

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2ND ANNUAL MEETING
COMMITTEE FOR NOXIOUS AND INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT
MARCH 13 –14, 2002
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION GROUPS
MARCH 13

SESSION A: DELINEATING PLANT MANAGEMENT AREAS
Ruth Gronquist, BLM
Ann Rippy, NRCS

Purpose of the Discussion: The Strategic Plan for Noxious and Invasive Plants Management in Alaska calls for the delineation of Plant Management Areas (PMAs) to facilitate work across administrative boundaries. The group was given the task of recommending a procedure for establishing geographic boundaries for PMAs.

Discussion: This was a very diverse group with varied experience in public and private land management. There was extensive discussion about how far the group should go in establishing PMA boundaries or should we just recommend a structure for formation of PMAs. There was some discussion of the advantages of “grass roots” organization of PMAs verses agency imposed areas. Although the group agreed that local buy-in was important we did not want to prohibit state and federal land managers from forming PMAs to work on invasive species where there was not a significant population base or where people were focusing their efforts on other priorities.

Several maps were available that showed how some state and federal agencies divided the state for planning and management purposes. The group quickly focused on the interagency eco-regions map which has 3 Provinces divided into 8 Zones which are then divided into a total of 32 eco-regions.

Summary: After much discussion and brainstorming a consensus was reached that we would recommend a structure for formation of PMAs that could be flexible enough to work in an urban, rural or wilderness environment. The Eco-regions map would provide a basic structure for PMA boundaries. The group developed a list of recommendations.

Recommendations:

- * The state would be divided into 8 management zones based on the eco-regions map
- * PMAs will form and dissolve as necessary within these 8 zones
- * Formation of PMAs will be coordinated through the Division of Agriculture program coordinator position which is currently not in place
- * A board will be formed with one member from each of the 8 zones. This board will advise the Div of Ag program coordinator in terms of PMAs
- * PMA boundaries will be flexible
- * PMAs will be developed to address common concerns

SESSION B: STRATEGY TO REVISING STATE NOXIOUS PLANT LIST

Charles Knight, DNR

Jeanie Cole, BLM

Purpose of the Discussion: Determine if the State Prohibited and Restricted species list needs to be revised. If so, what is the process for making additions or deletions to the list and what species should be considered?

Discussion: Charlie Knight gave a short presentation on the existing State statutes (Title 3, chapter 3) and regulations (11 AAC 34). Noxious weed regulations were established in the 1950's, driven by the Seed Association of Alaska. Article 01, 11 AAC 34.010-090 are the seed regulations that address seed crops and the prohibition against weed seed in these crops. The current prohibited and restricted species list (11 AAC 34.020) was developed under these regulations. Article 02 of the regulations, 11 AAC 34.100 addresses pest control. It gives the Director the authority to prevent the introduction and/or spread of pests in Alaska. He may establish, maintain and enforce quarantine or other such regulations necessary to exterminate or prevent the spread of pests. There is no list of prohibited species under Article 02.

The goal of the Strategic Plan is to halt the introduction and spread of noxious and invasive plant species in Alaska. However, the current prohibited and restricted species list was not developed with this goal in mind. Since the current list was developed under the seed regulations is there a need to develop a separate list of "pests" under the pest regulations rather than just amending the existing list? If so, what is the process for developing a new list? Approval would be by the Director of the Division of Agriculture, Alaska Department of Natural Resources following a public review process.

Also, the definitions in the regulations are primarily aimed at agriculture. For example, a "noxious weed" means any species of plants, ...which when established is or may become destructive and difficult to control by ordinary means of cultivation or other farm practices;...". A pest is defined as a form of animal life, plant life, or infectious, transmissible, or contagious disease of plants, that is liable to be dangerous or detrimental to the agricultural industry of the State. Do these definitions need to be broadened to address other noxious and invasive species issues such as transportation corridors, construction, dog mushing and horse packing on public lands, aquatic pests, etc.?

If we did create a new list or amend the existing list, what species should be on it? The group brainstormed for about 10 minutes and came up with the following preliminary species of concern in the State. Of these, about 70% are not on the current list. So, it appears that the existing list is probably not adequate as written or else, a new "pest" list needs to be created.

*Not on the current prohibited list.

*Japanese knotweed
*hawkweed
*hawksbeard
*Garlic mustard
perennial sow thistle
Canada thistle
*Scotch thistle

*Eurasian water milfoil
*Purple loosestrife
*Scotch broom
*Reed canary grass
*Bird vetch
hempnettle
*Candle grass

Russian knapweed
*Corn spurry
*Tansy ragwort
*giant hogweed

*White clover
*Schizania
Leafy spurge

Summary: The group decided that we did not know enough to start developing or changing the lists at this time. First we need to look more closely at the statues, regulations and definitions to see exactly what they mean and determine if they meet our needs. If not, how should they be revised and what is the process to change them? Secondly, we need to develop criteria for defining and listing invasive species.

Recommendations:

1. Appoint a regulation review committee including the following people: Andy Nolan, Charles Knight, Christine Jewitt (take lead), Marta Mueller, and Phil Kaspari.
2. Have the same committee review the definitions in State statute and regulation.
3. Have CNIPM gather together existing definitions out of agency regulations and also non-regulatory sources to form grab bag of definitions that we can pick and choose from if the regulations committee determines that State definitions need revision.
4. Establish criteria for determining what is an invasive species
 - a. Non-native species
 - b. Introduction of the species results in harm (environmental or economic)
 - c. Potentially use federal definition
5. Document process for changing invasive status
 - a. Inventory in SWCD
 - b. Changes in geographic distribution over time

MARCH 14

SESSION A: STREAMLING PERMITTING FOR PESTICIDE USE
Rosemarie Lombardi, ADEC

Purpose of the Discussion: Determine if the Department of Environmental Conservation permitting process for the use of pesticides on State land can be streamlined.

