

Chelan County
Noxious Weed Control Board
Meeting Minutes December 13, 2016

Board Members

Fred Smith - Chair
Dirk Veleke
Joe Grentz

NW Dept. Staff & Guests

Mike Mackey, NW Coordinator
Julie Sanderson – NW Field Supervisor
Jean Postlethwaite - Recorder
Nancy Redlin – Roadside Vegetation Mgr.

Open Meeting

Fred Smith called the meeting to order at 1:28 pm.

Consent Agenda

Dirk moved and Ken seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the September 13th, 2016 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Coordinator Report

1. 2017 Final Budget

The budget for 2017 totals \$318,000 with revenue and expenditures in balance. The current balance in the fund is \$70,000 and will be sufficient to carry us through March 2017 with payroll and purchase of supplies and equipment to start the field season. With the current assessment it is unlikely we will need to borrow against the general fund next year.

2. Irrigation Districts Meeting

We are coordinating our outreach to irrigation ditch/district managers with Craig Gyselinck, Program Manager for Cascadia Conversation District. Craig has direct experience working with ditch managers. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss noxious weed control options along ditch banks and ROWs. Two speakers representing chemical companies have agreed to present. The focus of these presentations will be on what is already being done by ditch managers in Eastern Washington and what can be done locally. Ditch managers will also be invited to attend our annual Weed Management Workshop Feb. 21 at the CTC.

3. Grants

We have joined with 10 agencies to participate in a 2-year Flowering rush survey. \$99,000 has been requested from WA ST Dept. of Ecology to survey the Columbia River from Chief Joseph Dam to Rock Island Dam. Funding in previous years was provided by WSU Extension and WA ST Dept. of Agriculture on the control effort in the Columbia River near Entiat. To eradicate Flowering rush, the plants must be removed. While plants above the surface may die off the rhizomes beneath the surface survive to continue the growth cycle. The goal is to remove the Flowering rush using a suction assisted hand removal tool. Flowering rush is not frequently found in Washington State. It was found to be growing in the Pend Oreille River and in Lake Pend Oreille. In Western Washington infestations have been found in just two lakes. A rapid response to its presence is widely supported.

4. State of Montana/Quagga Zebra mussels

The State of Montana recently declared a state of emergency after Quagga Zebra mussels were discovered in 2 lakes. The Chelan Co. PUD is sitting in on conference calls with them to learn what Montana is doing. Mike has relayed this concern to the Chelan County Commissioners. Damage

caused by this invasive species poses a serious economic threat.

5. Garden loosestrife in Fish Lake

Chelan County Noxious weed board will apply to the Dept. of Ecology Grant for chemical treatment of Garden loosestrife along the north shore of Fish Lake. Julie is in the process of discovering ownership of these parcels in preparation to apply for this offering. The application process will open in October of 2017 and close 30 days later in November. We have an existing aquatic permit which should be a positive factor in consideration of our application. While timing of control is critical, there may be unforeseen delays prior to the award due to the USFS environmental protection requirements.

Other Reports

1. Developers of Open Ground and Weed Control

We have been successful in having Noxious Weed control RCW 17.10.140 added directly to the plat map. Typically a municipality's Code Enforcer and/or Fire Marshall deal with nuisance weeds. And cities in our County have ordinances to deal with "tall" vegetation. Chelan just hired a code enforcer in response to an increasing number of complaints. We have taken action by working with home owner associations who may have covenants prohibiting the growth of noxious weeds or other noxious plants and need additional resources or recommendations for specific properties. Not all property associations are receptive to the problem or to our approach.

Julie asked about preventative measures i.e. hydro seeding. Dirk suggested these plans should involve soil scientists and botanists or "science guys" to recommend species-appropriate seed mixes. Many of these mixes are slow to establish and they have been known to contain intermediate weed species. The best time to seed, according to Dirk, is the day before the first snow. Timing is critical. Inspections are important.

Nancy asked about the status of Eurasian watermilfoil in Domke Lake. Julie responded that funding is needed.

2. Discussion of 2017 noxious weed list - Julie

The only change to the County Noxious Weed list for 2017 is the reclassification of Ravenna grass from a Class A to a B Designate. Our current ROW policy allows us to control anything listed plant growing on or along ROWs. Where Ravenna grass is found in those settings, a strong application of Roundup and surfactant will be used. Owners will still be required to prevent seed production by removing the tops before the plants go to seed.

Dirk: Is it still on the State Quarantine List?

An education effort will be initiated this summer to contact property owners known to have Ravenna grass and advise them of their responsibility to prevent seed production of this Class B Designate. You recall last year we used grant funds award through the State Weed Board to spray the grass with permission where ever it was found.

The 2017 State Weed List has been approved and County Weed Boards are required to approve it within 90 days. Scheduling requirements did not allow time for the required 10-day legal notice prior to a local Weed Board Hearing so it will be approved at the March meeting.

Board Roundtable

Nancy reported on spraying Poison Oak and the need to educate applicators. Poison Oak is not a noxious weed but it is difficult to control.

Mike: Terry Lillybridge is retired now and we need to find a summer seasonal employee for 6-8 months a year. We intend to hire someone earlier in the year to allow time for training before the summer field season begins. Tayna will continue to serve as our Knotweed Program and Grant Specialist

Joe: Is the Horse Lake Road vicinity in your radar? There is a bad infestation of Puncturevine at the lower end along the Dormier orchard properties. Mike reported seeing dodder, too.

[Prior to the end of the meeting, the Board entered into an executive session for the Coordinator's annual performance evaluation.]

The meeting was reopened with no action taken 2:30 PM.

Meeting Adjourned. Fred Smith adjourned the meeting at 2:45 P.M.

The next meeting will be March 14, 2017 at 1:30 pm