

Minutes
Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin
Annual Membership Meeting
Thursday, December 14, 2006
Hyatt Regency, Milwaukee

Board Members present: Jerry Doll, Rolf Utegaard, Tom Boos, Amy Staffen, John Exo, Jim Reinartz

Others present: Kelly Kearns, Rachel Orwan, approx. 35 members

I. President Doll called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m..

II. Jerry Doll introduced/announced Board Members, officers and IPAW Committee chairs
Board Members: Jerry Doll (President), Rolf Utegaard (Vice President), Tom Boos (Treasurer), Amy Staffen (Secretary), Doug Bastian, Willis Brown, John Exo, Mark Feider, Robert Frank, Tom Hunt, Jim Reinartz, Gene Roark, Brian Swingle.
Committee Chairs: Education (Amy Staffen), Science (Chris Reyes/Mark Renz), Plant Industry (vacant), Fundraising (Nancy Braker), Government Relations (Gene Roark), Communication (Rolf Utegaard), Website Committee (Tom Boos), Regional Groups (vacant).

III. Introduction of 2007 ISAM Coordinator, Rachel Orwan

Rachel Orwan has been hired by the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species via IPAW to coordinate Invasive Species Awareness Month (ISAM) in June 2007. The target audience will be people who work and recreate in forests. Four forest invasives workshops will be held around the state, and a fifth grade art contest will be coordinated with teachers around the state using the Invaders of the Forest Curriculum Guide. Winning artwork will be featured on posters and t-shirts. Rachel invites all interested parties to think about hosting or leading invasive species outreach events during June; she can provide assistance and resources in promoting and planning. For more information, go to invasivespecies.wi.gov.

IV. Treasurer's Report by Tom Boos

Hard copy distributed by Tom Boos. Summary: It has been a good year for IPAW. We are using grant money for printing and website services to supplement our expenditures. We continue to have a large sum of funds for conferences, from the original POOP Conference. Membership dues have been great despite our lack of a formal membership drive. So thank you all! However, we will be having a membership drive in the very near future.

V. Newsletter Editor Report

Reinartz summarized that four newsletter issues went out in 2006. He invites all members to contribute articles, and that there's always room for more pieces. Discussion followed on possibly not printing and mailing hard copies to members who have an email address. Rolf Utegaard, who arranges for newsletter printing and mailing, said that if we drop below 200 mailed newsletters, we would lose the bulk mailing option and the cost would actually increase. Several members said they strongly prefer a printed copy in the mail even if they have given us an email address, as they are more likely to read it.

VI. Invader Crusader 2006 Awardee Recognition

Jim Reinartz introduced and commended several of the 2006 Invader Crusader award winners: Michael Fort, Amy Staffen, Gigi La Budde, and the South Central Region State Natural Areas Crew (Matt Zine, Ryan Magana, Nathan Fayram, Joseph Henry, Amy Staffen, Rich Staffen, Jay Walters, Daniel Werner).

VII. IPAW Strategic Planning Discussion

John Exo led this open discussion with all meeting attendees. Questions asked to stimulate discussion included: What should IPAW's future be? What do you want IPAW to do? How can IPAW get there? Summary of comments/discussion points:

- Expand audience of IPAW. Include farmers, ag. producers
- Consider invasive 'critters' that impact plant communities, initiate and foster dialogue with other researchers that deal with such invasives issues, especially with those that occur below the soil surface.
- Strive to determine economic impacts of invasive plants and share this information broadly to foster support of related issues.
- Develop/build Speaker's Bureau. Staffen gave summary of existing Speaker's Bureau, which hasn't been updated since 2005. She encourages more people to sign up to serve as Speakers. She stated the need for better follow-up and analysis of who is out there speaking and where. Kearns pointed out that we have geographical gaps across the state where no speakers are currently available.
- Need to increase outreach at a local level, especially in terms of informing legislators and stakeholders of invasives issues, and identifying target audiences locally. Staffen summarized 2004 Education Committee meeting where a facilitated session resulted in a concise list of target audiences. IPAW could consider using this list and distributing it to members to facilitate the process of more targeted outreach efforts.
- Need to form more local "Friends" groups that can work on invasive species. Local volunteer groups could be advertised as a resource. Kearns explained that this is the essence of Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs), which she hopes will indeed form all over the state. See Midwest Invasive Plants Network (MIPN) display for more info on CWMAs; can get free copy of CWMA "Cookbook" (a guidebook for starting such a group). Free online workshops are offered through MIPN periodically.
- Need to reach out to and engage existing Friends groups. Kathie Brock described their successful Friends of Lakeshore Nature Preserve in Madison, as well as Shorewood Hills Neighborhood Group, both of which are good models of effective and active groups.
- Suggestion that each person at meeting should communicate information on IPAW to just one group, which would engage about 40 new groups!
- Need to create invasive species news releases and articles that people could use when communicating with groups. Orwan talked about existence of these very resources on the ISAM website (invasivespecies.wi.gov) which can be downloaded and reproduced for free. Staffen and Kearns described availability of Power Point presentations through IPAW website for people to use when communicating with groups.
- Suggestion to use IPAW LISTSERV as a means to send out regular reminders or basic information to membership. These could be simple reviews of resources available to members, opportunities for outreach, etc.

VII. Adjourn 12:55 p.m.