



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

February 6, 2020 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Keith Mainwaring, Steve Saunders, Bob Hofman and Noelle Orloff.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator), Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator), Danielle Jones (Program Assistant), Don Siefert (Commissioner), Jennifer Mohler (Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance), and Stephanie Blasonek (Public).

MINUTES: Noelle moved to approve the minutes for the December board meeting, Steve seconded, and all approved. Steve moved to approve the minutes for the January board meeting, Noelle seconded, and all approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- The enforcement policy was revised to incorporate the changes that were discussed at the previous board meeting. This revised enforcement policy does not currently need official approval by the Board because the policy will be incorporated into the Gallatin County Weed Management Plan. This Plan will be reviewed and approved by the Board and Commissioners later this year. Mike summarized the changes to the policy, including: adding a requirement that the complainant meet with Weed District staff before filing a complaint; clarifying that discretion will be used in determining how to deal with each complaint, with some complaints being addressed with an educational approach; outlining the entire enforcement process more clearly; clarifying that the complainant also needs to be in compliance with the weed law; and requiring that complaints about properties located in subdivisions with an HOA be addressed by the HOA instead of the Weed District.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **2020 Board Chair Appointment:** Keith opened nominations and Noelle was nominated for the 2020 Board Chair position. Bob moved to close the nominations, and Steve seconded the motion. Since Noelle was the only nomination received, she was appointed Board Chair.
- **Public Comment:** Jen Mohler provided an update on GISA, handed out the 2019 Annual Report, and summarized achievements from the past year. She thanked the Board and Commission for their support.
- **Monthly Report Q&A, discussion included:**
 - The Weed District recently provided comments on weed management requirements for a storage unit development on Jackrabbit Lane. This development is a Building for Lease or Rent, not a Subdivision, so application requirements are different.
 - In the future, there may be a new voluntary statewide weed-free gravel certification program, similar to the statewide weed-free forage program. Gallatin County currently has a voluntary gravel certification program for pits in the county that would like weed-free certification.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - Discussion included the state of the budget and subdivision development. Potential personnel changes for the Weed District in the next fiscal year were also discussed, including rewriting job descriptions to reflect actual duties and reclassifying positions.

- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **MWCA Annual Conference.** The conference was held in Great Falls on January 14-16th. Mike presented at a discussion that addressed population growth and increased subdivision development.
 - **Gallatin County Weed Management Plan.** An update of the Plan is required by MDA in 2020. A draft with revisions for the update was handed out to board members. The revised enforcement policy has been incorporated into the draft Plan. Other changes to the Plan included an updated weed list and revised estimates of acreage for each weed species in the county. Board members will review the draft Plan and provide comments at the next meeting. There was a discussion about where revenue collected by the Weed District goes, and whether it can be used to fund programs.
 - **GISA DNRC Grant.** Jen will be applying for another DNRC AIS grant to do education and outreach projects with billboards and other media.
 - **Herbicide Bids.** John will send out bid requests to Nutrien Solutions, Ag Depot, Rocky Mountain Supply, Wilbur Ellis, and Helena Chemical. Tordon, Escort, 2-4D amine, and glyphosate will be included in the bid. The surfactant Liberate will also be purchased, but it will not be included in this bid. Only Nutrien Solutions carries Liberate, so it will be purchased from them separately.
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - The Trust Fund hearings will be held on March 4th in Helena and Mike will present the Bridger WMA Continuing Grant to the committee. The grant will provide \$20,000 in cost share funds for helicopter spraying in the WMA in 2020.
 - The discussion from a couple of meetings ago about ideas for ventenata control on private land along Rocky Mountain Road was revisited. The possibility of a cooperative spray day was discussed, but concerns were raised about cleaning equipment and spreading seeds. Steve asked about MDA emergency money that may be available through the Trust Fund to help landowners with the cost of treating ventenata, since it spreads aggressively and is an urgent threat. Mike will follow up with Jasmine about this.
 - Mike reported the possibility of NRCS writing a TIP for weed management in Bridger Canyon, as well as a TIP for ventenata control in the county. He also discussed the cost share program for weed management offered by the Conservation District. Steve suggested inviting these agencies to a future board meeting to discuss their programs.
 - There was a discussion about making a brochure that explains the importance of cleaning equipment to prevent the spread of ventenata seeds, and distributing the brochure to local commercial applicators. There is a Montguide that provides information about this also.
 - There was a question about the status of Eurasian water milfoil management. Management of milfoil is now under the jurisdiction of FWP, and they have been managing the Jefferson River infestation.

Meeting dismissed at 2:45 pm

Next scheduled meeting: March 5, 2020, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones, Program Assistant