Discussion: Rose Lombardi gave an overview of the permitting process. She said it was unlikely that the process could be changed. So the discussion moved from how to streamline the process to how to work most effectively within the process.

Issue: DOT and other state agencies cannot use pesticides to control weeds within their rights-of-way (ROW) and other properties as the permit process is too cumbersome and time consuming (minimum 110 days). They do not have enough personnel to do the work needed to get a permit. Use of pesticides is controversial and the public in general is wary of state use of pesticides. Disturbed sites are prime areas for introduction of invasive weeds. DOT probably has the most extensive network of these kinds of sites in the state therefore, they have a great potential for controlling and preventing spread of weed

infestations. DOT is receiving more and more complaints about weeds on ROWs. The Public would like to see DOT control/eradicate noxious weeds.

The Plant Materials Center has a permit that they renew each year. The permit is for a variety of pesticides that they MAY use in any given year rather than specific for each use.

Groups such as homeowners associations have held permits in the past.

Some individuals wanted to be sure that pesticides were not the only means of invasive plant control that was considered.

Summary: Although Rose did not see a feasible way to streamline the permitting process she did see potential in working with Plant Management Areas. The PMAs could hold the permit for using several pesticides in a given area. A PMA could take charge of public information and education and processing the permit application. If the PMA held the permit it could cover multiple sites rather than requiring DOT to have a separate permit for each ROW.

Recommendations:

Rose agreed to check with the AG's office regarding PMAs legal status and if they could hold permits for pesticide application.

CNIPM will follow up by attempting to set up one PMA that will pursue permits to apply pesticide on state land as part of a weed control strategy for an area.

SESSION B: USING STATEWIDE DATABASE TOOLS

Michael Shephard, USDA, FS

Linda Billingsley, BLM

Purpose of the Discussion: Establish Statewide data elements and data sheet for data collected in 2002 so that data can be easily shared.

Discussion:

Who is currently collecting data:

1. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – soil sites over 3000 plots in Kenai alone.
2. Cooperative Extension Service (CES) – Agricultural sites, Private and public lands
3. U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and National Park Service (NPS) – exotic plant surveys on NPS lands
4. Military – plant surveys based on usage levels of military sites
5. USDA Forest Service (FS) – monitoring Forest Service lands
6. University of Alaska Fairbanks Herbarium – statewide
7. Alaska Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) – weed data
8. Plant Material Center – Noxious weed surveys for Department of Transportation on right of ways.
9. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – old mining sites within the Steese National Conservation Area.

10. Private Consultants: Alaska Biological Research and Lazy Mtn. Research

Issues brought up at Work Session:

1. UAF Herbarium welcomes exotic weeds in collections.
 - a. There needs to be guidelines for collection of invasive species so that seed dispersal during shipment and handling is not a problem.
 - b. Regulations may prohibit transportation of specimens.
 - c. When submitting specimens to Herbarium attach a complete data form or collecting information.
2. Cultural aspects of invasion is important data.
3. People need to be trained to use the tools
 - a. A How To guide needs to be developed.
4. Can common and traditional Native names be cross-referenced in the database?
5. Database issues
 - a. There are several sources of database management tools such as SWFPMP and NAWMP
 - b. Data needs to be submitted in an electronic format not written.
 - c. A dry run will be done on the data using existing data before new data is entered.
 - d. There will be missing data, especially in old data sets.
 - e. There will be required fields and optional fields.
 - f. Phenology may be a useful dataset
 - g. Data must be useful to many agencies
 - h. A user fee for data is not likely.
 - i. Data will most likely be housed at the Alaska Geospatial Clearinghouse
6. A site return policy within each project and agency will add better data.
7. How will tools be distributed?
8. Technical support and financial support needs to be further worked out.
9. Finalize the format of the data forms.
 - a. Comments or questions on using the data form should be submitted to an identified agency contacts.
 - b. Michael Shephard will contact agency representatives when the form is ready for 2002 field season.
 - c. Will there be a workshop on field usage of forms?
10. A critical species list needs to be develop for 2002 season.
 - a. A subcommittee headed by Chris McKee was formed to develop the list

Recommendations/actions taken:

2002 Field Season Agency Contact persons are identified as:

Michael Shephard	USFS
Ann Rippy	NRCS
Corlene Rose/Marta Mueller	CES
Andy Nolen	DNR, Division of Ag
Linda Billingley	BLM
Chris McKee	USGS
Jeff Mason	USARMY
Al Batten	UAF Herbarium

The following subcommittee was formed to develop a Critical species list with the goal of completing it within 2 weeks.

Corlene Rose	CES
Linda Billingsley	BLM
Ruth Gronquist	BLM
Faith Duncan	USDAFS
Pat Wilson	SWCDB
Jason Mouw	ADF&G
Jeff Mason	USARMY
Emily Binnian	USGS
Michael Shephard	USDAFS
Alan Batten	UAF Herbarium
Alan Nolen	DNR, Division of Ag.
Chris McKee	USGS

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