



**MINUTES OF THE PARK ECOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 17, 2012**

Committee members in attendance included Agency Chairwoman Leilani Ulrich, Arthur Lussi, Cecil Wray, Designees Jen McCormick Department of Economic Development, and Robert Stegemann Department of Environmental Conservation and Committee Chair Valentino. Members Frank Mezzano, William Thomas, Richard Booth and Designee Dierdre Scozzafava, Department of State joined the Committee. Also participating in the meeting was Executive Director Fred Monroe of the Local Government Review Board. Staff included Executive Director Terry Martino, and Supervisor Natural Resource Analysis Daniel Spada.

The Committee meeting convened at approximately 1:00 p.m.

**Approval of Draft Committee Minutes of April 2012**

A motion was made by Member Lussi to approve the draft Committee minutes for April. The motion was seconded by Designee McCormick. The draft minutes were unanimously approved.

**RASS Supervisor's Report (D. Spada)**

Mr. Spada briefly reviewed the activity report for the RASS Division that was included in the mailing packet sent to the Board. He then introduced APIPP Director Hilary Smith and her team.

**Update on the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP)/Adirondack PRISM (H. Smith, APIPP)**

APIPP Director Hilary Smith and Project Coordinators Brendan Quirion and Meghan Johnstone briefed the Agency on the latest developments impacting invasive species management in the Park and provided an update of the APIPP program.

Ms. Smith noted that the Adirondack Park is relatively free of invasive species which provides an opportunity, unlike any other in New York State, to prevent the spread of invasive plant species.

Ms. Smith noted that the Agency is a principle partner in this program. She noted the important role the Agency plays in

responding to the control of invasive species through general permitting processes and regulatory efforts.

Brendan Quirion presented examples of terrestrial invasive species infestations before and after eradication and noted that long-term monitoring of native species is done to ensure the native species are re-established.

Mr. Quirion also reviewed measures that are being taken by the team to address the feral pig invasive species issues in the Champlain Valley area. The population has been reduced but more work needs to be done to completely eradicate the species.

Meghan Johnstone briefly reported on aquatic invasive plant species management in the Park. She noted that two out of three water bodies surveyed in the Park are free of invasive species.

Member Booth asked what typical town transport laws state. Ms. Johnstone responded that typically they prohibit the transport of aquatic invasive species on any boats and trailers. Warren County prohibits any visible aquatic plants hanging from boats and trailers on the County highways.

Member Lussi asked if boats could be inspected. Ms. Johnstone responded that enforcement is not strong within the Towns. There is no mandatory inspection conducted although the stewards at the boat launches can request that any plants be removed prior to departure from the launch.

Member Wray asked if progress had been seen on Lake George with the Eurasian watermilfoil. Ed Snizek of Agency staff responded that hand harvesting efforts are still underway in Lake George. Member Booth noted a permit had been issued; Mr. Snizek responded that the permit was to address Asian clam infestations within Lake George and some success has been seen in that populations have decreased.

Ms. Smith concluded the presentation by noting the priorities for APIPP which include: prevention, early detection, rapid response, management, education, regulation and enforcement, and to secure funding for the regional response teams. She noted that the program has grown significantly in the past 10 years and is advocating for a Park and/or state-wide marketing campaign to increase awareness of invasive species. She also noted the need for legislation to address and enforce transport laws. Funding is also an important goal for the program to ensure the continued success of the rapid response teams.

Committee Chair Valentino asked if the private sector understands the severity of the problem and if developments have been made in technology and in formulating more discriminate herbicides to address invasive species. Ms. Smith responded that the industry has recognized the need for discriminate herbicides and has responded. He then asked how priorities are established for the program. Ms. Smith responded that goals are set according to the resources that are being impacted. Major resource goals include wetlands, forests, and rivers; these areas are a priority in terms of protection.

Local Government Review Board Executive Director, Fred Monroe, noted that in many municipalities and in lake associations there is little funding for invasive species control; he asked if a grant program might be forthcoming that will establish funding for municipalities and lake associations. Ms. Smith responded that within the environmental protection fund there is language that calls for an eradication program which has been disbursed in the past but DEC is not currently able to administer the program because of lack of staffing. The hope is that this funding will continue to grow to allow the program to be sustainable and that enough staff will be retained to administer the program. She emphasized the need to protect the areas that have not been invaded as resources are leveraged to address current infestations.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

None

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:50 p.m.