

February 21, 2012

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Dear Legislators of the Environment Committee,

TESTIMONY

I have just had the opportunity to read the proposed Connecticut Green Industries Council position, by Bob Heffernan on placing “Warning Tags” on running bamboo plants.

In viewing the images provided of the* two tags, by Bob Heffernan of the Connecticut Green Industries Council it is highly disturbing to see he has ****grossly incorrect information**** that will be relied upon by the unsuspecting public.

1.) He states : *Some form of containment may likely be necessary.*

Correct Statement should read :

Phyllostachys is running bamboo (rhizomatous) and **MUST BE CONTAINED.**

2.) He states: *Mowing the new shoots is effective in controlling spread.*

Correct Statement should read:

Mowing does not stop a rhizome from invading adjoining property. It allows it to invade underground undetected and further the following year to unwanted area's, possibly structures or a neighbor's adjoining land. Us.fed.data report shows Phyllostachys spp.will travel 9.3 miles and scientifically is one organism. (report available)

3.) He states herbicides like round-up may also be effective.

Correct Statement should read:

Herbicides do not translocate well to the rhizomes and Phyllostachys resists chemicals. Even professional's have a very difficult time trying to eradicate Phyllostachys. The rhizomes are chambered off and even injections are difficult. (New Peer reviewed report available-on power point) Backhoe to remove and several years follow-up on

missed rhizome fragments. He makes no mention that rhizomes are hazardous waste. Rhizomes must be taken to a burn center. Any small fragment of rhizome will colonize an infestation.

4.) He states on the tag that you can use metal, cement, or fiberglass to construct a barrier to avoid spread.

Correct Statement should read:

Must be 40 ml, 60 ml , or 80 ml polyethylene bamboo barrier.(HDPE)

Metal will *corrode and rust and is not a suitable bamboo barrier..

Cement will *crack and is also not a suitable bamboo barrier.

. He also fails to mention these **CRITICAL POINTS** in what constitutes an effective barrier:

- a) A barrier must be installed to* fully encircle around the planting* to be effective with *no seams. A barrier installed just on a property line will not contain or constitute an effective barrier.
- b) It is a common misconception that a barrier stops a running bamboo from invading, when just the opposite is true. A barrier deflects the rhizomes up so that they can be rhizome pruned each late summer. One missed rhizome is all it takes to invade an adjoining property.

Note: When a property is sold these instructions must be part of that property sale, or the new owner will invade the neighborhood. When a barrier is not maintained it fails faster. Mature groves will break through barriers, and they will need to be redone.

The truth is that Phyllostachys is a highly unsuitable plant for urban plantings and a highly unsuitable plant for a property line planting as it will spread and damage adjoining property.

Lastly it is impractical for him to suggest each person being invaded file a civil suit and sue their neighbor.

The problem is that the :
*Statute of Limitations would impose an unfair burden to the plaintiff in that Phyllostachys - creeps slowly in the first 3-5 years and then it begins to invade more aggressively each successive year.. When one realizes it is a problem it is almost too late. A better solution is to have the **H.B.5122** as law to establish such an affirmative duty that will deter potential defendants from engaging in this type of activity.*

Bob Heffernan also writes the genus Bamboo has hundreds of species.
This is a generalization , and confuses the reader even more.

Clarification: H.B. 5122

There are two types of bamboo:

*monopodial - Phyllostachys-spread at a surprising rate / Invasive worldwide.

*sympodial-Bambusa –clumping non-invasive

H.B. 5122 is specifying only the genus : Phyllostachys

It has come to our attention that all the research on Phyllostachys (which is lacking in the United States –per us. fed. data report has lumped all the Phyllostachys as Phyllostachys aurea aka: Golden bamboo.

We are just now finding out that even in Illinois most of the Phyllostachys thought to be aurea was in fact Phyllostachys aureosulcata- aka yellow groove. We are now correctly separating the two. Here in the North east it is all yellow groove (aka: Phyllostachys aureosulcata) Biochemically they are the same. All are members of the Genus : Phyllostachys All are non-native invasive running bamboo.

So to summarize it is typical in writings to use the Phyllostachys aurea :golden bamboo reference when referring to running bamboo in general.

This is a minor discrepancy to be clarified as the process finalizes. Phyllostachys spp. encompasses all the non-native invasive running bamboo that is causing the problems . This is a minor clarification that we are correcting now.

Bob Heffernan also states this bill is for only a couple of cases in the state. That also is **not accurate. Nothing could be further from the truth. I am receiving reports with damage photos from all of our towns now. Some are using gasoline to try to kill it, which has benzene and is carcinogenic.

Many people are asking for help in Connecticut now in each town.

We have a database with 120 invasions in Connecticut.

All are *Phyllostachys aureosulcata* :yellow groove and all are invading with no knowledge of what the plant is or containing it. No one bought the plants, all were shared rhizomes , or purchased from street vendors. Many invasions are in wetlands and forest area's.

One natural colony has been found in Southbury, CT where rhizomes have washed downstream from a large infestation nearby on the Pomeraug river. It is a known scientific fact that *Phyllostachys* will jump a spatial gap by means of water . Blundel 2003. We have many invasions now on the edge of Connecticut rivers. I am logging these now onto EDDMAP with images. (all *Phyllostachys aureosulcata*)

For all of the above reasons I strongly urge that **H.B.5122** pass in Connecticut.

Very truly yours,
Caryn Rickel
Invasive Bamboo Research Specialist