

PENNINGTON COUNTY WEED & PEST BOARD
Pennington County Weed & Pest Office
3607 Cambell Street, Rapid City, SD
Wednesday, March 8, 2016 12:30 pm Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Bert Jocks, Chairman
Brian Barber, Vice Chairman
George Ferebee, County Commissioner
Dennie Mann
Paul Paulsen

Members Absent:

Others Present:

Scott Guffey, Director
Max Bailey, Staff Assistant
Marty Petersen, Invasive Species Coordinator, BHNH
Tyrell Schmelz, SDGF&P

Dennie Mann called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Additional Items / Approve Agenda

Motion by Barber to approve the agenda, seconded by Paulsen, motion carried. Motion by Jocks to approve minutes for the December 7, 2016 meeting. Paul Paulsen seconded the motion, motion carried.

Election of Officers

Motion by Paulsen to elect Jocks as Chairman, seconded by Barber, motion carried and Jocks is elected to Chairman. Motioned by Jocks to elect Barber as Vice Chairman, seconded by Paulsen, Barber elected to Vice Chairman.

Budget Report

Auditor's budget report for the Weed & Pest (615) and Natural Resources (616) budgets was presented. A couple of new spray handguns, postage stamps, helmet visors and bar and chain oil were among some of the items. Some poison oats were sold at the beginning of the year, which is good, so not have them sitting around the shop for the summer.

OLD BUSINESS

Weed & Pest Board – Municipality Representative, County Commission Liaison

Dennie Mann was reappointed as a board member representing Rapid City. The new County Commission liaison is George Ferebee, alternate is Mark DeSanto.

Mountain Pine Beetle/ Shaded Fuel Break Update

The current Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic is essentially over. Guffey showed powerpoint of a density maps from 2010 thru 2016. It originally started around Beaver Park in 2009. It moved over to Rochford by 2012 and then to Custer and west of Spearfish Canyon. It peaked out in 2013 with 34,000 acres affected. 2017 is looking like a lot less MPB infestation. From 2009 to 2015 130,000 acres were mapped, with over half of that in Pennington County. High fire danger with all of the dead trees in the county. Dr. John Ball says the next epidemic is starting now with all the new regeneration of trees is growing and in about 20 years will be the perfect environment for the Mountain Pine Beetle. The crew is currently working on the shaded fuel break on Edelweiss Mountain Road and the project is coming along. This ensures the residents of the area will be able to evacuate the area safely during an emergency event like a wildfire. It also opens up the canopy over the road, allowing more snow melting and less winter maintenance by the county highway department. Some of the work must be done by hand due to the protection of wildlife timing areas. Sanford Timber Company was the only bidder on the project, some contractors are interested in the timber only and some the fuels work only. Few companies willing to do both, next project we will bid the timber and fuels separately. Guffey mentioned the diamond head mower and skidsteer, in which the left over money from the MPB budget wasn't available due to county short falls in 2017 in other budgets. Guffey will request the equipment in the 2018. With the purchase of the equipment, our crew could do the majority of fuels mitigation work more efficiently than our crew could do contractors. Revenue would be generated by selling the timber within the project to offset the county cost.

SD Weed & Pest Commission Grant Applications

Pennington received a \$5000 through the county grants available to all counties that meet the guidelines, also approved for \$15,000 competitive grant for the salt cedar along the Cheyenne river, will plan on working on it late summer into fall and winter if need be.

SD Weed & Pest Conference, February 22-24, Huron, SD

Guffey and Craig Smith attended, as there needed to be two representatives present to qualify for the county grants. DOW is introducing a new 2,4-D chemistry in product called Freelex with less drift and low odor. Association of SD County Weed & Pest Boards is currently in the process of hiring a new executive secretary.

Prairie Dog Enforcement Update

Three filed complaints, one on Bradsky Road. Guffey went and checked on it and there were still some dogs running around. Zinc Phosphide Oats are what is mainly used. Pre-bait is laid down and then three days later the poison oats are laid down. The later in the winter is the better time to poison, usually seeing 80-90% success rate. There are also smoke bombs that may be used but they can be more dangerous.

NEW BUSINESS

2017 Weed Spraying Agreements

BHNF agreement is for 569 acres on Forest Service at \$130 an acre. \$10,000 Title funds to be used on Forest Service land that will target oxeye daisy and spotted knapweed. DOT should be for \$25,000 contract. SD railroad has a contract of \$6,000. \$144,000 is what was budgeted out for this year in projected revenue, shouldn't be an issue in meeting that.

Chemical Cost-share Program

Was offered last year for the first time, a 50-50 cost share program for private landowners capped at \$100 reimbursement. 35 landowners participated at a 50/50 rate, coming out to \$208,016 dollars. This is more efficient because the landowner are being directed to use proper herbicides and directions from the recommended dealers rather than the hardware store. It also helps educate the landowners more. Motion made by Jocks to continue cost share program, seconded by Barber, motioned carried.

State Bid Pick-Up

A new spray truck is in this year's budget, one of the vehicles is getting older and tired. Guffey ordered a 2017 1-ton Dodge long box with 4.10 gears at \$27,286. It will help tow a trailer with 4-wheelers on it up the hills better than some of the other trucks that are available. Can usually run the vehicles for about ten years. It should be delivered in a few months and ready for summer use.

Crew Update

Max Bailey has been transitioning into LouAnn's position as a Staff Assistant. He is learning the invoice and payroll systems, as well as some ArcGIS mapping skills. He is one of the Weed & Pest Techs so it will be a benefit to have someone who has their hands and eyes on the daily duties and is close with the crew. The transition will also save the county a net of \$2,700. Guffey will give LouAnn a giftcard and the crew and board members signed a goodbye/thank you card. Seasonal crew is coming back about mid-May, looking like a great summer. A couple more seasonal employee may be added to the crew. Don Hensley is a crew member that has decided to retire after a long and storied career as seasonal sprayer for the county.

Additional Items

Agency Report

Tyrell Schmelz from SDGF&P has his seasonal staff hired, timber and fencing projects are underway.

-Black Hills National Forest Noxious Weed Program – Marty Petersen, Invasive Species Coordinator, BHNF

Marty Petersen attended the 2017 Weed & Pest Conference. He displayed to the Weed & Pest Board a power-point slideshow of graphs/charts and some pictures of violations. He also showed a video of a large tree harvester in action. Petersen said in a study from 2005 that there were 180,000 acres of noxious weeds, expected to be higher these days. The recreational use of ATVs has risen and is a contributing factor in the spreading of noxious weeds. There are only three law enforcement officers patrolling the trails in the Black Hills National Forest and simply cannot catch all of the violations. Petersen talked about the weed spraying agreements, there are 6 of them. BHNF provides funding to the counties and contractors. The agreements are Lawrence county, Meade county at about 200 acres targeting Knapweed and Yellow Toadflax, Crow Peak area targeting Leafy Spurge, Pennington county at 569 acres in the Canyon Hills area targeting Ox-eyed Daisy and Spotted Knapweed, Black Fox botanical area, and Crook county at 60 acres targeting spotted knapweed. Most of the money generated for spraying weeds is from the timber sale receipts, but it must be used back into that timber sale area.

ADJOURN

Jocks made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:17 p.m., seconded by Paulsen.

Next meeting will be May 10, 2017.

Submitted by Max Bailey