

Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board March Meeting
9:00 a.m. March 11th, 2021
Online/Teleconferenced via WebEx Only due to Covid-19 Restrictions

Handouts provided for meeting:

- ❖ Agenda for meeting
- ❖ Draft minutes of the January Meeting
- ❖ Office Reports
- ❖ Financial Report

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Bill Agosta.

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present via WebEx

Bill Agosta	Allen Evenson	Ian Burke
Jerry Hendrickson	Janet Spingath	Steven Seefeldt
Dirk Veleke	Brad White	Jenifer Parsons
	Carey Caruso	

Others present via WebEx:

- Mary Fee, WA State Noxious Weed Control Board
- Anne Schuster, WA State Noxious Weed Control Board
- Greg Haubrich, Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Todd Palzer, Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- Dave Heimer, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Katie Buckley, Pollinator Health Coordinator, Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Justin Bush, WA Invasive Species Council
- Cathy Lucero, Clallam County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Emily Stevenson, Skamania County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Jennifer Mendoza, Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Joe Shea, Skagit County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Christie Turner, Skagit County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Beth Tanner, Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Marc Eylar, Kittitas County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Jim McKeirnan, Garfield County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Eric Bell, Adams County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Scott Watson, Whitman County Noxious Weed Control Board

INTRODUCTIONS

Scientific Advisor - Bill Agosta introduced new Noxious Weed Control Board scientific advisor, Dr. Ian Burke. Ian Burke is appointed by the Washington Department of Agriculture is a professor of Weed Science at Washington State University.

Education Specialist - Bill Agosta introduced the new Noxious Weed Control Board education specialist Anne Schuster. Anne Schuster has a Masters of Conservation Science, from the University of Queensland, and has worked for a few environmental non-profits around Washington, including at the Center for Natural Lands Management’s native seed farm.

BOARD COMMENTS

Bill Agosta reports that San Juan County has a new field assistant, Carlton Burns, who is hard at work.

Jenifer Parsons announces that she is retiring as a Scientific Advisor for the Noxious Weed Control Board, after the May meeting.

Dirk Veleke requests that the board discuss getting Douglas County a Noxious Weed Board, at the May meeting.

- ❖ Dirk suggests a survey of weeds in Douglas County, to be done by a graduate student, but that this would be expensive.
- ❖ Mary met with Douglas County Commissioners in 2020 to discuss the possibility of starting a noxious weed board, but they were not ready to start one.
- ❖ Washington Noxious Weed Board booths at Douglas County spring and fall fairs were canceled, due to Covid restrictions.
- ❖ Mary suggests surveying Douglas County citizens, and citizens of adjacent counties.
- ❖ Adjacent counties can petition Douglas County to start a board, but that could stress the relationship.
- ❖ Mary will put this on the agenda for the May meeting.
- ❖ Mary will invite Dale Whaley to talk at the May meeting about starting a noxious weed board in Douglas County, as he knows the area and the citizens well.

Jerry Hendrickson announces that Asotin County Noxious Weed Board is sharing their coordinator with the Asotin County Conservation District

Janet Spingath suggests that Anne Schuster can be a speaker on weeds for Clover Park Technical College, as one of her first job tasks.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Board reviewed the draft meeting minutes for the January 14th meeting

VOTE	Jerry Hendrickson	Moved to accept the minutes for the January 14 th meeting.
	Carey Caruso	Seconded the motion.
	<i>The Board</i>	All in favor, no opposition, motion carried.

