



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

January 4, 2024 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Steve Saunders, Larry Holzworth, and Bernie Jones.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator) and Danielle Jones (Assistant Coordinator). Remotely: Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator) and Cola Rowley (Deputy County Administrator).

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no members of the public present.

MINUTES: Bernie moved to approve the November 2, 2023 meeting minutes with corrections, Larry seconded and the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **MDT Discussion.** At the last meeting, there was a discussion about meeting with MDT weed managers to discuss weed management along state roads. It was decided to have this discussion with MDT at the annual Weed Managers meeting that is hosted by the Weed District in April. At that time, a follow-up meeting can be scheduled with them if more discussion is necessary.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **2024 Board Chair Appointment.** Steve moved to appoint Larry as Board Chair for 2024. Bernie seconded the motion and all approved.
- **Monthly Report Q&A, Discussion Included:**
 - There seems to be an increase in the number of subdivision weed management plans that have been recently received. This is common at the end of the year.
 - There were a couple of complaints received and letters will be sent to the landowners in the spring.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - Zach was not present.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **NWTF Willow Creek Grant.** John gave an update on the NTWF grant application for the Willow Creek WMA. The application has been submitted to MDA (the funding agency) for initial review. The hearings where grant applications are formally reviewed will take place in March. Sixteen landowners are involved in the grant. The Weed Management Area covers approximately 70,000 acres in four counties, but Gallatin County will administer the grant. \$42,778 in grant funds are being requested to help landowners in the area with the cost of noxious weed management in 2024. Target weeds include knapweed, spurge, whitetop, houndstongue, and thistle.
 - **Upcoming Meetings/Trainings.** John reviewed the upcoming meetings and trainings, including the MWCA Annual Conference in Billings on Jan 30-Feb 1. Ed and Bernie will be attending this as well as Weed District staff. Becky Kington has been rehired as Executive Director for MWCA.
 - **Herbicide Bids.** John will send out herbicide bid request packets to local distributors next week. The herbicides that will be purchased include Telar, Escort, 2,4-D amine, Rejuvra, and Tordon.
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - Noelle will not renew as a member of the Weed Board, which creates a vacant position on the board. There was a discussion about the desired background of the future board member and the region that

they represent, as well as ways to get the word out about the vacancy and encourage applications. The Commissioners will review the applications and choose the new board member. The Commission office reached out to Bernie and asked for input from the board, so it was agreed that Bernie would respond to this request.

- The status of the discussion of witchgrass was summarized. Although the Weed District will not actively manage this species, it will be kept on the radar.
- There was an inquiry about the regulation of weed management activities at active gravel pits. New gravel pits in the county are required to submit a weed management plan for approval with the Weed District, but there is no regulatory pathway outside of the weed law to require weed management at pits. The Weed District does have a voluntary program where pits can be annually inspected and certified as 'weed-free', and a few gravel pits are enrolled in this program in the county.
- Steve gave an update on the status of the Bill Smith grant. Plans are already being made for the upcoming spray season and there was a discussion about ideas for how to get other neighbors outside of the grant area involved in the current spray efforts.
- It was agreed to cancel the scheduled February 1 board meeting because it would conflict with the MWCA annual conference in Billings.
- **Proposed Agenda Items for Next Meeting.**
 - Agenda for the Annual Weed Managers Meeting.
 - Update on Bill Smith WMA field work.

Meeting dismissed at 2:10 pm.

Next scheduled meeting: March 7, 2024, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Danielle Jones