



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

September 5, 2019 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

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

MINUTES: Noelle moved to accept the August minutes as written, Steve seconded, and all approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Public Comment:** No public were present.
- **Monthly Report Q&A:**
 - Discussion included the increase in the number of subdivision Weed Management Plans that have been received recently.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - Commissioner MacFarlane was not present.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **Medusahead Survey/Treatment.** Medusahead was found on a newly reseeded area of the Fairgrounds earlier this summer, and all of the plants were pulled at that time. As a follow up, Jane Mangold (MSU) and her group met with the Weed District in early August to survey the entire Fairgrounds for medusahead. No additional medusahead infestations were found on the Fairgrounds, but at the original location Jane pulled a couple more plants with seed heads. On August 13, John sprayed the original location with Esplanade. Monitoring for medusahead will continue on the Fairgrounds for the next few years to make sure no more plants are found. This infestation likely originated from a seed mix that was used to seed the disturbed area. MDA has initiated an investigation to try to determine where the seed came from, but there is not much information and they have not had any luck. During the survey, additional ventenata infestations were identified on the Fairgrounds, including around the arena and along Oak Street.
 - **Spray Update.** John reviewed the areas that were sprayed in August (Fairgrounds, county roads, Gardner Park, Kennedy gravel pit), and the areas that will be sprayed in September (Regional Park, West Yellowstone roads, Sixteen Mile, Logan Landfill). There was a discussion about how the county roads have improved since the private contractors have taken over maintenance, with the added benefit of reduced liability for the county. Jim Simon, the manager of the landfill, has agreed to pay the Weed District for any weed control activities from this year and last year using money from the landfill Enterprise fund. In the future, he may hire an applicator to helicopter spray since it is such a large area.

- **Complaints/Enforcement Update.** John gave an update on active complaints. A court order was obtained for a property in the Springhill area. A contractor had been lined up to spray the property, but that fell through at the last minute because of concerns about personal liability if the contractor was sued. John checked with the County Attorney's office and they reported that the county would not indemnify a contractor in that situation, so John and Mike had to spray the property instead. Thirty-eight acres of weeds were sprayed. Because the county will not provide liability for contractors, the district will not be able to hire contractors for enforcement treatments in the future. John met with Cola, the Deputy County Administrator, about the possibility of obtaining a supplemental insurance policy for contractors to cover them while doing enforcement treatments, and she was going to check into it. Mike reviewed the status of other complaints, including 300 acres in the Trail Creek area, a large property on Toohey Road, and an organic farm on River Road. A court order has been requested for another property that was previously sprayed by the Weed District in a 2014 enforcement treatment. Most other complaints have been resolved.
- **Esplanade Treatment Plots with MSU.** The Weed District worked with Jane on some herbicide treatments along the Frontage Road near Tower Road. There is a lot of ventenata in the right-of-way between the road and the railroad tracks. The area was treated with 2 strips of Esplanade now, and other areas will be treated in a month or so with Plateau. This work was a part of Jane's Noxious Weed Trust Fund research grant.
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - Cola will be doing John's formal job evaluations from now on.
 - Fred's has been persistently spraying spotted knapweed and hoary alyssum in an area near Hebgen Lake; the hoary alyssum has been very hard to control.
 - Keith reported an infestation of ventenata one to two miles north of Ennis, on the west side of the road. John said he would get in touch with Margie (from Madison County) about it.
 - Steve discussed the upcoming ventenata tour with Jane Mangold. Other partners include Gallatin County Extension, Gallatin Valley Land Trust, NRCS, and the Weed District. Everyone will meet at 5:00 on September 16 at the Reese Creek school and firehouse on Springhill Road. They will tour nearby areas that are infested with vententata, look at some areas that Steve has sprayed, and stop at Jane's research plots on the Weber property. The main goal of the tour is to help people to learn how to identify ventenata so they can become aware of it and its characteristics. Steve distributed the draft of the flyer that will be sent out.

Meeting dismissed at 2:15 pm

Next scheduled meeting: October 3rd, 2019, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones, Program Assistant