

SE EPPC Board Meeting
Birmingham, AL May 1, 2005

Participants

- Connie Gray – GA EPPC
- Pam Ferrel – SC EPPC
- Kristen Allen - Secretary
- Brian Bowen – President and TN EPPC Proxy
- Keith Tassin – AL EPPC
- Tony Pernas – Treasurer and FL EPPC Proxy
- Chuck Bargeron – Webpage Coordinator

April Minutes were approved.

Treasury Report – Tony Pernas

- Balance = \$20,714.85
- Pie chart was presented showing majority of budget going toward Wildland Weeds (Pass-through money).
- We will be receiving a check from FL EPPC from last years' Symposium. Treasurer is on maternity leave.
- We received \$2500 from USFS
- We may need to find an accountant to do our taxes, but will first try to pay Susie to do it. Either way, it will be extremely important for states to get their info in on-time.
- Report was accepted.

Webpage – Chuck Bargeron

- The Webpage “News” link contains an outdated newsletter, and the “Grants” link is empty, and the page doesn't get as many hits as it should
- Wildland Weeds has a section, called “Internodes” on Upcoming events, announcements, Publications etc., might be useful to post some of this information. Chuck also suggests posting certain articles from the magazine on the webpage, with a search engine by species. Articles would be chosen based on relevance to the entire region. Could also post a list of the articles in the publication, but readers would have to subscribe or pay to get the article. Tony will check with Karen Brown to see what she would be willing to do in this regard. Currently, Wildland Weeds is posted to the FL EPPC webpage after two years.
- The board also discussed a webpage project based on the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (funded by CSREES). This could potentially involve county-level mapping of invasives based on herbarium records, as well as an interactive reporting system allowing people to enter the locations of various infestations. It could be useful to add latitude and longitude in natural areas (should be avoided on private property to avoid privacy issues).

- Could divide states among biologists who could verify occurrences input into the map. Until verified, could simply be listed as “Not verified”. Could also add FIA data (however, it would have to be noted that each county contains only one plot).
- Could look for a grant to fund this. Grant could go to U of GA and Chuck could work on.
- Could put up fact sheets and pictures on species of rising importance, not those that have endless info on web. Infestation locations could be hot linked to a picture of the infestation. The picture could be retaken every five years.
- Chuck will research and report back to the board: will need to identify what kind of software is necessary, how much of Chuck’s time would be needed, what would his salary be, what sort of funds would be necessary for start-up and then following years. Would need to be a very easy form so that it wouldn’t be additional work for field biologists. Would need to post a very specific protocol for entering information into the system.
- The board also decided to try another listserv. Tony will set up through the FL EPPC webpage, then send Chuck the steps to subscribe to be posted on the webpage for interested users.
- The board has decided not to create a Southeast invasive species list, but would like to develop a criteria/protocol for how to create a state list; a standard by which species are listed (such as the number of times it has been documented scientifically as a problem). This might help alleviate the problem of nurserymen questioning the listing. It would recommend the lists be relevant in natural areas only.

NA EPPC – Brian Bowen

- Brian Bowen initiated a discussion to gain suggestions regarding how best to get the NA EPPC started, and to determine how much interest there is among the states in such an organization. Currently organizations on the MOU are expected to participate in an upcoming conference call (May 25th). It is also hoped that these organizations would need to support a representative going to two meetings per year. A larger EPPC could have a bigger say in policy nationwide.
- The board suggested that everyone seems to be interested, however, states are struggling to maintain their organization and adding SE and NA adds up to a lot of work.
- Meetings would have to be focused on a few main issues. Could be that an executive committee meets once per year and discusses issues to support, newsletter, etc. (but is open to anyone who wants to come) then every few years there is a larger national meeting partnered with another group.
- It needs to be decided what each group needs to do to participate. There would be no money changing hands, except possibly some seed money from states if a big national meeting was held.
- Chuck offered to set up a NA EPPC webpage with links to all participating groups.

SC EPPC- Pam Ferrel

- Had two meetings last year; elected a board but has not been able to get board together this year.
- SE EPPC Board provided advice in this regard: be persistent, make sure you have a good board (need a few good people to pull the weight). Have a meeting and invite several good speakers; Provide in Cooperative Extension Unit's. One-day events work best.

Strategic Planning – Brian Bowen

Need more discussion concerning a full time, funded executive director.

Next Conference Call: Wednesday, July 13; 1:00 CT

Strategic Planning Session
SE EPPC Symposium
May 2, 2005

This was a short open forum during which the general membership was invited to comment on future directions/activities for the organization to achieve meaning and value.

Randy Westbrook suggested that the organization would get the most accomplished by developing the following committees:

- Program Development (Symposium planning, developing special task forces)
- Training/Technical Support (developing hands-on trainings, and a list of “experts”)
- Early Detection/Rapid response (Regional EDRR)
- Communications (Developing fact sheets, etc.)
- Research (Identify Research needs)

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the executive director. There were repeated comments that it was something for the organization to work toward. Several other EPPC’s are going this route.

- The individual would be supervised by the board, and would have a background in biology as well as PR and fund raising.
- Alternatives for funding were also discussed. First year could be grant funded, or funded by an interested organization such as The Nature Conservancy, then individual would raise funds for following years. Or could develop a Foundation (similar to SAMAB structure) that could be responsible for seeking funds from industry, etc. to serve as match money for grants. Could also raise dues slightly.
- A committee should examine this idea and develop a plan to report to the board.

There was also interest among the membership in developing a quarterly newsletter. This is something the director should work on. In the mean time, however, there should be more article submissions and monies put into Wildland Weeds from outside of Florida.