

Draft June 5, 2018 – Noxious Weed Advisory Committee (NWAC) Meeting Notes from 5/24/18

The committee convened at 10 am on Thursday, May 24, 2018, at the Virginia Department of Forestry Building, 900 Natural Resources Drive, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Members present:

Agency or Organization represented:

Debra Martin	Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
Tina MacIntyre	Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Lori Chamberlin	Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF)
Stacey Moulds	Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Kevin Heffernan	Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
Jim Hurley	Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS)
Paul Munn	Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association (VNLA)
Jacob Barney	Virginia Tech – Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology and Weed Science
Jon Repair	Virginia Forest and Grass Council
Lonnie Murray	Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Laura Greenleaf	VA Master Naturalist and James River Park System Invasive Plant Task Force member
Rod Walker	Blue Ridge Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM)

Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) Process Review:

The meeting began with a short power point explanation of the status of Noxious Weed regulation on the timeline of the NOIRA process. A copy of this power point will be provided to the committee members. The regulation, at the time of the meeting, was still in the Governor's Office so the NOIRA is still in Stage 1 of a 3-stage process.

A member asked if the committee could approve weeds prior to the public comment period. With a quorum, the committee can vote on and approve submissions, but we cannot submit them to the Commissioner for review until the close of the public comment period in the NOIRA process. Members of the committee plan to attend an upcoming Board of Agriculture meeting to advocate for new weed submissions. VDACS members were asked to add the definitions of the different Tiers (or categories) of noxious weeds to VDACS' noxious weed web page.

Two new members to the committee were introduced; Stacey Moulds, VDOT and Laura Greenleaf, VA Master Naturalist, and provided a brief explanation of the committee's development of the assessment/submission/review process for adding new plant species to Virginia's Noxious Weed List.

Currently the process for submitting a weed is as follows:

- The proposer accesses the DCR website and signs in, creates an account and answers the questionnaire, which consists of twenty-three questions. This requires significant justification

and documentation/citations. Once completed, the proposer saves and submits on the DCR website where it is stored.

- DCR completes a brief review and then emails the package to the Noxious Weed mailbox at VDACS. The submissions will be again be reviewed briefly, primarily to confirm that contact information has been provided and all questions answered. They will be compiled and filed for the next NWAC meeting. Depending upon numbers of submissions, they will be saved until a certain number are accumulated, at which time a batch of reviews will be sent to the committee to review prior to a scheduled meeting.

The committee reviewed the process and VDACS agreed to make any needed revisions to the formal process.

Ten voting members were present, representing 10 organizations (out of a total of 16 that are members of the committee). Nine members are required for a quorum.

Ten weed submissions were mailed to members for their review before the 5/24 meeting. Those submissions and descriptions of the review process are as follows (in alphabetical order):

1) *Ailanthus altissima* – Tree of Heaven – The form was complete. A motion was made by Jacob Barney and seconded by Lonnie Murray to accept this assessment and submit to the Commissioner for review. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

2) *Ampelopsis brevipedunculata* – Porcelain Berry – The form was incomplete. Additional citations and documentation are needed to support this submission. Jim Hurley, representing the Virginia Native Plant Society, will provide additional documentation and resubmit. A motion was made by Lonnie Murray and seconded by Stacey Moulds to suspend discussion until this plant species is resubmitted. The motion passed by unanimous vote to suspend for further review.

3) *Carduus nutans* – Musk thistle – The form was incomplete. Three of 23 questions were answered with a U for unknown. Discussion ensued. Unknown can be a reasonable answer, but how many unknowns are acceptable with these submissions? Questions 19 & 20 (they had a U for an answer) are difficult to find exact answers as they deal with economic impacts on various types of land (parks, private property, natural areas, etc). In some cases, this info is difficult, maybe not possible to obtain., therefore, Unknown can be an acceptable answer. Also discussed - the potential hardships imposed on the agricultural community, i.e. farmers, regarding moving certain products and articles that could unknowingly contain life stages of this (& other potential noxious weeds) particular weed. A motion was made by Lori Chamberlin to table this plant species until the next meeting as it could be controversial. Lonnie Murray seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote to re-examine *Carduus* as a Tier 3 weed.

4) *Celastrus orbiculatus* – Oriental bittersweet – The questionnaire was complete. Discussion ensued. The question was asked if personal observations are acceptable if the committee is aware of the expertise of the person sharing their personal experience. The committee felt that Rod Walker, as a landowner with experience in trying to manage *Celastrus* and the difficulty and associated costs, was a reliable source of citation/documentation. A motion was made by Jacob Barney to approve this plant

species. Lonnie Murray seconded with an amendment to add a committee comment that this plant's seeds are toxic to animals and available when other food sources are not. Jacob accepted the amendment and a vote was taken. *Celastrus* was approved unanimously and will be forwarded to the Commissioner for review as a Tier 3 noxious weed.

5) *Cirsium arvense* – Canadian thistle – The questionnaire was complete. Discussion of this plant species revolved around the fact that it is difficult to control in small grains as there are no effective chemicals available to use on these crops (wheat, barley, rye) for its control. This would result in economic hardship for agricultural producers. Lonnie Murray made a motion to table discussion due to its potential negative economic impact on farmers and Jon Repair seconded. The motion to table passed with a unanimous vote.

6) *Corydalis incisa* – Incised fumwort – The questionnaire was complete. Discussion revolved around some concern that there is a lack of documentation as to its invasiveness in VA. Lori Chamberlin made a motion to move the weed forward as a Tier 2 weed and Lonnie Murray seconded. There was 1 no vote, 1 abstain, and 8 yes votes to move the weed forward for review by the Commissioner.

7) *Hydrilla verticillata* – Hydrilla – The questionnaire was complete. There was a short discussion of the weeds' invasiveness, but also the potential for hardship on the boating public who will be required to get a permit to move boats from waters inhabited by hydrilla to other areas. Further discussion revolved around the serious impact of hydrilla on Virginia's waters. Rod Walker made a motion to move this weed forward as a Tier 3 weed to the Commissioner for review and Jim Hurley seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

8) *Lespedeza cuneate* – Sericea lespedeza – The questionnaire was complete. During discussion, it was noted that lespedeza seeds are found in VDOT seed mixes used for planting along right of ways. It is commercially available and is planted by some farmers for grazing. Lori Chamberlin made a motion to table this plant species due to the fact that it is commercially available. Jon Repair seconded. The motion to table passed unanimously.

9) *Persicaria perfoliata* – Mile-a-minute Weed – The questionnaire was complete. Rod Walker made a motion to push this weed through as a Tier 3 weed without discussion and Kevin Heffernin seconded. The motion passed **unanimously**.

10) *Rubus phoenicolasius* – Wine raspberry – This plant is grown commercially and is therefore not eligible for a vote.

The next meeting of the Noxious Weed Advisory Committee is scheduled for 10 am on Thursday, August 9, 2018.