



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

October 6, 2022 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Steve Saunders, Bernie Jones, Ed Brainard and Larry Holzworth.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator), Danielle Jones (Assistant Coordinator), and Zach Brown (Commissioner). Remotely: Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator).

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public were present.

MINUTES: Steve moved to approve the September 2022 meeting minutes as written, Larry seconded and the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Recognition Award.** The award was presented to John VanHouten of Bridger Bowl by Commissioner Skinner at the October 4th Public Meeting. Board members and staff attended the meeting, and Steve spoke a few words in support of the award and the winner. A press release was sent out by the county to notify the media about the award winner. There was a discussion about potentially scheduling a TV interview up at Bridger Bowl to heighten the awareness of the award. Steve will follow up with his contact at the news station to see if this could still happen. It would also be great if Bridger Bowl shared the news about the award on their Facebook page. Larry suggested the idea of erecting a sign up at Bridger Bowl that recognizes them as the 2022 winner of the award. The wording on the sign could be something simple, such as '2022 Winner of the Gallatin County Outstanding Noxious Weed Management Award – Bridger Bowl'. Everyone agreed this would be a good idea if it was put in a conspicuous place (e.g., the driveway into the parking lot or near the path for walking up to the ski hill) and could further increase awareness. There was a discussion about who would make the sign. The only county department that makes signs is Road and Bridge, and they have mandates about how their equipment and funds can be used, so they likely would not be able to make this sign. Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance recently erected some signs along Highway 191, and Larry agreed to check with them about costs. It was agreed that Danielle would contact Bonnie from Bridger Bowl about the idea.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Monthly Report Q&A, Discussion Included:**
 - Question about the annual rent paid to the Fairgrounds and other claims.
 - Ventenata along the Triple Tree trail system. GVLT put up a fence and signs around the infestation and it will be sprayed. Ventenata has spread to some surrounding land as well. There will be further outreach efforts to other landowners in the area in the future.
 - Manhattan Orchards subdivision.
- **Commissioner Report Included:**
 - There are no anticipated changes to the Weed District budget in the immediate future.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **NWTF Grant Updates.** For the North Bridgers WMA grant, approximately 440 acres were treated by helicopter and 95 acres on the ground this season. The CA Ranch treated an additional 140 acres

by helicopter that was not funded by the grant. All of the funds for the 2021 grant were used and that grant will be closed out. The money that remains from the 2022 grant, about \$34,000 worth of project costs, will be spent out next field season. A new grant for this WMA will not be written this year but will likely be written in the future with adjustments to the boundary. Also, the Weed District has been working with 4 or 5 landowners on the north side of Bridger Canyon Road near Brass Lantern who are interested in applying for a grant this year. Another landowner near the fish hatchery will also participate. They were originally interested in writing the grant for control of leafy spurge, but ventenata was discovered during a field tour and this will likely be the focus instead. Letters of interest were recently sent out to landowners in the Brass Lantern neighborhood to try to increase participation.

- **Ventenata Spraying Discussion.** Steve showed a map of the helicopter spraying that he is coordinating on private land along the west side of the Bridgers. About 460 acres of ventenata and cheatgrass were sprayed in the area this week. He summarized the areas that were sprayed and discussed areas that will be sprayed in the future. Steve asked if the Weed District would be willing to write another ventenata grant for the people in this area as well. There are about 700-800 more acres of ventenata that need attention. There are also about 200 acres of sulfur cinquefoil. Steve will provide more information about the landowners and help with the mapping if the Weed District will write the grant application.
- **Spray Update.** John summarized the areas that were sprayed in September including the West Yellowstone area, the dog park at the Regional Park, and county road touch-ups. Parts of Nash and Sourdough Road rights-of-way were sprayed for ventenata.
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - Steve suggested taking a Commissioner field tour to look at areas with ventenata. It was agreed that this would probably be best next August when ventenata is most visible. Zach suggested that the tour be coordinated with the Road and Bridge Department to look at road projects in the area as well.
 - The Weed District will send out to commercial applicators an informational ventenata brochure that discusses seed spread and the importance of cleaning equipment after spraying ventenata.
 - Steve mentioned the ventenata task force that is being organized in Southeast Montana and suggested this might be a good thing to consider for Southwest Montana as well.
- **Proposed Agenda Items:**
 - Potential ventenata grants.
 - Bridger Bowl sign discussion.

Meeting dismissed at 2:35 pm.

Next scheduled meeting: November 3, 2022, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Danielle Jones