

Memo

To: City Council

From: Robert Lieber, Council Member

Date: October 11, 2010

Re: Comments on CISAC Invasive Species Draft Strategic Framework

Recommendation

Council Member Lieber recommendation: Authorize the Mayor to sign a letter opposing the recommendations made by the CISAC, which include a broad Programmatic EIR; the use of tax dollars to create "educational" programs that promote the notion of invasive species being a threat without addressing pesticide use; the document appears oblivious to the need to protect human health against the risk of pesticide exposure; the use of tax dollars for planning public relations and pesticide campaigns.

Discussion

California Invasive Species Advisory Council (CISAC) formed by California Dept. of Food and Agriculture in 2009, with members from various "stakeholder" groups (membership list below)

All stakeholder groups identified as "environmental" groups were organizations that supported the apple moth aerial spray (including some in the Sierra Club, but not our local chapter)

There is no representation of health groups on the committee

CISAC reports to another body formed the same year, the Invasive Species Council of CA, which consists of state department heads

These two bodies were formed at a time when state agencies were being asked to cut costs and eliminate advisory bodies across the board

Focus of these groups is "invasive species"; their formation comes after a public relations firm that was advising CDFA about how to market the apple moth spray urged CDFA to court environmental groups to help give the spray legitimacy (state contracts office forced CDFA to cancel the PR firm contract after its existence was revealed in the Monterey newspaper)

The draft CISAC framework document that the city's letter addresses was released two days after CDFA announced a \$180,000 grant to an industry group, the Alliance for Food and Farming, for a campaign to convince the public that pesticide residues on food are safe to consume and to discredit public interest science about the hazards of pesticides.