

**LIISMA Highlights  
January 31, 2008  
Oak Ridge  
Forest Park, Queens**

**1) Welcome and Introductions**

**2) Approval of Summary from 12/6/08 Meeting**

The noting of the attendance of Louis Harrison at the 12/6/08 was the only amendment.

**3) Roundtable Announcements**

**Long Island Sound Future's Fund**- Due 2/16/08, USFWS grant supports Long Island Sound. Invasive species projects are acceptable, so long as they are in the Long Island Sound watershed. (Louise Harrison, USFWS/LI Sound Office)

**Perennial Pepperweed**- The problem at West Meadow Beach has not been addressed. There are many potential partners and stakeholders in the area that could take initiative to write a grant proposal. It may be a worthwhile project for Long Island Sound Future's Fund grant.

**Pine Shoot Beetle**- found in 54 counties and all surrounding states are quarantined, but it is not yet found in the 10 southernmost counties of New York. Ag and Markets are trapping now and will continue through May. Quarantined means that no pine products can be moved out of the area. It was introduced to OH and moved through PA to the NE in the early 1990's. It attacks new shoots and eventually kills the tree. It attacks 2- and 3-needle pines so this could be a major threat to the Pine Barrens Region. (Joe Parent, NYS Dept of Ag and Markets)

**Bark Beetle**- trapping begins in March (Joe Parent, NYS Dept of Ag and Markets)

**Sirex Wood Wasp**- Still moving from the north, but Federal money for tracking was suspended, so the current extent is partially unknown. (Joe Parent NYS Dept of Ag and Markets)

**Kudzu**- North Brother Island infestation is close to controlled. DoT discovered a Cross Island infestation and committed to spraying it until complete control. A total of two new infestations were found. (Tim Wenskus, NYC Parks)

**Weed Awareness Week**- February 24 – March 1 is National Weed Awareness Week. Tim shared a poster that is available online. Search NIWAW or to go to the North American Weed Management Association website at: [www.nawma.org](http://www.nawma.org) There is a conference February 24-29 in Washington D.C. (Tim Wenskus NYC Parks)

**BBG Book *Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants***- The Nature Conservancy is partnering with Brooklyn Botanic Garden, North Shore Land Alliance, Nassau Suffolk Landscapers Association, and Long Island Farm Bureau to develop a special edition of the book *Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants*. It will contain a supplemental section including the Suffolk and Nassau County ban list. About 2,000 copies will be distributed to nurseries, all Suffolk and Nassau County libraries, landscape architects, legislators and officials, and Long Island Garden Clubs. The book will also be advertised on the CCE and Farm Bureau websites. (Laura Bavaro, TNC)

**Kudzu**- Marilyn Jordan is conducting research on the viability of Kudzu seeds found on Long Island. There are researchers in D.C. and Canada who are researching the winter tolerance of Kudzu. Kudzu is a highly invasive weed known as "the vine that ate the South." It was introduced from China for animal forage and erosion control, and now has spread throughout the Southeast and up the Eastern Seaboard and is found in New York City and Long Island. (Marilyn Jordan, TNC)

**Climate Change and Invasive Plants**- Long Island Sound Study's next newsletter will likely focus on climate change issues. Larissa Graham, LISS Outreach Coordinator (NY Sea Grant) was advised to post the request for someone to write an article re: invasives and climate change on the LIISMA list serve. (Larissa Graham, NY Sea Grant)

**Connetquot State Park**- State Parks is hiring a permanent biologist to implement natural resources and ecological stewardship plans, including invasive plant control. (Kathy Schwager, TNC)

**Sunken Meadow**- State Parks is writing a grant to hire an engineering firm to conduct a tidal modeling project for Sunken Meadow Creek within that park to determine the best course of action to re-establish tidal flow into the system. The area is considered tidal wetlands of low salt marsh, but is now dominated by *Phragmites*. By re-introducing salt water into the system, the area will be less suitable for the *Phragmites* and hopefully will re-establish the *Spartina* and other natural plant community that should be there.. (Kathy Schwager, TNC)

-end of roundtable discussion-

#### **4) Review and Approval of Revised Invasiveness Assessment Protocols -Presentation and Discussion by Dr. Marilyn Jordan (TNC) and Dr. Gerry Moore (BBG)**

Distributed four handouts:

- 1) NYS Non-Native Plant Invasiveness Ranking Form (January 2008)
- 2) NYS Non-Native Plant Invasiveness Ranking Form completed for *Microstegium viminium* using an older version that needs updating.
- 3) Non-Native Plant Invasiveness Ranking Form for PRISMS in NYS (January 2008)
- 4) NYS Criteria For Evaluating Non-Native Plant Species for Invasiveness (Introduction to ranking forms; January 2008)

New York is one of only four states without a noxious weed list. While the NYS Invasive Species Task Force will likely implement a state list in the future, it is currently incumbent on each PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) to develop its own list. LIISMA is the first PRISM to develop an invasiveness assessment protocol and to help legislate county invasive plant 'do not sell' lists. The LIISMA invasiveness assessment ranking form is designed to be a robust, transparent, and repeatable procedure based on the best available science to identify problematic non-native plants and to inform prioritization of control efforts. LIISMA is using the Federal definition of invasive; it must be non-native and cause harm and includes all cultivars. The Federal definition was also used in the invasive plant legislation developed by Suffolk and Nassau Counties.

