



## United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Research, Education, and Economics (REE)

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board

### **Pollinator Subcommittee Meeting – Monday, September 23, 2024**

**Pollinator Subcommittee (PS) Members Present:** Dr. Christina Grozinger (Chair), Ms. Kelly Bills, , Ms. Danielle Downey, Ms. Melanie Kirby, Dr. Margarita López-Urbe, , and Dr. Hollis Woodard - 6

**Members Absent:** Mr. Darren Cox, Dr. Ramesh Sagili, Dr. Daniel Schmehl - 3

**Ex-Officio Present:** Ms. Elizabeth Hill, USDA Honey Bee and Pollinator Research Coordinator, Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS), USDA – 1

**NAREEE Board Staff Present:** Ms. Michele Simmons, Acting Designated Federal Officer/Program Support Specialist

**Guest:** - Mr. Mike Evans, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Plant Protection Program Director, Ms. Anne LeBrun, National Policy Manager, Marketing Regulatory Programs, Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA, Mr. Steven Long, Clemson University Department of Plant Industry, Assistant Director, Regulatory Services, and Dr. Chris Looney, Washington State Department of Agriculture, Entomologist

#### **I. Welcome, Roll Call, Quorum Check, and Minutes**

Ms. Simmons welcomed the group, took roll call, and noted that the quorum was met.

Ms. Simmons asked if there were any revisions to the August minutes. There were no comments or revisions. She asked for a motion and a second, which was received to approve the minutes. All were in favor and no one opposed. Ms. Simmons will have the web team post the August minutes and agenda on the PS website.

#### **II. Report/Remarks from Dr. Christina Grozinger, Chair**

Dr. Grozinger mentioned there are about four main areas that the PS would like to focus on. She would like the group to think about the four topics in the next couple of upcoming meetings. The Committee could start writing up short recommendations to start moving forward. One response to one of the topics was the Yellow Legged Hornet (YLH), how that's coordinated, and how the PS can potentially make recommendations for improvement.

The next PS meeting will be in October, which is right before the State of the Science Workshop. Dr. Erica Kissner Thomas and other folks from her group will talk about the USDA Pollinator Health, how it's been operating over the previous years, the funding outcomes, and the expectation to make recommendations to the priorities if needed.

A possible agenda item for the PS November meeting is to have a few folks from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the United States Geological Survey to

attend the meeting to talk about colony surveys and wild bee monitoring, and understanding what is needed. One of the other recommendations is seeds for Conservative Reserve Program land and other restoration. That is the general framework of what we're thinking of.

Dr. Grozinger asked if there were any questions or comments.

A Subcommittee Member mentioned there is a national managed Pollinator Protection Plan Working Group that's housed in Michigan State University. It's very insightful and brings together different researchers, extension folks, tribal folks, and a few people from the Environment Protection Agency. It would be good if the PS can get an update from that group to get an overview of what's happening across a variety of states. Dr. Grozinger stated that's a great idea and will add the request to her notes for the group to attend a future PS meeting.

### III. New Business

#### Presentation – Understanding how the response to the YLH was/is being coordinated

Dr. Grozinger welcomed the guest and thanked them for joining.

Ms. LeBrun presented a PowerPoint that covered the following topics.

- Yellow-Legged Hornet
  - Native to Southeast Asia
  - About 1 inch long
  - Colonies have an annual cycle
  - Active during the day and return to the nest at dusk
  - Social Hymenoptera
    - Workers, asexual
    - Males/Queens
- Life cycle of the yellow-legged hornet
- Nest Types – Embryo Nest
- Nest Types – Primary Nest
- Nest Types – Secondary Nest
- Color forms of yellow-legged hornet across its native range
- Trapping
- 2024 Season Traps in Georgia
- 2024 Season Traps in South Carolina
- Nest Eradication

Ms. LeBrun asked if there were any questions.

A Subcommittee Member asked how do these invasive species responses work? Ms. LeBrun stated when somebody reports something, usually the state will do the initial identification and then work through the State Plant Regulatory Official, and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Assistant Director.

Mr. Long mentioned that the public reporting has been the best way to submit new areas where the Hornet is.

Mr. Evans stated that Beekeepers have been extremely helpful and important, letting us know when hawking activity is going on. We've had some success with trackers and will continue to work with those trackers to find the nest as well as any anyone that records them.

A Subcommittee member asked does individual catches of the YLH go down after removing a nest?

Ms. LeBrun stated that initially they go up because there are hornets that escaped. Theoretically they will go down in maybe two weeks or so, but that first week you'll find traps that have not been positive any other time during the season.

#### **IV. Old Business**

##### State of the Science Meeting Updates

The State of the Science (SOS) Meeting is scheduled for scheduled for October 29 - 30, 2024. The meeting has been extended to October 31<sup>st</sup> to accommodate a small PS meeting. The PS will have a debrief of the SOS meeting at their monthly meeting in November.(footnote here)

#### **V. Wrap-up/Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m. ET.

The next meeting is Monday, October 28, 2024, ET. (When these minutes were approved as is as the discussion was held in September, the October 28<sup>th</sup> did not occur due to the legislative impacts)