

SUASCO CISMA
Steering Committee Meeting
Great meadows NWR, Sudbury
September 14, 2010

Members Present: Amber Carr (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), Bill Brumback (New England Wild Flower Society), Matt Burne (Walden Woods Project), John Dwyer (Maynard Conservation Commission), Anna Wilkins (Lincoln Conservation Commission), Lee Steppacher (National Park Service/ River Stewardship Council), Lynn Knight (Carlisle Conservation Commission), Tia Pinney (Mass Audubon), Barbara Volkle (Friends of Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge), Eileen McGourty (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), Libby Herland (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Alison Field-Juma (Organization for the Assabet River).

Announcements:

Laura Mattei is stepping down from coordination of beetle raising project. Perhaps there is a school who can take this over, or an intern from one of the CISMA member organizations. Could something be set up at the Assabet NWR?

TTOR hosted a field trip at Old Manse to observe control of Black Swallow Wort. Event was attended by about 7 people. It was very well presented and interesting, many photos taken to be used on the website and elsewhere.

John Bakewell will host a future field trip to view control of Buckthorn in Carlisle. He believes he has an easy and quick method for treating Buckthorn and wants to share with CISMA members. The control site is on private land.

Annual Calendar

The Admin Subcommittee has created an annual calendar which outlines milestones throughout the year for the Steering Committee. See handout (attached). Discussion about when was the best time to have elections for membership followed. Preference was to notify CISMA membership of upcoming elections at the November Annual Meeting, hold elections in December and then announce new members at the following Steering Committee meeting in January. In this way, membership terms will coincide with the annual calendar. In order to get on this election schedule, current members will have to serve an additional 6 months. Lee moved, Matt seconded a motion to accept the Annual Calendar, amended to change the election process so that it is initiated in November and new members are announced in January. Unanimously approved.

Position Descriptions

Amber distributed a handout entitled SUASCO CISMA Position/Chair Descriptions (attached). Based on suggestions from the last meeting, a brief introductory paragraph has been added and specific names of individuals have been removed.

Under the Coordinator description, there was a question about how the March 1 date to develop APAs related to NFWF proposal timing. After some discussion, it was suggested that actual dates to accomplish the annual priority actions (APAs) be removed from the description. The coordinator will have to be cognizant of the NFWF application process, and other grant opportunities, and ensure that annual priorities are developed before and in anticipation of these applications. Barbara moved, Tia seconded a motion to accept the position descriptions with removal of all dates. Unanimously approved.

Both the annual calendar and the position descriptions should be included in a packet for distribution at the November Annual meeting. These should also be given to the congressional delegation and the press. As an aside, there was discussion of cultivating relationship with the reporter who wrote the article in Metrowest Daily News earlier in the summer about the ED/RR project. It would be good to support their interest in these issues.

Discussion of Annual Meeting

Agenda will flow as follows:

Opening/Welcome – Libby
Guest speaker
Project presentations
Refreshments

We are still looking for a guest speaker for the meeting. The two top choices were unable to attend. Suggestions were made to contact the woman who runs the Asian Long Tailed Beetle project at the State or Bernd Blossey who works on biocontrol of Phragmites. Amber will follow up. We need to get the speaker in order to advertise the meeting, so time is of the essence.

Project presentations will include:
Purple loosestrife project – Laura
ED/RR project – Ted or Bill
SWEET – Rebecca Chizo
Website - John
APAs for 2011 – Amber

There was also discussion of having a time for CISMA members to report on any success stories they would like to share. An email should be sent before the meeting to let organizations know that they have this opportunity.

Libby offered that FWS could pay to prepare the packets, and remaining funds in the NFWF grant will be used for refreshments.

The Admin Committee would like to reach out to potential members to encourage them to attend this meeting. They have developed a list of organizations to target and are splitting up responsibility of contacting them. Additional organizations to add to the list include

Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust – Tia will contact
Stow Land Trust – Anna will contact

Lee reported that Framingham has decided not to join at this time. She has contacted Wayland and Billerica as well, though not heard back.

Lynn reported that the Carlisle Conservation Foundation would like to become a member. Lynn moves, Lee seconds a motion to nominate them for membership to the CISMA. Unanimously approved for membership.

Development of Website

John reported on the progress made by the Education Subcommittee in developing a website. He first clarified that the purpose of the website was primarily to serve the needs of the CISMA members. Unlike many others sites, it will not necessarily be an extensive inventory/resource to all invasive species. Instead, the website will focus on the CISMA priority species and include links to other good sites for further information.

An RFP was issued to which several individuals and companies responded. Bartlett Interactive, a small firm based in Concord was selected. The Education Subcommittee is working closely with Bartlett to flesh out a site map and create a design for the site. Bartlett will produce 3 design options for the Subcommittee to review. John suggested that the Subcommittee review and propose their preferred design to the Steering Committee for approval. Steering Committee members will be invited to attend the Subcommittee meeting if they are interested in reviewing all of the design choices.

Key features of the website will include a photo gallery of species and projects, a calendar for volunteer activities, contact information. There will be a link to an interactive map (being developed by Mass Audubon) of invasive species sites, and the ability to report any new sightings.

The Subcommittee will need support from other CISMA members when content is added to the website.

Next Steering Committee meeting will be held on November 9th from 3-5 pm.