

NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL (NISC)

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INVASIVE SPECIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ISAC)

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MEETING

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TUESDAY,
NOVEMBER 18, 2008

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SUMMARY

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The Committee convened at 8:00 a.m. in Chesapeake Ballroom II of the Sheraton Inner Harbor, 300 South Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland, Ken Zimmerman, Acting Chair, presiding.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

KEN ZIMMERMAN (Chair)	Lone Tree Cattle Company
PETER ALPERT	University of Massachusetts
NANCY BALCOM	Connecticut Sea Grant
LESLIE CAHILL	American Seed Trade Association
EARL W. CHILTON, II	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
JANET CLARK	Montana State University
JOSEPH M. DiTOMASO	University of California, Davis
OTTO C. DOERING, III	Purdue University
SUSAN ELLIS	California Department of Fish and Game
MILES FALCK	Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission
CHRISTOPHER J. FISHER	Colville Confederated Tribes
AMY E. FRANKMANN (Secretary)	Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association
E. ANN GIBBS	Maine Department of Agriculture
CATHERINE HAZLEWOOD	The Nature Conservancy
LISA KA'AIHUE	Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council
ROBERT F. McMAHON	University of Texas at Arlington
KATHY J. METCALF	Chamber of Shipping of America
EDWARD L. MILLS	Cornell University

JAMIE K. REASER
STEVEN JAY SANFORD

JEFFREY D. SCHARDT
CELIA SMITH
DAVID E. STARLING
NATHAN STONE
DOUGLAS W. TALLAMY
JOHN PETER THOMPSON (Vice Chair)
JENNIFER L. VOLLMER
DAMON WAITT
ROBERT H. WILTSHIRE

Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council
New York Department of Environmental
Conservation
Florida Environmental Conservation Commission
University of Hawaii
Aqueterinary Services, P.C.
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
University of Delaware
The Behnke Nurseries Company
BASF Corporation
University of Texas at Austin
Center for Aquatic Nuisance Species

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

TIMOTHY J. CARLSON
JOHN KENNEDY

Tamarisk Coalition
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

NISC STAFF PRESENT

LORI WILLIAMS
DELPHA ARNOLD
KELSEY BRANTLEY
CHRIS DIONIGI
RICHARD ORR
MELINDA WILKINSON

Executive Director
Office Manager
ISAC Coordinator
Assistant Director - Domestic
Assistant Director - International
State Liaison

NISC POLICY LIAISONS PRESENT

MARGARET M. BRADY
GORDON BROWN
HILDA DIAZ-SOLTERO

U.S. Department of Commerce (NOAA)
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Department of Agriculture

WELCOME/MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

Acting Chair Ken Zimmerman called the Advisory Committee to order and asked for introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 2008 MEETING

Acting Chair Zimmerman called for the approval of minutes from the May 2008 meeting. Otto Doering moved approval. Peter Alpert seconded. Margaret M. (Peg) Brady asked that the minutes reflect her presence at the meeting. The minutes were approved with the aforementioned correction.

NISC STAFF REPORT

NISC Executive Director Lori Williams announced the August 2009 retirement of Paul Hoffman, former Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Department of the Interior (DOI). She thanked him for his role in getting the ISAC-5 Class approved and cleared. NISC's primary focus over the past six months has been the final draft of the management plan. The Council has also been developing a website, which it plans to launch by the end of the year.

Ms. Williams has been accepted to the Senior Executive Service (SES) Career Development Program. While she will continue to serve as NISC's Executive Director during the 18-month long program, Chris Dionigi will serve in an acting capacity during periods when she is on detail in other locations around the country.

The Invasive Species Working Group, along with its parent organization, the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR), has been reestablished. CENR's purpose is to increase the overall effectiveness and productivity of Federal research and development efforts in the area of environmental and natural resources. The Working Group will coordinate invasive species research and facilitate information sharing.

NISC is operating under a continuing resolution, meaning it does not have the money to establish new programs. Fortunately, Ms. Williams does not foresee any drastic cuts in the near future.

DOI's Presidential Transition Team has been provided with materials outlining the role and function of NISC. NISC Staff has been working with the policy liaisons to ensure a coordinated transition message.

Ms. Williams introduced Melinda Wilkinson, the State of Hawaii's Invasive Species Coordinator, currently on detail to NISC as its first State Liaison. Ms. Wilkinson presented a few slides detailing what NISC is calling its Pacific Initiative. Phil Andrezzi, NISC's Pacific

Regional Coordinator, is on Guam in an effort to support regional planning among the Pacific trust territories. Ms. Wilkinson's goals include increased communication, involvement and participation with existing networks. A series of state conference calls are planned to address USDA grants, mapping and early detection.

NISC MEMBER DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Hilda Diaz-Soltero, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) is continuing the Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management (PREISM). The USDA is preparing a Do No Harm Report, which it will issue at ISAC's spring meeting. A comprehensive document outlining grant opportunities for work on research, technical assistance or management of invasive species for 2009 will be available on invasivespeciesinfo.gov early in the new year. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is implementing a 17-point, three-year action plan on invasive species. Funding for the National Research Initiative for FY 2009 is \$4.6 million, the same as FY 2008. The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) systematics budgets for FY 2008 and 2009 were about \$10.5 million per year, lagging behind inflation. Implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill enacted by Congress is likely to help reduce the spread of invasive species. USDA would like to make a joint presentation with the Department of Energy (DOE) on linkages between biofuels and invasive species if and when DOE joins NISC. The NRCS estimates it would need a \$1.1 million increase to provide important restoration plant materials and develop technologies for reestablishment of ecotype-specific plant species. All agencies in USDA's invasive species portfolio agree that invasive species should not be used as biofuels, but ERS points out that doing so could result in invasive species being reclassified as non-invasive. In a May 2008 ARS Stakeholder Workshop, Ms. Diaz-Soltero and others were able to incorporate invasive species as part of ARS' climate change research agenda for the years 2008-12. The Federal interagency coordinating committee on Invasive Terrestrial Animals and Pathogens (ITAP) Systematics Subcommittee (SSC) is working to resolve the shortage of systematic scientists. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is participating in two early detection, rapid response (EDRR) programs in Alaska, one focusing on five invasive plants and the other on bark beetles.