STATE AGENCY UPDATES

David Heimer, Noxious Weed Coordinator for the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, provided the following updates:

- ❖ Dave asked all Wildlife Area Managers to report their weed treatments for 2020. Despite Covid creating difficulty with collecting them, he has compiled about 75% of the data. He showed a table of the condensed records, with the five species by acreage and by times treated each highlighted. Cheatgrass was number one in acres treated, and common species, like scotch thistle were treated the most often.
- ❖ Dave reports that Wildlife managers have been reporting weed issues, without being asked, which is good for funding and grant writing.
- ❖ Dave reported on Flowering Rush was treated, on behalf of DNR, on the Yakima River
- ❖ Dave discussed that in 2019 Vancouver Lake was treated with Procellacor for the first time since 2017. In 2020 it was surveyed for Milfoil, and the 2019 treatment was affective. Other plants were impacted, but hopefully they will rebound. Local residents are now concerned about curly leaf pondweed becoming the next weed issue in the lake.
- ❖ Dave reported that Lake Mattoon had Procellacor treatment for the first time, using a Department of Ecology Grant. This was done around the boat ramp, and anecdotally it went well, but surveying will occur in 2021.
- ❖ Dave reported that WDFW helped the local county weed board with a survey of Sportsman Lake, as part of a Milfoil control grant.

Tod Palzer, with the Washington Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program, provided the following updates:

- ❖ Todd reported that about a third less was accomplished in 2020, than in other years. Mostly due to Covid restrictions making paperwork for contracts harder to get through.
- ❖ Todd is happy to see HB1355 is going through
- ❖ Todd is identifying contacts for each county's AIS program.
- ❖ Todd reported on DNR's 2020 AIS funding assistance program went to projects with Clark County, Avista Corporation, Thurston County, Wilapay Bay, Cape Disappointment State Park, Chehalis River Surge Plain natural area preserve, Damon Point natural area preserve, Lake Kapowsin, and North Bay Natural Area Preserve.
- ❖ Todd reports that a DNR storage unit got broken into, and \$160,000 worth of equipment was lost, but because in 2020 their budget was underspent, they were able to replace priority equipment. This could still impact the 2021 field season.
- ❖ Todd reported that in 2020 DNR was able to work on 3509 acres, 37 river miles, with 151 crew members from Puget Sound Corps and EarthCorps, across 107 days.
- ❖ Todd reported that the AIS program has \$942,000 in their 2020-2021 biannual budget, plus \$158,000 for crew funds, from AmeriCorps-like crews.

Justin Bush, the Executive Coordinator for Washington Invasive Species Council, provided the following update:

- ❖ Justin reported that Zebra Mussels were found in Beta Buddy brand marimo mossballs in Seattle in early March. 56 mossballs were confiscated, with 12 confirmed zebra mussels by a state team. Since early March, zebra mussels have been found on these mossballs in 27 states and two Canadian provinces. This brand likely gets its mossballs from Ukraine, which is within zebra mussel's native range. This means that the first detectors are going well. So far Washington has been in prevention mode, but now has initiated a coordinated response with the Columbia River

Basic Action Team on this issue. They have been working with industry to do outreach to all sellers, who are cooperating. Now the work is to do outreach to aquarium owners, as it only takes one person dumping their water in the wrong place to introduce zebra mussels to Washington. The estimate to mitigate for, not even eradicate, zebra mussels in Washington would likely be over one-hundred million dollars. Aquarium owners are being asked to take any Beta Buddy brand mossballs out of their aquariums, and dispose of the ball and water accordingly.

Katie Buckley, the Washington State Department of Agriculture Pollinator Health Coordinator, provided the following updates:

- ❖ Katie reported that SB 5253 was passed in the Senate. It now moves onto the House Agricultural committee. If it passes, it would implement many recommendations from the pollinator health taskforce.
- ❖ Katie reported that the WSDA pollinator program's website is being updated, and will be live in May. This new website will include lots of information, like how you can help, what are Washington's pollinators, best management practices, how to create habitat, current research, and links to pollinator projects and partners across Washington State.
- ❖ Katie reported that the state budget provided \$250,000 for the Pollinator Health Project, but it still won't cover all of the recommendations. Hopefully a future year will be better for funding.
- ❖ Katie recommends, for seed mixes for pollinators, be as diverse as possible. Some species are better, depending on use by listed species. There will be lots of guides on the new website in May.

