



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

May 4th , 2017 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Jeff Littlefield, Keith Mainwaring, Fred Bell, and Steve Saunders.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator), Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator), Danielle Jones (Program Assistant), Don Siefert (Commissioner), Glenn Colclough (Commercial Applicator), and Brad Bauer (Natural Resources Extension Agent).

MINUTES: Keith moved to accept the minutes as written, Fred 2nd the motion, and all approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Jeff asked for clarification about purchasing Liberate surfactant separate from the herbicide bid. John explained that there is no equivalent for Liberate and only two suppliers carry it (Crop Production and Ag Depot), so he did not include it in the bid. He contacted the two suppliers and got quotes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Brad Bauer gave an update on Extension activities. John and Mike are going to present at the Small Acreage Management class, which is in its fourth year. The Agriculture Agent position has been vacant since April, and probably will not be filled until August or September. Dara Palmer is serving in the plant clinic here in the office this summer on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Extension is hoping to make that position more permanent by creating a combined horticulture/forestry position with the Conservation District. The demand for plant identification is huge and the Schutter Lab on campus takes in a lot of samples from Gallatin County. John and Mike frequently take weed samples up to the lab for identification. The plant clinic is separate from Schutter lab; it was started a few years ago through Master Gardener, but now it is through Extension.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Monthly Report Q&A, Discussion Included:**
 - The \$200 paid to the Montana BioControl project is an annual donation to the project.
 - Hoover Way subdivision is located on Thomas Drive, off of Baxter Lane. Subdivisions submit a Weed Management Plan to the Weed District for approval, and they have to follow the plan to get an MOU with the District before final plat is granted.
 - Burr buttercup is a ranunculus with tiny yellow flowers and spiny seed pods.
 - The payment to First West is a quarterly payment for liability insurance. This amount will be adjusted now that there will not be seasonal employees.
 - Mike got his license to do inspections for the Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage program. He will be a backup, Larry Holzworth will do most of the inspections.
 - When a resident asks how much 2,4-D to add to a 2-gallon hand sprayer, John and Mike advise 1-2 ounces per gallon. With a larger sprayer, it will depend on how it is calibrated. Steve suggested a general rule of 1-4% herbicide solution, depending on the plant species and time of year spraying.
- **Commissioner Report**
 - Don presented John with a pin and certificate in recognition of his 10 years working for the county.

- **Coordinators Reports**

- Mike and Danielle attended the MWCA Southwest Area Meeting on April 18th. John Moodry is now the chair. Discussion at the meeting included a legislative update. HB126, which would provide stable funding for the statewide Weed Coordinator position, and a bill that would raise fishing license fees to fund aquatic invasive projects, will likely pass. The education trailer will be replaced with a bigger one that is 18-20 feet long, with new wrap that focuses on terrestrial weeds. SW Area Crew Training will be on May 30-June 1st in Whitehall. Mike and Danielle will attend.
- The Annual Weed Manager's Meeting was held April 26th, with 18 people attending. Forest Service, Big Sky Weed Committee, Gallatin Valley Land Trust, MSU, MT Conservation Corp, MT Department of Transportation, and Fish Wildlife and Parks were represented. At the meeting FWP discussed the healthy flea beetle population at Headwaters Park and the possibility of having a collection site there, the addition of Play-Clean-Go signage at various sites, and weed control at FA sites this summer. GVLТ mentioned that Melissa Bradford will spray trails again; the Weed District will donate some herbicide. The Weed District will collaborate with MDT to spray road cuts on Highway 86. The BSWC/Trout Unlimited weed pull will occur on June 10th and the Big Sky community weed pull will be on June 27th. The Weed District will participate in a spray day in Big Sky with Madison county on July 26th and 27th. BSWC is participating in the Give Big fundraiser.
- Equipment Update: The spray trucks were rewired. The new truck now has the spray tank installed. The 2002 Chevy has an electrical issue and will go to Farr Automotive for repairs.
- There were no cuts to the FY 2018 startup budget. There will be \$5500 savings on rent because of adjustments since the Fairgrounds moved out of the building; however, now utilities will not be covered. The department is requesting a promotion for Danielle to expand her job duties to include property inspections, education, etc. when needed, although main duties will still be in the office. The department will therefore request an increase of only \$200 for the overall FY18 budget. Don suggested that the board submit a letter of support for the promotion as a part of the request.
- John and Mike will talk about weeds at the upcoming Small Acreage class with Extension. Farm Fair is on May 9-11th, and MSU will attend one of those days. Budget meetings are on May 9th and 10th. The Beartrap spray day and the open house with Extension will occur on May 18th. The Gateway Youth Group weed pull will happen on May 19th.

- **Roundtable**

- John has been spraying around the Fairgrounds. Mike has been editing weed articles from Chantelle to distribute to the Belgrade News. Steve suggested sending them to the Chronicle, and Don suggested the West Yellowstone Star.
- The road contractors will pick up herbicide soon. They will start spraying between May 15 and June 1st, with all the work done by August 15 and touchup in the fall if needed. Steve asked if John and Mike are seeing a lot of whitetop. They are not seeing it so much on roadsides, but do see it in fields in some places. It is flowering right now, and it is a good time to spray it.

Meeting dismissed at 2:25 pm

Next scheduled meeting: June 1st, 2017, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones

Program Assistant