

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board

Meeting minutes for February 10, 2011

In attendance

Steve Russell, Keith Sarkisian, Louis Stangeland, George Ohlsen, Roy Scalf, Steve Thomsen, Mel Reitz, Gordon Sivley, Curt Moulton , Sonny Gohrman, Geraldine Saw

The meeting was called to order at 10:35

Approval of minutes from December 9, 2010

Sonny said that suggested wording was added to a motion that was made in the December minutes regarding delegating authority to Sonny and staff to travel for required training. If words are added or removed from a motion, the process needs to begin again. Roy said the intent is the same. Keith made the motion to accept the revised wording clarifying the motion. Louis seconded the motion

The corrected motion reads:

The Board delegates to the weed coordinator the Board's approval to initiate requests for travel and expense reimbursement for training that is required of weed board staff to keep applicator licenses current. This would authorize the Coordinator to initiate the request without seeking Board approval prior to submitting.

Motion: Keith made the motion to accept the minutes as amended. Louis seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Weed List Public Hearing

The Public Hearing for changes to the Snohomish County Noxious Weed List was called to order at 10:50.

Sonny asked if there is any comment on changes to the weed list. There was no public comment. Only one change needs to be made to the current list. Hairy willow-herb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), which was listed as a Class C weed, is now a Class B designate for Snohomish County. Sonny made a short presentation on hairy willow-herb. It is required by the State to be added to the county weed list. It is a big problem in Whatcom County. King County also has a small infestation. King County is the sponsor of elevating hair willow-herb's status since they have so little. The prevention strategy is important here since they can manage it successfully. The weed has pink flowers, grows in wetlands and looks like fireweed when it seeds.

Motion: Keith made a motion to accept the weed list as is with the addition of the hairy willow-herb which is required to be added by the State Weed Board. George seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

The public hearing adjourned at 11:10.

The regular meeting of the Board reconvened.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Coordinators Report

Sonny commented that Mel and Keith have visited our office in Cloverdale. He encouraged all the Board members to visit the office and see how records are kept. In addition to that, he invited Board members to take a tour around the district that they represent so that they are aware of weeds and projects that we are undertaking in the area. Louis asked when would be the best time to schedule the tour. Sonny said that May through July would be the best time.

Aaron Reardon who was absent at the Snohomish County Board appreciation reception was scheduled to attend the March meeting. He had a conflict in his schedule and had to cancel. Sonny urged the Board to contact the Executive office to schedule an appointment to meet him in his office at his convenience.

Action: Board writes letter, makes, phone call, directs Sonny to make arrangements???

Sonny gave a presentation to the Cattleman's Winter School and will be a speaker at the Master Gardeners class this afternoon. Sonny and Gerry will also staff a booth at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show for two shifts. This has always been a cooperative effort between the Sate and the surrounding counties. Sonny called the organizer for the Everett Home and Garden Show and has not heard anything back. Other speaking engagements include a WSU Forestry Class, a WSU Beach Watcher class, and 2 DOT training sessions.

A chemical inventory and system for ongoing inventory monitoring has been put into place. An equipment inventory has also been completed with best estimates of purchase dates and values. Sonny has also created a special file for motion and action items made during meetings. The motions and action items were highlighted in the minutes because without the flow written in the minutes, the motions and action items standing alone don't make much sense. Sonny is open to suggestions on how to manage this file differently.

Sonny gave a 2010 budget summary. A lot of funds were left on the table except for Spartina. The roadside funds were not fully spent because we didn't have a crew until mid-June and the weather conditions were bad. We did 57 road miles last year. 74 miles were treated if roadside knotweed control is included. Roy asked how the road miles were counted. Sonny said that it depends on the level of infestation of the roads and the maps that were drawn by the crew. Maps can be either detailed small infestations or whole road systems. Roy commended Sonny for doing a good job managing the budget.

Five grant proposals for controlling knotweed have been submitted. Knotweed surveys for the Skykomish River and the South Fork Stillaguamish River have been submitted to the Community Salmon Fund and the Forest Service. A proposal for knotweed control in Darrington

is proposed in the Forest Service grant. We are currently working on a Title II grant for noxious weed control on the Mountain Loop Hwy, Crawford Loop, Sauk Prairie Rd, and possibly Sultan Basin and Mann Road. In the past we have been reluctant to pursue this grant, but upon checking, no one in the County has applied for the last two years. Roy said there is staff that has expertise in writing grants and their services could be made available should we need their support. Sonny said that he had tried working with some PW grants staff in the past but there seemed to be a high turnover or they are busy. Roy mentioned that they probably weren't as busy these days. Sonny said he'd certainly make use of their knowledge especially on federal grants.

Action: Roy will provide a contact person in Public Works to help us with grants.

2010 Control Work Plan/Strategic Plan Results

Sonny gave a report on the outcome of the 2010 control work plan. All giant hogweed sites have been visited and treated.

Spartina has a written report and a very successful season.

There was no reed sweetgrass at the past infestation site near Monroe. The parrotfeather was also gone at the Monroe site. The parrotfeather is still in Lake Nina.

Volunteers from the Friends of Edmonds group will take care of the common reed (Phragmites) in Edmonds Marsh, but the timeframe isn't clear. DOT will treat the patch of common reed on Hwy 522 and Hwy 529. Gerry found a new patch in Quilceda Creek. The Boeing and the Nature Conservancy sites had been controlled. There is still a patch close to the Everett Sewer Plant. Getting a good contact response has been difficult.