Peg Brady, Department of Commerce (DOC)

Within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), there is an integrated, multidisciplinary program called Matrix, through which the agency is working to build a budget. NOAA's goals include preventing new invasions and eliminating, mitigating or controlling existing invasive species within U.S. coastal waters. To that end, NOAA is currently developing new programs and supporting existing ones. Along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), NOAA co-chairs the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF), and is in active partner in the CENR. The aquatic invasives program is part of a larger program known as the Ecosystem Goal Team (EGT). Grant programs have been put in place to protect and restore injured habitats. NOAA is working to identify new technologies to prevent the spread of invasive species via ships. Congress has earmarked funds for this endeavor, but Ms. Brady does

not foresee such funds continuing over the long term. Another area of concern is making sure invasive species do not get introduced through restoration projects.

Gordon Brown, U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)

Mr. Brown challenged the Committee members to think of how the ISAC might advise the incoming administration on a stimulus package related to invasive species. He reminded the Committee that during the transition invasive species are not a front-burner issue but an adjunct to many issues, such as global climate change. DOI's National Park Service (NPS) has a Habitattitude Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NOAA, FWS, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) and Aquatic Water Gardeners to engage in a social marketing campaign which targets point-of-sale decisions by consumers. The ANSTF's Western Regional Panel will issue an interim report on the spread of the quagga mussel. Mr. Brown introduced Erin Williams, who will lead the Panel in this effort. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) recently organized a Hill briefing on climate change and the impacts on invasive species.

MANAGEMENT PLAN OVERVIEW AND ISAC INVOLVEMENT

Chris Dionigi of the NISC staff reported that the new management plan draws extensively from the old plan, but there are some significant differences. The old plan, established at the end of the Clinton Administration, contained supportive functions such as information management, research, international cooperation and other categories not included in the new one. The action items in the old plan call for roughly 170 identifiable actions, of which approximately 100 have been completed or established. The old plan included a lot of reference information absent from the new plan.

In drafting the new plan, the NISC staff solicited input from ISAC, other NISC members, and stakeholders, examined the old plan, the ANSTF strategic plan. The plan went through a subcommittee and was approved by the full Committee on August 1, 2008.

The new plan has five strategic goals: prevention, EDRR, control and management, restoration, and organizational collaboration. The supportive functions of the old plan are embedded in these goals. The goals are not specific to a particular time. Unlike the old plan, the new one contains information on implementation. The new plan also specifies the leads and participants on a given objective.

The plan calls for 209 identifiable actions. Most of them concern USDA, but DOI will also play a major role. DOC will be focused primarily on aquatic species. NISC staff will lead on 53 performance elements.

The prevention component of the plan will focus on screening intentionally introduced species, examining high-risk pathways and improving standards and guidelines. The EDRR aspect calls for the identification of high-priority species and making gap recommendations. Under control and management, the plan prescribes identifying regional control and management efforts, identifying three priority species in a location, reducing harm, increasing the acres receiving on-

the-ground control treatment, workforce training. Restoration has often been lumped with control and management, but the NISC staff deemed the issue important enough to receive its own category. It consists of evaluating restoration projects and conducting demonstration projects, areas where ISAC can play a major role. Organizational collaboration is the largest segment of the plan. It entails better working relationships among Federal agencies, as well as enhanced policy and regulatory policies, improved outreach, and better data standards. Dr. Dionigi envisions a role for ISAC in crafting legal and regulatory analyses and in planning research.

PRESENTATION: COOPERATIVE CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT OF EXOTIC FISH IMPACTING NATIVE FISH POPULATIONS

Chris Fisher, Colville Confederated Tribes (ISAC Member)

Chris Fisher, a fisheries biologist for the Colville Confederation of Tribes, reported on a workshop on predators held in Portland, Oregon in September. The purpose of the workshop was to develop strategies to minimize the prevalence of invasive predators in the Columbia River basin.

There are many dams on the Columbia, some owned by the Federal Government, others by local Public Utility Districts (PUDs). Because of the dams, it is more difficult for native salmonid species to reach the ocean, and easier for non-native predators, such as smallmouth bass, to catch them. In the late 1990s, the Summer Steelhead and Spring Chinook were listed as endangered on the upper Columbia. As a result, the PUDs had to draft a mitigation plan to get relicensed. Projects were put in place to offset the loss of populations at the dams.

One such project was a three year, \$1.3 million study evaluating the predator community in the Columbia River basin. Mr. Fisher initially did not support this project because the State of Washington may be reluctant to take corrective action due to opposition generated from warm water fisheries interests. Consequently the investment from the study may be lost. However, Mr. Fisher was eventually convinced to support the study, because without results, the State of Washington would not be able to justify deregulating the fisheries or liberalize bag limits. Samples for the study will be collected beginning in the spring of 2009.

The Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS), which oversees the Federally-owned hydroelectric dams on the river, has been directed to work towards recovering threatened and endangered native fish species. One strategy is to reduce non-indigenous species. The first step in doing so was holding the aforementioned predator workshop.

There are currently 15 fish species in the basin that are threatened or endangered. Inland Fishes of Washington identified 42 non-native fish species in the State of Washington alone, many of which have only recently been introduced.

The northern pike minnow is the most abundant and effective native predator species. In 1990, a sport reward fishery was created to reduce the production level of this species 50 percent.

Reductions have gradually increased since that time. As a result, juvenile salmonid mortality has decreased 23 percent in the John Day Dam area. Smallmouth bass, first introduced in the Willamette River in 1924, had by 1998 become the most prevalent non-native predator. A study in the Lower Granite Reservoir found that increased discharge reduces predation by increasing turbidity and lowering temperature. There is concern over other predator species, such as the channel catfish and American shad, but not much is known about them at this point.

Some at the workshop argued that smallmouth bass were not a major factor in the decline of salmonid species, while others, citing a study in the Yakima River basin, opposed that conclusion. In small group sessions, a series of management strategies were developed. The most prevalent among them were creating flow conditions similar to what existed before the dams; reservoir drawdown, which would desiccate bass eggs; a system-wide predation study; more sport fisheries; evaluating the size of hatchery fish; and removal of target areas for predation.

PRESENTATION: POTENTIAL RISK OF BIOFUEL AND FEEDSTOCKS BECOMING INVASIVE IN WILDLANDS AND AGRICULTURE

Joseph DiTomaso, University of California, Davis (ISAC Member)

Joe DiTomaso, of the University of California at Davis, reported on the risk of biofuels and feedstocks becoming invasive. There is currently a tremendous incentive for the production of biofuels. Some of the most invasive perennial grasses have many of the same characteristics as an ideal biofuel source. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandates the study of the impacts of invasive or noxious species relating to biofuels. The Farm Bill contains a provision that any plant that is or may potentially be invasive or noxious not be eligible as a biofuel.

