

## Maryland Invasive Species Council

Thursday, July 16, 2009  
USDA/APHIS; Riverdale, MD

Call to Order: 9:45; AI Tasker; Acting Facilitator  
Larry Hurley taking notes in absence of Carol Holko

Present at Riverdale, per sign in sheet:

AI Tasker, USDA/APHIS  
Ruth Hanessian, MAPI  
Bob Tichenor, USDA/APHIS  
Gaye Williams, MDA (sub for Carol Holko)  
Marc Imlay, AWS, MNPS, Sierra Club  
Betty Marose, UMD  
Larry Hurley, Behnke Nurseries  
John Peter Thompson, MNLA  
Carole Bergmann, MNCPPC  
Eric Duce, SHA  
Mike Hemming, Eastern Shore Nurseries  
Kerrie Kyde, MDNR

Matt. T. Salo, FLBC  
Prakash Hebbar, APHIS-PPQ  
Lydia M. Carrera, APHIS-ERE  
Indira Singh, APHIS-PPQ  
Rodney Young, APHIS-PPQ  
Gary Smith, APHIS-PPQ  
Kai Caraher, APHIS-PPQ  
Anne Hairston-Strang, MDDNR  
Earl "Bud" Reeves, AACo HPP  
Jil Swearingen, NPS

- 1) Video Conference with group in North Carolina and Dr. Talley in Colorado Springs is scheduled. Due to technical problems, the conference is delayed until later in the meeting.
- 2) Presentation by Jil Swearingen regarding the new WeedUS website <http://www.invasive.org/weedus/> and the EDDMapS (Early Detection Distribution Mapping System) <http://www.eddmaps.org/> for the Mid-Atlantic Region
  - Funding program for downloading databases of info on invasive plant occurrences
  - An expansion of the Bugwood site
  - Currently open to put in individual reports; site locations, species, etc
  - WeedUS; Database of Plants invading natural areas of the US; maps of occurrences of invasive plant species by state and in national parks from Jil's database; the goal is to work down to the county level
  - Site lists recommended native alternatives to invasives
  - EDD Maps; using a Google map for the location entry, individual entries can be mapped and entered
  - Currently accepting individual reports; later this year, can submit larger data sets
  - Currently following about 300 spp. of invasives for the Mid-Atlantic; additional species can be added

### 3) Videoconference and Powerpoint Presentation:

#### “Another Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde Red Ornamental Reverts to the Green Monster Weed: Cogongrass”

Dr. Sharon M. Talley; Lead Scientist; Ecologist for PPQCPHST

Dr. Leland Cseke, Molecular Biologist for University of Alabama in Huntsville

Presented by Dr. Talley

- Cogongrass (*Imperata*) is one of world's worst weeds; 500,000 hectares in US affected
- Expensive to eradicate, \$750 per hectare
- Can survive in zones 4 to 11, 91% of USA
- Currently in SE United States, plus Oregon, West VA and MD (Tasker interjects, Oregon is wrong and will be taken off the list)
- 'Red Baron' is an ornamental cultivar, common name Japanese Blood Grass
- Widespread ornamental grass
- Federally prohibited to move across state lines without a federal permit; in a few states those where the wild type is not a confirmed problem, 'Red Baron' is allowed entry under permit if state concurs.
- Said not to reproduce sexually, or flower

“Are Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde the same person?”

- 'Red Baron' reverts to a plain green form, what does it turn into?
- First sample of a green reversion from Clemson University; the reversion spread rapidly, even after almost total eradication it came back vigorously and was very difficult to eradicate.
- Reversion number 2, collected at College Park, by Betty Marose. Reverted and flowered.
- Conducted morphological comparisons of the reversions when grown in a greenhouse  
The revertant is in between 'Red Baron' and the wild type, (root mass, etc) but more similar to the wild type than the cultivar
- Leaves are thinner; does flower; not known yet if they produce fertile seed
- Genetically, there are sequence identities between the reversion and the 'Red Baron' that are different from the wild type, so it definitely comes from 'Red Baron'
- Goal to determine several primers so can easily test revertant from wild type using gel electrophoresis
- Still to look at: what genes are responsible for invasive traits? What mechanism allows plants to acquire invasive trait?

Discussion:

Should we stop using Red Baron in gardens? Dr. Talley thinks, “yes.”

'Red Baron' could contribute new genes to the existing genetic base of the wild type, assuming fertile flowers are formed.

It does spread by rhizomes. As a federal noxious weed (FNW) *I. cylindrica*, including 'RedBaron' is not allowed to be moved across state lines without a federal permit. Federal permits are only issued for states where cogon grass is not a problem, and the receiving state concurs. Discuss whether it should be banned for future entry into MD (That would be Carol Holko's decision.) Currently Maryland concurs with the federal permit to move it into MD. The revertent much harder than 'Red Baron'; very hard to eradicate at Clemson. Very aggressive rhizomes.

