

South Carolina EPPC Meeting Notes – 4 December 2008

10:00am -- Logistical Information and Welcome – John Brubaker

Secretary's Report – Alex Gregg

Call for modifications - Newt Hardy requested for it to be noted that the 23 acres of Kudzu treatment he reported on at the last meeting (May 8, 2008) was completed over a period of time. Request noted.

Minutes from last meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's Report – John Brubaker (for Colette Degarady)

Current in account = \$4211.20 (\$530 of that is in the Larry Nelson Memorial Fund)

Cogongrass grant = \$11,016 remaining (this isn't in our account, but available to us through SCFC. One more payment will go to Clemson, \$3,750, the rest will be used for the May 2009 Cogongrass survey)

Report on EDDMapS data coordination / collection effort – Sara Cech.

Ms. Cech reported that data was collected from several agencies (SC Forestry Commission, Clemson Public Service- DPI, Carolinas Beach Vitex Task Force, A.C. Moore Herbarium, NPS). Ms. Cech also reported that she wrote an article for the SC Landscape and Turfgrass Association for newsletters, focusing mostly on Cogongrass (Red Baron).

Ms. Cech also spent time working with Early Detection / Rapid Response, and noted that the A.C. Moore Herbarium added an "Invasive" field to their searchable database. She gave 4 presentations (to USFS - Francis Marion National Forest, and South Carolina State Parks) on EDDMapS.

Future steps – follow up with agencies that did not submit data, encourage regular submittals, continue w/ EDRR efforts, and further public education.

Meredith Malone will take lead on follow up items from Sara w/ Data Coordination group.

Discussion

Bill Hulslander – one reason for not uploading data into EDDMapS is that it cannot accept native GIS data.

Pat Layton – GIS data can be sent directly to Chuck Burgeron at UGA, no need to convert GIS to lat/long format.

Meredith Malone suggested that Sara's article should be included on the SC EPPC website.

Report on state of SC/SE EPPC – John Brubaker.

Mr. Brubaker noted that much progress is being made in all areas. However, EPPC in general is basically broke and is in need of money. The proceeds from the May 2009 Symposium should help, although it was noted that income generally comes from state and national governments...which is increasingly unlikely in this economy. EPPC is in need of new members – but presence of young people in the group is very encouraging.

Discussion / Comments

It was noted that possibly adding some advertising to the website might aid in revenue generation. Also, a web registration option might assist in boosting membership. Send out more mailers, through snail-mail and email. Having links to SE/SC-EPPC from various organizational websites would also be good.

Pat Layton noted that there is a Master Naturalist workshop in 2009 and that it might be worthwhile to have an EPPC presence (membership forms, etc.)

Symposium Report – Robin Mackie.

Symposium planner hired – Brenda Davis.

Highlights – Colette has selected plenary speaker (Kathy O’Riley Doyle – will speak on Cooperative Weed Management Areas) – along with another individual (lowcountry native) who will be speaking on Beach Vitex management. Four field trips are planned -including one to Bull Island to look at Chinese Tallow treatment sites, and to visit several plantations that interpret SC history.

Request for abstracts due by January 15th. Example topic areas include “EDRR Efforts; Cooperative Weeds; Research, Control, Restoration; Screening Species for use in Biomass Production, etc.” There are still many opportunities for presenters and posters. A press release and other advertising will be produced.

Max attendance will be ~150. Several requests for sponsorship have been sent out.

Outreach – distribute information to ecology listservs, bulletin boards, websites, ETV (possibly interview Colette on “Your Day”?), master gardeners, naturalists, wildlife biologists community, etc.

George Kessler suggested that flyer needs more enticing language. Theresa Yednock suggests tri-fold brochure, double-sided, including explanation of why we should care about invasives – written in language for average people. Need to target broad audience.

Entertainment includes trip to Bernard Baruch Mansion for dinner (lowcountry boil), blues singer, tent, etc. This site features one of the only remaining slave villages.

Still firming up registration fee cost (~\$120 probably). Looking to cover all expenses through registration fees, in case sponsorships are not adequate. Web registration for the symposium will be made available.

Silent auction...headed up by Sudie Daves. If you have items for the silent auction, contact Sudie.

George Kessler – Cogongrass Taskforce Update

Cogongrass Survey – designated “Larry Nelson Survey” – conducted in his honor. The survey was conducted May 15-18, 2008, and ended up having 200 participants. The survey effort focused on the 26 counties closest to GA border (everything on the western side on I-26). In addition to Cogongrass, Giant Sylvania and Tropical Soda Apple were also surveyed (no federal funding for Cogongrass).

1,060 total survey hours, 13,587 total miles (roadway)

New Cogongrass Infestations (2008):

Williamsburg County 1

Greenville County 1

Pickens County 3

Hampton County 5

2009 Survey Registration now underway (web-based)

Lessons Learned – Cogongrass difficult to ID, activities must take place during flower stage of growth.

GA and NC have expressed interest in conducting a similar survey.

SC-EPPC will do what is possible to raise money to continue funding Kessler’s salary (Cogongrass Coordinator).

Kudzu Task Force Report – Newt Hardy

Provided every principal of every school in Spartanburg County with the book “Last Child in the Woods.”

Privet Task Force – Matt Nespeca

Discussed methods of treatment and control for privet, viability of seeds, etc.

Data Coordination Committee Report – Meredith Malone

Ms. Malone will follow up on the work that Sara has done. Work may bleed into EDRR initiatives.

Committee will need to streamline process of getting data into EDDMapS. Also need to find ways to make EDDMapS more useful (e.g. color-coding by date of report, etc.). The issue of how to get herbarium data into EDDMapS is currently being discussed as well.

Discussions are underway with the U.S.C. Herbarium of possibly being able to have people send specimens in question to them for identification.

EDRR Committee Report – Robin Mackie

EDRR List may need to be updated. State ED species may include species known to occur in SC.

Education Committee – Mary Morrison

No time for report. It was noted that Ms. Morrison was planning on stepping down.

Appointment of Nominating Committee

Colette DeGarady appointed by president John Brubaker to serve as nominating committee chair. Up for re-election are Elyse Benson, David Bourgeois, Bill Hulslander, Robin Mackie, and Brett Moule.

Call for Old Business

None

Call for New Business

Legislative issues on invasive species (Colette was to discuss, John Brubaker addressing in her absence). Begun dialog with Dr. Ray at Clemson. John Brubaker will begin to work with SC Legislature to have Beach Vitex listed as a regulated species. Beach Vitex is currently regulated in NC, but not SC. It is not a candidate for federal regulation since it occurs naturally in one state (Hawaii). Pat Layton suggested that everyone write a hand-written letter to their state representative to address this.

Robin Mackie (new business) – Sudie Daves agreed to send out literature to nurseries and other plant people, informing them of invasives and why not to sell them.

John Brubaker – just a straight mailing may not be the best approach. Still working on coming up with best strategy. In the meantime, all of us should do our best to spread the word by mouth to folks in our community with whom we do business.

Date for annual meeting (normally would happen around time of the symposium, but will be pushed back until after June 1st) will be Tuesday, June 9th.

Motion to adjourn (Mary Morrison). Motion seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05pm.