

**CALIFORNIA INVASIVE SPECIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CISAC)
MEETING
ROOM 220, CDFA BUILDING**

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 19, 2011

Opening:

The regular meeting of the California Invasive Species Advisory Committee (CISAC) was called to order at 10:10 a.m. on September 19, 2011 in Sacramento, by Committee Chair Andrea Fox.

CISAC Members Present:

Bob Atkins, Victoria Brandon, Karen Buhr, Christiana Conser (by telephone), Jim Cranney, Andrea Fox, Larry Godfrey, Jay Goldsmith, Vince Guise, Doug Johnson, Jeanne Merrill, Betsy Peterson, John Randall, Sheri Smith,

CISAC Members Absent:

Lou Anne Cummings, Ricardo De Leon, Joseph DiTomaso, Richard Forster, Marcy Martin, Karen McDowell, David Pattison, Kristina Schierenbeck, Robin Wall, Helene Wright

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Staff Present:

Alexandra Espinosa, Robert Leavitt, Matt Lugo, Amber Morris, David Pegos, Susan Sawyer

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Staff Present:

Susan Ellis, Lisa Corvington

Opening Comments:

Chair Andrea Fox welcomed the Committee, staff, and members of the public participating in person and online. She invited Committee members to share news and information of interest.

- Vince Guise distributed copies of an article from the August 14, 2012 Contra Costa Times describing several invasive fish recently discovered for sale on Craig's List.
- Sheri,Smith said that the Board of Forestry had just approved a zone of infestation for the gold-spotted oak borer and advised that the Forest Pest Council would hold its annual meeting in Sacramento on November 7 and 8. There will be good speakers, and she will send the link to the listserv. The following week (November 13) an international conference on non-native forest insects and diseases (the "Continental Dialog") will also be held in Sacramento. The firewood

- task force will have a booth there. It was the consensus of the Committee that these events should be posted to the ISCC website.
- Jeanne Merrill asked about the findings in the recent court ruling on the lawsuit against the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) EIR. Robert Leavitt proposed that CDFA counsel give a full report at the next CISAC meeting, but summarized very briefly, saying that California Superior Court Judge Connelly had found in CDFA's favor and dismissed the complaints in their entirety. The plaintiffs may appeal. Doug Johnson expressed concern about the way the plaintiff's lawyers are attempting to credit the suit with removing aerial spraying from the project, even though it had been taken out before the environmental evaluation took place.
 - Betsy Peterson: the commercial citrus and nursery industries and CDFA are trying to work out a citrus quarantine agreement. At present all sales are forbidden in a 909 square mile quarantine area.
 - Sheri Smith reported on a huge increase in Sudden Oak Death mortality this year. The disease, primarily affecting tan oak, has been found in a range of coastal counties involving 50,000 acres and 350,000 trees. An eradication project is ongoing but the disease is escaping the boundaries. Amber Morris: in Oregon the emphasis has moved from eradication to control. So far SOD has not been found outside California and Oregon. Robert Leavitt explained that CDFA's responsibility for SOD control is limited to nursery stock; the agency is working on ways to steam treat the soil and to develop a trichogramma fungus that kills the pathogen.

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the May 24 and July 19 meetings were still not available.

PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Susan Ellis of CDFG discussed a recent discovery of the invasive coqui frog in southern CA, and also said that AB 2443, which would impose a fee on registered boats and direct the money towards quagga/zebra mussel control efforts, had passed the legislature and was on the Governor's desk awaiting signature. She then introduced Lisa Corvington, who gave a presentation on the California Climate Adaptation Strategy. California's 2009 climate adaptation strategy is now being updated, with DFG leading the biodiversity section. A draft will be released for public review in November, with the expectation of a final version by the end of the year. Effective control of invasive species reduces a significant source of stress on the ecosystem and improves capacity to withstand climate change. Robert Leavitt stated that CDFA is also starting a Climate Change Advisory Group under the science advisor to Secretary Ross. Several grower groups are already involved and additional participants are being sought for a series of symposia. It is important for CISAC to be involved in long range planning to make sure that invasive species issues and appropriate strategies are included.

(b) Dr. Jason Leathers, CDFA's new state entomologist gave an update on recent eradication projects.

