

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

The Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC) was established in 1999 by Executive Order 13112¹ and furthered by Executive Order 13751² to provide consultation, feedback, information on particular issues, and expert advice generally for consideration by the National Invasive Species Council (NISC).³ ISAC is composed of distinguished, experienced volunteers from various organizations that are appointed to serve on the Committee by the Secretary of the Interior. Their task is to develop assessments on many aspects of the invasive species issue in the United States and to provide recommendations for the management, control, and response to key invasive species as articulated in the Executive Orders. However, as of April 2019, the principal representatives of the NISC co-chair departments (Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce) decided to place ISAC on administratively inactive (i.e., suspended) status. The justification for this action was a constraint in NISC Secretariat funding and the staff capacity necessary to maintain ISAC's operations. Without an external advisory committee providing expert recommendations to NISC, effective NISC-agency policies and programs are at risk in an environment of already heightened and increasing threats and risks from invasive species to human health and welfare, ecosystem stability, food security, and commerce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Current 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. 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. NISC departments and agencies need to provide consistent, long-term funding and sufficient resources across the board for invasive species prevention, eradication, and control. Invasive species are an increasingly important issue in the US and a threat to biosecurity, the environment, the food supply, national and local economies, and human health and safety.
 - a. NISC departments and agencies should internally review and comply with allocation and invasive species funding requirements as expressly articulated by the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Public Law 116-9, 2019).
2. NISC departmental leads should convene 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.

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

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 memorandum (March 1, 2018) and reflect on these recommendations in the policies, procedures, and decisions to come to reduce the impact that invasive species have on the US economy, its lands, and its people.
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, Agronomic, 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)
 - i. Regional Governor’s Associations
 - j. Tribal Associations, Societies, Regional Tribal Fish Commissions, and the National Congress of American Indians
5. Efforts to respond quickly to and to manage and control invasive species will always require many partners outside of the federal government. NISC departments should quickly re-establish and appropriately fund ISAC and its support team. ISAC played a significant role since its creation in assisting 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.