

VIEPAC Meeting Notes

Date:

September 11, 2024

Present (in-person):

Bonnie Donahue (AOT), Melissa (GMNF), Lynn (TNC), Kim Jensen (DEC), Dave Huber (VAAFAM), Emi, Max, Steph, Ben, Judy

Online:

Caitlin (VLT), Noah (FPR), Kathryn (PPQ), Bethany Creaser (VAAFAM), Toby Alexander (NRCS), Steven Mortillo (Marsh Billings Rockefeller NP), Grace Glynn (F&W)

Introduction:

- Brief introduction to the agenda and participants.

Updates:

Kim (DEC):

- Plants were up in June, not July. New infestation at Gander Bay, hand-pulling led to eradication. EWM infestation at Joe's Pond, early detection and rapid response in progress.
- Lost garage space; hiring a new person.
- Prioritizing campgrounds, administrative work, and timber sales, though funding is limited.

Bonnie (AOT):

- Environmental staff received plant ID training. Planning future invasive plant management in projects, including addressing Tree of Heaven (TOH) in Colchester.

Kathryn (PPQ):

- Trap takedown starting. No significant findings reported.
- Concern about spotted lanternfly (SLF) in Springfield, MA, and its potential spread via I-91.
- Market surveys for SITC program; confiscated dairy products and cow urine (religious ceremonial use).

Grace (F&W):

- Collaborating with VCE to manage invasives on Lake Champlain's remnant sand dunes, with Rugosa rose overtaking the state-threatened beach pea.
- Managing cheatgrass and spotted knapweed; biocontrol might be an option.
- Working on state land planting guidelines, focusing on shifting from non-native plants to using ecotype seeds.

Caitlin (VLT):

- Nothing to report.

Toby (NRCS):

- Working on brush management, covering 2-3k acres/year.
- Updating technical documents to comply with state and federal pesticide and wetland rules.

Steve (Marsh Billings Rockefeller NP):

- Treated Japanese tree lilac, added to NH ROW permits. Collaborated with VYCC to treat invasives and conducted aquatic vegetation surveys.

Noah (FPR):

- Working on early detection and rapid response (EDRR) for mile-a-minute and stiltgrass.
- Significant stiltgrass infestation found at Pond Woods WMA; monitoring and managing newly disturbed soil areas.
- Publicly facing the VTInvasives website, focused on terrestrial plant reports.

Discussion Points:**Nursery Inspection Update (Ben):**

- 100 inspections completed with 7 stop-sale orders: 3 for Norway maple, 2 for burning bush, 1 for water hyacinth, and 1 for wineberry. Most violations were from Canadian imports.

Public Reports & Response:

- Focus on designated plant pests and early detection of giant hogweed and pale swallowwort. Discussed iNaturalist reports and state survey tools for infestation tracking.

Max (VAAFME):

- Developed outreach materials on new plant pests with Katie. Printed pamphlets and fact sheets for public awareness, distributed at farmer's markets.
- Working to ensure materials are posted online.

Judy:

- Mile-a-minute weed monitoring ongoing. Found new plants on the western side of the original infestation site, with plans to delineate further.

Steph (VAAFME):

- Noxious weed rule update in collaboration with AOT, focusing on disposal techniques and staging areas to prevent dispersal.
- Legal review and rulemaking process underway to streamline invasive species listing.

VAAFME Pesticide Rule Updates (Bethany and Dave):

- Updating pesticide manuals and certification exams. Collaborating with UVM's Pesticide Safety Education Program.
- Amended pesticide rule (first update in 32 years). New provisions for ROW permits, e-commerce, and terrestrial invasive plant control permits.
- Emphasis on coordination between permittees and inspections, with a focus on ROW and invasive species control.

Language in Invasive Ecology (Emi & Noah):

- Discussed shifting the narrative around invasive species to reduce exclusionary and xenophobic language.
- Proposal to change terms like "invasive" to "introduced," recognizing the human role in species spread.
- Emi highlighted the importance of inclusive language to foster collective action and reduce harm.

Action Items:

1. Kim to coordinate on aquatic invasive species management and explore potential expansion with state staff survey tools.
2. Noah and Emi to continue efforts on statewide volunteer coordination for invasive plant management.
3. Steph and Ben to update and distribute educational materials online.
4. Dave to consider simplifying ROW and terrestrial invasive permit processes.
5. Emi to lead continued language revision discussions within the group.