Most invasive plant species, such as johnsongrass and Kudzu, are introduced intentionally. About half the species proposed as biofuels are non-natives. Some, like *Arundo donax*, are already considered noxious weeds in many places.

A joint paper issued on May 20, 2008 by the Global Invasive Species Program, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature recommended gathering information on potential biofuel sources, conducting risk assessments and cost-benefit analyses, selecting native, low-risk species, developing risk management practices and having an accreditation program.

A Council for Agricultural Sciences and Technology (CAST) paper recommended emphasizing cultivar evaluations by region and genotype, conducting weed-risk and environmental tolerance assessments, evaluating cross-hybridization potential, identifying susceptible landscapes, measuring the potential of biofuel crops to escape into surrounding ecosystems, incorporating data into ecological studies that can minimize the risk of spreading particular genes into biofuel plants and establishing pre-commercial management protocols.

NISC RESPONSE TO ISAC RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Williams reported NISC's response to ISAC's recommendations from the May 2008 meeting, in effect supplementing the Member Department Reports of the morning. The preamble to the recommendations reflects a sense of urgency that something must be done in Alaska, an urgency shared by NISC and the member departments.

The first recommendation called for NISC members to consider actions and research into impacts of global scale processes, e.g. climate change, on invasive species; and to utilize the multi-disciplinary expertise available when making invasive species decisions. Ms. Williams believes more progress has been made on the first aspect of this recommendation than the second.

The second recommendation asked NISC members to assess currently available research, training and/or species identification capacities, identify strategic gaps and provide targeted support for systematics activities relating to invasive species; and to enhance departmental integration and coordination of the U.S. scientific systematic invasive species infrastructure. Ms. Williams cited the ITAP SSC as an important means of addressing this recommendation. She added that there are elements in the management plan which also focus on taxonomic concerns.

The third recommendation said NISC members should consider actions and research regarding the science-based evolution of the impacts of invasive species, as well as the development and evaluation of alternatives that avoid or reduce the negative impacts of invasive species. The staff feels this recommendation should be forwarded to CENR's newly formed Invasive Species Working Group, which will be coordinating research on invasive species. In addition, NISC hosted a workshop at the National Arboretum.

The fourth recommendation called for USDA and DOI to assign a high Federal priority to widespread invasive species, specifically in support of EDRR. This recommendation was discussed at length with NISC members, some of whom felt it would be difficult to implement if opposition to chemical use is strong. There will be a follow-up presentation on this matter. In Alaska's case, NISC recommends that the state and its coordinating groups exchange information and share best practices with its counterparts in nearby states like Oregon and Washington.

The fifth and final recommendation asked that USDA and DOI, in cooperation with state agencies, initiate a rapid response on small infestations of approximately 10 invasive plant species in Alaska. Ms. Williams referred ISAC to Ms. Diaz-Soltero's earlier presentation and DOI's upcoming presentation, and said this was something the agencies would need to continue working on.

ISAC OPERATING GUIDELINES, GUIDELINES/BYLAWS, OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUBCOMMITTEE RESTRUCTURING

Subcommittee restructuring would be based on the new management plan. Officer recommendations would be handled by a nominating committee composed of Kathy Metcalf, Ann Gibbs and Jamie Reaser. Acting Vice Chair John Peter Thompson encouraged those interested in serving as an officer or on the steering committee to see one of the nominating committee members. The steering committee consists of eight voting members including the Vice Chair and three ex officio members. All acting officers were available for renomination.

Steven Jay Sanford asked if ISAC was also looking for subcommittee chairs. Ms. Williams said NISC staff's plan was to have subcommittees settle that in their discussions. Dr. DiTomaso wanted to know the length of terms for officers and steering committee members. The consensus was that it can be up to three years; Acting Chair Zimmerman said staff would review the operating guidelines.

A sign-up sheet for the various subcommittees was passed around. Acting Chair Zimmerman cautioned members not to take on too much, but encouraged them to sign up for more than one. NISC staff had prepared a draft agenda for each of the subcommittees to keep them on focus. The new management plan recommended six subcommittees: prevention; EDRR; control and management; restoration; organizational collaboration; and communication, education and outreach. There was a recommendation to combine restoration with control and management. It was also proposed that ISAC continue the research subcommittee from the old management plan.

Damon Waitt inquired as to the difference between a subcommittee and a task team. Ms. Williams replied that subcommittees were all standing groups under and approved by ISAC. Ad hoc groups were often referred to interchangeably as task teams or working groups. Acting Chair Zimmerman asked for a motion settling on one fixed name for such groups. Catherine Hazlewood moved that any group that is not a committee or subcommittee be referred to as an ad hoc working group. Otto Doering seconded. Ms. Metcalf argued that the term subcommittee should not be used at all because it creates the impression that so-called groups have some sort of legal standing. She suggested that groups currently known as subcommittees be called working groups and ad hoc groups be called task teams. Ms. Williams assured ISAC that there is a legal basis for the subcommittees. Ms. Metcalf replied that she would take back her comments. Ms. Gibbs proposed that ad hoc groups be referred to as task teams, not ad hoc working groups. Ms. Hazlewood accepted the proposal as a friendly amendment. Dr. Doering maintained his second. David Starling suggested that definitions of these terms be included in the bylaws. Mr. Brown reminded ISAC that the definitions were already in the bylaws. Acting Vice Chair Thompson therefore carefully suggested that Ms. Hazlewood withdraw her motion, which she did.

After a break, Ms. Gibbs announced that the nominating committee would not be nominating new officers or steering committee members until the spring meeting, because the acting officers' terms would expire then. Ms. Reaser added that the acting officers would be formally appointed to their positions the following day.

