



**Gallatin County Weed Board  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
January 6, 2011**

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

**Others** present were Marty Lambert (County Attorney), Michelle Passmore (Extension Small Acreage Specialist), Marci Murnion (Conservation District), John Ansley (Coordinator), Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator) and Rosemary Perry (Secretary).

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

**2011 Chair Appointment.** The Board reviewed the rotation of the Chair position and Fred Bell moved to appoint Craig Morgan as Chair; Bob Hofman seconded and the motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Bell** asked if contact had been made with the Utility Companies regarding the weed management plan contract. Ansley has researched contact names and information and has sent out emails. He is waiting for replies.

**Bell** asked about the Weed Managers Meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. This will be held at the Bozeman Library from 9.30am to noon.

**Mainwaring** informed Ansley that there is a gas line project that is creating a disturbance between Bozeman and Belgrade.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Weed Law – Marty Lambert (County Attorney).** A series of questions or concerns had been sent to Lambert and he addressed them in order. With regard to the current Weed Law he feels this is cumbersome and would be hard to enforce. Lambert asked what the current procedure is for enforcement. Lambert would like to see the forms that are currently used during the enforcement process; he would like to see a contract drawn up between the Weed District and property owners who are in violation of the Montana County Weed Act. According to the current version of the Weed Law state statute does not require a court order to enter property if the formal contact procedure has been adhered to. In the proposed changes we would be required to get a court order for an inspection of the property. Lambert felt that this would make the process cumbersome and suggested watching the progress of the bill closely. The Weed District can hire a commercial applicator to do enforcement work however we would need to make sure they carry appropriate insurance and that the County and Weed District are indemnified in the insurance coverage. With regards to whether the complaints should be in writing or not Lambert felt we should leave our process as is. Written complaints will take priority over verbal reports. There is a proposal in the new legislature that property in violation of the weed law be posted. Lambert felt that this is not a good change and recommended that the Gallatin County Weed District not do this. With regard to the proposal to add a civil fine to the process Ansley felt that we would not go with that. Lambert made some recommendations; add deadlines to documentation; develop short contract for landowner and get signatures; when landowner calls or emails to say they have had weed control done request copies of receipts consistency is the

key. Lambert would like Ansley to put together the current forms and develop a short compliance contract and submit them to him for review. Bell thanked Lambert for his time and guidance on the Weed Law process.

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

- Bell asked about the Conservation District wishing to merge natural resource agencies into a building that they are contemplating purchasing. Ansley informed him that he had met with the Commissioners, Finance Officer, and Conservation District representative this morning and the move would not be feasible.
- Bell commented on the fact that the Department of Agriculture had complimented us on our grant applications.
- Bell commented on the fact that Wagner's Nursery had dropped the booth fee for an educational booth at their Spring Flower and Garden Show. He felt that this was a good venue for us and appreciated that the nursery was willing to drop the fee in order to accommodate us.
- Mainwaring commented on the price of wiper blades for one of the trucks. The cost is standard for truck wiper blades.
- Bell asked about the NPDES Permits. This is something that we will have to do in order to be in compliance with the DEQ; however we were not budgeted for the new permits and will have to draw funds from another area. The process has not been completed yet by the DEQ.
- As two (2) Board members needed to leave due to other commitments Michelle Passmore asked the Weed Board if they were planning to continue providing the truck and fuel for the Small Acreage Resource program. The Board is committed to continuing the program.
- Ansley read part of an Emergency Budget email that he had received from the Commission to the Board. All non essential purchases have been temporarily suspended.
- Bell asked Mainwaring about the FW&P legislature that was being proposed. Washburn is proposing that the FW&P budget for purchasing and maintaining property be reversed from 80% for purchase and 20% maintenance to 20% purchase and 80% maintenance until they get caught up with maintenance issues that include weed control.

## **3. Commissioner Report.** None

## **4. Coordinator(s) Report.**

- Ansley asked the Board what their thoughts were on Eurasian water milfoil? The county is not set up for this and we do not have the budget to address the issue. After discussion the Board felt that the Department of Agriculture should head up the program and the Weed District would cooperate wherever possible.
- Ansley and Jones have been continuing with the Shop clean-up and getting the rentals refurbished. They are taking the booms off the rentals and replacing them with boominator nozzles.
- The Fairgrounds mechanic has almost finished servicing the trucks. Ansley brought up a safety issue with the Dodge as it carries a 500 gallon tank and the bed of the truck is high. The mechanic has recommended that we install air shocks for stability and safety. Even though the shocks are expensive the Board felt that this was a justifiable safety measure.
- The MWCA Group membership has been renewed.
- The KBOZ Home Show is on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ansley and Jones will man the booth. If any Board members would like to stop by for a couple of hours they would be welcome.
- The Weed District was invited to attend the Montana Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup>. A survey was sent out asking counties involved how they are set up to handle aquatics. We are not. There was discussion regarding changing the

noxious weed list to remove the aquatic species and put them on a separate list and also develop an aquatic invasive species trust fund. The Weed District could spend some time on a survey, a hand-pull or a treatment. Time factors will not be known until we know if the budget will be cut once again. There are permits required even for a hand pull of EWM (creates turbidity in the water). The permit for the hand-pull took 3 days to write; a permit for herbicide treatment would take considerably longer. The Advisory Council is trying to find a way to waive the permitting process for hand pulling. In 2010 we did a Eurasian water milfoil survey on the Jefferson River which was not completed. We hosted a EWM workshop and participated in a hand-pull with FWP. The plan for the 2011 field season will be to complete the survey.

- Upcoming meetings are: MWCA Annual Conference next week; Montana Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council meeting in Helena on January 19<sup>th</sup>; core equipment meeting January 26<sup>th</sup>; Big Sky Weed Committee meeting January 10<sup>th</sup>; and our Weed Managers Meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**5. Public Comment.** Michelle Passmore informed those present that she has been officially hired for another year and will continue to provide small acreage assistance for another year. The meeting adjourned at 2.55PM. The next meeting will be on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Perry, Secretary.