Survey for new invaders was accomplished only as a sideline to other projects. Adding our projects to the Habitat Work Schedule is important but did not occur because of time and funding constraints. Fewer than 30 thistle and tansy ragwort contacts were made.

Sonny feels a more formal report than has been done in the past is needed and will work on one before the next Board meeting.

Action: Sonny will report on the outcome of last year's strategic plan in a written report.

Old Business

Rules and Regulations Changes

Steve handed out copies of the proposed rules and regulation that he had worked on with Gordon. Two versions were introduced. One of version incorporated the weed list and the other document excluded it. Other changes were the same in both versions. Steve explained that in the RCW, the weed list belongs to the Weed Board and no approval from the council is

required if changes are deemed necessary by the Board. The following discussion ensued about changes to the Rules and Regulations.

The item in Section III.C has been crossed out because it is already in the county ordinance. Gordon added that the contents in Section III.D and E which gives the definition of control is already in the statutes and need not be repeated. Steve referred to Section VI.A which is already in the RCW 17.10 and does not need to be in the Rules and Regulations. Section B took what is in the weed law and made it applicable to the county ordinance. Gordon added that the weed law gives authority to the Weed Board and staff. There will be a county policy and procedure that will guide enforcement actions. The internal policy and procedure which will be written in a thoughtful and careful manner does not need to be in the rules to address these actions. Gordon recommended taking out Section VI.D regarding attempts to be made to contact owner. He believed that there should be flexibility in what is considered reasonable in a case by case basis. If enforcement is imposed, we can demonstrate that actions taken are reasonable for that circumstance. Sonny disagreed on taking out section D. He does not think it is too restrictive and thought that it was taken from the Coordinator's handbook. Gordon said that doing just the 3 attempts described in the current ordinance may not be enough in some situations and would be better if there is some flexibility.

Section VII which addresses penalties was removed as it was repeated in the statutes. Gordon referred to Section VII ((I)) which addresses the appeal process and it was modified to be consistent with the State weed law. The partnership between the Board and Public Works was added in Section VIII which addresses Public Works commitment to implement the Weed Law as written in RCW 17.10. Sonny would like to know where the Weed List will be placed instead of in the rules and regulations. Gordon said that the Weed List stands by itself and belongs to the Board as stated in the statutes.

Keith made a motion to accept the Rules and Regulations without the inclusion of the weed list. George seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously accepted. Sonny said that he will do an ECAF for the final copy. Steve asked if Gordon will be there when the Rules and Regulations is presented to the council. Gordon and Roy will be present before council.

Motion: Keith made a motion to accept the proposed Rules and Regulations version that does not include the weed list. George seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously accepted.

Action Item: Sonny will do an ECAF and initiate the process for Council approval of the Rules and Regulations.

Open Board Position in District 3 and future open positions

The District 3 position is still open. Keith's and George's terms will end this year and both have reached their 3 term limit and will not be able to reapply. Steve's term will be ending this year, but he has the option of serving another term. Steve asked if the positions are posted in the newspaper. Sonny said the notices will be published in the summer, but are only in the legal section.

On another note, Louis asked how Sonny likes working with Public Works. Sonny said that he has been corresponding with Steve Russell and Mel Reitz. A lot of paperwork will be generated, but it's doable. Overall it is working fine. The tree planting got us off of our budget which has been a benefit of being in Public Works. Mel heard that the progress on the Big Trees project has been better than anticipated. Louis asked about Gerry's current job classification. Roy said that her classification is the same as an entry worker and he doesn't think that the position is consistent with her current task and there may be a change in her classification.

New Business

Strategy for 2011 and beyond

Steve said that there needs to be a work plan which is required by the RCW to see if it sufficient to satisfy the weed law. In order to accomplish this Sonny will need to draw up 2 separate work plans. One will show what extra funding will let us do and the other will show what happens if no funds are offered. Roy cautioned that with the current economy climate it will be tough for the Council to allocate more money or agree to an increase of a tax or fee. However, it is a good time to put together a package and be ready to present it when the time is right. Instead of looking in a year ahead, we could project 5 years in the future. Sonny said that we have had little input in the budget since we moved to the POG budget format. A proposed budget to add a couple of dedicated inspectors was presented for three years and the budget has remained flat or been reduced. Sonny feels that it is a good proposal, but he is unsure of how to jazz it up or get a better chance to present it.

Roy offered help in providing a planner who can meet with the board and come up with a good proposal. Keith shared that the soil conservation had a public hearing for an assessment and no one from the public showed up to object. He thought that if we had an assessment the funds will go back to the community for weed control. Steve said that according to the RCW, it is our job to inform the Council about our budget and it is the Council's responsibility to provide the necessary funds. He would like the board members to meet with the planner to come up with a proposed budget.

Action: Roy will provide a planner to help with the budget preparation.

Action: Board representative meet with budget planner.

Action: Sonny will do strategic plans that are tied to budget revenue.

Election of officers

An election of officers is required during the first meeting of the year. Louis made the motion to keep the existing officers. Steve Russell Chairman and Keith Sarkisian Vice Chairman. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: Louis made the motion to keep the existing officers. Steve Russell Chairman and Keith Sarkisian Vice Chairman. Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm

Respectfully submitted by Geraldine Saw and Sonny Gohrman