

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

Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, January 15, 2014

**Opening:**

The regular meeting of the California Invasive Species Advisory Committee (CISAC) was called to order at 10:05 a.m. on January 15, 2014 in Sacramento, by outgoing Committee Chair Victoria Brandon.

**CISAC Members Present:**

Bob Atkins, Victoria Brandon, Richard Forster, Andrea Fox, Larry Godfrey, Jay Goldsmith, Vince Guise, Doug Johnson, Jeanne Merrill (afternoon only), Betsy Peterson, John Randall, Sheri Smith, Helene Wright

**CISAC Members Absent:**

Karen Buhr, Christiana Conser, Jim Cranney, Joe DiTomaso, Marcy Martin, David Pattison, Kristina Schierenbeck, Robin Wall

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

David Pegos, Austin Webster

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Staff Present:**

Susan Ellis, Valerie Cook-Fletcher

**California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) Staff Present:**

Tom Smith

**CISAC MEMBER UPDATES**

- Helene Wright: APHIS is continuing to find new ACP infestations, though so far HLB finds have still been limited to the one original tree. There have been scattered LBAM finds in San Diego County recently.
- Vince Guise: EGVM quarantines may be lifted in some of the marginal quarantine areas soon, with hope of eradication throughout the infested area next year.
- Sheri Smith: last year GSOB was found in Idyllwild, and infested trees have now been identified in 30 trees, with firewood the likeliest vector. A GSOB task force has been appointed under the California Forest Pest Council. The Polyphagous Shothole Borer, initially limited to Riverside, Orange and San Bernardino counties, has now also been found in San Diego County. It has a huge number of hosts including natives, and kills infested trees. A huge breeding population of the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle was recently found in Honolulu, probably having been transported on military equipment from Guam. USFS has produced a national Strategic Framework for invasive species management, available on the web.

- Doug Johnson: Cal-IPC has been awarded a Wildlife Conservation Board planning grant to develop early detection and eradication strategies, with a little funding for on-the-ground projects.
- Betsy Peterson: cucumber green-mottled mosaic virus and bacterial fruit blotch have recently been found in Yolo County. The mosaic virus is considered a transient, actionable pest with a good potential for eradication. Different types of seed treatments are under investigation.
- Victoria Brandon: gave a presentation on CISAC's work at the CARCD conference in November, with emphasis on investigating alternative sources of WMA funding. The group was very responsive but produced no clever ideas about how to function with no money. NPR seems to have discovered invasive species: they had a program about Asian Carp a few months ago and a more recent one about the effects of ACP on Florida citrus. Quagga mussels have recently been found in Lake Piru in Ventura County.

## STAFF UPDATES

- Susan Ellis: the National Invasive Species Council was unable to meet during the sequester. An NISC subcommittee is preparing a white paper on harvest incentives, starting with Asian Carp and Lionfish -- can they be marketable as food? There won't be a formal nationwide invasive species awareness week in 2014 but some states are planning local activities in February and March. She expanded on the mussel find in Lake Piru, which is the first place in California to be infested that is *not* on the Colorado River. The mussels were presumably transported by boat despite the existence of a prevention/inspection program and have probably been there quite some time. Lake Piru is in a reciprocal banding program with other lakes in the vicinity and they are probably infested too. There is a good possibility of eradication because the lake doesn't connect to other water bodies downstream: the water is used for irrigation. Vince Guise: could contaminated irrigation pipes act as a vector? Irrigation pipe stands empty for a while which would reduce the risk of transmission, but pipes are sometimes sold and moved long distances.

CDFW is working on a five year update of the AIS management plan, with a focus on vector analysis. Various marine vectors are being assessed. More comprehensive permitting for live marine bait may reduce importations, though the spread of a few species may be inevitable: for example, lionfish is spreading beyond its predicted habitat, and is not on the California IS list. Emergency regulatory action may be necessary. The mussel interagency team is still meeting quarterly.

- Valerie Cook-Fletcher: is engaged in preliminary planning for Invasive Species Action Week, which will probably take place in the first part of August. She's working with CDFA and State Parks on a statewide public education campaign that will include staffing a booth at International Sportsmen's Expo.
- Tom Smith: has had no success in getting funding for firewood outreach. Sudden Oak Death has recently been found in Trinity County, the first new county in 10 years. A new North Coast Region staff member was just hired, but three out of four current staff members will be out of commission this year because they have been required to go through three six-week fire training sessions.

- David Pegos: ACP has been found on 20 properties in Ventura County, and treated. There's a strong effort under way to keep it out of the Ojai valley. CDFA has requested Farm Bill funding for tribal outreach, focusing on traditional ecological knowledge. There will be four listening sessions throughout state, and four weed eradication projects will be funded @ \$10,000 each. Upcoming outreach opportunities include Ag Day in Sacramento on March 19, and Ag Expo in Tulare in February.

