

## Invasive Task Force Meeting

January 10, 2018, 1:00 PM

### Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center

**In attendance:** Sam Webb (Park Volunteer), Gina Moran (Senior Environmental Scientist, California State Parks), Briana Puzzo (Education Manager, Anza-Borrego Foundation), Joe Woods (Volutaria Volunteer, CALIPC), Jennifer Howland (Environmental Services Intern, California State Parks), Pat Matthews (Botany Society, ABDNHA, CALIPC), Don Stang (Seasonal Resident and Weeder), Mason Hyland (Environmental Scientist, California State Parks), Sicco Rood (UCI Research Center / Website Designer), Mona Robison (on phone, CALIPC), Larry Hendrickson (Senior Park Aide, California State Parks) Chris McDonald (UC Cooperative Extension, Nat'l Resources Advisor), Gretchen Cummings (Cummings Environmental, Urban Corps of SD), Paul Larson (Park Volunteer)

- CALIPC = California Invasive Plant Council
- V = Volutaria
- SM = Sahara Mustard

Minutes approved (Moran/Hyland)

**Introductions** – see list above

#### **Update Reports:**

**Sicco Rood** – The website almost ready to go, just need to connect the domain. Weedtaskforce.org. Danny McCamish from Ocotillo Wells told Sicco that they will have someone attend the next meeting.

**Mason Hyland** – Coordinating with Pat Matthews on weekly weeding. Continuing SM seed mortality study, investigating whether they're able to successfully kill seeds. Goal is to no longer bag SM that has gone to seed. Thanks to the Botany Society volunteers and Chris McDonald who have helped with the study. Seeing new V germination. Crew will survey every Thursday and conduct manual removal for V and SM. Will begin in a couple weeks. Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) will target V and other invasives. EDRR volunteer training will happen soon. Did not get consistent V germination in the lab.

**Gina Moran** – Found V on her personal property today.

**Joe Woods** – Recent rains went as far as 4 inches into ground. Rain totals varied between .5-1.0 inches

**Larry Hendrickson** – Fred Melgert and Carla Hoegen found Spanish False Fleabane, *Pulicaria paludosa*, in Coyote Canyon in November 2017. Tom Chester, Walt Fidler, Jim Roberts, Fred Melgert, Carla Hoegen, and Nancy Accola removed all of the plants they saw on 4 December 2017, converting them to vouchers (Edited by Tom Chester). Was entered in Calflora. **This is a new weed to the Park.** They will be on the lookout for more in riparian areas. **Could be mistaken for the perennial subshrub Desert Goldenhead, *Acamptopappus sphaerocephalus* var. *s.*, found in higher desert. Another possibility would be the low annual Desert Yellowhead, *Trichoptilon incisum*, with fuzzy gray leaves.** Thinks we'll have lots of SM germination after the recent rains (Jan 8-9) (Edited by Larry Hendrickson).

**Jennifer Howland** - Starting to see a trend in the SM mortality study: the seeds in higher moisture have a higher mortality rate. Weekly weedings so far have focused on SM in Coyote Canyon between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> crossing. Haven't found much there recently. SM was being browsed on and some had powdery mildew.

**Pat Matthews** – Reported 114 volunteer hours total since last meeting. Weekly weeding will break and then start back up on Jan. 31.

**Chris McDonald** - SM germinates in 3-5 days. Roots come out first and then shoots. SM can germinate with 0.5 inches of rain; most native annuals need 0.75-1 inch of rain. Other weeds need 0.5-1 inch. The rain needed for V to germinate is unknown. Chris has failed to germinate V higher than 5-8%. May try more finely tuned experiments when colleague gets lab running. Was contacted by a Natural Resources Government Official from Chile. They had decent rainfall over their spring season and now have a “good infestation” with carpets of V. Chile may get more plant growth because of increased fog. Chris may have a researcher in Virginia interested in looking at the genetics of our V compared to V in Spain and Chile and also Borrego’s V compared to the two other sites in SD and one Orange County site. Will be presenting V story at CNPS meeting in LA soon. Chris will be working with Doug Johnson (Cal-IPC Executive Director) to look for V funding. Grant for coastal work could free up money for our needs. Needs citizen scientist volunteers to look at phenology of V – germination, growth, bolting, flowering, etc. Sicco volunteered to help.

**Gretchen Cummings** – Gretchen is a biological consultant for Urban Corps of San Diego County, a nonprofit. Manages a 120-acre preserve north of Borrego Valley Airport (mitigation land for solar farm) for three years. Have V on property, removed last spring. Removed more V this morning. Will take care of V on their preserve. Corps members are receiving job training while also getting their high school diplomas (18-26 yrs. old). Students serve as Gretchen’s task force.

**Joe Woods** – Found V plants over 8 feet tall south of Henderson Canyon Road and north of Bighorn on an old agricultural field that may have been flood irrigated a few years ago. Surrounding fields are relatively clear of V. Continues to survey in this area. Sites owned by AgriEmpire need to be sprayed. More sites along Peg Leg Road. Joe pointed out various other sites on the Calflora map. V found south of dump and in mesquite bosque area. Working with Mona to create a half-mile grid system to compile data and report plant count. Need to talk with airport to find out if work can be done on their property. More survey work needed in Gina’s neighborhood. Funds needed for this year to fund V work. Any publications could include a request for donations to support the work. David Garmon (Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy) could be contacted.

**Mona Robison** – Hired Joe and Pat to help monitor this year. Wants to work with county on roadside spraying. No plan on spraying the pivot field right now. Doug (her boss) has list of potential funding opportunities. The plan is to create a grid of the whole infestation area so that they can estimate the number of plants. Could overlay track logs to determine where we need to survey. Would like to know how long it takes for V to germinate.

**Mason Hyland** - Potential to use Calflora Weed Manager account so all users can collect data on the same platform. Funding is needed. Estimated cost is unknown at this time. Mason will pursue getting a quote for our project. V plants with seeds should be bagged, solarized with additional water and taken to the dump.

**Joe Woods** - Cynthia Powell (Calflora) said Weed Manager is \$2,500 annually with limited users.

**Chris McDonald** – 2018 will most likely be a La Nina year. Rainfall could be spotty. Great possibility of invasive plant seedlings dying on their own from lack of moisture. Saw V plants with viable seeds; most seeds were gone but flowers were still on plants with 6 seeds inside. Mason has seen the same thing.

**Sam Webb** – Sicco should contact Mike Strandberg to begin a contract with Republic Services.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm

Next meeting date is February 14 at 1:00 pm at the Research Center (March 14, April 4, May 9)



