

Chelan County
Noxious Weed Control Board
Meeting Minutes September 8, 2015

Board Members

Dirk Veleke, Board Chair
Ken Bauer
Fred Smith
Joe Grentz

NW Dept. Staff & Guests

Mike Mackey, NW Control, Coordinator
Julie Sanderson – NW Field Supervisor
Jean Postlethwaite - Recorder
Dale Whaley – WSU Regional Extension
Specialist

Open Meeting – Board Chair Dirk Veleke called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve minutes for the June 10, 2015 Board meeting. Joe moved and Fred seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Coordinator Report

- 1. Insect Release** – Dale Whaley reported 196 releases for 2015, (159 in 2014) on 42 sites, (29 for 2014). A total of 40,227 Biological Weed Control Agents were released (29 for 2014). See report attached. Dale anticipates an increase in biological work next year due to the fires. Discussion followed. Fred asked about the consequences of the galerucella beetle species released on Purple loosestrife in Portland, OR. Dale assured the Board there is no risk to local industry concerns.
- 2. Puncturevine** – Jean reported there are a total of 968 Puncturevine cases in the County, 823 in Wenatchee. Of that total 348 have demonstrated compliance for at least 3 years and have been assigned a ‘No Action Needed’ status. This year we sent 534 Puncturevine Reminder Letters in early June. Of those 336 property owners responded in some way—with a Control Plan, email, phone call, or office visit—leaving 198 who did not respond at all. Those property owners were sent a Puncturevine Follow-up letter September 2.

Discussion followed. Fred asked what was happening with irrigation districts. Dirk suggested we hold a special meeting with irrigation ditch and district managers, County Commissioners and Prosecuting Attorney. The meeting would serve as an education forum with a focus on Puncturevine and provide opportunity to explain the Noxious Weed program, Washington State RCWs and to relieve concerns about applying chemical treatments along open ditch lines. Dirk also suggested we call Kittitas County and ask Mark Eyler about the KRD Irrigation Ditch spray program.

- 3. Musk Thistle** – Julie and Mike. We have 7 known Musk thistle sites after last year’s survey. Terry sprayed those 3 weeks ago. There are also 2 more infestations on Stemilt property. Those have not been sprayed. We know of 3-4 Scotch thistle sites, 1 in Manson and 1 in Chelan. One in Malaga has rosettes even after spraying. Julie will recommend to the owners that they broadcast spray the entire area; spot spraying is not effective.
- 4. Grants and Budget**
Grants. Mike reported on the purpose and status of current grants. The Dept. of Ecology grant requires more in expenditures of in-kind dollars which we may not be able to meet thus requiring the return of dollars. We’re

hoping for another WSDA grant. The Title II application process for Crupina Control is not yet complete; we anticipate an award of approximately \$20,000 which will provide 2, 10-day crews. Costs for transportation, equipment and supplies are shared between the County Noxious Weed Dept. and Forest Service. And Forest Service crews have been giving private property a more equitable share of time spent on the ground. The Knotweed fund account is \$35,316 for July 1, 15 to June 30, 2017. Grants are starting to 'dry up'. We will continue to take advantage of grants as they become available but must be mindful about becoming 'grant poor', spending more time servicing grants than carrying out our core function.

Budget. In 2016 we will need to revisit our assessment. The existing assessment of \$212,000 is a static figure and does not adjust with inflation and increased costs. It is derived from property parcel count; however, we have only received about \$180,000 of our total assessment each year. The shortfall results from delinquent payments and exempt properties. The disparity between our total assessment and actual dollars received is approximately 85% of the total assessment. We've had a 25% increase in salaries, 25% increase in benefits as well as increased costs in operations. If the Commissioners agree to set a Public Hearing we will follow the process. Dirk asked the Board for discussion on a proposed increase of Assessment. Discussion followed. Mike will present the 2016 budget to the Board of Commission October 19th. He invited Board members to attend.

Fred presented a motion; "Request an increase in the 2016 Noxious Weed Assessment for six years in the amount of \$7.50 per parcel, and an additional .05 cents an acre for parcels over 1 acre." Fred moved to accept the motion and Ken seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Reports

1. Burned areas survey and education. Mike is working with the Cooperative Extension to insure weed abatement is part of the rehabilitation planning. The Conservation District is overseeing the letting of restoration contracts following the recent fires in Chelan County. Dirk asked about any changes to policies related to grazing and logging. Mike responded that Senator Maria Cantwell is presenting a bill to Congress which will require FEMA to step in as well as other changes to Federal law.
2. Milfoil Project - Mike and Julie. The project is done and considered successful. It brought attention to the need for Milfoil eradication in the Columbia River. Mike has had 3 meeting presentations. Julie has surveyed and resurveyed twice since the treatment. Milfoil was killed and did not harm the native Narrow Leaf pond weeds, which are completing their natural cycle and is being confused with milfoil debris. In reality the Milfoil is decaying and drifting to the bottom. Triclopyr TEA, trade name Renovate, was used. Marcie, the PUD Aquatic Invasives Specialist and Julie observed there is still a 'forest' of Milfoil outside the 20-acre project area. Julie talked to the PUD harvester operator who observed how much easier it was to harvest. Grant funded surveys in 2014 found 1,000 acres of milfoil in 2 pools on the Columbia River in Chelan County.
3. 2016 County Noxious Weed List.
This year there will be 4 weeds proposed for addition to the 2016 State Noxious Weed List at the hearings in November. The new list will be released in December. Ventenata grass will be proposed as a Class B, Medusa Head Class C and Fox Glove and English Hawthorne, both ornamentals, will also be proposed as additions to the Class C list. The Noxious Weed Department staff will send proposed changes to the County Weed List to the Board in November with the current Control on ROW policy.

Roundtable Discussion

Meeting Adjourned. Joe moved and Fred seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Board Chair, Dirk Veleke adjourned the meeting at 8:00.

The next meeting will be **December 8, 2015 at 1:30pm**

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