Tim Spann from the Avocado Commission gave a presentation on the Polyphagous Shothole Borer (*Euwallacea* sp). This very small pest is not yet federally actionable, and was misidentified as the tea shothole borer when first detected by a chance capture in 2003. It was first found on box elders in Long Beach, then on a backyard avocado tree. The species, which has still not been officially named, carries spores of three fungi, all potentially fatal to the host trees. Females bore into trees to lay eggs and carry the fungi with them. Juveniles feed on the fungi, then mate in the gallery; pregnant females emerge and either bore into the same tree in another location or fly to a nearby tree. Since they don't ingest wood when boring, systemic pesticides don't work, and sprays don't work well either because the beetles are outside the host tree for only a very short time. 286 host species have already been identified, including many native species and many crop trees including avocado. Current distribution includes many sites in Los Angeles County and some in Orange. An infestation in San Diego has been identified as a separate introduction from Taiwan, and Vietnam is the probable point of origin of the others. The beetles can live in wood for months after a tree has been cut down, and also in packing materials, crates, etc. Thousands of street trees and park trees have been destroyed by this pest in Long Beach and elsewhere, and although it has not been found in commercial avocado groves yet the industry is extremely concerned. Outside its native range the only other place it has been found is Israel, where avocado is the primary host. Contact info: 949 341 1955, [tspann@avocado.org](mailto:tspann@avocado.org), [californiavocadogrowers.org](http://californiavocadogrowers.org) or [eskalenlab.ucr.edu](http://eskalenlab.ucr.edu)

**Discussion.** Bob Atkins: have monitoring traps been developed? No: there are no known pheromones and the beetles stay in galleries in the host trees for almost their entire life cycle. Juveniles feed exclusively on fungi, not on wood. The beetle attacks small wood, and there is great concern about its spreading on nursery trees.

Tim Spann: the Avocado Commission has provided \$800,000 for screening fungicides, with field trials under way. Several seem promising, but none is registered for use on avocados yet. A couple of partly effective pesticides have come out of screening trials at UC Riverside, but even the best product only lasts 6-8 weeks. Chipping is very effective, but only if pieces are smaller than 2 inches. If dead wood is cut up for firewood, the piles should be covered in black plastic. This treatment kills the beetles in 2 weeks in summer.

John Randall: are almond and pistachio hosts? Not known to be as of now but almonds could be vulnerable. Pistachio's resinous sap will probably be a good defense.

Bob Atkins: we should be working with solid waste management areas and legislators to urge comprehensive handling of firewood and wood products to limit transmittal of pests like these.

Victoria Brandon: would a CISAC working group be helpful?

David Pegos: working with the USFS group is the best way forward, and a major outreach and education component is needed. He introduces Nick Condos, the new director of the CDFA

Plant Health Division, who says that green waste that goes to approved compost and biomass facilities is covered by existing protocols that mitigate risk for most pests. Unregulated rogue operators who chip and spread are a problem, as is private movement of firewood. Education is more likely to succeed than a regulatory approach since enforcement is so difficult. Discussion about controls on firewood movement are going on at the national level, but it's hard to control what people do on their private property. Border stations provide an extra level of protection for California. Richard Forster: the single biomass plant in Amador County is now drawing material from 100 miles around. Nick Condos: most of the state is covered by one quarantine or another and that brings on regulatory structure and education about requirements. Sheri Smith: more than \$1 million has been invested in GSOB and firewood outreach but it's not working. Interagency collaboration is needed to devise an effective course of action.

**Transition ceremony.** CDFA Secretary Karen Ross thanked Victoria Brandon for her service as CISAC chair during 2013, and presented her with a plaque as an expression of ISCC's appreciation. She welcomed Bob Atkins as incoming chair.

#### **PRESENTATIONS:**

**(a) "Know Before You Go" ("Don't Pack a Pest")** Following up from the presentation at the July 17, 2013 CISAC meeting, David Pegos discussed plans to extend this outreach effort to California, along the lines developed in Florida. Funding has been obtained to develop materials for use at international ports of entry, including three marine ports and international airports. CDFA is also identifying opportunities for offshore partnerships, starting with Mexico and China, and developing an interactive website and mobile app, and possibly tying invasive species awareness to a lottery reward.

**(b) NEPA – Bob Atkins and Sheri Smith.** Instead of being a tool for the protection of the environment, NEPA requirements have sometimes added to weed problems by making it more difficult for National Forest managers to collaborate with surrounding landowners. Competition for funding is also an issue, especially when a severe fire season (as in 2013) consumes so many resources. Excessive buffer requirements for herbicide use (e.g. 300 feet from a waterway) provide a reservoir for invasive plants since some weeds can't be controlled by anything *but* herbicides. Spot (as opposed to broadcast) treatments could safely be allowed a lot closer to streams.

