



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

August 2nd, 2018 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Keith Mainwaring, Steve Saunders, Bob Hofman, and Noelle Orloff.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator), Danielle Jones (Program Assistant), Don Siefert (County Commissioner).

MINUTES: Bob moved to accept the minutes as written and all approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- The 2018 County Weed Management Plan is in the process of being revised. Changes that were suggested by the County Attorney's office will be incorporated as soon as time allows. The County Attorney has already written a draft resolution that will include both the approval of the revised Plan and the proposed changes to the county Noxious Weed list (adding ventenata and removing scentless chamomile and meadow knapweed) that were previously approved by the Board. Once the County Weed Management Plan is finalized and approved by the Board this resolution will be presented to the Commission. The goal is to have the Plan revised in time for the September Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Public Comment:** No members of the public were present.
- **Monthly Report Q&A:**
 - There was a discussion about the increased number of subdivisions approved in the Belgrade area.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - The Weed District was fully funded this year, including advertising money for the Gallatin Invasive Species Alliances to do outreach in the Big Sky area.
 - An Assistant County Administrator will be hired instead of going through with the reorganization of county departments that had been previously discussed. The county is also hiring someone to manage internal communications, public information and media interactions, as well as perform some administrative functions for the Administrator.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **Gallatin Weed Pull.** About 30 volunteers showed up.
 - **Ventenata Tour/Ventenata Locations.** About 60+ people showed up for the tour. With the increased awareness provided by the tour, there have been a lot of new reports of ventenata throughout the county, and it seems to be pretty widespread. The infestations have probably been present for a while, just not identified until now. Reports have also come from outside of the county, including thousands of acres in Carbon County. The labelling exemption that allows for the use of Esplanade herbicide on ventenata and medusahead infestations on grazing lands in Montana was approved as of August 1. As outlined in the exemption, a two week rest from domestic livestock grazing is required after spraying. The exemption expires after a year.

- **Spray Update.** John summarized the areas that have recently been sprayed, including the 13 county roads maintained by Weed District (the rest are contracted out) and all of the county maintained parks, gravel pits and other properties. The Three Forks area was also sprayed. The Logan Landfill has been sprayed twice this year; weeds at the landfill included bindweed, perennial pepperweed, and spotted and Russian knapweeds. John sprayed at Fort Ellis where the county stores gravel, and encountered a lot of St. Johnswort. Other areas sprayed included the Bozeman softball complex, the Museum of the Rockies trail off of Kagy, the right-of-way by the soccer fields on Durston (a complaint site), Caboose Park, Story Mill Spur Trail, and the BMX park.
- **Complaint/Enforcement Update.** Approximately 12 formal complaints have been filed this season, and many friendly, informational letters have additionally been sent out. One formal complaint is going to require a court order; Guylyn Warren near Willow Creek has not responded to the two notices that were sent to her about the musk and Canada thistle on her property. There was a complaint last year on her property as well, but she did not follow up with weed management then. Sheep are present on the property, but they do not seem to be eating the weeds. Because this property has had complaints in the past, a 3 year court order will be obtained.
- **Esplanade Treatment.** The Weed District will partner with GISA, NRCS, MSU and others to do an Esplanade treatment for cheatgrass on the Bighorn winter range in Big Sky. Ideally this treatment will occur soon, before the fall rains start and seeds begin germinating.
- **Blueweed.** Blueweed was found on a 5 acre property in the Sourdough Ridge area. This is the only known infestation of blueweed in the county. The landowner had planted a seed mix for pollinators, and the property is now full of blueweed and other noxious weeds. The blueweed occurs only on his property, and has not spread to the neighbors. It has been mowed recently, and the landowner is supposed to have it sprayed in the fall.
- **Roundtable**
 - Jane Mangold has talked to the Weed District about partnering to write a ventenata mapping/educational trust fund grant. If that was successful, they would likely follow up with another grant that would involve treatment of areas with ventenata. Ron Carlstrom inquired about the possibility of writing a weed grant for landowners in the Sixteen Mile area. The Weed District will work with Extension on that grant if it turns out that landowners are interested. There is a lot of sulfur cinquefoil in that area.
 - Steve mentioned the possibility of holding Weed Board meetings in other locations in the county (e.g. Three Forks, etc.) to increase outreach opportunities and landowner involvement in outlying parts of the county.
 - Keith followed up on the leafy spurge found along Frank Road. John had sprayed along the right-of-way and sent a friendly letter to the bordering landowner.
 - There was a discussion about the new technology for using drones to spray and inspect property.

Meeting dismissed at 2:35 pm

Next scheduled meeting: September 6th, 2018, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones, Program Assistant