

PENNINGTON COUNTY WEED & PEST BOARD

Pennington County Weed & Pest Office

3607 Cambell Street, Rapid City, SD

Wednesday, May 11, 2016 12:30 pm

Members Present:

Dennie Mann, Chairman
Bert Jocks, Vice Chairman
Paul Paulson
Lyndell Petersen, County Commissioner

Members Absent:

Brain Barber

Others Present:

Scott Guffey, Director
LouAnn Blain, Administrative Assistant
Milt Harr, Badlands National Park Ecologist
Chaney O'dell, FS Grasslands, Wall District Range Management Specialist
Brennan Hauk, National Park Services Invasive Species Coordinator

Dennie Mann called the meeting to order at 12:31 p.m.

Additional Items / Approve Agenda

Paul Paulson made a motion to approve the agenda with no additional items for today's Board Meeting, seconded by Bert Jocks, motion carried. Motion to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2016 meeting made by Paulson and seconded by Jocks, motion carried.

Budget Report

Guffey handed out the budget for review. Explained the 2 supplements to MPB Budget, Nieman and \$38,000 RAC Grant which was left over from last year. \$150,000 + to carry us through this fall. Weed & Pest Budget looks good. Upkeep of vehicles happens on rainy days. \$40,000 surplus, this will be offset by the addition of another employee which will make our field work more efficient.

OLD BUSINESS

Mt Pine Beetle Update / Shaded Fuel Break Update

The marking was done in the early part of April. Forest Service has had the data. An amendment to the participating agreement has been made. We have \$150,000 with \$130,000 fluctuating. This will go out to a bid process. Guffey estimates that it will come back at \$300 per acre. This gets complicated because of the avenues to sell the product also.

2016 Weed Spraying Agreements

Forest Service agreement is in place with 658 total acres in several parcels. Last year there was 400+ acres. Guffey shared map details live via tablet and wall monitor. We will be working with different contacts since Gene is gone. Plans are to start on this a bit sooner this year because of the rainfall and the extra acres to do. The department has 5 Full Time and 6 seasonal employees. The additional employee would allow the department to run 4 (2) man crews. Each seasonal employee costs about \$10,000. DOT, RR, and Hwy agreements are all done and approved. Guffey met with City of Rapid City, Lon VanDusesen and Tim Forester, things seem a bit clearer. Road district letter was emailed out to the districts contacts. Guffey has received a lot of response. The letter stated the statute and it seems to be drawing a lot of calls. Our services were offered and 4 Road Districts have signed up this far. There are 20 townships that will be mailed too.

Pennington County Chemical Cost-Share Program

The cost-share program uses the \$6000 from the state weed & pest commission for reimbursement. This will be a 50/50 cost share for chemical or commercial service for spraying. The attorney and the auditor have looked at the letter and approved it. The goal is to help people purchase the proper herbicide and be trained in the proper way to spray weeds. Press release to be sent out next week and it will be in our compliance letters and on the web site.

Japanese Beetle

Guffey met the early part of April with City, State, plus others, and the groundskeepers from affected areas to combine efforts of the Japanese Beetle work. Warne Chemical has done the spraying in the St Martin and other areas. Numbers are declining. May be no need to spray next year, just watch the adult survey trap counts. The state plans to survey around some nurseries, city on city park properties, and the county on private property. Last year's spraying seemed to decrease it by 70%. Guffey received 30 traps to put out from the state. RedRocks golf course will be a new area along with NAU on Hwy 16.

Sheep Mountain Common Mullein

Frank Bloom complained to Paul Paulson about a growing common mullein problem near Scenic, SD. Paul Paulson on 1/26 passed on a Common Mullein complaint from Frank Bloom. It's coming from the Badlands National Park to Buffalo Gap National Grasslands to Frank's

alfalfa field. Guffey has talked to Frank Bloom and has organized a tour to look at the problem with Mr. Bloom, along with representatives from Badlands National Park Service, Buffalo Gap National Grasslands, and SD Dept of Agriculture. A field tour was rained out in early April, but met later on April 20th with Mr Bloom, Guffey and representatives from the SD Dept of Ag, Buffalo Gap National Grasslands, and Badlands National Park. The mullein in the BNP on Sheep Mountain is bad. Plans are to spray on the grasslands to minimize the impacts on private lands. Brennan Hauk shared that travelling back to Redshirt he other bad spots. This is an ongoing long problem over many years. The best procedure would be burning along with a spraying plan. Janet Vandermay, the weed & pest supervisor from Jackson County is working on it as well. The Federal funding is a concern, Guffey suggested getting calling a Badlands Weed Management Committee meeting. Guffey and Mel will work together to get a date set for the meeting in the park.

