

### **3/23/23 VIEPAC Meeting Minutes**

**Start: 9:00am**

**Attendance:**

Steve, Judy, Stephanie, Ben, Emilie-PHARM/Plant Health Staff

**Committee Members Present**

Bob Popp, Botanist VT F& W

Toby Alexander, NRCS

Ann Hazelrigg, UVM-Extension

Bonnie Donahue, VT AOT

Kim Jensen, VT DEC

Elizabeth Spinney, FPR

Katie Kaine US Fish and Wildlife service

Steve Mortillo, NPS

Steven Davidson, VNLA

Meg Modley, Lake Champlain Basin Program

Mary Beth Deller, NFS

Mike Bald, Weed removal industry

**Absent**

Lynn Mcnamara- TNC

Kathryon Aroian, APHIS-PPQ

**Non-Committee**

Kathy Decker-FPR

Introduction: Steve- Committee is established by the Noxious Weed Rule, formal charge- makes recommendations for added plants; as well as info exchange; no authority for recommendations of other things

**Committee Members: Personal introductions**

**Operations Guideline:**

VAAFM staff will provide admin support to the committee, and facilitate meetings, organize materials, serving as liaison to our Secretary

Public meeting- associated rules

Recommendation Listing and Delisting Process- VIEPAC makes recommendations to Secretary of Agriculture. VAAFM staff drafts recommendation letter for committee and will communicate with the Secretary. VAAFM will communicate to the committee whether the recommendation was accepted or not. Once recommendation is accepted by the Secretary, VAAFM will initiate the rule making process to update the list. Process will be transparent.

PRAs (Plant Risk Assessments) process for assessing risk of invasive plants

Comments or Concerns:

Kathy- does current rule allow for species to be added without rule making process? As it stands it does need to go through process- Steve

Steve Dwinell-Explanation of rulemaking process? Have authority to make rule, go through sec of state, public comment, LCAR, then adopt

Bob- for endangered species list state can add species with rulemaking, burden of proof is on Agency instead of person

Judy- concern about timeline for rulemaking

Steve VNLA- pressure from public, worth the time to open to the public, better resources for nurseries

\*\*\*Need an open channel of communication

Kim- outreach is very important, watchlist- how does that get presented to public without having regulatory weight? Aquatic rule- in statute- early detection/ rapid response ability without having to go through rulemaking; have not added anything yet

Steve D.- investigate authority and responding to rapid situation, concern has been raised

NPS- have their own rules, impacts

Mike- vector concerns, EDRR- Japanese stiltgrass

### **Kim's Review:**

VTNNIP listing- Noxious Weed list: various descriptive columns

Watch list discussion

Concerns of ordering lists from nursery lists- nurseries responsibility; providing lists to suppliers

Exploring options of the watchlist ahead of time with nurseries and other- BUT no regulatory authority

Once we have this established we share on website and blog/ requests

Who creates and maintains watchlist? Previous committee, lots of thought went into it, call for info from experts

Watchlist could be maintained by VAAFM as part of the pipeline towards listing (flow chart steps), alert tool for nurseries and other stakeholders; another use for it- permitting for Act 250 projects developers saying they can't plant anything on watchlist; many groups use watchlist as a guide

Maine uses an advisory list- could look at it

Committee recommends to use Watch list as a resource, etc

VTInvasives.org- has a subset of watchlist species (and noxious weed list)

11 updates made but takes lots of work and grant funding is limited

Pest Risk Assessment: work sheet to filled out by committee member; very extensive 60hrs per plant species, brought to committee, discuss whether to add to noxious weed list; already 5 PRAs completed

Developed the flow/ roles of people VIEPC Roles and Vision

### **Committee Structure/ Process Discussion**

Steve Dwinell leading- simplest structure best, recommendations brought to committee and “vote” but really members are there to present their positions

Any committee member can bring plant to consideration- do PRAs, present to Secretary, other concerns brought forward but no obligations to other activities

VAAFM has obligation to keep meeting going

Who does the PRAs? Someone has to volunteer to do them- Subcommittees to address?

Who is responsible for various aspects of everything else? Outreach, requests, VT Invasives, treatment- respective Agencies and individuals

Enforcement? VAAFM, Fish and Wildlife, Federal- APHIS PPQ

Committee sole responsibility is to add weeds to list- decide on other various aspects on case by case basis

VT Invasives- FPR supports \$, UVM,

Methodology for selecting which plants to even investigate, write out objectives, which ones are being sold and distributed, regional approach- what about other states PRAs, permission to use ones from NYS

Nursery outreach about native species alternatives to invasives- good ancillary example

How often to meet and agenda?

Way to holistically look at list to determine which species get added? How to streamline process

Who is responsible for some of these important aspects such as EDRR which is not addressed in statute?

EDRR can have biggest impact ecologically; how to monitor,

VIEPAC will only focus on recommendations.

Voluntary working group comprised of state agencies and other stakeholders may be the most comprehensive and efficient way to work on other aspects related to invasive plants that need to be addressed (pest risk assessments, fact Sheets, enforcement, early detection & rapid response plan, outreach and education, etc.). If the need arises, the working group may send recommendations to VIEPAC on administrative actions or specific plant species to consider.

### **Quarterly meetings:**

Formal charge again- here are the plants and recommendations, begin rule making process

Watchlist gets published...

6 PRAs in place

Next meeting 6/22/23 in Waterbury 9-12pm Ash Conference Room at WSOC

Moving location around: UVM, Randolph, Woodstock

Acknowledgement of Bob Popp's retirement!

**Adjourn: Noon**