The Suffolk and Nassau County invasive plant 'do not sell' lists were based in part on LIISMA's invasive plants list. While the LIISMA invasives list is science-based, working through the invasiveness assessment protocol will further verify the list using a robust and repeatable scientific process.

Dr. Marilyn Jordan (The Nature Conservancy), Dr. Gerry Moore (Brooklyn Botanic Gardens), and Troy Weldy (TNC's statewide contact/coordinator of invasives activities) are the lead developers of the invasiveness assessment protocol. Development of the LIISMA ranking form has taken place over the last few months. To date, it has been vetted with other PRISMS, the NYS Invasive Species Task Force, and all LIISMA members. The concept has been discussed among natural resource managers, scientists and industry representatives for some time now.

Today's handout is the most up to date version. It is understood that minor changes to the forms may be made in the future. There are two parts of the protocol: the state level form and the PRISM form. The state level form focuses on the characteristics of the plant, while the PRISM form addresses the invasiveness for the specific PRISM region. In the time after the ranking forms were discussed at the December LIISMA meeting, pathways of introduction, benefits, economic impacts and human health impacts were added to the State Invasiveness Ranking Form (pages nine and ten). After the forms are completed, the scores from each of the forms are plugged into a matrix to assign an invasiveness level (unknown, insignificant invasiveness, low, moderate, high or very high).

**LIISMA Scientific Review Committee (SRC)** - Nearly all slots on the Committee are filled. *Kathy Schwager covered the list and who has and has not accepted membership on the committee.* The response has been robust and enthusiastic, with most people embracing the importance of such a committee. USFWS has not yet accepted a seat and Louise Harrison volunteered to help find someone to fill that seat.

It is envisioned that the SRC will review the BBG invasiveness assessments of 30 species by the summer and then the burden will become lighter. (Marilyn Jordan, TNC)

*Movement for approval of LIISMA Invasiveness Protocol*

Louise Harrison- LIISMA lacks the expertise to approve.

Tim Wenskus- NYC may have different species and problems. Will the differences be accounted for and will NYC Parks be welcome to the table?

Marilyn Jordan- The SRC meetings are open and anyone who would like to contribute is encouraged to come. Only the permanent members are allowed to vote, but anyone with pertinent information is encouraged to present it. NYC is considered when filling out the invasiveness ranking forms. Marilyn wants to distribute the 140 plant list so people can look it over.

Laura Bavaro- Approval is important for showing that LIISMA is comfortable with the process. Expertise is not necessary for approval. It is simply stating that LIISMA supports the process and protocols.

Joe Parent- Where is the list going? Is there any regulatory muscle behind it?

Laura Bavaro- The LIISMA invasiveness work will help inform the actions of the Suffolk and Nassau County Invasives Advisory Boards.

Kathy Schwager-The purpose is to make sure that science is the basis for the lists and also by LIISMA doing the initial assessments, it will jumpstart the process for all the other NY PRISMs.

Joe Parent- Does the list only have departmental support or is there support from the higher ups?

Marilyn Jordan- Troy Weldy is in contact with Leslie Suprenant.

Louise Harrison- The message is that each region should make a list but the money will be coming from Albany.

Bob O'Brien (Minnewaska State Park)- Bob has written comments about the protocol to give but they are in written form. They have likely been incorporated already but Dr. Marilyn Jordan will double check with Troy Weldy.

*LIISMA approved the underlying methodology and overall concept of the invasiveness assessment ranking forms. LIISMA also approves of the overall process as outlined for the entire invasiveness assessment effort.*

**The example form filled out for *Microstegium viminium*.**

The protocol is to be made independent of current distribution or in conjunction with distribution, but it is primarily from the plant biology. This methodology helps to predict the worst invasive plants before they become widespread. As a side note, the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens is the repository for invasive plants, and it is important for LIISMA members to send in plant specimens to the BBG to keep good

information and correctly fill out the PRISM section of the form. Other PRISMs will not need to repeat the work being done now unless new species are found in their PRISM that are not on Long Island.

Troy Weldy is using modeling software called "Climex" to model potential range to identify invasiveness of different plants. The software uses latitude as a rough indicator of potential range. This data is then factored into the PRISM ranking form.

Tim Wenskus- How do we rank if there is a lack of information but we know that it is invasive (e.g. Jet Bead or Scholar Tree)

Marilyn Jordan- information is needed to answer at least 70 points worth of questions for an invasive species to be ranked. If less than 70 points worth of questions are answered, then the plant can not be ranked for invasiveness.

Gerry Moore- References and a literature search are major parts of the assessment. BBG finds all relevant sources, then compiles and reads them. The information is used to fill out the form. People can look at the form and then refer back to the references to see why it was ranked. The review committee would augment, and could contribute to the assessment, potentially contributing enough information to push the plant past the 70 point threshold.

Louise Harrison- Can people look and see that an "Unknown" rank is not the same as "Not Invasive"?

