



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

August 6, 2020 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Steve Saunders and Noelle Orloff.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator), Danielle Jones (Assistant Coordinator), and Don Seifert (Commissioner). By phone: Mike Jones (Senior Assistant Coordinator).

MINUTES: A quorum of board members was not present, so the vote to approve the June meeting minutes was postponed until the August board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- No old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Public Comment:** No members of the public were present.
- **Monthly Report Q&A, discussion included:**
 - There have been a lot of calls this year about horsetail, a native plant that is experiencing a big year probably due to favorable weather conditions.
 - Properties in the North Bridgers grant area were sprayed by helicopter on June 19 & 20. Mike has been spraying on the ground in the extended rights-of-way in the Sixteen Mile area as well.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - Don gave updates on the FY 2021 county budget, additional funding that the county received for COVID related expenses, and the progress of work on the Nixon Gulch Bridge.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **FY 2021 Budget.** John summarized the preliminary Weed District budget for FY21. The operations budget will remain the same, except that \$1500 will be moved from the cell phone line item to the cost share line item. The personnel budget requests were approved by the Commission, and Danielle is now full-time weeds. Mike's position has changed to Senior Assistant Coordinator and Danielle's position is now Assistant Coordinator.
 - **Spray Update.** John and Mike summarized the areas sprayed in June and July, including county properties (gravel pits, parks, roadways, etc.), courtesy spray areas within city limits, and Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance cooperative spray days.
 - **Complaints Update.** A lot of complaints have been received, and the Weed District has sent out educational letters to landowners in response to these complaints. This outreach seems to be effective, with many landowners treating their weeds after receiving the letter. Management tips and a list of commercial applicators is sent along with the letter. Three of the four standing court orders from previous years have already been treated by the landowners.

- **Contractor Roads.** All of the contracted county roads have been sprayed. Contractors are doing touchups when needed. One of the road contracts will expire this year, so bids for that contract will be solicited in January. There was a discussion about the possibility of considering past performance of contractors when approving new contracts. For example, including a scoring system in the hiring process so that past performance can be considered in addition to the price of the bid. It was agreed that the Weed District should look into that possibility for the next bidding process.
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - Quite a few calls have come in from landowners that received our ventenata brochure and have found ventenata on their property. In general, landowners seem motivated to treat the ventenata.
 - The Weed District will sell two 500 gallon spray tanks at the county surplus sale.
 - A lot of sprayer rentals went out in June and July, and there were many new renters this year.
 - Mike has been working with Shantell and the MSU Weed Ecology group to Adopt-A-Trailhead and put up Play-Clean-Go signage on a GVLT trail that runs from Kagy to Triple Tree.
 - The blueweed infestation in Gallatin County is being controlled this year with hand pulling.
 - The Audubon Society will do common burdock management along Bozeman trails again this year.
 - The presence of persistent herbicides in topsoil and compost has been a big issue in Gallatin County this year. There was a discussion about the role the Weed District should play in providing guidance to subdivisions and the general public about this issue. A bioassay is the only way to know if soil is contaminated, and the District may need to write a statement about recommending that people do a bioassay for any soil of unknown origin before planting sensitive plants. This statement could be included in weed management plans or educational materials.

Meeting dismissed at 2:50 pm

Next scheduled meeting: September 3, 2020, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones