



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

March 7th, 2019 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Keith Mainwaring, Steve Saunders, Noelle Orloff, Bob Hofman, and Fred Bell.
- **Others:** Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator), Danielle Jones (Program Assistant), Jennifer Mohler (Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance).

MINUTES: Fred moved to accept the minutes as written, Bob seconded, and all approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Public Comment:** Jennifer Mohler from Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance gave her annual update about the organization. She reviewed the 2018 Annual Report, including achievements in conservation (e.g. bighorn sheep winter range improvement, community weed pulls, etc.) and education (e.g. billboards in the Gallatin Canyon, outreach through the PlayCleanGo campaign, landowner site visits, wildflower/weed hikes, the Crail Ranch native garden, etc.) in the past year.
- **Monthly Report Q&A:**
 - Discussion included recent subdivision Weed Management Plans.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - Commissioner MacFarlane was absent.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant Hearing.** Mike attended the hearings in Helena on March 5th. He presented to the Trust Fund Council the North Bridgers Weed Management Area grant application, which included a request for \$20,000 of grant funding, with landowners providing an additional \$20,000. Most spraying will be done with a helicopter, including approximately 1000 acres of sulfur cinquefoil, spotted knapweed and diffuse knapweed being treated this summer. The Weed District will spend a couple of days helping the landowners spray roadsides in the project area, with some additional time spent monitoring weed populations before and after the spraying is done.
 - **SW Area Commercial/Private Applicator Training.** Danielle attended the training and gave a summary of the topics that were discussed, including invasive annual grass control, an update on biocontrol resources, pesticide law, and an update on AIS in Montana.
 - **Road Spraying Bids.** In February, two county road spraying contracts were put out for bid, one for roads south and west of Bozeman and south of Belgrade (contract 1), and one for roads near Clarkston/Three Forks and other outlying areas (contract 2). Both contracts will last for three years. NPK, Montana Spraying Company, WMA Specialists, and Stan's Weed Control all submitted bids for both contracts. There was some discussion about safety requirements and quality control; the contractors will be responsible for overseeing all activities associated with spraying. Mike

summarized the bid amounts for the Board, and Montana Spraying Company had the lowest bid for both contracts. Steve moved to accept the bids from Montana Spraying Company for contract 1 and contract 2, with the stipulations that they provide their proof of insurance that shows they have the minimum amount of insurance that is required, and that they clarify that the quote that they provided is good for each of the three years of the contracts, with no annual increases. Fred 2nd the motion, and all approved. There was a discussion about the value of including mapping in future contracts, specifically the areas being sprayed and the location of weeds in the right-of-way. It may be an important tool for measuring the effectiveness of weed management efforts over time, justifying costs, and keeping better track of the exact areas that are being sprayed. There would need to be consideration for the potential costs associated with mapping.

- **Upcoming Events.** Mike reviewed upcoming Weed District events. The annual Weed Managers meeting will be held on April 24th at the Weed District office. Mike and Jen Mohler will conduct an educational event for the Gateway Youth Group on April 26th ; this has been an annual event. The Youth Group also asked them to participate in the Environmental Leadership Summit at the Flying D ranch in May. Students from schools in the Gallatin Gateway area will rotate through various stations throughout the day, and Mike and Jen will have a station about ways people can prevent the spread of weeds. Mike and Danielle will attend a MWCA Professional Development training March 27-28th in Bozeman.
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - Steve requested that the Weed District inquire with NRCS about the EQUIP program, which has recently been expanded to provide funds for fighting the invasive grasses ventenata and medusahead. Money may be available through this program for landowners in Gallatin County to fight ventenata. The program operates by creating a partnership between NRCS and a landowner, and NRCS provides cost share funds for controlling ventenata on their property. The role of the Weed District would be to help promote the program, but would not involve managing the funds. Money for this program has already been earmarked for Big Horn County. Steve will contact those working on the project in other locations to get more information for the next board meeting, and the Weed District will follow-up with NRCS.
 - Steve mentioned how the development of tools for mapping ventenata using satellite imagery has been moving forward with great promise, and there are direct implications for the management and control of ventenata on a large scale.

Meeting dismissed at 2:50 pm

Next scheduled meeting: April 4th, 2019, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones, Program Assistant