



**Gallatin County Weed District  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
June 04, 2009**

**Board** members present were Bob Hofman (Chair), Keith Mainwaring, Fred Bell, Jeff Littlefield and Commissioner Joe Skinner. Craig Morgan was excused. **Others** present were Dennis Hengel (District Coordinator), John Ansley (Education/Enforcement Coordinator) and Rosemary Perry (Secretary).

**Minutes.** The Minutes of the May meeting had been sent to the Board and were approved as presented.

**Budget.** Fred Bell asked about the new spray truck. Hengel informed him that it was a 2002, ¾ ton, Chevrolet and that we will install a 300 gallon spray tank on the truck.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Public Comment/Other.** None

**2. Monthly Report Q & A.**

- **Bell** asked a question regarding the Oma complaint noted on River Road. Hengel stated that he had visited with the property owner and the property is looking much better.
- **Bell** asked for a progress update regarding the development of a working agreement with utility companies. Hengel has contacted Northwestern Energy but has not heard back from them at this time. We have been approached by Three Rivers Fiber Optic Company regarding a weed management plan for a project they are working on installing a fiber optic cable from Big Sky along 30 + miles of right of way. Hengel has discussed the required weed management program with a manager. The manager stated that they will fill out the weed management plan and submit it to the Weed District office.
- **Bell** also asked for information regarding two other complaints listed in the Monthly Report (Maxey and Centennial Village/Pioneer Crossing). Maxey requested the documentation regarding the enforcement action conducted on the property. Photocopies of the records requested were mailed to Maxey by Delivery Confirmation. Regarding the Pioneer Crossing/Centennial Village complaint: Hengel has discussed the complaint with the developer. The developer stated that they are going to conduct a combination of mowing and herbicide treatment to control the weeds. The Vidar property has been mowed and will have the perimeters sprayed.
- **Bell** asked about the Gravel Pit program. We are currently exploring options for a gravel pit inspection technician. The original technician offered the position recently decided not to accept the employment. Therefore, we are currently looking for another qualified individual. Two thirds of the program is funded through the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Position and the Weed District funds the remaining third.

3. **Commissioner Report.** Commissioner Skinner announced that the Budget meetings will be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday next week at the Bozeman Public Library. The Weed Board has requested additional funding in the herbicide line item. Commissioner Skinner will push for the additional funds.

**4. Enforcement Report.**

- Ansley reported that he has sent out enforcement reminder letters and has received good response. Many people had already sprayed or made arrangements to have spraying done.
- Reminder letters have been sent to the Frog Rock WMA regarding the grant funds.
- Letters have been sent to property owners in the Lower Madison WMA informing them that we have the grant.
- There are three (3) weed pulls scheduled this month. On the 13<sup>th</sup> in cooperation with the Big Sky Weed Committee and Trout Unlimited there will be an educational day of pulling weeds and picking up trash along the Gallatin River. June 13<sup>th</sup> is National River Clean-up Day. The other two are both on June 24<sup>th</sup> at the East Gallatin Recreation Area. One will take place in coordination with the MSU Analytical Lab and the other will be in coordination with the Conservation District.
- Ansley has put a sprayer in one of the weed trucks and has been spraying "hot spots" as he is driving around doing property inspections.
- Ansley has been in contact with the property manager on the Huffine property in the Springhill area. The caretaker is planning to spray around the perimeter and the junk vehicles then mow the rest.

**5. Coordinator Report.**

- Hengel informed the Board that he has been contacted by the manager of an organic farm on Reese Creek Road. They will be developing a weed management plan for the farm. The certification for the farm is through the State of Montana.
- There was a resident complaint filed on a subdivision (Centennial Village/Pioneer Crossing) in Manhattan. Hengel contacted the developer and was informed that the property has been mowed on a regular basis. However, un-mowed areas on the perimeter still have a serious Russian thistle (tumbleweed) problem. Hengel discussed the situation with the developer. The developer will submit a letter to the Board stating his future plans for weed control on the property.
- The County has received stimulus monies for energy savings. Hengel submitted four (4) requests for funding of energy saving projects for the weed shop to the committee; a) Furnace replacement; b) Hot water heater replacement; c) overhead door replacement; and d).insulating the shop area. The Committee selected the proposal of applying CorBon to insulate the shop. This project will cost approximately \$20,000.
- The Lower Madison Ditch & Dike Company has submitted an application for \$2500 of the NWTF Grant funds. The Ditch Company will participate in the grant this year and then the Weed District will spray for one more year.
- Hengel informed the Board that Carlstrom had called to inform the Board that the 16 Mile Grant project has received another \$20,000 from the NWTF this year. This project covers over 400,000 acres and has been ongoing with a great deal of success since 2001.
- Gravel Pits. The Weed District has been contacted by Kenyon Noble Redi-Mix requesting an inspection and certification of one of their gravel pits for a project in Yellowstone National Park. Earlier checks on the property show that it is unlikely that they could be certified. Hengel will do an inspection of the sites on Monday June 8<sup>th</sup>.
- The seasonal crew members are doing an excellent job this year.

- Hengel has had problems trying to connect with the Fairground's (FG) mechanic to get work completed on the District's vehicles as the FG mechanic is extremely busy repairing FG equipment. There was discussion regarding taking the equipment to a commercial repair shop. A number of options were provided.
  - Commissioner Skinner stated that he had talked to the Fairgrounds Manager, Sue Shockley, and the Fairgrounds is not planning to take down the fence along the boundary of the Fairgrounds and the old Road Department Complex.
6. **Budget.** Hengel has had numerous meetings with Ed Blackman (County Finance Officer) regarding the FY 2010 budget. As per the Boards request, Hengel submitted a budget that met the guidelines of Option One. All current three FTE's were requested, reductions were made in operations with the exception that additional funds were requested for the herbicide line items. For this current year the seasonal crew was started a week later than usual and one less seasonal employee was hired. Hengel was able to retain the \$7500 Special County Grant to purchase a sprayer and flatbed for the newly purchased spray truck. For the FY2010 spring (May/June 2010) field season we will hire only six seasonal crew members. For this year, the limited boom spray program is being conducted. The spray trucks with the 500 gallon tanks can spray continually for three hours and treat approximately 9.5 miles of right-of-way (10 foot width).

Hengel announced to the Board that he will be going in for rotator cuff surgery on Tuesday June 9<sup>th</sup>. He expects to be off work until June 18<sup>th</sup>

7. **Round Table.** Mainwaring asked if the program to upgrade Perry's position was still in progress. Hengel stated that training for the position has been ongoing since last winter. However, due to the stagnation of the economy and reduction in the county budget there are no funds available for the position.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.10PM.

The next meeting will be at the Ag Center, 1:15pm on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Perry, Secretary