NEW BUSINESS

2017 Budgets

Commissioners gave direction. Wages were frozen on this first go around of the budget. Guffey is requesting 30,000 in the weed and pest budget, for a vehicle replacement. Guffey handed out a detailed report. Revenue increased with the biggest jump in the weed spraying. MPB account has been renamed the Natural Resource Management Fund. This has covered the MPB, West Nile areas in the past. Salary change shown relates to health care. Revenue projected is Zero at this point. RAC dollars/Title II dollars of \$244,000 is out there. Guffey plans to ask for weed control project and shaded fuel break project. There are some old title III funds that need to be zeroed out as per direction from the state auditor. We plan to zero it out and put it into the shaded fuel breaks. Next budget hearing will be in June with the Final Budget due September.

Black Hills Invasive Weed Working Group

Pine Beetle seems to be fading. The working group will continue to meet for forest health issues. The two working groups encouraged at the last meeting were Forest Health and Mitigation/Forestry and Invasive Weeds. April 28th was the first meeting for invasive weeds with a good turnout of 20+ people. Next meeting will be June 9th at the outdoor campus. Suggestion was made to include the mines and gravel pits. Next meeting will be about programs creating awareness. The plan is to work on a priority listing for weed species and the use of ED maps as a possible data base to create a large clearing house.

Invasive Weed Management Training (Rapid City May 17th at the Outdoor Campus)

13th Annual – one will be held in Rapid City and one in Pierre on the 19th. Sprayer application, first aide, ATV certification/ safety courses will be available. Training AND lunch are free. WY groups have been in attendance.

SD Professional's Range Camp (Sturgis June 8-10)

This is put on by SDSU and the Grasslands recommended by Guffey who plans to go to it again. Paulsen made a motion and Jocks seconded approval of the training. The session offers training and knowledge in labeling of different grass types.

Crew Update

4 full-time employees are busy spraying. All the guard rails/cattle guards/bridge bare ground has been sprayed. The android tablets and mapping with GPS are new for us and they seem to work well for mapping. Guffey talked to the Sheriff Department about safety for applicators spraying along the road. People are not being careful or respectful when driving by. Sherriff sent out patrols to watch for violators of the move over law. Seasonals begin 5/23. Additional employee, he will start next week and get trained before the seasonals come. RC Code enforcement was contacted to see about their ability to handle the complaint calls for weeds in the city limits. Canadian Thistle seems to be the main city weed. Meeting is planned to figure out the protocol for this transition. Brennan shared that there are information pamphlets he could share with the city to disburse for information. The county takes care of the small patches of spotted knapweed and spurge in the city.

New cold storage shop has been wired. Garage door opener options were wired.

AGENCY REPORTS

Milt shared pictures of the last year's badlands overview of weed. Data collected over The North unite which is 120,000 acres with ½ of it being wilderness. Guessing 60,000 acres of prairie and they are able to treat about 3000 acres each season. The park has been too big to fully inventory. 5 Biotechs and seasonals will be hired. The park will use ATVs and spray on foot. Helicopter spraying is coming. There is a possibility of sending the helicopter over old prairie dog towns to try to get control over the weeds. Canada Thistle is high priority, with common mullein 2nd. Not treating cheat grass and clover. Prioritize and go. Goal is to be a good neighbor. Brennan stated that Mt Rushmore is serviced by the crew.

Chancy O'dell, 1 seasonal for UTV spraying. Biocontrol for Canada Thistle around dams. Horay Cress started then, sickle weeds, then sulfur cinquefoil, Canada thistle. Guffey asked for sharing of weed spots and the Helicopter rate is \$14 and this seems real good for large acres (covered area needs to be \$5 per acre to be reasonable). He can do 12A per load with a 20 Ft span covered.

ADJOURN

Jocks made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:08 p.m., seconded by Paulson.

Next meeting will be June 29, 2016.

Submitted by LouAnn Blain