

Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board May Meeting

9:00 a.m. May 22nd, 2025

Hybrid Online via Zoom and in person at 1111 Washington St. SE, Olympia, WA 98504, Room 259

Handouts provided for meeting:

- Agenda for meeting.
- Draft minutes of March meeting.
- Office report.
- Financial report.
- Letters of support for Douglas County Weed Board formation.
- Douglas County weed surveys

Meeting called to order at 9:16 a.m. by Janet Spingath

Roll Call

Board members present via Zoom and in person:

Alaine Sommargren	Ian Burke	Randy Johnson
Alison Halpern	Janet Spingath	Todd Palzer
Carey Caruso	Marci Miller	

Others present via Zoom and in person:

- Mary Fee, Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
- Anne Schuster, Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
- Becca Hebron, Foster Creek Conservation District
- Carolyn Kelly, Foster Creek Conservation District
- Emily Stevenson, Skamania County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Farren Reinbold, Lincoln County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Larry Hudson, Okanogan County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Sofia Sherman, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Sydney Balderston, Foster Creek Conservation District
- Tayna Russell, Chelan County Noxious Weed Control Board

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the draft meeting minutes for the March 11th meeting.

VOTE	Randy Johnson	Moved to accept the minutes for the March 11 th meeting.
	Alaine Sommargren	Seconded the motion.
	<i>The Board</i>	All in favor, no opposition, motion carried.

Board Member Comments

- Janet stated that spring arrived and that the weeds started blossoming.
- Randy also stated that the weeds are blooming and that they are always finding new weed species.
- Alaine and Carey also commented on spring.
- Marci said that it was raining in Adams County
- Todd gave an update on the Eastern DNR Weed coordinator leaving and what will happen with that position.
- Ian said that there was adequate rainfall for planting in Eastern Washington, but that meant weeds are already growing well in fields.

Election

- Ron Tebow, from Grant County, is now elected for Position 4 on the state board.

Office Reports

- Anne updated the Office Report to be in the same order and headings as the strategic plan, to better track progress.
- Anne updated the board on the tasks and projects she has been working on, including several presentations, updating publications for printing, completing the Class A Report, outreach events, and the usual answering questions and sending out publications.
- Mary updated the board on the tasks and projects she has been working on, including attending several meetings, working on Douglas County weed topics, updating the Class A grant RFP, working on the Position 4 board election, Flowering Rush grant administration, and the usual administrative board support work.
- Mary will have a future board meeting training be on Robert's Rules of Order.

Strategic Plan Update

- Alaine requested a further update on the strategic plan than what was reported throughout the office report.
- Anne will create power points for future board meetings to go through the strategic plan and agenda topics.

Financial Report

- Mary summarized the financial report to the board.
- The fiscal year ends on June 30th.
- The main expenditures on the most recent financial report was mailings, facilities, and travel to the Chelan meeting.
- There was a large refund for mail, Verizon and telecom, which Mary will investigate.
- Mary expects future legal costs to be lower, with less Attorney General office communication needs.
- Mary predicted that our budget will be very close to 0 at the end of June, based on her projections for June.

State Agency Updates

WSDA – Alison Halpern

- Alison updated the board on WSDA budget and the end of the legislative season.
- The governor signed the budget and did not have any line-item vetoes on the pest program.
- There will be a 3% pay increase for most employees in July 2025 and 2% in July 2026.
- There were cuts for spongy moth and Japanese beetle.
- There were funds allocated for spotted lanternfly monitoring, education, and outreach as well as Tree of Heaven removal.
 - There was a spotted lanternfly spotting in Portland. WSDA is investigating and Oregon Department of Agriculture is going to make a press release.

Committee Updates

Noxious Weed Committee

- Anne summarized the Noxious Weed Committee meeting from May 14th.
- New species additions proposals:
 - Class C:
 - Black locust, *Robina pseudoacacia*
 - Maiden grass, *Miscanthus sinensis*
 - Norway maple, *Acer platanooides*
 - Goutweed, *Aegopodium podagraria*
 - Class A:
 - Waterhemp, *Amaranthus tuberculatus*
 - Delta arrowhead, *Sagittaria platyphylla*
- Change in designation requests:
 - Designate in Lewis County:
 - Giant knotweed, *Polygonum sachalinense*
 - Bohemian knotweed, *Polygonum x bohemicum*
 - Undesignate in Lewis County:
 - Diffuse knapweed, *Centaurea diffusa*
 - Meadow knapweed, *Centaurea x moncktonii*
 - Spotted knapweed, *Centaurea stoebe*
- Name update proposal:
 - Japanese eelgrass, *Nanozostera japonica* to *Zostera japonica*
 - Current science argues for maintaining *Nanozostera japonica*
- Monitor list:
 - California sea lavender, *Limonium californicum*
 - Sessile-fruited arrowhead, *Sagittaria rigida*

Education Committee

- Anne summarized the Education Committee meeting on March 26th and the April 21st holly language meeting.

- Topics included outreach events, Lakewold gardens training planning, making our materials accessible for different disability needs, the status of publications, biocontrol fact sheets, and potential future curriculum.
- The holly language meeting discussed the wording for the holly page of the Western Garden Wise, and what would be on a holly educational page on the NWCB website.

