

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board Meeting minutes for December 8, 2011 (Regular Meeting)

Location: 19700 67th Ave NE Arlington, WA 98223

In attendance

Steve Russell (Board Chair) Keith Sarkisian (Vice-Chairman), George Ohlsen (Board Member), Curt Moulton (Ex-officio), Mel Reitz (Public Works), Michael Smith (Public Works), Scott Moore (interested public), Wally Michalec (potential Board Member) Dick Barr (potential Board Member), Sonny Gohrman (Public Works), Geraldine Saw (Public Works)

Meeting presided over by Steve Russell, Board Chair

Approval of minutes from September 8, 2011

Since there is one board member who was late, the approval of minutes was moved to the end of the agenda.

Public comment

There was no public comment

Coordinator Report

Old Business

Board E-mail address and Business Cards

Mel Reitz has taken care of the process to establish E-mail addresses for Board members. Business cards for Board members will be printed and emails will be setup for Board members.

Communication issues

Curt reported that he had meetings with George and Keith and another meeting with Mel and Roy to address issues surrounding the partnership with Road Maintenance. A discussion was ensued on open meeting law and the role of the weed board. Keith made a motion to form a committee comprised of weed board members and representatives of Public Works to address communications issues and bring the findings back on the next meeting. George seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Keith, Curt and Mel will be in the committee.

Motion: Form a committee comprised of weed board members and Public Works representatives to address communication issues and bring back findings to the next meeting.

Action Item: Keith, Curt and Mel will meet to address communication issues.

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Enforcement / Compliance

Mel handed draft copies of the noxious weed enforcement policy statement which follows the weed law with some tweaks. Michael has talked to Sonny and has received his written comments before the draft was printed. Dissuasion was followed on Weed Board consultation before enforcement, the definition of reasonable contact and how this would work with County code enforcement.

Preliminary 2012 Strategic Plan

Sonny said that the 2012 Strategic Weed Control Plan is similar to the 2011 plan. It will be presented at the at the February meeting for approval. Mike suggested waiting for the formation of a new Weed board before deciding on the long range strategic plan.

Action Item: Sonny will finish the report on the 2011 Plan and work on the 2012 Strategic Weed Control Plan for presentation at the February meeting.

Approval of minutes from September 8, 2011

George moved to approve the minutes as written, Keith seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

New Business

Move to Cathcart

Keith made a motion against the move to Cathcart citing the cost of fuel, driving time and wear and tear on vehicles as reasons. George seconded the motion. Mel distributed a spreadsheet originally written by Sonny which details the cost of wages and vehicles to and from Cathcart to project sites. The spreadsheet was analyzed by Public Works and the results were presented in the spreadsheet. Discussion followed about travel and other costs associated with the move. An amended motion was made that the Weed Board wants to discuss sending Sonny once a week to Cathcart. George seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Motion: The Weed Board will negotiate with Public Works to have Sonny report to Cathcart once a week and not move the facility from Cloverdale.

Action Item: Curt and Steve will meet with Public Works to discuss the Board's position.

Empty Board Positions

Sonny informed the Board that Louis Stangeland gave his letter of resignation. Sonny thanked Keith and George for the years of service provided to the Board and how privileged we have been to have such dedicated members. Keith was a coordinator for 12 years and served as a weed board member for another 12 years. George served 12 years in the weed board.

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Open Board positions will be announced prior to the February meeting. Applications will be accepted until positions are filled.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm

Respectfully submitted by Geraldine Saw and Sonny Gohrman

Coordinator's Report

Budget status

An estimated balance of \$1500 will be in the general fund after December 15th. It will be tight, but we should stay within budget. There is still \$10,000 left in the Spartina contract which will be carried forward to next year. . Sonny is still working on producing a Spartina report. There is \$3500 left in the roadside control budget after the vehicle charge transfer. All the mitigation sites were treated and about \$5000 was left. \$40,000 remained in the SRFB funding and a request was made to extend the grant to August 2012. We have received verbal approval. Half of the Darrington knotweed grant has been and expended. The balance will be used next year to contact owners and conduct surveys in the area for efficacy. Gerry will be applying for the same Forest Service grant for knotweed control in Darrington. No charges were made into the NFWF grant for controlling knotweed on the South Fork Stillaguamish. The NFWF grant will be brought forward to next year. \$4,156 was spent on eradicating giant hogweed; \$3,000 from the Class A Eradication grant, the balance plus vehicle expenses came from the general fund.

2011 Strategic Plan

All known giant hogweed sites were sprayed.

It was not a great season in Spartina. A combination of rain, non-cooperative tides, and thick native vegetation made field work difficult. Spartina levels seem to be increasing over last year. 303 affected acres were sprayed, 230 affected acres were manually pulled, and 33.52 miles was surveyed along the Snohomish County coastline. 23ft² of Spartina were found and controlled in the areas surveyed. Estimated Spartina controlled is 2.02 solid acres. We had 3 cooperative efforts with the Tulalip Tribe in Tulalip Bay and one at Big Flats. We have developed a good contact with the Tribe and staff will work with him next year. He has expressed a concern about the noxious weed problems on the reservation.

Three Class A weeds were found or reported. Garlic mustard was discovered for the first time in Snohomish County. Garlic mustard was sprayed at a County mitigation site. Staff is working with a homeowner at the other site. A European hawkweed complaint at a site in Monroe was checked out, but identification of hawkweed is challenging and it may be common hawkweed. Reed Sweet Grass was reported in Echo Lake, but staff has been unable to find the site.

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For the Class B designates; all but one site of common reed was controlled. A staff member was assigned to work with the City of Everett on the common fennel infestation with good results and cooperation. A few roadside plants were controlled, but there isn't much out there making fennel possible to control the County. We got good response from the owner of Simpson Pad located at the Lowell-Snohomish Rd. They controlled the spotted knapweed which was the main target. Gorse and tansy ragwort were also present at the site and were controlled. No meadow knapweed was found at the site in Snohomish. Diffuse knapweed was pulled in Arlington and all known sites were sprayed.

There are no new parrotfeather sites. The parrotfeather in Lake Nina needs follow-up. It was questionable if two owners were going to cooperate with the homeowner association.

Gorse which is a Class B non-designate has been controlled at Silver Lake. We will monitor. The gorse at the Simpson Pad site was sprayed. We will check the Edmonds Dog Park to see what is being done, but we were told it would be taken care of. These are all of the known gorse sites.

The knotweed report is currently in draft form. A total of 91.5 affected acres were controlled. River miles walked totaled 12.45 river miles on the North and South Fork Stillaguamish River and 2 days were spent floating the South Fork cover about 16 miles. There are 229 property owners who have entry and hold harmless agreements in place.

Sonny and staff did more presentations and educational displays this year than any other year (19 events and talks). Presentations included the Master Gardeners training, Snohomish County Cattleman Association and Edmonds Community College Horticulture class and numerous others. Events included the Evergreen State Fair and the Festival of The River.

It is possible that there will not be enough of weed board members for a quorum in February to decide on the 2012 weed list. The Board is required to include the State's listing according to RCW17.10. Sonny suggested removing thistle off the list and a discussion ensued on thistle and knotweed on the roads.

There were 484 tansy postcards sent out earlier this year and 24 tansy letters written. Sonny explained in detail how some notable tansy sites were handled differently. 24 letters were sent to property owners with tansy ragwort. Ideally, an inspector dedicated to work with homeowners would make follow-up and monitoring more efficient.

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