- Japanese Beetles were discovered in the Sacramento suburb of Fair Oaks again this summer. This species lives in the soil as grubs most of the year, and the adults attack many types of fruit: it is a very destructive pest that is widespread in most of the eastern states. It is spread primarily in sod or potted plants but also frequently found in cargo holds; to control it CDFA distributes 13,000 baited traps and inspects 7,000 aircraft annually. During the past three years seven individuals have been found within a narrow radius in Fair Oaks, including four this summer. In response, extra traps were deployed in the neighborhood and chemical treatments of plants and soil took place within 200 meters of the find. No additional beetles have been discovered since June 21, and any remaining at this season would be living in the soil as grubs so there will be no more treatments this year. CDFA held a public meeting and invited all the residents in the neighborhood, who gave 100 percent cooperation.
- European Grape Vine Moth, native to Europe, was found in Napa in 2009 and in nine additional counties the following year. As of now almost no pesticides are needed on California grapes, but this would change if EGVM becomes established here. The moth has three generations annually: the 1st generation feeds on grape flowers, the 2nd generation on bunches of grapes (damaging them severely), and the 3rd generation overwinters. In response, 39,000 pheromone traps were distributed and 2000 square miles placed under quarantine. The project has received great cooperation from growers, who voluntarily spent \$30 million for treatments. Homeowners in the EGVM area were offered a choice of having their grapes removed or sprayed with Bt to control the moth. The goals are to eradicate EGVM and prevent its spread. In 2012 only 76 moths were found, all in the vicinity of two inactive vineyards that were not treated last year. The last moth was trapped on June 12, with no second generation individuals found at all. This has been a model project for successful eradication, as evidenced by a USDA APHIS administrative award presented to CDFA.
- The Mediterranean Fruit Fly was discovered this summer in Rancho Cucamonga in San Bernardino County. This pest is known to attack more than 250 species, and could cause a \$2 billion impact if it becomes established in California. Before 1996, CDFA conducted a control program costing \$250 million annually, then in collaboration with USDA switched to a different approach concentrating on preemptive mating disruption and involving the weekly release of massive numbers of sterile males in the Los Angeles basin. Since the female only mates once, this technique is very effective. The flies are reared in Hawaii and Guatemala (where they are already established) and imported into California as irradiated sterile pupae. After the discovery of four flies this summer, CDFA distributed extra delimitation traps, released additional sterile flies in the area, conducted a larval survey, looked for damaged fruit, and (on a voluntary basis) distributed poison baits within 200 meters of the discovered flies. No additional

flies have been found since August 16. The whole program costs no more than \$10 million annually, demonstrating that prevention is a bargain.

(c) David Pegos introduced Carly Montez and Darcy Bontempo, both with Texas Parks and Wildlife, who gave a presentation (by phone) on the Texas “Hello . . . Goodbye” invasive species public awareness campaign. Texas agencies recognized several years ago that public awareness was critical to stopping the spread of aquatic invasives. They decided to concentrate on Giant Salvinia and Zebra Mussels, and devised a campaign targeted at the general public, particularly boaters and anglers, with primary messages “why should I care?” and “what should I do?” The tone was serious but not alarmist, educational but accessible, stressing pride in the state, a sense of responsibility, and ways that individuals could be part of the solution. They wanted to devise an umbrella message that could be extended to a wide variety of pests, and settled on the “hello/goodbye” format, telling citizens what they are going to lose and why they should care, with the goal of creating awareness and motivating action. A wide variety of outlets received a consistent message (via a wide range of materials, from TV commercials to “pump toppers” at gas stations) pointing towards a one-stop website, *www.texasinvasives.org*. Random user surveys at targeted lakes discovered that 96 percent of those surveyed said they would be more likely to clean their boats after seeing informational materials. They were funded by legislation, with \$300,000/year to spend on the campaigns.

REPORTS:

- (a) Austin Webster reported on four bills from this year’s legislative session.
- AB 1540, authorizing control of the South American Spongeplant in the Delta, has already been signed by Governor Brown.
 - AB 1625, the Transition to Organics Act would allow growers to be reimbursed up to 25 percent of the cost of switching to organics from conventional farming.
 - AB 2443, increasing boat registration fees up to \$10 annually and designating the funding for dreissenid mussel prevention, has strong support from local governments, the shipping industry and recreational organizations
 - SB1066 on climate change creates a fund for non-profits involved in coastal conservation and authorizes the State Coastal Conservancy to award grants from the fund.

The last three bills are on the Governor’s desk awaiting his signature. In the future, it would be useful to identify bills that are of interest to the various organizations represented on CISAC, and post information about them to the website. Under some circumstances CISAC might consider a position on specific legislation but it would be useful to be aware of relevant legislation in any case

(b) Pathways risk analysis: Christiana Conser (by phone) gave a summary of the draft report that had been distributed to the Committee earlier in the week. She invited comments from committee members and others, particularly to identify gaps in knowledge and possible approaches to filling them. Comments should be submitted to her directly by October 15.