BALLAST WATER ISSUES AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Ms. Metcalf gave the legislative ballast water update. This session, there were two ballast water bills in the Senate and one in the House with real legs. Senator Levin's bill, the Comprehensive Invasive Species Legislation, was reintroduced, but there was widespread concern over the bill's fiscal impact. S 1578, the Inouye-Stevens Bill, focused directly on ballast water. After negotiation, the bill included hull fouling. HR 2830, the Oberstar Coast Guard Authorization Bill, was passed in the House after a quick rewrite and without much input from the industry or environmental organizations. It can be a challenge getting Congressional staff to talk to one another on these bills. Joint jurisdiction among different House committees can also be an issue. Ms. Metcalf added that the industry tends to favor a preemption clause requiring one standard across the nation's waters, which members of Congress are often reluctant to support because it would be seen as weakening their state's authority. There has been ongoing negotiation to ensure that states could integrate more stringent standards with the national standard should such a clause be in place. The industry is also reluctant to support a bill by Senator Boxer, which would subject discharge ballast water under two separate, unrelated statutes, the ballast water statute and the Clean Water Act NPDES Statute.

Ms. Hazlewood reported that HR 2830 passed overwhelmingly in the House, 395-7. However, Senator Boxer has placed a hold on the bill in the Senate. There have been attempts to bring the bill to the floor and to force debate on the issue, but to no avail. Agencies in the Great Lakes states and California are concerned that the standards of the bill are not as stringent as those in their respective states. Ms. Hazlewood did not see much sentiment in Congress for continuing to address this issue.

Ms. Williams reported that NISC staff had revamped a chart tracking Federal legislation relating to invasive species. She had testified in the House on HR 6311, a bill which would provide a screening process for the introduction of animals. Since the hearing, there has been no official action on that bill. Ms. Hazlewood added that there several bills passed enhancing the capacity of Federal agencies to man invasive species on their lands. The Farm Bill and certain energy packages also contain provisions on invasive species.

MEMBERS FORUM

Doug Tallamy, University of Delaware – Dr. Tallamy spoke of his work on the effect of alien plants on food webs. He has found that native plants are better at supporting food webs than alien plants and that not all native plants support food webs equally. He concluded by passing around *Mistaken Identity*, a booklet from the Delaware Invasive Species Council comparing native plants with similarly appearing invasives.

Damon Waitt – University of Texas at Austin - Dr. Waitt discussed his work at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas, which promotes the conservation and use of native plants and wildflowers. In the past few years, the Center has hosted two invasive plant conferences, helped establish the Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Council (TIPPC) and has been active in the Citizen Science Program and the Plantwise Program.

Miles Falck, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission – Mr. Falck reported that his agency is still working on best management practices in forestry. It has reached consensus with stakeholders on wolf management in the State of Michigan, and is close to consensus on bear management. The Wisconsin Invasive Species Council has launched a series of initiatives on recreational use.

Lisa Ka’aihue, Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council – Ms. Ka’aihue said that her organization was concerned about the invasive species spread by oil tankers and other vessels. There is extensive coordination in Alaska along this issue. There is also a movement in the state to establish an Alaska Invasive Species Council.

Catherine Hazlewood, The Nature Conservancy - Ms. Hazlewood discussed her role as a senior policy advisor for The Nature Conservancy (TNC). She directs TNC’s work on invasive species, primarily on prevention policies. In the past few months, she has been concerned with Government relations.

David Starling, Aqueterinary Services, P.C. – Dr. Starling gave a brief overview of Aqueterinary Services, P.C., a company addressing the disease needs of private fish farms and public hatcheries. He is involved with health certification and testing. The company can make vaccines for clients as an exemption under the Virus Serum Toxin Act. Mr. Starling has also helped establish an introductory course at Iowa State University on animal ecology.

Otto Doering, Purdue University - Dr. Doering is an agricultural economist at Purdue University. Trained as a policy economist, he has worked on farm bills, conducted long-term planning for Indiana’s electric utility and studied the effects of invasive microgen in the Mississippi River, among other things.

Nancy Balcom, Connecticut Sea Grant – Ms. Balcom discussed her involvement with the University of Connecticut’s Sea Grant program. She is mainly concerned with outreach and education programs. Recently, she played a major role in writing Connecticut’s aquatic nuisance species (ANS) management plan, as well as a draft interstate plan for Long Island Sound. Ms. Gibbs works for the Maine Department of Agriculture, primarily on plant pest issues. She is part of a regional collaborative effort responding to the recent outbreak of Asian longhorn beetle in Massachusetts.

Leslie Cahill, American Seed Trade Association – Ms. Cahill is Vice President for Government Affairs for the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA). ASTA represents over 800 seed companies. It is a diverse organization, with high-quality seeds for a variety of uses.

Celia Smith, Professor University of Hawaii – Dr. Smith spoke of her work as a Professor of Botany, which has led to improved management of invasive algae in the Hawaiian coral reefs. Several new research positions were planned, but are on permanent hold due to budget constraints. Dr. Smith passed around a series of Good Guy, Bad Guy playing cards identifying native and invasive species.

Earl Chilton, II, Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife – Dr. Chilton reported that a statute formally establishing the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee is in the works. The Committee had been operating as an MOA. Texas is in the process of converting from a prohibited species list to an accepted or white list. The Asian communities in cities like Dallas and Houston have been cultivating water spinach, a prohibited species. It has not escaped greenhouses, so Dr. Chilton recommends taking it off the prohibited list. Other issues include water hyacinth in the Rio Grande and giant salvinia in a lake bordering Louisiana. The use of grass carp in Lake Austin and Lake Conroe has been effective in combating hydrilla.

REVIEW OF DAY 1 ACTION ITEMS

Secretary Amy Frankmann gave a recap of the action items and recommendations for Day 1. The action items were as follows:

1. Send out the basic documents produced for the transition team to all members of ISAC.
2. Send out a PDF of the new NISC management plan to all members of ISAC.
3. NISC staff provide to the transition team important ISAC recommendations over the past three years.
4. ISAC members refer to Ms. Wilkinson any proposed people to be incorporated in the upcoming NISC/state conference calls.
5. NISC track, to the extent possible, state legislation that changes non-native to native species.
6. NOAA provide a copy of the biological opinion on the relicensing of mid-Columbia River dams. (There was some disagreement on the wording of this action item. At Acting Chair Zimmerman's suggestion, it was set aside for review with the intention that it be re-submitted the following day.)
7. NISC staff reach to Canada to communicate the ISAC recommendations that were formed at its Alaska meeting with them.

