

**TN-EPPC Board Meeting Minutes  
May 14, 2008 Norris Dam State Park**

Attending: Terri Hogan, Dan Brown, Pat Parr, Kris Johnson, Kevin Fitch, Margie Hunter  
Guests: Claude Bailey, Jackson State Comm. College; Pat Cox, Senior Botanist TVA  
Absent with proxy: Anni Self, Nancy Fraley, Richard Clements, Bob Parrish, LinnAnn Welch

Meeting convened at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes: Nov. 2007 meeting minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Attached. General account balance: \$5,693.19 reflects income for State Parks training payment of \$350 for an ID and control workshop to be set up after the NAA meeting in Oct, and Tennessee Department of Agriculture sponsorship payment of \$800 for the Cogongrass workshop July 22. It also reflects our payment of \$500 for sponsorship of the NAA conference. Money Market: \$3,932.56. Total assets: \$9,625.75. Report was approved.

Web Site: Any information – especially calendar events – should be given to Richard for posting as soon as possible. Carrie and LinnAnn need to update their bios.

Early Detection & Rapid Response: Nancy Fraley is attending a workshop in Asheville, NC, in August with state and Cooperative Weed Mgt officials to draft an EDRR protocol in August. This will likely be adopted by TN-EPPC.

Plant List Update: Committee met in early May to review listing criteria. All test plants (even Watch list plants) emerged as Rank 1, so protocols were fine tuned for fairer evaluation. They looked to the processes in Massachusetts and Alabama, which were not as rigorous and time consuming as NatureServe. The committee has received several plant recommendations for list additions. Each will be run through the refined process. Terri Killifer from NBII in Oak Ridge was most helpful in thinking through the criteria.

TDA Noxious Weed List: TDA asked TN-EPPC if we would support removing privet from the list. We agreed not to endorse that idea. Terri will write a letter expressing our support for the committee recommended list, which included two species of privet. To date, TDA has made no final decision on the amended weed list.

TN-EPPC needs to find out what is on the Federal Noxious Weed list. States must follow Fed list, but do not have to incorporate it into their own. Pat C. will send us a link to Fed list.

Lowe's: Terri and Nancy are trying to work with Lowe's in Tennessee to see if we can't duplicate an arrangement made in Florida, where the Lowe's store there do not carry some of the worst invasive species. The FL deal was contingent upon concurrent support from the FL nursery industry. After some time spent establishing a cooperative relationship with nurseries and the development of a video showcasing the invasive problem in the state, FL-EPPC got a commitment from Lowe's.

Kris noted that Home Depot in Canada has agreed to sell only “green” pesticides. Perhaps Home Depot would be receptive to an exotic plant arrangement. If we could get one big box store on board, we could use that as leverage with the other.

Nursery Cards: Looked at a printout of the two versions – one to be folded, one to print front/back. Need to make sure the front/back version will print reasonably in line to facilitate cutting. Will get them posted on the Web site.

Natural Areas Conference: Oct. 14-17 at Doubletree in Nashville; theme - Invasive Species and Global Climate Change. Keynote will be at War Memorial Auditorium, but no speaker has been designated as yet. Social will be at the Ryman. Twenty-seven field trips are planned including some prior to and after the conference. A few are overnight hikes, such as Savage Gulf. Others include canoe trips, Mammoth Cave, Flat Rock, Metro parks, Swan Conservation Trust, and human cultural sites too. Registration is estimated to cost about \$200.

Gravel and Sand Pit Certification: Kris has been working with several large sand and gravel pit companies in NC and TN. By working through their regional environmental specialist (whose job is stabilization for water quality), she has gotten them to amend their planting lists and remove invasives such as lespedeza and vetch. Substitutions including annual and perennial seeds (like red fescue) are readily obtainable through coops, but pose no problem. She is working with Vulcan Materials in Maryville & Sevierville at present. This company also has an operation in Murfreesboro, and Kris will send info to Terri. Kris will also post her work on the Web site so others may use it.

Kris has noticed several occurrences of *Tussilago farfara* (coltsfoot) on recently graveled areas. Pat Cox also noticed it in the Blue Ridge Mountains. We need to encourage documentation of this species to get a better handle on its distribution. From early spring flowers, seeds are explosively discharged, and it root sprouts prolifically – two weeks to a flowering plant. Pat C. said garlic mustard has likely been spread through riprap.

Wildland Weeds/Alt Brochure: Pat P. emailed Wildland Weeds to initiate process. Karen Brown said summer issue has already been prepared, and they will wait until fall.

NIWAW/TNVAW State Proclamation: Board has been asked to review letter to various constituent groups asking their support for our state proclamation/legislative resolution. Board has one week to finish reviewing and send suggestions to Margie. Letter will be put on TN-EPPC letterhead and emailed to as many people on the list as possible and snail mailed to the rest. An electronic file of the letter will be sent to all board members to forward to additional groups they know. We need to review Kentucky’s process for developing their proclamation’s language and draft our own language. We also need to devise a publicity campaign around the proclamation/resolution release.

EDDMapS: Anyone can send a photo ID of a plant along with GPS coordinates or Google Earth latitude/longitude info to Kevin. This data can also be sent in spreadsheet form for numerous sightings. He will review, approve, and forward to Chuck Barger. Data can also be input directly to EDDMapS. (TopoZone now charges a yearly subscription fee.) UT Herbarium data needs work. TN-EPPC might consider funding a student to work on specific species.

