

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2019

Noxious Weed Control Board Office, Room 2A02. Cathcart Way Operations Center

Board Members Present

Lea Anne Burke
George Ohlsen
Joshua Misenaar

Others Present

Geraldine Saw – Coordinator
Scott Moore – Snohomish County Surface Water
Management Watershed Steward

Approval of Minutes

Lea Anne mentioned a mistake in the June 6 meeting minutes. Instead of countries, the word should be replace with counties. She also suggested a phone conference option for members we cannot attend the meeting in the office. Josh motioned to approve the June minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by George and the motion was passed.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Coordinators Report

Josh filled the vacancy for District 3. District 1 which covers the north side of the county is still vacant. The SRFB funding will be ending soon. We will be awarded another \$200,000 SRFB grant for knotweed control and native tree revegetation for 2020-2024. The new WSDA Spartina and Knotweed funding started in July 1st, 2019 and will end in June 2021. The economy is booming and it was harder to find seasonal workers this year. The crew consist of 4-5 people. Crew spent time clipping tansy seedheads along the roadside and spraying. A public reported a garlic mustard in a park belonging to the City of Mountlake Terrace. We treated the garlic mustard as part of the Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) action plan. All giant hogweed sites were revisited. Gerry spotted some garden loosestrife along Ebey Slough. A row boat was used to treat the garden loosestrife along the slough. Gerry plans to expend the search for garden loosestrife next year. A homeowner reported velvetleaf in his yard in Everett. We pulled the velvetleaf and disposed as garbage. A large patch of Phragmites was found on a private wetland, adjacent to Big Flats. The crews sprayed the patch after permission was granted. One of the crew members had an eye injury while he was spraying in the area. Gerry suggested the use of drones in challenging areas like this to reduce injuries and to have better coverage. Josh mentioned that DroneSeed has been seeding for timber companies and is seeking to expend their services to include herbicide treatment. Lea Anne added that projects using drones need to go through the bidding process and the drones are getting bigger, which could potentially have higher carrying capacity.

We continued knotweed treatment along the Pilchuck River. This year, the WSDA knotweed grant contract will not fund projects that has not been treated upstream of the river. Crews walked from the Pilchuck River dam downstream towards Granite Falls. 10 rivermiles were walked. We also treated knotweed along the North and South Fork Stillaguamish River. Crews walked about 15 rivermiles. Scott's WCC crew has been working on the North Fork and are currently planting trees at the end of Swede Heaven Rd. Last week, Scott surveyed a site in the Boulder Trading Post fishing access area. Tree plugs will be planted there. Gerry showed a map of where Spartina has been sprayed in the State. The I-form app was used to record where Spartina was found. The Stillaguamish Tribe bought a land in Stanwood from Twin City Foods and restored it to a marshland. Spartina has been found in the newly restored land and a more thorough survey needs to be done next year. Department of Fish and Wildlife removed the dike along Leque Island to transform it to a saltwater marshland. Spartina survey will need to be done in Leque Island next year. WSDA crews used an airboat to ferry crews and equipment to Big Flats. A WCC crew sponsored by DNR worked about two weeks surveying for Spartina, which includes Big Flats. Lea Anne said the Tulalip Tribe has some funding and will be hiring a WCC crew for 2021 to start inventory and treat invasive plants in the Tulalip Tribe's land. Crews from Skagit and Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board assisted us in the Spartina project.

We hosted a citizen science early detection rapid response reporting and identification of invasive plants workshop. It was organized by the Pacific Northwest Invasive Plant Council. Attendees learnt how to identify invasive plants and report the findings on EDDMapsWest. The respective county coordinators will be notified when a report is submitted. The educational booth at the Evergreen State Fair was well attended. Fresh knotweed samples are brought in everyday during the fair. Don Tillman's farm was honored in the fair as the Snohomish County Centennial Farm. About 1700 people visited the booth. We also staffed a booth during the WSU Forestry Field Day, and demonstrated the use of a knotweed injection gun and a weed wrench. Booths were also staffed during the Return of the Salmon Celebration and the Sky Valley Festival event in Sultan. Future educational events will be a noxious weed identification class at the Washington Turf and Landscape show. In January, a booth will be staffed at the 2020 Country Living Expo and Cattleman Winterschool.

The Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board encouraged nominations for local weed warriors. Gerry nominated Jill Cheeseman who formed a weed committee within her home association in Mill Creek. Jill Cheeseman has been organizing weed pulls in her community and consults with Gerry if she had questions. Her certificate of appreciation and an article of her volunteer efforts were featured at the Mill Creek newsletter.

For the new few months, Gerry will be working on producing reports and data entry. Discussion on seasonal labor and WCC crew ensued.

Old Business

Assistant

The assistant position was offered to the qualified candidate and unfortunately she choose to work with the King County Noxious Weed Control Board. Although the job with King County is a temporary position, the wages are much higher. The position will be posted again.

In addition to the assistant position, Gerry would like to create a new temporary position similar to King County. She envision the position to offer benefits from April to November. Gerry is waiting to get King County's job description for this position to proceed further. It takes time and effort to train the current seasonals, and they rarely return the following year.

Enforcement

We finally have an MOU with the Department of Planning and Development to perform enforcement actions. Since the formation of the Weed Board, no enforcement has been conducted. We came close after sending certified letters, and fortunately, the owners had complied. Lea Anne asked if PDS have the capacity for more workload. Enforcement discussion, ensued. Gerry gave a step by step summary on how enforcement will be conducted. Another alternative is to issue fines as written in WAC16-750-020. The amount of fines are dependent on the noxious weed categories. Questions were asked on who makes the decision on which option are use and staff safety. The consensus was to resolve the issue with the landowners, rather than issuing fines, which could result to weeds going into seeds.

New Business

Weed listing and proposed changes in RCW 17.10

The Washington State Noxious Weed Board had adopted the 2020 noxious weed list in November. South American spongeplant was added as a Class A and it is currently being considered for addition to the quarantine list. It is found in only one location in Pacific County. South American spongeplant will be added into the Snohomish County's list in the next board meeting.

The RCW17.10 has been open for changes. Gerry highlighted three changes that are being finalized. In RCW 17.10.140 concerning noxious weeds control in forestland; buffer strips are added to adjacent land uses, active roads, active gravel pits, active staging areas, active log yards and along waterways. More details were added in RCW 17.10.890; which allows a county weed board to be deactivated if there are no class A or class B noxious weeds in the county. The voting members engaged in the primary

production of agricultural products are reduced from four to three people. Lee Anne asked about the definition of agriculture products. Gerry will research the answer.

Other Business

No business was discussed.

Next Meeting Planning and Agenda

The 2002 meeting dates are February 13, June 4, September 3 and December 3.

Josh made the motion to adjourn the meeting. George seconded the motion.

Adjourn at 10:30 am

Respectfully submitted by: Geraldine Saw

DRAFT