Greg Haubrich, from Washington State Department of Agriculture provided the following updates:

- ❖ Greg reported that Wendy DesCamp has a 12 month position, despite hiring freeze, to work on a fresh water Integrated Pest Management permit. She is also working on WSDA's Spartina and Knotweed programs and webpages. Her Spartina storymap is almost finished.
- ❖ Greg reported that the Army Corps of Engineers has approved a multi-million dollar program for Flowering Rush, \$300,000 of which is going to managing it in Washington State.
- ❖ Greg reported that the Request for Proposals for knotweed funding went out this week. Due to Covid-related budget issues, most contracts over \$5000 need to go through a different approval mechanism, or can't be approved.
- ❖ Greg reported that this is the last year of the five year NPDES permit, which will need to be reapplied for, before 2022.

Ray Willard, from Washington Department of Transportation, provided the following updates, via written report:

- ❖ Ray reported that Covid restrictions impacted crews getting out to do roadside maintenance, so in 2020 there was significant increase to the vegetation management backlog.
- ❖ Ray reported that WSDOT is improving their integrated roadside vegetation management plans, which will be published in the next quarter.
- ❖ Ray provided a budget analysis. This includes litter control costs and vegetation management being added to the budget. A ten year spending trend graph was presented, including expenses for noxious weeds, nuisance species, obstruction, and management.
- ❖ Ray reported that if HB 1355 passes, WSDOT will have \$50,000 a year for plant assessments.

OFFICE REPORTS

Mary Fee highlighted tasks and events from mid-January through early March in the following office reports:

- ❖ Mary reported on the meetings, tours, and presentations she has done since the January meeting, which include: noxious weed taskforce meetings for HB1635, webinars and pesticide recertification presentations, Columbia River annual meeting, flowering rush group meeting, and the Washington Vegetation Management Association board meeting. For which, the November conference is currently being planned for in-person, with webinars available.
- ❖ Mary reported on filling publication requests, and doing a little on the website and Facebook pages, all of which Anne Schuster will take over, now that she is hired.
- ❖ Mary reported on the county and district weed board support she provided, including answering legal and Covid-related questions. She has been talking with the Attorney General's office about the responsibility of controlling noxious weeds based on water lines in Chelan County.
- ❖ Mary reported on the administrative tasks she has undertaken, including AAG calls, testifying for HB1355, working on quarantine list changes, hiring for the education specialist position, and she even got to take a week-long leave, during which she logged in each day to respond to emails. She will provide Board Member Handbook in the next couple weeks.

BUDGET REPORT

The board reviewed the financial spreadsheet for the current budget report.

- ❖ Mary reviewed the current budget numbers and reported on the current amounts. It was noted that there were no big expenses except for Attorney General fees, from reviewing HB1355, advising about county bills, and getting an exemption to hire an Education Specialist. The March budget will jump, because Anne started as the new Education Specialist.
- ❖ Mary discussed printing and special projects to complete for FY2021. We need to save a buffer of 15%, due to Covid budget reduction, but that is likely compensated with no travel and no Education Specialist for several months. This allows for printing and other projects. These projects have been for seed packets in the past, but this year Wendy DesCamp suggested to re-do and print the Gardenwise Eastern and Western Washington booklets. Other ideas on projects include road signs for county coordinators to install, host a virtual county coordinator conference, and provide funding for county coordinators to get GIS programs. The board reached consensus to allow Mary and Anne to decide how the \$20,000 remaining funds get spent.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Noxious Weed Committee Updates

- ❖ Bill Agosta comments that the Noxious Weed Committee is the most important committee for the Noxious Weed Control Board, and that because Rod left as lead and chairman, when he resigned as a scientific advisor at the end of 2020, Bill is making new appointments.
- ❖ Bill appoints Ian Burke as a member of the Noxious Weed Committee
- ❖ Bill appoints Marty Hudson, the county coordinator of Klickitat County, as the chairman for the Noxious Weed Committee

Budget Committee Update

- ❖ Bill Agosta appoints Jerry Hendrickson to chairman, due to Tony Stadelman retiring.

