



**Gallatin County Weed Board
Regular Monthly Meeting
July 01, 2010**

Board members present were Keith Mainwaring (Chair), Jeff Littlefield, Bob Hofman and Fred Bell. Commissioner Skinner and Craig Morgan were excused. **Others** present were John Ansley (Coordinator), Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator) and Rosemary Perry (Secretary).

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

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Utility Agreement.** This agenda item was tabled until the next Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Public Comment/Other.**

- Huffine Property. This property has been in non-compliance, however there are legal issues that need to be resolved before the Weed District can proceed with enforcement. A request has been sent to the County Attorney for advice on how to proceed.

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

- Mainwaring asked about the organic farming situation with the Landowner Maintenance program. Ansley has had more signs made and these have been posted. Across the road from Brown's property is Wright's property that has been posted, however we do not have him on our list and do not have a Landowner Maintenance Agreement with him. Ansley has tried to contact Wright but has received no response.
- Mainwaring asked about the leafy spurge on the Forest Service property next to the Madison Fork Ranch in West Yellowstone. One of the Madison Forks Ranch owners wants to spray the infestation. The Weed District referred the caller to the USFS Hebgen Basin Ranger Station.
- Mainwaring had asked about the Weed District buying an MWCA raffle ticket and holding a drawing for it at the County Fair. First prize is a \$4000 travel voucher, second prize is a 2009 Honda Dirt Bike, and third prize is a \$500 Gift card. Ansley has checked with the County Auditor to see if this is possible and she found no problem. After discussion the Board decided that three (3) tickets would be a good idea.
- Bell asked about the status of the Phillips Minor subdivision. Huyser is spraying the property and the WMP is being followed.
- Bell asked about the location of the Cameron Springs gravel pit. He would like a list of gravel pits in Gallatin County with those that have ongoing weed management plans noted.
- Bell asked about the cost share program. He suggested a cap of \$75/applicant in an effort to spread it among as many people as possible. There was discussion but no decision was reached. Jones stated that the Big Sky Weed Committee will also have cost share so that program will be able to assist landowners from the Four Corners area to the Yellowstone National Park Boundary.
- Bell noted that he had requested information on soil sterilant and herbicides at Ag Depot. He toured properties that he has listed with Bradford (PPYC), a commercial applicator and received recommendations on backpack spraying.
- Bell noted that the property that he has listed behind the Cat's Paw on N 8th has been mowed. Ansley told Bell that he has sprayed back there.
- Bell asked about the complaint of common tansy on 11 acres near Sourdough. Ansley has sent out a property inspection notice.

- Bell also asked about the spotted knapweed complaint behind the KOA. This was called in by a Great Falls resident who had stayed at the KOA during the spring rodeo event. Bell said the office needs to contact the owner. Property was originally a rail road right-of-way.
- Bell brought up property on N 19th between Oak and Durston where there is a traffic island full of cheatgrass and a field full of Bull thistle. The Weed District gets complaints on this property every year, however it is now owned by a bank. Jones will contact the bank.
- Bell suggested that we hand out a flyer advertizing the rental program during trade shows and other educational events. Ansley reported that 2 spray tanks were cracked by hail during the storm that hit Bozeman on Wednesday 30th. To replace the tanks will cost approximately \$210, however the shape of the new tanks is different so we may have to order new cradles as well which will double the cost. Ansley and Jones have checked all the other sprayers for damage and they are O.K.

3. Budget. Ansley reported that the Budget meetings went well and the Weed District Preliminary Budget request was approved, including three (3) FTE's and the Cost Share.

4. Chair Report. None.

5. Commissioner Report. Commissioner Skinner had been excused.

6. Coordinator(s) Report.

- Ansley reported that the weed management plan for gravel pits is a three (3) year plan. The DEQ permits depend upon the estimated life of the pit.
- Conservation Easement WMP. Ansley has contacted Harris (Open Lands) regarding this topic and was informed that weed management is already factored into the contract.
- We have already contacted some property owners regarding last years complaints and discovered that Baxter Meadows now belongs to First Interstate Bank in Billings, the property off North 19th is owned by the Yellowstone Bank in Billings, and the Story Mills development is owned by American Bank.
- The crews are spraying the Logan Landfill, the City Landfill, the Three Forks Airport and are well along with the county traces. There was an issue with a property owner in the Gateway area. He and his wife are enrolled in the Landowner Maintenance program; however when the crews started to spray at a corner post that they thought was the end of his property he verbally assaulted them. He then called the office and verbally assaulted Ansley. The crews had mistakenly started to spray before the end of his property. The landowner had planned to organize all the property owners on that part of the road into one big Landowner Maintenance area; however they have not turned in the paperwork. Ansley has notified the crew not to spray on that road at this time.
- Jones reported that the Trout Unlimited weed pull was again a success. He took the weeds pulled to the landfill and the weight was 820lbs.
- Ansley reported that the hail damage from yesterday's storm amounted to 2 cracked spray tanks, 1 hose reel cover, and 1 cracked windshield, 1 broken safety light bar on top of the truck and dimpling on the truck roof, hood and fenders. At this time we do not know about the Shop roof, however when the adjusters come out to look at the Fairgrounds buildings they will also look at the weed shop roof.
- Mangold (MSU) called regarding reports of curly leaf pondweed in a pond at the Stonegate subdivision. Ansley has called the aquatic specialists in Helena for information and guidance. Moon (Dept. of Agriculture Aquatic Specialist) stated that there are a number of issues with this particular infestation as the pond is fed by the East Gallatin and channels back into the East Gallatin. This is State water and any treatment would involve a number of agencies and permitting programs. Herbicides are not effective in moving water. Bell suggested getting the names of the contact people in the state agencies and giving the property owners an option.

Littlefield stated that there is a new aquatics person in Helena and suggested that Ansley consult with him.

- Ansley, Jones and the crews will be in West Yellowstone July 12th-15th. They will participate in the cooperative program on 287 with MDT, and spray other projects in the area and the county roads.
- At the end of July Ansley and Jones will participate in the Madison River mapping program. Jones will assist with a mapping training program on July 12th.
- Ansley requested August 7th and August 23rd to 27th for vacation time. He asked the Board if they wanted to postpone the August meeting. The Board agreed to the time off and decided to stay on schedule with the August meeting.
- Jones reported that he is wrapping up his part of the Big Sky Weed Committee program. Mohler has been helping out. The committee still plans to go ahead with the oxeye daisy project at the golf course. Mainwaring suggested that the Weed District does an enforcement on the property. Bell stated that we need to keep a paper trail on the project and work through the legal process.
- Ansley informed the Board that Saunders (DOW) asked the Weed District to supply the City of Bozeman with a container of Chaparral to spot spray the Galligator Trail. Saunders has since replaced the container.
- Ansley called the City of Bozeman to make sure that we were on the Government rates for water. The City inspector requested an inspection of our site and we did not pass code. The Weed District will have to have backflow regulators installed both inside and outside the shop.

7. Round Table.

- Bell asked where the Department of Agriculture Invasive Aquatic Species check points were set up. This is a voluntary check station program and is being rotated around the West Yellowstone, Gardiner and Ennis areas.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.45pm and those present went to the Shop to see the upgrades.

The next meeting will be August 5th.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Perry, Secretary.