Discussion Topics

Douglas County Noxious Weed Control

- The board discussed what the current status of weed control is in Douglas County.
- Surveys occurred in the past for Class B designates in Douglas County, with no big changes of infestation levels
 - As of 3 or 4 years ago, Flowering Rush, a class A was found in the Columbia River along Douglas County's border.
 - The Flowering Rush grant does not currently include Douglas County, but a future grant could.
- Dale Whaley was part of the Douglas County Weed Task Force but retired in early 2025.
 - He was not allowed to do weed treatment or enforce weed control. He did do education and outreach as well as kept track of what was reported to him.
 - WSU took a while to start the hiring process for Dale's replacement, but it is happening now. The position may be combined with Chelan WSU extension office. Ian suspected that hiring for this position may not be a priority, given current WSU funding constraints.
- The Douglas County Commissioners are familiar with noxious weeds and want to do outreach, but are very hesitant to have a control board. They do not want to tell landowners what to do and do not want to raise taxes, even through an assessment fee.
 - Dirk Veleke pushed for a board in Douglas County, but he has retired.
 - Adjacent counties, at least one land owner, and a few other counties have written in support of forming a county board.
 - The RCW states that adjacent counties can petition the state weed board to ask the WSDA director to establish a weed board.
- Allen and Mary went to the Cooperative Weed Management Area's meeting on May 14th.
- Alison summarized what she has seen with Douglas County over the last two decades.
 - There used to be a weed expert in Douglas County.
 - There was a hearing many years ago, and the commissioners then made a task force instead of having a fee or assessment-funded county board.
 - They only adopted the weed list, but did not enforce unless a neighbor complained about weeds spreading. It is unknown if these enforcements ever went anywhere.
- Larry Hudson, from Okanogan County summarized his experience with weeds and Douglas County.
 - His county and Chelan County get calls from landowners in Douglas County complaining about weeds.
 - He has also seen an increase in weeds coming from Douglas County.

- He would like the weed control issue to be pushed now that Dale is gone. Dale was easy to contact and would go out and do what control or education he could, but now there is no one to contact on any issues.
- Tayna Russell from Chelan County stated that the coordinator, Adam, is on vacation and unable to speak at this meeting.
- Several employees from Foster Creek Conservation District, who are part of the Cooperative Weed Management Area discussed their work with the task force and weed control in Douglas County.
 - Weed control by the Conservation District is based on funding availability, so they work on certain species or in certain areas but don't have the resources to control all species throughout the county.
 - They were working on grant applications to make up for the FEMA funds that were frozen for noxious weed surveys.
 - Reporting weeds is difficult for them, at least partially because they do not have the contacts Dale had.
 - Agricultural producers will report on government property, but it is difficult to communicate with these producers on control.
 - Agricultural producers get federal grants, which require weed control.
 - Producers want to control their weeds to not degrade their crops, and they have herbicide licenses.
 - The rocky scab lands have a lot of weeds.
 - Outreach and education is great, things like boot brushes and booklets are helpful.
 - They are concerned with how much extra weed control would be able to happen compared to the cost to citizens from an assessment fee.
 - Overall, the population is fiscally conservative and agricultural products are not selling for very high prices currently.
 - They have biocontrol nursery sites and are doing biocontrol release and education.
- Janet started a discussion on what the next steps can be for the board.
 - Anne will place CWMA contacts in place of Dale on the NWCB website.
 - Anne will reach out to the CWMA staff to provide outreach materials and talk to them about WISC's species reporting app and iNaturalist for reporting.
 - The state weed board would like to be more involved with the task force.
 - The weed board would like to be involved with the conservation district in hiring the new WSU staff for Douglas County.
 - The Conservation District can be very helpful in getting the public to control weeds on their properties.
 - Someone from the district, CWMA, or task force can be in charge of collecting reports from the public, even on Class C and non-designated Class Bs.
 - A committee will be formed by Allen. Allen, Mary, and the CWMA can determine who will be on this committee.

Class A Grants RFP

- Mary updated the board on the Class A Grants RFP and the board had a discussion on some options for the final version.

- The board would like the RFP to include Class B designates, but that the board will still prioritize funding to Class As.
- The board would like to limit the RFPs to come from county boards and districts, and not open it to non-profits and other organizations.

Holly Update

- Anne will create a webpage to cover the history of holly in Washington and link to the holly growers association. This page will be under the outreach tab of the website.
 - Anne will update the Western Washington GardenWise online and the general holly pages to have similar language as well.
- Alison reached out to Washington Grown to make a pitch for an episode in the coming years. The episode could be on removing holly from abandoned holly plantations with conservation districts and other organizations.
 - Alison will also continue leading the holly working group meetings.

Coordinators Forum

- Farren – Lincoln County, stated that their seasonals are starting.
- Emily – Skamania County, stated that spring was going following pre-emergent fall treatments on shiny geranium and that garlic mustard season has started but with finding fewer bolted mature plants throughout the region.
- Lary – Okanogan County, stated that they have started inspection season and are starting new Class A control programs.
- Sofia – Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, has started working with Grays Harbor, Thurston, and Lewis counties on finding new ways to take on big problems.

Public Comment

- No comments

The next board meeting will be on Friday July 18th, at 9 a.m., via webinar and in person.

The board meeting adjourned at 11:00am

Allen Evenson, Chair
WSNWCB

Carey Caruso, Secretary
WSNWCB

Mary Fee, Executive Secretary WSNWCB

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