Doug Johnson: Eldorado NF went through a forestwide weed control NEPA process that included weeds that might show up in the future. This kind of process will take place forest by forest rather than regionally.

Sheri Smith: need to gather more information about specific problems and questions from CACASA and other groups, and will find someone attend the April CISAC meeting to answer questions, specifically about how NEPA relates to weed management.

Jay Goldsmith: NPS is conducting studies in the Santa Monica Mountains and Redwood National Park and finding many of the same issues.

#### **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

- **Approval of minutes:** Doug Johnson moved and Vince Guise seconded to approve outstanding minutes of July 17 and October 16, 2013. All in favor, none opposed. Minutes from the July 19 2012 meeting were still not available.
- **2014 meeting dates.** Victoria Brandon moved and Sheri Smith seconded to approve additional 2014 meeting dates of April 23, July 23, and October 15, as previously determined by Doodle poll. All in favor, none opposed.
- **CISAC member self-evaluation.** Betsy Peterson moved and Doug Johnson seconded to implement the member self-evaluation survey as presented. All in favor, none opposed. It was agreed that participation by all committee members should be required but that responses should be anonymous. Austin Webster will set it up on Survey Monkey, with a response deadline of 30 days from posting date.
- **Term limits and election of officers.** Many members will be terming out in the next year or two, which limits possible vice chair candidates considerably. A round robin discussion to explore the availability and willingness of those present took place. Victoria Brandon moved and Jay Goldsmith seconded to postpone the election of a vice chair to the next meeting, and in the meantime to ask ISCC for guidance on a suggested bylaw change extending the term of a termed-out outgoing chair for an additional year to allow them to serve as past-chair. All in favor, none opposed. Victoria Brandon moved and John Randall moved to select Christiana Conser as secretary for an additional year. All in favor, none opposed.

#### UPDATES

- **2014 SCBG.** Andrea Fox: CISAC filed a preliminary grant application for \$127,000 for three years, and is waiting to hear whether we will be invited to submit a full application. If so support letters from committee members will be requested.
- **Legislative Update.** Austin Webster: five of the items of interest that he was watching last year are going forward as two-year bills. He requested members to let him know about any additional legislation to track. David Pegos: has made contact with Congressman Mike Thompson, who is one of the founding members of the recently formed House invasive species caucus.
- **Invasive Species Council.** 2013 chair Victoria Brandon attended the November 6, 2013 ISCC meeting and reported on CISAC activities to the ISCC secretaries and their representatives, as well as representatives from the Governor's office. The report was very cordially received, with a request for further updates. The ISCC also made a few minor bylaw changes, appointed David Pegos as CISAC Executive Director, and committed to appointing liaisons to CISAC from each ISCC agency.
- **21st Century Pest Management Symposia.** David Pegos: the most recent symposium on Invasion Biology was held in Davis on October 17 and featured insects, nematodes, and diseases, with Daniel Simberloff as keynote speaker. The next symposium (date TBD) will focus on exclusion, prevention and risk assessments.

#### WORKSHOP: Set priorities for Strategic Framework implementation

After extended discussion, it was noted that top funding priorities seemed to be almost identical with those expressed in the report on invasive plant control and budget priority letter that CISAC submitted in the summer of 2012. Weed Management Areas, border stations,

prevention programs, and biocontrol were all top recommendations then and they remain so. In addition, internet pathways and online purchases were identified as priorities.

Although CISAC role as advisor to ISCC means that the committee as a whole cannot act as an advocate, individual members are encouraged to use the letters that were submitted in August 2012 as resources in their own efforts to weigh in on the budget process. Since the letters are posted on the ISCC website they can be considered public, and quoted as needed. It would also be good to ask the ISCC liaisons (when appointed) for their responses to the funding recommendations and to request responses at the April CISAC meeting.

In the meantime, CISAC's outreach campaign is dependent on being awarded the SCBG, but can we identify some actions that we could start working on before that? Suggestions: think of useful additions to the existing website; follow up on the pathways report by selecting a few key pathways to evaluate in depth (internet, rail traffic, military vehicles); create a white paper on funding recommendations with specific amounts; develop and implement BMPs such as those developed by Cal-IPC.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** none offered

**Next meeting:** The next regularly scheduled CISAC meeting will take place at 10:00 AM on April 23, 2014, in Sacramento.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM

Minutes taken by CISAC Past Chair Victoria Brandon

Approved by Secretary Christiana Conser