

DATE May 2, 2019
TO The National Invasive Species Council
FROM The Invasive Species Advisory Committee
SUBJECT Considerations for NISC's future without ISAC

BACKGROUND

Established by Executive Order 13112¹ and furthered by Executive Order 13751,² the Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC), comprising Secretarially appointed volunteers, provides information and expert advice for consideration by the National Invasive Species Council (NISC).³ The ISAC has developed and provided to the NISC recommendations on many aspects of the invasive species issue in the United States. In April 2019 however, the principal representatives of the NISC co-chair departments (Interior, Agriculture and Commerce) decided to place the Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC) on administratively inactive (i.e., suspended) status. The justification for this action was constraint in NISC Secretariat funding and staff capacity necessary to maintain the ISAC's operations. Without an external advisory committee providing expert recommendations to the NISC, effective NISC-agency policies and programs are at risk in an environment of increasing threats and risks from invasive species.

THE ISSUE

Efforts to prevent the importation, establishment, expansion, and impact of invasive species are *insufficient* to protect the United States from a continuous stream of invasive species, ranging from pathogens, bacteria, plants, and animals. Additionally, resources for the eradication and/or control of invasive species that have already entered the country are inadequate and, where present, often inappropriately applied. There is a clear need for more effective coordination and collaboration among federal, state, and tribal agencies, as well as academic, institutional, corporate, and non-governmental organizations to address gaps and inconsistencies in policies, relevant statutes, regulations, agency authorities, as well as to improve and sustain access to the data needed to inform decisions and direct action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen the biosecurity of the United States, including its territories and possessions, against the introduction and spread of invasive species, ISAC recommends the following:

1. Consistent, long-term funding is needed across the board for invasive species. Invasive species are an increasing important issue in the U.S. and a threat to biosecurity, the environment, the food supply, national and local economies, and human health and safety. Sufficient resources and funding need to be provided by NISC departments and agencies.

¹ <https://www.doi.gov/invasivespecies/executive-order-13112>

² <https://www.doi.gov/invasivespecies/executive-order-13751>

³ https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/isac_charter_filed_121817.pdf

- a. NISC departments and agencies should internally review and comply with allocation and invasive species funding requirements as outlined 7 U.S.C. § 10 (2019).
 - b. With ISAC being put on inactive status, funding allocated for the administration of the committee should be rerouted to agency budgets for localized management projects.
2. NISC departmental leads should meet regularly and provide coordinated leadership for the prevention, eradication, and control of invasive species across respective agencies, including via relevant authorities, capacities, programmatic priorities, and actions.
 3. NISC departments should review and consider recommendations from the previous ISAC White Papers, and the ISAC Considerations for the 2019–2021 NISC Management Plan (March 1, 2018).
 4. NISC departmental leads should strive to maximize communication and coordination with external organizations, such those listed below, to achieve the greatest possible success for invasive species efforts:
 - a. North American Invasive Species Management Association
 - b. Regional Panels of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force
 - c. Scientific Societies – Weed Science, Entomology, Phytopathological, Wildlife, Forestry, Ecology, Rangeland Management, etc.
 - d. National Plant Board
 - e. Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
 - f. Western Weed Coordinating Committee
 - g. National Association of Invasive Plant Councils
 - h. Land user organizations (e.g. National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, etc)
 - i. Regional Governor’s Associations
 - j. Tribal Associations, Societies, Regional Tribal Fish Commissions and the National Congress of American Indians

The effort against invasive species will always require many partners outside of the Federal government. NISC departments should reestablish and appropriately fund ISAC and its support team as soon as possible. The current hiatus unfortunately precludes the effective development of robust recommendations to the NISC agencies for implementation and this is to the detriment of the nation. ISAC has played a significant role since its creation in assisting the federal agencies in constructively improving their programs through policy and management recommendations. By its charter, nature of operation, and composition, ISAC can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of NISC.