Cogongrass Initiative – Terri & Dan met with TDOT, TDA, and Div of Forestry officials to explain threat and got a good response. A 4.5-hour training workshop has been arranged for groups around the state including various department officials and ground crews July 22 in Nashville at Ellington Ag Center’s Ed Jones Auditorium. Enough underwriting has been secured to cover the guest speaker – David Moorehead from Georgia – and provide lunch for about 125 people. More money is expected. Any excess funds will be used for future smaller workshops near the southern border. David will cover identification, management techniques, and equipment sterilization agreements.

One incidence of cogongrass in Lexington, TN, (Henderson Cty, north of Jackson) may have been an accidental introduction or a deliberate planting. TN Div of Forestry killed it.

Wildlife Impacts: Margie & Kevin got numerous professional articles from JSTOR that Margie is sorting through slowly. She will continue tracking down such articles and develop a comprehensive list of the documented effects (negative) that invasives have on wildlife and other ecological impacts. Any board member with any related information should send it to Margie. Kris is sending some that she has gathered.

Southern Plant Board: Terri gave a presentation on cogongrass at their meeting. About 200 attended, and she was warmly welcomed. TN-EPPC gave a \$200 contribution to the meeting, and this gift was acknowledged. SPB is a collection of state regulatory agencies, etc., concentrating primarily on agricultural issues.

TN-EPPC Business Cards: Terri will add Web address to card template and resend it.

Tennessee Master Naturalist: Margie is serving on the planning task force and shared their draft curriculum. Recommendations are for ten four-hour classes (40 hours total, 20 must be in the field) with 40 hours of volunteer service. Instructors will be trained. All courses will include ecological concepts, native vs. non-native species, and ID techniques. Board expressed concern regarding the extensive information covered in 40 hours – a concern shared by the planning committee, but the intent is to present an overview and inspire a desire to learn more and appreciate all that Tennessee’s nature has to offer. Planners are meeting with Dep. Comr. Paul Sloan May 15 to sell idea and try to get a funded position at TDEC to oversee program.

Cooperative Weed Management Area Meeting, Reno, NV: Terri attended the meeting. CWMAAs are more active in the West. It was a great place to make connections and learn more about CWMAAs and how to form one. Terri’s yam project on the Stones River won an award.

Board/Membership Issues – Hands-on Activities: Kevin suggested we sponsor a couple of interpretive hikes a year, showing infestations, their impacts, and healthy habitats free of invasives. Kris will put together a hike on part of the Old Settler’s trail in the Smokies around Soak Ash Marsh where multiflora rose has been successfully eradicated in part but not all of the area. Terri and Kevin will organize a hike on the Stones River Greenway to show the yam removal and native replanting project. Hikes will be advertised on Natural Areas Web site calendar and to our membership and any other interested parties.

Profile Exposure through Articles: Kris will be writing an article for *Tennessee Conservationist* on the ways humans spread invasive species – hiking boots, firewood, etc. Margie got a Letter to the Editor in the June/July issue of *Horticulture* magazine regarding state EPPC organizations as good resources for gardeners wanting to know about exotic invasives in their areas as a follow up to the magazine's two-part invasives article by Cole Burrell.

Video Segments/Podcasts: There are two ideas. One is to work with Volunteer Gardener TV show (out of Nashville, broadcast statewide on PBS) to film an exotic removal showing the scope of the invasive issue. VG has done previous segments on this including one with Terri's yam project. They are willing to do another if we can come up with a good setting.

The second idea is a series of short videos for broadcast and/or posting online as podcasts called Tennessee's Least Wanted. The videos would feature one pest plant with related info like ID, control, and alternative plants if relevant. These shorts could also focus on removal techniques, invasive impacts, or other topics, and could feature other invasive organisms – hemlock woolly adelgid, gypsy moths, fire ants, zebra mussels, etc. Each would be approximately one to three minutes in length, just enough to cover pertinent info per species/topic. A reporting mechanism, either directly to EDDMapS or to an email or phone voicemail, might be worthwhile – especially with cogongrass.

Volunteer Gardener is not interested in shorts because of the cost involved to them to produce. Using TN's Wild Side, done by TWRA, would likely result in agency territory issues. We will look to university students for film/production staff. The segments will be produced first for our Web site, then marketed to TWRA or other TV venues if production values warrant. Margie will contact MTSU's journalism program to inquire. Kris will check with her high school nephew who interns at a TV station in Chattanooga and might be able to work with Richard to produce some segments. Pat P. is going to survey the board to request 6 to 12 segment ideas (species or other topics).

Other ideas are to post videos on a My Space page or You Tube or iTunes. Kevin can explore those venues. The videos will always be accessible via Web link from many other sites including SE-EPPC, etc. The costs will be one-time with no recurrent printing or distribution.

TNPS Fall Meeting: Terri will address TNPS membership during their fall meeting at Fall Creek Falls Sat., Sept. 20. She will present EDDMapS training to enlist their help in documenting invasive plant distributions. TNPS will cover her room and meals, plus a \$50 honorarium.

Displays: Kris has the poster, either Margie or Nancy will get it to Cullowhee for native plant conference in July. Kris needs 200 alternative brochures, Margie will forward request to Anni. Margie is mailing Pat P. a CD of the alternatives PowerPoint presentation for garden club talks.

Member Honoraria: Need to consider some payment to board members who get no institutional support for gas expenses, etc., traveling to/from meetings. Will discuss at future meeting.

Next Meeting: Possible location in Murfreesboro or surrounding area. Dates August 6, 7, 12, 13 were set aside depending on other members' schedules and Nancy's EDRR workshop.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.  
Submitted by Margie Hunter.