



**Gallatin County Weed Board  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
August 04, 2011**

**Board** members present were Fred Bell (Acting Chair), Bob Hofman, Jeff Littlefield and Commissioner Joe Skinner. Craig Morgan and Keith Mainwaring were excused.

**Others** present were Michelle Dammen (Small Acreage & Horticulture Agent), John Ansley (Coordinator), Michael Jones (Assistant Coordinator/Foreman) and Rosemary Perry (Secretary).

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Public Comment.** Michelle Dammen reported that she has had a busy summer so far. In the Clarkston Grant area she has done a lot of site visits but has not had a lot of follow through. Ansley offered to assist her with developing a mailing list from GIS data. Dammen is also working with Mohler (Big Sky Weed Coordinator) on a Fall Pasture Management class.

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

- Bell asked about the Courtesy spray on Despain's property. There is a bad leafy spurge problem in the area and the Weed District helped with a perimeter spray of the property.
- Bell asked about the Longhorn Saloon. Jones responded that the owner is working with us.
- Commissioner Skinner asked about the Lodge property. There is a farmer working that property; however due to the rain and a flooded ditch he has been unable to get a good start on the property.
- Bell asked about the trailer sales place off Jackrabbit. This is near the Holiday Inn Express and has been mowed.
- There was a question regarding a resident in the Aspen Meadows subdivision wanting to change the structure of the Weed Board. The Board currently consists of two (2) large acreage producers, two (2) small acreage landowners and a research scientist from MSU. The resident would like to see more representation of the small acreage people. The Board members present felt that the current structure of the Board was good and noted that the Board meetings are open to the Public.
- The same property owner had asked Ansley to ask the Board if they would consider adding glyphosate to the Cost Share. There was a lot of discussion regarding the issue as glyphosate is not a selective herbicide. Ansley brought up the fact that there are some instances where it is the herbicide of choice such as elimination of yellow flag iris, Hofman moved to add glyphosate to the Cost Share specifically on a case by case basis. Littlefield seconded and the motion carried.

- Mainwaring had emailed some comments to Perry. He had a question regarding the Commercial Applicator in the Rocky Creek WMA sending out mailings regarding the grant. Commissioner Skinner requested a copy of the mailing and said he would look in to it.
- Mainwaring also brought up the organic farm that is in violation of the Landowner Maintenance program. Ansley and Jones inspected the area and the Canada thistle infestation on the right of way is still out of control. A letter was sent and the property owner has cut the thistle. The Board felt that the property owner needs to control the weeds or have his Landowner Maintenance agreement revoked. Commissioner Skinner recommended sending another letter to the landowner clearly stating the Weed District's position.
- Mainwaring also commented that he felt that the courtesy sprays are too time consuming and expensive. It is difficult to keep up with this and get all the county properties taken care of.

3. **Grants.** This item will be addressed in the Coordinator Report.

4. **Commissioner Report.** Commissioner Skinner reported that the County had received less money than anticipated but did not think there would be any changes to the Weed budget.

5. **Coordinator(s) Report.**

- Ansley reported that projects completed so far are: Cherry River, Greycliff, Cobblestone, Madison Dike, Arrowleaf Hills Park, Regional Park, Big Horn Sheep project, Dudley Creek Road, Logan Park, gravel pits (Brownell, Holzworth, Biggs Haugland, Cooper) and the Ethanol plant. Ansley has also sprayed MRL property above Clarkston. The county roads near West Yellowstone have been done and also the airport and the transfer station.
- The courtesy spray on the complaint property near Cameron Bridge has been done. Bell appreciated that and felt it was a good outreach to get the property owner started. We now need to get a weed management plan in place for the owner.
- Grant Update. Nearly all the funding has been spoken for on the Rocky Creek WMA and the Hebgen Basin WMA grants.
- Complaints/Enforcement. The complaints have been coming in at a steady rate. There is a property on Trail Creek Road that Ansley has discussed with the County Attorney. As the new Weed Law will not take effect until October 1, 2011 we are still able to follow the State Law and enter the property and treat the weeds. Commissioner Skinner recommended notifying the Sheriff's Department when we enter property to treat weeds. We are waiting for a response to the final non-compliance letter on a couple of other properties.
- Jones reported that the Longhorn Saloon property owner has sprayed some of the property but not all.
- Jones reported that he has been working with the Wildhorse Trail HOA. Of the seven (7) properties that they were going to file complaints against five (5) have been treated.
- We have been receiving a lot of complaints about property in the City of Bozeman, mainly Pete's Hill and property behind the library. Citizens are having issues getting through to the appropriate city officials and not getting any response. The Weed District has offered

the city the loan of a sprayer and some donated herbicide; however these items have not been picked up. One property owner has requested complaint forms in order to file formal complaints. Commissioner Skinner asked for copies of the complaints when they come in and he will talk to the city manager.

- The new computers are installed and working well.
  - Orange hawkweed. Ansley and Jones are working with Aspen Meadows homeowners and many are spraying for orange hawkweed. We will write a grant for the area this fall and try to cover the orange hawkweed area, and also Bridger Canyon for the leafy spurge and oxeye daisy. Littlefield has done a lot of work with orange hawkweed and gave a description of the plant and the wasp that he has released in the northwest part of the state for control. Another infestation was noted off Airport Road.
  - Japanese knotweed. An infestation of Japanese knotweed was reported on a city park across from City Hall. Ansley took a sample of the plant and had it positively identified at MSU. He contacted the city and cut the plants down and sprayed. He will keep monitoring the site for re-growth. Another report of Japanese knotweed was reported at the Bozeman Hot Springs. Jones inspected the site and showed the Board a photo. The plants seem to have been planted as a hedge. Commissioner Skinner told Ansley to contact the owner and discuss removal of the plants. Littlefield told Ansley to contact the Lincoln County Weed Coordinator regarding control measures as he has had experience with the plant.
  - Yellowflag iris was reported in a pond on private property up Bear Canyon. Ansley and Jones checked the site and have requested a site visit with the landowner to verify that the plant is in fact yellowflag iris.
  - Next week the crews will be spraying the two (2) BLM properties. August 13<sup>th</sup> is the crews last day. We are down to five crew members as one member was having some difficulty with the herbicides.
  - There will be a core equipment meeting on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Ansley will discuss purchasing a new truck with the Finance Director (Blackman).
6. **Round Table/Other.** Hofman asked about the rollover balance on budget sheet. Most of the figure is the Capital outlay that was not spent due to the Deputy settlement and some final year-end figures have yet to be posted.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20PM. The next meeting will be September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Perry, Secretary.