Recommendations were as follows:

1. Recognizing the need for continuity in the implementation of programs relating to the management, control and mitigation of impacts from invasive species and further recognizing the cyclical nature of the U.S. election cycle and the changes in key Government personnel resulting from this process, ISAC strongly recommends the implementation of the 2008-2012 national invasive species management plan by the new administration without delay. ***ISAC voted unanimously in favor of this recommendation.***
2. (The second recommendation was a continuing recommendation.) NISC will continue to pursue the Department of Energy to become a member of NISC and ISAC.
3. (The third recommendation would be presented the following morning.)

4. To enhance capacity for invasive species management and to aid national economic recovery, NISC member agencies should initiate and expand programs that provide jobs based on preventing and controlling the spread of invasive species.

ISAC voted unanimously in favor of this recommendation.

5. The capacity of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address the issue of invasive species depends largely on its Branch of Invasive Species. This Branch of Invasive Species in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be fully staffed as soon as possible. *(NOTE: There was some disagreement on the wording of this recommendation. At Acting Chair Zimmerman's suggestion, it was set aside for review with the intention that it be re-submitted the following day.)*

PUBLIC COMMENT

Melissa Bravo of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture commented that her state has written a background paper on the issue of feral swine. Pennsylvania's Feral Swine Task Force is committed to eradicating feral swine but is restricted by lack of funding.

The meeting recessed for the day at 5:00 p.m.

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MEETING

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WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER 19, 2008

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SUMMARY

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The Committee reconvened at 8:00 a.m. in Chesapeake Ballroom II of the Sheraton Inner Harbor, 300 South Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland, Ken Zimmerman, Acting Chair, presiding.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

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Assistant Director - International
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NISC POLICY LIAISONS PRESENT

MARGARET M. BRADY
GORDON BROWN
HILDA DIAZ-SOLTERO

U.S. Department of Commerce (NOAA)
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Department of Agriculture

REVIEW OF DAY 1

Chris Fisher proposed a new recommendation arising from one of the previous day's presentations. It was as follows: ISAC recommends that NISC develop educational, outreach, information resources i.e. White Papers, workshop materials available to resource managers, directed towards policymakers, stakeholders and public to elevate awareness and to prevent unauthorized introductions and support management actions which reduce invasive or non-native species. Hilda Diaz-Soltero called the Committee's attention to invasivespeciesinfo.gov, a website with species fact sheets, issue papers and other relevant information. Several ISAC members agreed that it was better to promote access to existing information than create new material. Acting Vice Chair John Peter Thompson expressed discomfort with the word non-native because it suggested that all non-native species were bad. Mr. Fisher agreed to take the recommendation back to the communication, education and outreach (CEO) subcommittee.

Recommendation 3, rewritten from the previous day, was as follows:

“ISAC recommends that USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture], Department of Energy and any other Federal agency should evaluate plant species' invasiveness, including algae, hybrids or cultivars, based exclusively on the potential of the species to cause environmental or economic harm or harm to human health. No non-native genotype should be planted for production of biofuels unless it can be shown that the risk that the genotype will become invasive is very low and that the grower can prevent or assume fiscal responsibility for any spread of the genotype beyond planted areas. The evaluation should include at least the following considerations: risk assessment, climate matching analysis, cross-hybridization potential, escape potential, ecology analysis; should create an eradication plan; and mitigation via breeding, engineering, cultivation and landscape context.”

Celia Smith pointed out that what's non-native to one region is native to another. Joe DiTomaso suggested changing ecology analysis to ecological analysis and adding in the area of proposed planting after non-native genotype. Damon Waitt felt the recommendation conflated non-native and invasive species. Dr. DiTomaso said he preferred the term non-native because there are species that are not currently invasive but have the potential to be. Lori Williams commented that the recommendation was a bit too specific. Peter Alpert said it was important that the recommendation refer to genotype and not species because it is possible for a species that is native to a region to have a genotype that is not. Acting Chair Zimmerman sent the recommendation to the prevention subcommittee.

Recommendation 4 was as follows:

“ISAC recommends that the White House and NISC should urge non-member departments or agencies to not fund, plant or encourage planting or cultivating invasive species as biofuels.”

All ISAC members voted in favor of this recommendation. Therefore, the recommendation passed.

Recommendation 5 was as follows:

“The capacity of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to address the issue of invasive species depends largely on its Branch of Invasive Species. This branch should be sufficiently staffed to address this issue.”

Ann Gibbs suggested that it read with sufficient capacity to fulfill the work instead of sufficiently staffed. Bob Wiltshire said there was no quantitative language in the recommendation to define sufficiently staffed. Bob McMahon proposed taking out sufficiently staffed and replacing it with given the resources necessary. Acting Chair Zimmerman sent the recommendation to the organizational collaboration subcommittee.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Organizational Collaboration Subcommittee, Janet Clark Reporting

This committee produced several recommendations. It recommends that NISC organize a briefing, possibly in conjunction with the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Washington, D.C. this spring utilizing ISAC member expertise. Ms. Williams with the help of Ms. Brady will draft a template for policy liaisons to report back to ISAC. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) should prioritize the Global Invasive Species Information Network (GISIN) (*see Recommendation 5*). Ms. Williams will post a PowerPoint about NISC on the NISC website for ISAC members to use in presentations elsewhere. Work continues on a proposed National Network of Invasive Plant Centers. NISC will continue to pursue facilitation of regional meetings of state invasive plant councils. The subcommittee was concerned about the strategy behind NISC’s proposed state conference calls and offered to brainstorm approaches and coordination with NISC staff. This subcommittee also reworded the ISAC recommendation concerning FWS’ Branch of Invasive Species, which would be discussed later in the meeting.

Communication, Education and Outreach Subcommittee, Bob Wiltshire Reporting

Attendance for this subcommittee was sparse, so it was decided that a conference call be held in the near future to determine a chair. The subcommittee believes the NISC website should represent only NISC and Federal actions. For other information, it should rely on links to existing sites rather than attempt to duplicate information available at other sources. A good statistics package is also essential. The subcommittee also discussed OC 6, which addresses elementary and secondary school programs. It recommends developing rules for what components of an outreach education program must be in place in order to allow that program or activity to use the NISC logo; that the subcommittee bring that list to ISAC at the spring meeting for their review to determine whether that’s advisable to pass on. The subcommittee also feels that this effort need to be guided according to regulations and guidance provided by the Department of Education, which is not a member of NISC. It recommends that the Department of Education be invited to join NISC.

