred in North Texas. Travis Miller of Texas A&M spoke about the efforts biofuels are making in regards to how invasive plants such as sugar cane can help biofuels. Jonathan Doherty (ESRI – San Antonio) updated the group about making it easier to share tools such as maps online, Arc GIS, and showing maps on saltcedar. The last to present was Sky Lewey-Jones (NRA) on Arrundo cane and the many efforts NRA and the Landowner Riparian Network are doing to eradicate the cane in the Nueces River basin. After Sky's presentation Dr. David Villarreal ask the meeting to be adjourned.