



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

November 1st, 2018 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

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

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

OLD BUSINESS:

- The resolution that included the updated Gallatin County Weed Management Plan and the changes to the County Weed List was approved by the Commission at the Oct 16th public meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Public Comment:** No members of the public were present.
- **Monthly Report Q&A:**
 - Discussion included recent subdivision Weed Management Plans and leafy spurge management in a pasture with a high water table.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - A Communications Coordinator has been hired for the county to help with internal and external communications. Applications are currently being received for the County Administrator position.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **Spray Update.** John summarized the county roads and properties that were sprayed in October. Fall spraying is now done and all of the equipment has been winterized.
 - **SW Area Meeting.** Mike summarized what was discussed at the October 9th meeting, including the upcoming legislative session and prospects for an increase in the vehicle tax that would fund county weed districts, the new education trailer, and plans for future trainings.
 - **Enforcement Policy Discussion.** Discussion continued about potential changes to the Weed District enforcement policy, specifically how to add to the policy the use of discretion so that the severity and impacts of an infestation could be taken into consideration. Policies from other counties were evaluated as examples. It was mentioned that there is language in both the State Noxious Weed List and the weed law that support the use of discretion when enforcing the law. It was decided that a general statement would be added saying that discretion will be used when necessary and the matter may be addressed through other means, such as education. Other suggestions for changes to the policy included adding a statement that anyone filing a complaint should not have any noxious weeds on their own property, and requirements that the complainant contact the landowner and HOA before filing the complaint. It was agreed that John and Mike would consult with the County Attorney on writing the general statement that will be added to the policy, and they will bring this statement to a future board meeting for further discussion and approval by board members.

- **Upcoming events.** John summarized the upcoming events, including the MWCA Education Summit (Danielle will attend), the annual meeting of the Montana Invasive Species Council (Mike will attend), and the MWCA Coordinator Training (John, Mike, and Danielle will attend).
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - A recap of the ventenata tour that occurred in the Pass Creek area.
 - The possibility of a WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program) grant in the North Bridgers area. Three landowners have shown interest. So far a minimum of 750 acres of sulfur cinquefoil and 150 acres of spotted knapweed have been identified for treatment, but there will be more acreage added to that estimate in the future. The deadline for grant submission is December 15th, and if awarded, work would then occur next spring. Steve mentioned the possibility of including another area, located at the bottom of Rocky Mountain Road over to the base of Corbly, that is also infested with sulfur cinquefoil. There would be approximately 200 acres to treat in that area. Steve will talk to some of the landowners in that area about the possibility of a grant.
 - The potential for using drones to map weeds. Steve shared some footage from a drone flying over patches of ventenata. John mentioned that he will talk to the County Attorney about the legality of the Weed District using a drone for mapping, site visits, enforcement, etc., with the potential for purchasing one in the future.
 - The new Polaris Ranger that the Weed District will purchase in the near future with Special County Grant funds. John will get bids from dealers; he has already purchased a 75 gallon sprayer for it.

Meeting dismissed at 2:45 pm

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

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones, Program Assistant