Prevention Subcommittee, Catherine Hazlewood Reporting

This subcommittee briefly reviewed its past work. It asked those interested to reformulate the language of the biofuels recommendation. It discussed potential projects, particularly dealing with the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) strategic plan and the NISC management plan. The subcommittee is interested in ship pathways, screening intentionally imported species and a coordinated national ballast management plan. A motion to retain the acting chair, Jamie Reaser was unanimously approved.

Early Detection, Rapid Response (EDRR) Subcommittee, Susan Ellis Reporting

This subcommittee met briefly after the other subcommittees had met, so much of its work will be handled in conference calls. It felt a need to review existing EDRR guidance and the USDA's ICS system. Goals include drafting a White Paper, crafting language minimizing the timeline for permits for rapid response activities and an overall template for EDRR.

Research Subcommittee, Peter Alpert Reporting

This subcommittee, consisting of Peter Alpert, Celia Smith, Doug Tallamy, Gordon Brown, Hilda Diaz-Soltero, John Peter Thompson and Otto Doering, elected Dr. Alpert as its chair. It invited Arpita Choudhry of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Michael Bowers of USDA and Saran Twombly of the National Science Foundation (NSF) to be members. Dr. Choudhry agreed and Drs. Bowers and Twombly will be contacted after the meeting. For the next meeting, the subcommittee will propose a presentation by Dr. Doering on current research on invasion economics under the Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management (PREISM) and a presentation on systematics. It will also review funding for training and researching systematics at NSF during the past decade and contact Holly Menninger of Cornell University for results of her survey of Federal funding for research and invasion science. Finally, the subcommittee noted a planned 2010 symposium on the genetics of invasive species in Minnesota.

Control and Management Subcommittee, Jennifer Vollmer Reporting

This subcommittee also included the restoration subcommittee. It reviewed a study concerning the exotic fish impact on native fish in the Columbia River basin. Chris Fisher will continue to monitor the situation. The subcommittee also identified and addressed strategic gaps in regional invasive species control and management efforts. It also discussed the increased need for aquatic biocontrol agents, a need for increasing resources to support monitoring and create greater awareness for best success methods. The subcommittee will formulate questions for NISC to take to biocontrol research agencies. Based on those answers, it will identify gaps in preparation to formulate specific recommendations. It also discussed integrated pest management, and will review existing definitions and determine if any modification is necessary. Finally, it discussed use of restoration to describe sustainable follow-up management. It would like to develop a White Paper for publishing that addresses restoration issues of climate change and the impacts on creating a desirable, sustainable ecosystem. Dr. Vollmer was acting chair for this meeting. Dr. DiTomaso will be the new chair.

DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON ISAC OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATIONS, PART 1

There was one rewritten action item, which was as follows: ISAC requests that NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] provide an analysis of RPA [Reasonable and Prudent Alternative] 44 within the biological opinion for the Federal Columbia River Power System. The analysis should include the metrics, timelines and updates from FCRPS and/or associated agencies relative to RPA 44. There were no comments or questions on this item.

Recommendation 3 was rewritten by the prevention subcommittee as follows:

3(a): "ISAC recommends that USDA, Department of Energy and any other Federal agency should evaluate plant species' invasiveness, including algae, hybrids or cultivars, based exclusively on the potential of the species to cause environmental or economic harm or harm to human health."

3(b): "ISAC recommends that no non-native genotypes should be planted for production of biofuels unless it can be shown that the risk that the genotype will become invasive is very low and that the grower can prevent or assume fiscal responsibility for any spread of the genotype beyond planted areas."

3(c): "ISAC recommends that NISC develop a process to require any private organization; Federal, state or local government; or industry to do an analysis of the potential invasiveness of any proposed biofuel. This analysis must be presented to USDA for final approval or disapproval before the project is initiated."

Ms. Williams felt this recommendation was beyond the scope of NISC's authority. Dr. Reaser explained that the prevention subcommittee agreed to bring it forward, but there was not universal consensus. Ms. Diaz-Soltero said it was important to have similar standards of behavior and analysis for the public and private sectors. She suggested taking votes on 3(a), (b) and (c) individually. Dr. Reaser said her personal recommendation would be to put together an ISAC task team to do a White Paper. Dr. Doering and Ms. Cahill agreed that ISAC should be more deliberate in moving ahead. Dr. Tallamy defended his support for this recommendation, citing a need for teeth in what NISC does.

Ms. Cahill moved that a working group be assembled to assess this issue. Acting Vice Chair Thompson seconded. Dr. McMahon questioned whether ISAC had the time to draft a White Paper, and suggested a timetable. Dr. Doering agreed, saying it should be done in six to nine months. He moved that items 3(a), (b) and (c) be considered separately. Dr. Alpert seconded. Acting Vice Chair Thompson said Dr. Doering's motion would take priority over Ms. Cahill's. Dr. Alpert made a motion to call the question on Dr. Doering's motion. All voted in favor of calling the question. All then voted in favor of Dr. Doering's motion except Ms. Cahill and Acting Vice Chair Thompson, who opposed.

That left Ms. Cahill's motion. ISAC would need to decide what would and would not be sent to the working group. What wouldn't be sent would be subject to additional motions. Dr. Tallamy moved that 3(c) be sent to the working group. Dr. McMahon seconded. Mr. Wiltshire called the question on 3(a), (b) and (c). Dr. Tallamy withdrew his motion.

Ms. Hazlewood moved to call the question on Ms. Cahill's motion. Dr. Alpert seconded. All voted in favor of this motion except Acting Vice Chair Thompson, who opposed. All then voted Ms. Cahill's motion down.

For clarity's sake, Recommendations 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 4 and 5 were renumbered 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 respectively. Jeff Schardt proposed that Recommendation 3 read USDA, DOE and any other Federal agency should evaluate the invasiveness of a plant species being considered for a biofuel.

As there was a guest speaker for the working lunch, Acting Chair Zimmerman postponed discussion of this recommendation until a later point in the meeting.

PRESENTATION: SITC's MARKET-BASED INTERDICTION PROGRAMS

*Scott Sanner, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Smuggling Interdiction and Trade Compliance (SITC)*

SITC's mission is to detect and prevent the unlawful entry and distribution of prohibited, non-compliant products that may harbor exotic plant and animal pests, diseases and invasive species. Mr. Sanner was invited to speak by ISAC's prevention subcommittee.