(c) iPhone app “What’s This Bug?”: Susan Sawyer. CDFG received Farm Bill funding to set up a strategic system for early detection that would encourage citizen scientists to report what they have seen. The system has several parts: an easy method for the public to report, a web-based reporting system with a simple form and place for a photo, a way for officials to respond, follow-up from staff in the field, and a system for sharing information within the Western Region. This has been set up as an iPhone app called Report-A-Pest and a website www.whatisthisbug.org that contains links to CISAC’s Invasive Species List, the app download, several social media sites, and educational information. Sightings can be submitted by web form as well as by phone. The app is already available in the Apple store and rollout of the whole system is expected by October 1. There are no immediate plans for setting up a Droid app which is much more complicated.

DISCUSSION

Strategic Framework next steps. The list of priorities for immediate action drafted at the two previous CISAC meeting was distributed, and Andrea Fox and Victoria Brandon led follow-up discussion. It was the sense of the Committee that the items selected were appropriate, but that a closer look is needed to determine just what we, as a committee of volunteers, can reasonably accomplish, and where to direct our efforts. It was also agreed that the list of initiated and ongoing items needs more specificity about just what is being done and who is doing it. The Executive Committee will evaluate and report at the November 15 meeting, and in the meantime all members are invited to send comments to Andrea. Doug Johnson pointed out that a report on framework implementation is due as a grant deliverable (though with little money available to prepare it). This list will provide a starting point for the report, which is an opportunity for CISAC and ISCC to inventory what programs currently exist, show the good work that is going on, and identify gaps. The report is due in May, 2013; we should have a strong draft by our March meeting.

PRESENTATION: State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), by Dr. Junko Hoshi from DFG State Wildlife Agency. Preparation of this framework for conservation is a requirement for eligibility for federal wildlife grants supporting programs benefitting wildlife and habitats, and must be revised every 10 years. Funding is distributed according to a formula based on population and geographic area. There are currently 43 active grants in California. The State Wildlife Agency is tasked with the development and implementation of SWAP, which is focused on wildlife (fauna) but also includes habitats and stressors such as invasive species. California has been divided into four provinces containing 19 ecoregions, with different specific conservation targets. The process is still in the conceptual phase, and would benefit from CISAC input. It’s hard to set firm goals because everything is changing due to climate change. A draft will be available for public comment next year. CISAC members raised concerns about conflicts?? with agriculture, and recommended coordination with federal land management agencies such as BLM. The October meeting of the Biodiversity Council will focus on joint planning efforts.

UPDATES

- Letters to ISCC: Robert Leavitt confirmed that CISAC's letters on dreissenid mussels and invasive plants have been submitted to Secretary Ross. Unfortunately there is still no extra funding for weed control, but CDFA is committed to strengthening prevention efforts and maintaining the border stations,
- Strategic Framework distribution: printed copies have gone out to the organizations listed by CISAC, and ten copies were distributed to committee members. If anyone needs more they should ask David Pegos.
- 21st Century Symposium: the next session, the third in the series, will focus on invasion biology. A date has not yet been set, but the event will probably take place in late November or early December. Major scholars such as EO Wilson and Peter Raven have been invited to participate.
- "Buy it where you burn it" campaign: many members of the firewood task force are participating, with 8 billboards up, posters at Caltrans rest stops, attendance at the woodturners conference, handouts available at campsites and border stations, and notices distributed through the park reservation system and with firewood cutting permits. Sheri Smith: this program provides a great example of interagency cooperation.
- AB 2367 Fish & Wildlife vision process: Doug Johnson did not have an update regarding the proposal to add a definition of invasive species to the Public Resources code. Susan Ellis said that DFG will be revisiting their Strategic Plan, and that she would keep this idea in mind when they work on that.
- Ag in Classroom – Andrea Fox has engaged some new reviewers through UC Davis, and will bring a draft to a future meeting.
- Farmer's Market brochure – CISAC is working with Kitchen Table Consulting on messaging and brochure design. CACASA has been offered a contract for distribution and surveys.
- CISAC subcommittee updates: Communications SC is working on the farmers' market brochure. Invasive Plant SC and Mussel SC are on hold pending additional needs.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Nan Wishner, California Environmental Health Initiative, suggested CISAC look at a newly released study by Gilles Seralini regarding health impacts of RoundUp and RoundUp-Ready GMO corn fed to rats. RoundUp is used in California to control invasive plants.

Next meeting: The next regularly scheduled CISAC meeting will take place at 10:00 AM on November 15 in Sacramento.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 PM

Minutes taken by CISAC Vice Chair Victoria Brandon

Approved by Secretary Christiana Conser