'Red Baron' supposed to be female sterile, and maybe male. Up for discussion; working on it, looking at doing breeding trials. Will the several strains of 'Red Baron' found in the horticultural trade cross, will it outcross with Cogon grass? May be self-sterile clones, but could produce pollen source for out-crossing with wild type.

How common is reversion? (Dr. Talley) Hearsay accounts of reversions, haven't been able to track more down.

Wild type and 'Red Baron' are from Asia, 'Red Baron' probably from Japan.

What would it take to convince the American Nursery and Landscape Association and Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association to support a change in policy regarding 'Red Baron'? How much evidence is needed?

John Peter Thompson to ask the nursery industry to adopt precautionary thinking instead of reactionary.

Larry Hurley: there are new cultivars of native *Panicum* grass that have red foliage similar to 'Red Baron' so substitutes exist, albeit it taller in the garden.

Betty Marose: what about stuff that is already planted? APHIS defers to the state. Not a strong position to come in and eradicate; general federal policy, can prevent future problems, not correct past plantings.

How important is it to the nursery trade? JPT, cutting edge but "small potatoes." Nursery guys Hurley and Hemmings agree that it is widespread but a minor crop.

The North Carolina participant said that discontinuing the sale of 'Red Baron' in NC has not been a big deal. The nursery industry has been supportive. Were allowed to sell down, after a specific date, remaining plants in inventory to be destroyed. Not finding much in nurseries, have issued three destruct orders.

After discussion on the next step, it was agreed that interested members of MISC should gather with Mr. Thompson after the meeting to form a working group to discuss options with MDA/Carol Holko and ANLA/the nursery industry.

Motion to set up a working group (Betty Marose); seconded by Bob Tichenor; passes unanimously.

#### 5) Corrections to the minutes:

Kerrie: Was not at meeting, not aware of funding for basketgrass; [given a contact name at BARC]; Unnamed herbicide is Clethodim; third bullet of bottom page three, base of trees not threes; MDA update: fifth bullet down, should be rose rosette disease; News and new business: lots of kids attending, not the "lost" ones

Ruth: First comment about speaker at the 669 hearing; delete comment on speaker being bad.

Move to accept as amended : Kerrie Kyde; seconded Bob Tichenor; motion passes.

6) Invader of the Month:

Next scheduled invader is Japanese Knotweed; blooming early this year

7) Updates: MDA; none at this time

- Emerald ash borer; a lot of traps are out; large purple kite-shaped thingies  
Recommend to Carol Holko: Put a link on the MISC site, what are these purple kites?  
(Carole Bergmann; says she is getting barraged with calls about these traps.)  
DNR; Kerrie  
Contentious but successful treatment season of mute swans  
Task force emphatically stated approval of mute swan control, primarily by egg oiling,  
but lethal control when necessary
- DNR's Invasive Species Matrix Team met last month, finalized a draft of a Do Not Plant  
list, present to leadership team at next meeting (July or August). Once approved in  
house, then share with MISC and MNLA.
- Meeting with private landowners who might want to be in an incentive program to get  
rid of wavyleaf basketgrass on their own land. Bad site found in Baltimore County. Very  
interested in getting rid of it. Treating this site would be \$10,000, homeowner pays 25%  
in cash or in kind, but Baltimore County which owns closed landfill next door is not  
interested in treating its land.  
Revisited sites sprayed last year; clean early this year but there are seedlings coming up  
now. Either clethodim retards germination or it's late due to late, cool spring.  
Appears that there is some interaction between beech and suppression of wavyleaf  
basketgrass.
- Ann Hairston-Strang: written and printed Japanese hops handout; passed out copies.
- SHA: research grant to continue on coop program with MDA on thistle research
- APHIS: AI Tasker has giant hogweed burn on arm after an eradication expedition.
- Comments requested at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov); wants to add 7 new species to the  
regulatory list rule; Aphis-2007-0146
- Two Lygodium species to be added to noxious weeds list.
- Tasker's intern Kelsey doing project to work on 4X8 cards of species IDs, eg Onion weed  
found in Arizona and New Mexico. 30 or 40 cards drafted already.
- MA-EPPC symposium coming up in August, in Johnstown.
- Ruth Hanessian: doing science cafes in Rockville. Montgomery County Historical  
Society; on "Pets in America." Includes a veterinarian, and a lab animal vet.
- Radio show; WAMU; "Animal House"; John Peter going to meet producer today at 2:00.

8) New Business:

- John Peter Thompson; ISAC call for nominations is being extended because no one has  
applied. 8 positions available; term limited, eight coming off.
- Recommends reference book, *Bioeconomics of Invasive Species*, which he is reviewing.  
Economic models of invasiveness.

- He is involved with a meeting in August at the National Arboretum regarding certifying nurseries. An Invasive Free Certification, weed assessment protocol, stock carried, etc to be basis of evaluation.
- AI Tasker: National Weed Awareness Week is moving to all taxa instead of just plants.

Meeting adjourned at 12:10.

Submitted by Larry Hurley (ed. C. Holko)