

January 7, 2009

To: Continental Dialogue on Non-Native Forest Insects and Diseases
From: Transition Package Subgroup
Re: Overview of December 12, 2008 Meeting with David Lazarus, Member of President-Elect Obama's USDA Transition Team
Date: January 7, 2009

On Friday, December 12, representatives of the Continental Dialogue on Non-Native Forest Insects and Diseases (the Dialogue) and the National Environmental Coalition on Invasive Species (NECIS) met with David Lazarus of to present and discuss recommendations included in their respective Transition packages. Those present were:

(for the Dialogue)

- Nadine Block, American Forest & Paper Association
- Faith Campbell, The Nature Conservancy
- Bob Ehart, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
- Jay Farrell, National Association of State Foresters
- Carol Holko, National Plant Board
- Craig Regelbrugge, American Nursery and Landscape Association
- Lin Schmale, Society of American Florists
- John Peter Thompson, American Nursery and Landscape Association

(for NECIS)

- Aimee DeLach, Defenders of Wildlife
- Cat Hazlewood, The Nature Conservancy
- Read Porter, Environmental Law Institute
- Corry Westbrook, National Wildlife Federation
- Phyllis Windle, Union of Concerned Scientists (also a Continental Dialogue participant)

The Dialogue Transition package was endorsed by 21 entities; the NECIS Transition package was endorsed by nine environmental organizations. Copies of the packages are available on their websites – <http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/> and www.NECIS.net

In accordance with a pre-agreed division of labor, the following people took the lead in presenting the positions:

- Raise priority of invasive species, improve coordinated government response, USDA leadership
 - Phyllis Windle, UCS
- Key USDA APHIS rulemaking – Q-37
 - Aimee DeLach, Defenders; and
 - Craig Regelbrugge, ANLA
- Funding of key programs
 - Nadine Block, AF&PA
 - Phyllis Windle, UCS
- Key USDA APHIS rulemaking – wood packaging used in domestic (interstate) trade
 - Faith Campbell, TNC

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The group had sufficient time to discuss the rationale behind these priorities. The group also discussed some other invasive species priorities and concerns that had not been included in the respective Transition packages.

Both the Dialogue and NECIS expect to present their priorities to the Congress in January. The participants agreed the next opportunity to interact with Obama Administration officials on invasive species will probably be confirmation hearings for the new Secretary and Under Secretary of Agriculture.