Gerry Moore- There will be no relative score published. Any plant in which there is not enough information to answer at least 70 points worth of questions will appear as "Unknown". This is different than "Insignificant Invasiveness" or "Low". It is simply a statement that not enough information is available to do a thorough assessment.

The score is relative to the number of questions that can be answered. Less information will mean a lower total point number in the denominator. If less than 70 points worth of questions can be answered, the species will still come to the SRC, and after review, if the denominator is still <70, then it will remain "Unknown". After review, if the possible score is 70 or greater, then the score will be assessed by dividing the points assigned by the points possible.

Bonnie Seagraves- How will cultivars be accounted for?

Gerry Moore- Cultivars are considered the same as the species. The example of Japanese Knotweed; multiple, closely related or hybridized species will be evaluated on the same sheet.

Louise Harrison-Asks if everyone is satisfied with the process.

Gerry Moore- Asks if the group approves.

Kathy Schwager- Bylaws will be approved at the first SRC meeting. Kathy briefly covered Article III Section 2- Agenda Items; specifically that all materials to be considered by the SRC must be scientifically verifiable with documentation. She moved that LIISMA approve the bylaws.

*Group approves process and bylaws*

Louise Harrison- How to get USFWS on the SRC? What are the protocols for a proxy?

Kathy Schwager- Referred to Article III Sec. 2: Notice of a designated representative must be made to the Chair at least one day prior to any scheduled meeting. She also said that conferencing is acceptable. Any proxy should be familiar with the process and the group. All materials need to be sent out ahead of time and everyone in the SRC should review them ahead of time and be ready with any comments.

Gerry Moore- Staten Island needs some representation.

Kathy Schwager- All are welcome to contribute, but the 19 member core is set. It is important that if anyone has relevant information, they bring it to the SRC meetings to present it.

### **Volunteer Invasives Pulls for Weed Prevention Areas (WPAs)-filling up fast**

The Nature Conservancy is planning on hosting one volunteer event at a WPA and one on TNC preserves per month during the growing season. Not all of the WPA events are yet planned, but the dates are filling up fast and it is in the interest of anyone who wants volunteer labor to contact Alex Entrup at [aentrup@tnc.org](mailto:aentrup@tnc.org) to get an event set up at your site. Additionally, if anyone is having an open to the public volunteer conservation event, they may contact Alex to see if it can be posted on the TNC website. The volunteer website should be online before spring (Alex Entrup, TNC)

### **Letter of Support Template/Agency Agreements**

DEC needs letters of Support, MOUs or Cooperative Agreements to prove that LIISMA is a functioning PRISM. LIISMA's funding is contingent on getting the MOUs to the DEC, although a deadline for submissions has not been set by NYSDEC. Letters of Support are OK only in the interim. If LIISMA does not get the letters it could hold up the LIISMA grant, thus blocking funding (which means to more coffee and donuts at meetings). (Kathy Schwager TNC)

Tim Wenskus- It is time for TNC to meet with city or county staff in NYC about MOUs.

Laura Bavaro- Agreed.

### **Industry Outreach for "Do Not Sell" List**

Refer to **BBG Book** section in Roundtable discussion

### **Updating Your Planting Recommendations to Reflect “Do Not Sell” and Management Lists**

Everyone, please look over the planting list recommendations for your agency or organization. Make certain that DNS and management list plants are taken off the recommendations. Check websites and publications. (Kathy Schwager, TNC)

Bonnie Seagraves- CCE is aware and doesn't recommend banned plants. Caroline Kiang should be included on the list serve.

Tim Wenskus- Get the information into papers for Spring planting recommendations.

Louise Harrison- “Sound Gardening” needs recommendation changes and updating.

Bob O'Brien- Little cards distributed at the Point of Sale at nurseries showing the invasive plants and native alternatives are very effective.

### **Didymo (Rock Snot) Presentation**

PowerPoint presentation available upon request. Contact Alex Entrup [aentrup@tnc.org](mailto:aentrup@tnc.org) or Kathy Schwager [kschwager@tnc.org](mailto:kschwager@tnc.org) to get a copy.

**Next Meeting is on March 27, 2008 10:00 AM- 12:30 PM at Cornell Cooperative Extension office in Riverhead, NY**

### **Attendees:**

Laura Bavaro	TNC	Aphrodite Montalvo	NYS DEC
Jessica DiCicco	Prospect Park Alliance	Gerry Moore	Brooklyn Botanic Garden
Alex Entrup	TNC	Bob O'Brien	EMB/OPRHP
Sherry Forgash	Nassau County/SWCD	Joe Parent	NYS Dept of Ag & Markets
Larissa Graham	NY Sea Grant	Bonny Seagraves	CCE, Suffolk Co.
Louise Harrison	USFWS/LI Sound Office	Jim Schmitt	NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets
Jane Jackson	North Shore Land Alliance	Kathy Schwager	TNC
Marilyn Jordan	TNC	Polly Weigand	Suffolk County SWCD
Al Lindberg	Nassau Co. Parks Rec. and Museums	Tim Wenskus	NYC Parks Nat. Res.