Executive Committee Update

- ❖ Bill Agosta must replace Tony Stadelman, as he retired, and Executive Committee appointments require a vote.

Bill Agosta nominates Ken Bajema, who is the new Vice Chair of the Noxious Weed Control Board, to be added to the Executive committee.

VOTE	Dirk Veleke	Moved to accept Ken Bajema to be added to the Executive Committee
	Jerry Hendrickson	Seconded the motion
	<i>The Board</i>	All in favor, no opposition, motion carried.

NOXIOUS WEED LIST PROPOSAL PROCESS

Mary reviews the Noxious Weed List proposal process, because it is currently in the proposal phase of the cycle.

- ❖ January 1st-April 30th, anyone can propose a change, addition, or listing move for species to the noxious weed list.
- ❖ In May the Noxious Weed Committee meets. They receive information on the proposed species, and begin surveying counties for distribution.
- ❖ In July the Noxious Weed Committee meets again, to look at more information and proposals. The committee formulates recommendations for which proposals to recommend moving forward
- ❖ In September the Noxious Weed Committee meets again, to formally decide which proposals they recommend move forward, and which ones to put on for a hearing.
- ❖ In November there is a public hearing, with public comment on the proposed species. The following day the Noxious Weed Control Board votes on which changes and additions to accept, based on all provided information, testimony, and recommendations.
- ❖ January 1st, the new changes and additions go into effect. Counties then have 90 days to hold hearings, make decisions, and start actions on the new noxious weed lists.
- ❖ Anne will create Facebook posts and email the county coordinators about the proposal process.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mary reports to the board on RCW 17.10 – SHB 1355, that

- ❖ Passed the house unanimously, and is now moving to the Senate.
- ❖ Mary will testify to the Senate Agricultural Committee on March 16th.
- ❖ Mary reports that if the bill passes the Agricultural Committee, the bill will move on to the Weights and Measures Committee and the Financial Committee. If the bill passes both of those, it will go to the House floor. If the bill passes the House, it will go to the Governor to sign.
- ❖ Mary reports that so far it is going smoothly, and that anyone can testify but to please coordinate with Mary.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Mary starts a discussion about hay and other grassy agricultural materials spreading weed seeds when they are not covered on highways and interstates.

- ❖ Mary states that this is mostly a problem that has been noted in Southeast Washington, with commercial loads. There are laws in place, but Mary would like to help facilitate a stakeholder discussion group on this problem. Mary notes that the Wheat and Grain commissioner also has concerns about this.
- ❖ Ian has seen weed seeds being transported by uncovered hay as a problem as well. He has seen herbicide resistance and broadleaf species coming in.
- ❖ Dirk wants to have county weed programs involved in this discussion group.

COORDINATORS FORUM

- ❖ Jennifer Mendoza states that Cowlitz County has one seat on the Weed Board empty, and they are looking for someone in that district to sit on the board.
- ❖ Erik Bell reports that Adams County hired a seasonal inspector in late 2020. They are also gearing up to hire two more inspectors for 2021. Additionally, Erik is running his first Zoom meeting in May, which will be on pesticide use on rangeland and cattle land.
- ❖ Scott Watson mentions his observations that toadflax is blooming at low elevations, but it is still too cold for growth at higher elevations.
- ❖ Cathy Lucero cheers Tod for all his AIS work, but would like to hear from DNR folks who are working on terrestrial weed species.
- ❖ Janet Spingath reminds all the coordinators to keep looking for people and businesses who are doing good weed control work, to name them Weed Warriors, and get articles written about them in local papers and a Weed Warrior Certificate.

Mary states that the next board meeting will be on May 20th, at 9am, via webinar.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There are no public comments.

The board meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Bill Agosta, Chairman
WSNWCB

Janet Spingath, Secretary
WSNWCB

Mary Fee, Executive Secretary WSNWCB