SITC focuses primarily on commercial commodities but sometimes gets involved with passenger items. Areas of concern include prohibited or non-compliant fruits and vegetables, Federal noxious weeds, animal products, and other types of plant products.

In marketplaces, SITC agents look for limited distribution products. SITC provides outreach to the industry as well as state and Federal agencies. In addition, SITC works with the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at ports of entry. The agency sends alert notices to CBP concerning prohibited or non-compliant products. SITC also works with Border Patrol, especially on the southern border, and with other countries. It performs data analysis to determine where products of highest risk are being concentrated. It also conducts traces of prohibited and non-compliant products in an effort to block the pest's pathway into the country.

SITC has 108 officers nationwide, most of whom are concentrated near large ports of entry. It has implemented a voluntary recall program, which averages about nine recalls a year. Importer violations average about 162 annually. The number of seizures SITC conducted rose to around 4,000 in the past year.

Since SITC was created in 2001, there are fewer blatantly illegal fruit, vegetable and meat products on the market. Some have undoubtedly been driven underground, and finding them is one of SITC's goals. The agency is still seeing a lot of processed plant and animal products, as well as Federal noxious weeds, entering the country that do not meet requirements. SITC is doing its best to address the problem. Many prohibited and/or non-compliant products entering the county are bought and sold via the internet, mail and express couriers. To combat the problem, SITC will heighten its monitoring of international mail facilities, express courier hubs, and internet sites and chatrooms.

PRESENTATION: UPDATE ON USDA Q-37 REVISION

*Polly Lehtonen, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Plant Protection and Quarantine*

Ms. Lehtonen, a senior import specialist with APHIS PPQ, briefed ISAC on the revision of Quarantine 37 (Q-37), which she has helped work on the past four years. The way the quarantine is written now, most plants for planting are generally admissible into the U.S. if they have a phytosanitary certificate issued by the exporting country. All plants are inspected at ports of entry. Certain plants are prohibited, usually because they carry a form of disease. Some plants require treatment, others require post-entry quarantine growing and still others have special certification requirements. The only pest risk analysis conducted is on generally admissible nursery stock when they are imported in approved sterile growing media.

Q-37 was written in 1918, when the U.S. imported a small amount of plants, mostly from Europe, for slow increase and distribution. APHIS has made it a priority to bring the regulatory framework up to date, creating a staff dedicated to this goal. The staff published an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) and received public comment. It then held a public meeting on establishing a new category of nursery stock, plants that would be not authorized for import pending pest risk analysis (NAPPRA). The staff also hosted an electronic discussion on how to predict invasiveness. There have been annual summit meetings, and two staff members participated in the development of RSPMs 24 and 32.

The staff has 15 proposed regulatory work plans in various stages of planning and implementation. The first, concerning the establishment of the NAPPRA category, is furthest along but is still in departmental review. This category will include two subcategories: plants that are themselves pests and plants that are hosts of pests. Plants on the NAPPRA list could be imported in small amounts under special permit for evaluation. To remove a plant from the list, one would have to enter a formal request to import with APHIS, which would perform a pest risk analysis.

The second major rule, the restructuring and consolidation rule, attempts to make Q-37 more user-friendly. It will consolidate all miscellaneous quarantines with provisions for planting and add an index. In addition, it will establish performance standards for regulatory systems approach protocols (RSAPs).

The third major rule will eliminate what is known as the departmental permit, which allows Government researchers to import germplasm for research in containment. In its place will be the controlled import permit (CIP), with risk categories and corresponding permit conditions.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Arnold G. Konheim of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) gave ISAC an update on disinsection, the killing, containing or controlling of flying insects. Forms of disinsection include the spray of insecticides. The U.S. stopped requiring disinsection in 1979. The

Secretary of Transportation has encouraged counterparts in other countries to drop the practice. DOT is working with six other Federal agencies to develop non-chemical alternatives, including air curtains and netting. Laboratory tests reveal these alternatives to be as efficacious as insecticides. The World Health Organization (WHO) will meet December 15-16 in Gainesville, Florida to discuss the issue.

PRESENTATION: ALASKA ISSUES - FOLLOW-UP FROM MAY 2008 ISAC MEETING

Janet Clark, Montana State University (ISAC Member)

Gina Ramos, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management

Jenny Ericson, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service

Rita Beard, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Ms. Clark explained that there is presently a real opportunity to support Alaska in preventing the spread of invasive species to the state. She introduced a panel of representatives from the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds (FICMNEW): Gina Ramos, a senior weed specialist for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Jenny Ericson, a national invasive species program specialist for FWS; and Rita Beard, the national invasive species coordinator for the National Park Service (NPS).

Ms. Ramos said that the BLM manages approximately 81 million acres, or 22 percent, of Alaska's surface land area; other Department of the Interior (DOI) agencies manage roughly 34 percent. In 2001, the BLM, along with state and other Federal agencies, formed the Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plants Management (CNIPM). The state has identified high-priority areas, including oil and gas areas, boat ramps, highway corridors, wildfire areas and cabins. BLM has inventoried 47 miles of the main stem of the Gulkana River. It has also established monitoring plots in each of its field offices. At one location, orange hawkweed was found. Education, EDRR and prevention are BLM's highest priorities.

Ms. Ericson said that national wildlife refuges (NWRs) account for 96.4 million acres of the country's land area, 77 million of which are in Alaska. NWRs nationwide report 4,387 invasive animal populations and 2.3 million acres infested with invasive plants. Alaskan refuges, conversely, report only 112 invasive animal populations and 4,500 acres infested by invasive plants. Therefore, it is important to act now before the problem grows. The steps FWS has taken include: a comprehensive invasive plant management document, a survey in collaboration with USGS on invasive plants in Kenai NWR, a volunteer initiative, a budget request for additional invasive species strike teams and creation of a response kit for rat spills.

