

MINUTES
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
February 8, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Bingham, Karen Bodner, Paul Clements, Chris Melotti, Douglass Moser, Ross Penhallegon

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Balthrop, Mike Koivula, Molly Hoffer

STAFF PRESENT: Sonny Chickering, Stephonee Freeman, Bill Manewal, Arno Nelson, Orin Schumacher

B/CC PRESENT: Faye Stewart

GUESTS PRESENT: Vern Holm, Director of NW Weed Management Partnership

PUBLIC PRESENT: John Sundquist

Karen Bodner called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sundquist suggested a grass seed grower from Oregon State University, Daryl Ehrensing (head of special crops, and source of native grass seeds). Daryl is working on a large number of wheat varieties, along with a dandelion species that produces latex. Sundquist mentioned a discussion he had with the Vegetation Management Coordinator (Schumacher), along with Lynn Bowers concerning aerial spray applications conducted by private timber companies in Lane County.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Moser moved to approve the Minutes of January 11, 2006, as written. Clements seconded. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

III. GENERAL COMMENT

No comment.

IV. THE WEED MGT PARTNERSHIP: "WHAT WE DO & HOW WE DO IT" – PRESENTATION BY VERN HOLM, DIRECTOR OF NW WEED MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

Holm said the NWMP (NW Weed Management Partnership) was set up a couple of years ago and modeled after a group established in Montana. Because no group has enough funds to control weeds on its own, the idea was born to include all kinds of people who are interested in the management of weeds, and to focus on a partnership relationship. Groups that established management areas are divided geographically: mid-coast, north coast, upper Willamette, mid-Willamette, and the four-county area (Portland metro). The north coast area, which has special geographical problems, has linked up with other groups with similar problems.

Over 90 different agencies belong to the NWMP, such as watershed councils, soil conservation districts, city/county governments, parks, and federal agencies. When the NWMP started, its goal was to serve as an up-to-date stewardship group providing methods of weed control. The

NWMP is neither for nor against herbicide spraying, as this has to be a decision made locally. There is no fee for membership, and accomplishments include many agencies brought together that typically don't communicate. For instance, the forest service and ODA take care of forest land, and the watershed councils and ODA will work together in attempts to control Japanese knotweed on private lands. Last year, the groups worked together on Japanese knotweed on 12 acres, and this year their combined work has increased to 167 acres.

The NWMP provides alerts on invasive weeds, which currently includes garlic mustard in Multnomah County. This plant crowds and shades out other plants, and produces tons of seeds that poison the ground and prevents other plant growth. It is growing rampantly with or without sun, by the gorge in Multnomah. ODA and the Oregon Agricultural Extension Service have worked together to develop a bio-remediation treatment, which they may start using this March to attack the roots, leaves, and/or stems of the plant. The prevalence of invasive plants, if allowed to grow, will continue to crowd out natives. If allowed to continue to spread, natives will lose biodynamic control.

Holm said that Clark County is working on a grant for the study of false brome and how it affects soil biology.

V. MYCELIUM RUNNING, BY PAUL STAMETS (DISCUSSION)

Moser stated that mycelium is the dominant organism on earth and is how soil is made. The mat controls how moisture gets in, and earthworms do this also. Mushrooms and worms successfully control their own environment and together create organic matter. Wood chips are a favorite food of saprophytic mushrooms, and trace minerals keeps the mat healthy, by being washed out and brought back in. Melotti said the book has links online to related articles, and added that mushrooms and wood chips act as a bio-filter (hardwood chips are favorable, and he's used conifer hog fuel – mix of bark and woodchips – from Lane Forest Products).

VI. CONTROL PRESCRIPTIONS – SCHUMACHER

Schumacher provided handouts of “Right-of-Way” Management Prescription Plan & Action Thresholds 2006, and discussed highlights with Committee:

- Action Thresholds/Triggers – the plan is more site specific than broad approach
- Management features are defined on Page 3
- Monitor/Review – what the County is planning to do
- Features – associated action thresholds and definitions
- Appendix A – definitions
- Appendix B – two different versions of zones (vertical and horizontal)
- Appendix C – proposed County noxious weed list
- Appendix D – description of effort to separate noxious weeds from routine vegetation management activities

VII. PERMITTED PRODUCTS LIST – SCHUMACHER

Schumacher provided handouts of the Proposed Permitted Products List and discussed products and usage with Committee. He stated that the list of products was created to be efficient, low volume, and have the least impact on humans.

VIII. IVM STATUS UPDATE – SCHUMACHER

Schumacher reported that he's wrapping up the Control Prescriptions and Permitted Products List; working on education outreach, including contact with a middle and high school in Florence and Weed Alert color flyers that he is working on as future mailings to private landowners, as well as for use as training tools for road maintenance crews.

IX. ROAD MAINTENANCE UPDATE – MANEWAL

Manewal reported that crews continue to work on road surface maintenance and brush mowing; top trimming work is in progress throughout all zones, except the coast; storm cleanup continues. Fleet Services is currently providing maintenance on the mowers in preparation for grass season this spring. A training program is in progress for preparing road maintenance 2 positions for road maintenance 3 work (equipment training);

Nelson reported that during the past 6-7 weeks crews have been busy cleaning pipes, setting up high water signs, and removing tree debris from roads. He stated that the County suffered \$140k in storm damage cleanup and overtime hours. A portion of these costs may be reimbursable from FHWA or FEMA.

X. REVIEW OF 2006 WORK PLAN – COMMITTEE & STAFF

Work plan reviewed and updated.

XI. NEW ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – WED., MARCH 8, 2006:

- Presentation by Tanya Beard (Botanist) and Tom Shamberger (IVM Coordinator), Marion County – Management issues and methods
- “Right-of-Way” Management Prescription Plan & Action Thresholds 2006 – Discussion

Meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Stephonee Freeman, Recording Secretary