

Weed Board Meeting Notes – October 20th 2015

Previous meeting minutes, EPA info and Agenda were passed out to all in attendance.

Attendance: *Please see attached sign in sheet*

Call to Order: Jim Kulish @ 10:30am

Minutes were read by Meredith Phillippe

Minutes were amended by Michelle Lynn and Dave Burch

(Please see attached minutes)

After amendments - Minutes were approved (Not sure who motioned and seconded-sorry)

Old Business:

Contractor Applicator Application and Advertisement: Nothing new to report – Jim opened it to discussion...

- Re use the previous application with editing
- Deadline - ?
 - Weed Trust Fund Grants due December 1
 - Advertise the 1st two weeks of November
 - Deadline December Monday, 14
- Advertise in the JB Press, County Website, MCCA website (Free) Extension website and in News Argus and Great Falls Tribune
- Awarded by December 21st. Lowest bidder that is capable of performing the job.
- Roger and Michelle will share with weed board member via email and phone the recipient and get unofficial permission that way. Official approval would be granted at the following meeting.

Resolution Providing Reorganization of JBC Weed District. Was the board reappointing the weed board members? This will still need to be done. The council did change the term appointments in the resolution.

Copies of the Resolution were handed out to all board members.

New Business:

Dave Burch – Speaks about the Raynesford Area Grant –

- Keep acreage size manageable. You want a high % of land owner involvement.
- Raynesford project does not include limestone. It is 450-500 ac. Among 4,500ac.
- Roger shares the plan that they plan to increase the acres to include extra area but concentrate on a specific area first and thus the EA (environmental assessment) only has to be done once. Dave Burch says that is fine but makes sure to clearly, with maps and colors and expansion plans, explain that in the proposal.

- Dave advises to makes sure you have a landowner aiding in the push in the area. There has to be owner buy in for this to be a success.
- 7,500 Grant
 - Only counties, weed districts, and reservations can apply
 - 63 Grants awarded each year
 - Grants will not allow herbicide to purchase with the money because of EA.
 - It can be used in a trust fund grant area.
 - Trust Fund Grants – EA has evolved to a more defined document. It is required now. Ground water and soils are the toughest sections – advised calling the department at any time for assistance with documents.
 - EA on Raynesford project will take time b/c it is a new format – will be 1st time Michelle will have to do it from start to finish. According to Burch it will probably take 1-2 weeks.
 - EA for Raynesford will have to be completed by Dec. 1st
 - Dave Burch is there to assist and help with these programs and applications.
 - There are 100-110 grants reviewed each year with the state hearing in March.

Montana is the only state in the nation with a weed trust fund. Revenue is down due to legislature and the way they received funding.

The department received 10 Million from Forest Service since 2000

Jasmine is the new Grand Coordinator – She will be performing the evaluations from now on. Carol is the grant contact in their office.

Burch suggests a need to start promoting the success in the county – like the whitetop program.

Tucker Asks a Question: White top area has really grown to cover more than 3 Townships – 28 landowners. Do we have to write a new EA to cover an expansion in the whitetop project?

There is more interest, the program is wanting to move areas, what happened when landowners outside of the original project area are incorporated? – A new EA for the new land will need to be updated.

Sparks: Currently the original land owners are in maintenance mode. They have a decrease in \$ to the original costs but want to increase the project area. Burch says: At some point you will have to redefine the project area. Area 1, Area 2, Area 3 as the growth warrants.

Burch: A PowerPoint is critical for the grant presentations in March. Also, landowners need to be present or at least call in. Also, make sure PowerPoint shows success of program. (Newspaper clippings)

Sparks: If they do not spend all the \$ can they use it on chemicals in the project area? Burch: Yes, you can let landowners in the area spray it. This could not have happened this year because the wording in the application was incorrect. It was the wrong line item.

Jim Moore: How about getting funds from the state of Montana? Reversible Grant – If no other crisis – will that be the same next year(2016)? Burch: Since the grants operate on a fiscal year there has to be a safety net for emergencies (flood, fire, etc.). Since funds are awarded in April they still have May and June to budget for so these grants are earmarked till then.

Burch: Recommendations for next year:

- PowerPoint
- Land Owner Representation
- Expansion Plan - Explanation included in grant proposal(application)
- Show/Document Success

Tucker: Are Aquatic weeds going to be funded by these grants? Burch: There is a discussion about this at the state level. DNRC and Fish/Wildlife – They are proposing an Aquatic Trust Fund be built. MACO- Aquatic will not take current funding. There is a new invasive species board that assesses the aquatic weeds – Zebra and Quagga mussels are a big threat in the east (it is in ND) and the inspection states are struggling to stay staffed (they cannot pay enough). Fort Peck has a large milfoil problem. Burch said this will be an extremely expensive problem to fix – if possible.

Burch: Encouraged the board to have Jasmine come out next year, before March and see the white top project. This way she can speak about it in the March hearing.

To fix this year's problem with not being able to sell or dispense herbicide – add more line items – Specific herbicides need to be stated in EA

Burch has issues with Milestone – leaching into the water and Tordon

Cody: Mandy would like an updated board list – Please have Katie send one out.

Dave Burch: Parting Comment: 2017 the legislature will increase fees on herbicide state coordinator change funding on a bill that year. Increase registration fee to cover Dave's program and private applicators will switch to the Dept. of Ag. This will be coordinated through the agents still but not MSU.

\$15-20 Increase to registration fees

Jim Moore requested they contact them early so they know how, who and when to vote and reach out to legislature.

Burch HIGHLY recommended sending someone on the board or involved to the Coordinator Training in November. It is only \$50 dollars and the meal, lodging and other expenses are paid. It is at the Wingate in Helena. This is the first one since 2004. It is on the NWA website.

Meeting was Adjourned (Motion Luke, Seconded Lee) 12:14pm