Ms. Beard reported that of the seven NPS regions, Alaskan national parks comprise the largest land area but are fewest in number. The volume of visitors national parks receive presents a challenge. The NPS takes seriously its mission to educate the public on invasive species. In its database, it lists three invasive species in its Alaska parks: the Arctic fox, the Atlantic Salmon and the Arctic Char. The invasive plant population in Alaska national parks is still low compared to parks elsewhere in the country, but is rapidly expanding. In 2003, the NPS

established an exotic plant management team in Alaska. The invasive species specialists in NPS consider herbicides the best way of combating invasive plant species and proposed using them. However, the comments NPS received on the issue were overwhelmingly opposed. Environmental, recreational and industry groups were silent on the issue. The NPS regional director has decided to reconsider their use.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ISAC OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

Kathy Metcalf spoke on behalf of the nominating committee. The committee noted that the acting chair and acting vice chair will rotate off of ISAC at the spring meeting. ISAC will recommend that the Secretary of the Interior retain Mr. Zimmermann, Mr. Thompson and Ms. Frankmann, as well as the current steering committee, in their positions until the spring meeting. The steering committee members are: John Peter Thompson (chair), Jennifer Vollmer, Ann Gibbs, Miles Falck, Peter Alpert, Cat Hazlewood, Janet Clark and Celia Smith. *ISAC approved the nominating committee's recommendations unanimously.*

DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON ISAC OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATIONS, PART 2

A new recommendation had been submitted. This recommendation was as follows:

“Alaska remains largely free of invasive species, and early detection, rapid response is a cost-effective way to preserve this freedom. NISC should promote support for EDRR in Alaska such as support for invasive species strike teams and for the exotic plant management team.”

Dr. Vollmer felt the recommendation should specify with which agencies the teams were affiliated. Dr. Tallamy asked if it should contain explicit language supporting the use of herbicides. Dr. Vollmer and Acting Chair Zimmerman expressed reluctance at issuing such a specific statement for so broad a category. Ms. Diaz-Soltero suggested the phrase, including the use of herbicides. Dr. Alpert proposed leaving this recommendation as is and considering a separate recommendation on herbicides if there was sufficient support later. Dr. DiTomaso proposed an umbrella term like best management practices.

Ms. Hazlewood felt the recommendation was an ineffective response to a comment period that had already closed. Ms. Metcalf said she was not prepared to vote on the appropriate mitigation strategy for a geographically specific EDRR program. Earl Chilton felt that Alaska was a special situation and could probably use a recommendation.

Acting Chair Zimmerman called for a vote on the recommendation as written. Seven ISAC members voted in favor, 16 were opposed. Therefore, the recommendation did not pass.

The next recommendation was as follows:

“ISAC recommends that NISC organize a briefing in conjunction with CBD [Convention on Biological Diversity] May 22 [of 2009] in Washington, D.C. and utilize ISAC expertise.”

Ms. Williams advised against tying it down to a specific date, suggesting Spring 2009 in its place. Ms. Cahill asked who would be the audience for the briefing. Ms. Clark said it would be a general audience, and asked if this needed to be a recommendation or could simply be an action item. The consensus was that it could be an action item. Dr. Reaser suggested changing the language from in conjunction with CBD to in conjunction with International Biodiversity Day. There were no additional comments or questions on this item.

The next recommendation was as follows:

“The Global Invasive Species Information Network has developed a draft protocol that facilitates internet searches across multiple databases, making information retrievable, therefore making information retrieval more efficient. ISAC recommends that USGS prioritize Performance Element OC.8.2.5, improving and expanding participation in GISIN because of the supporting role this protocol can play in all facets of the national invasive species management plan. USGS should be provided adequate resources to achieve this performance element.”

All ISAC members voted in favor of this recommendation, except David Starling, who opposed. Therefore, the recommendation passed. (NOTE: Recommendation Numbers 1, 2, 6 and 9 had already been approved. Recommendation Number 8 had been withdrawn.)

Recommendation 7 was rewritten as follows:

“The capacity of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address the issue of invasive species depends largely on its Branch of Invasive Species. There has been a reduction in the capacity of this branch to respond to this issue. The branch should be given the resources necessary to address the issue.”

All ISAC members voted in favor of this recommendation. Therefore, the recommendation passed.

Recommendation 3 was as follows:

“ISAC recommends that USDA, Department of Energy and any other Federal agency should evaluate plant species’ invasiveness based exclusively on the potential of the species to cause environmental or economic harm or harm to human health.”

Mr. Falck suggested referencing the executive order and the White Paper in this recommendation. Dr. Doering maintained that the recommendation should contain references to biomass or bioenergy. Dr. Starling proposed that the health issues include both human and animal health. Acting Vice Chair Thompson said that since there were so many issues at work here, it might be best to send it to a task team for further discussion. Acting Chair Zimmerman tabled Recommendations 3, 4 and 5 and asked that a task team be formed with Drs. Reaser and DiTomaso as its co-chairs.

The team would consider the recommendations and have a complete draft ready by the spring meeting.

Ms. Metcalf proposed the following recommendation:

“ISAC recommends that NISC communicate with all executive branch departments and Federal agencies to reemphasize agency responsibilities under Section 2 of Executive Order 13112 (including the provisions of Section 2(3), which prohibits the authorization, funding and/or carrying out of actions that it believes are likely to cause or promote the introduction or spread of invasive species) for actions of the agency which may affect the status of invasive species.”

The section in parentheses consists of language Ms. Metcalf considered optional. The consensus favored the short version of this recommendation.

All ISAC members voted in favor of this recommendation. Therefore, the recommendation passed.

SCHEDULING OF SPRING 2009 MEETING

Acting Vice Chair Thompson suggested either Michigan or somewhere in New England. Ms. Williams passed along an invitation from the Oregon Invasive Species Council for ISAC to meet in their state. Dr. Starling proposed Woods Hole in Massachusetts. Dr. McMahon also liked the idea of Woods Hole. Dr. Vollmer offered Arizona as an option. Ms. Williams said Ms. Beard told her NPS would be pleased to host ISAC in Tucson. Ms. Diaz-Soltero said the Forest Service might be willing to host ISAC in Puerto Rico. Dr. Alpert supported Tucson. Dr. Reaser said the director of the Sonora Desert Museum would be willing to help out if ISAC met in Arizona, and asked that the meeting be held in late April rather than May.

Mr. Falck expressed support for Puerto Rico, but added that it might be easier to decide on a location if there were a specific theme. Dr. Waitt proposed biofuels as a theme. Dr. Starling said Iowa would be a good place for biofuels. Acting Vice Chair Thompson proposed sending theme and location ideas to the steering committee. Ms. Williams said would create a chart on which ISAC members could list their best and worst dates for the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

RECOGNITION OF RICHARD ORR

ISAC recognized the service of Richard Orr, who will retire in early 2009. The committee presented him with a series of parting gifts.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.