



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

November 5, 2020 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Keith Mainwaring, Bob Hofman, Larry Holzworth and Noelle Orloff. Absent: Steve Saunders.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator) and Danielle Jones (Assistant Coordinator). By Phone: Mike Jones (Senior Assistant Coordinator), Don Seifert (Commissioner), and Cola Rowley (Deputy County Administrator).

MINUTES: Keith moved to approve the October 2020 meeting minutes and Bob seconded the motion. During discussion, Larry noted a needed correction and the minutes were approved with this correction.

OLD BUSINESS:

- There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Public Comment:** No members of the public were present.
- **Monthly Report Q&A, discussion included:**
 - There were no questions or comments about the Monthly Report.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - Commissioner Seifert reported that the county has been dealing with the impacts of the Bridger Fire, as well as continuing to deal with the impacts of Covid.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **Spray Update.** John summarized the city and county roads that were sprayed in October. The Weed District partnered with GVLTA again this year to treat common buckthorn at the East Gallatin Rec Area. It was mostly cut stump treatments on larger sapling-sized trees. There is still a lot of buckthorn left to be treated at the Rec Area, and this will continue to be a project for the Weed District in the future. The areas that were treated last year were assessed, and it seems the treatments were effective. All of the spray equipment has now been winterized.
 - **Bridger Foothills Fire/Grant.** The Weed District had previously sent out letters to approximately 135 landowners that had been impacted by the Bridger Foothills fire. In the letter, landowners were told about the possibility of a Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) grant to provide cost share for weed control efforts. More than 30 landowners initially expressed interest in participating in a Weed Management Area for the grant. The Weed District then asked those interested landowners to follow up by providing an estimate of how much money they would spend on weed control on their property in the spring of 2021. This information would be needed to create a budget for a future grant application. Twelve landowners responded with this information, and collectively they

estimated that a total of \$18,000 would be spent on weed control. The request for grant funds from the NWTF would be half that, because the grant would provide 50% cost sharing. Some significant roadblocks to the grant application process were discussed, including: not having three adjacent properties participating in the grant (this is a requirement for submitting an application), having a low percentage of landowners in the burned area participating (only 9% of landowners), and the fact that many landowners seem to be having trouble estimating future weed control costs (the grant application deadline is January 6, so it is not possible for the Weed District to conduct site visits before the application is due). Because of these difficulties associated with the NWTF grant application, there was a discussion about possible alternative sources of funding. Potential funding sources from other public agencies for weed control on private land had already been explored and did not seem to exist. It was decided that the Weed District would present a proposal to the Commissioners requesting \$10,000 from the county to provide 50% weed control cost share in 2021. There was also discussion about the possibility of the Bridger Relief Fund matching county dollars, which would increase the total amount of cost share money to \$20,000. If the county and Relief Fund were to provide cost share money in 2021, it would allow time for landowners to request field assessments in the spring to help determine weed control needs and then follow through with weed control on their property using the cost share assistance. The information collected in the spring could also be used to inform a future NWTF grant application for providing weed control cost share after 2021. Larry suggested also adding revegetation as a component of weed control because after a fire an integrated approach to weed management is usually most effective.

- **North Bridgers WMA Grant.** The Weed District will submit a continuing grant application to the NWTF to continue weed control work in the North Bridgers WMA in 2021. The same three landowners will be participating. Over 1000 acres of weeds were helicopter sprayed in the WMA this year, plus additional acreage sprayed with ground equipment.

- **Roundtable:**

- There was discussion about the issue of weed control in open spaces of new subdivisions. It is often unclear who will be managing the weeds in these areas. Keith suggested this problem could be addressed when a subdivision is first approved by requiring that the developer establish a fund to provide for weed control on open spaces in the future. It was also suggested that standard language could be added to existing RID contracts to include weed control as a part of those contracts.
- Terms expire for both Keith and Noelle at the end of 2020, and they will need to reapply if they would like to remain on the Weed Board.
- After discussion, Bob moved to cancel the December meeting and Keith seconded the motion. All agreed and the motion passed.
- Discussion continued about the importance of revegetation when planning noxious weed control efforts after a wildfire. Areas that burned very hot would be the most likely to need it. It is important to first identify which areas will not regenerate on their own before planning revegetation efforts. If an area seems to be regenerating on its own, it will likely not need to be reseeded.

Meeting dismissed at 2:25 pm

Next scheduled meeting: January 7, 2021, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones