

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board

Meeting minutes for March 10, 2011

In attendance

Steve Russell, Keith Sarkisian, Louis Stangeland, Mel Reitz, Curt Moulton, Michael Smith, Sonny Gohrman, Geraldine Saw

The meeting was called to order at 10:35

Approval of minutes from February 10, 2011

Keith made the motion to approve the minutes. Louis seconded the motion.

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Coordinator Report

2010 Control Work Plan / Strategic Plan Results

Sonny gave a power point overview on the 2010 control work plan. We received \$3000 from the State Weed Board to control giant hogweed. The grant will supplement existing general fund that go towards giant hogweed control. About 1.5 acres of Spartina was controlled last year. \$25,000 will be made available this year. A Marsh Master will be loan to us by Fish and Wildlife. Funding remains stable for the 2011-2013 seasons. No reed sweetgrass was discovered in the Monroe site where it was treated in 2007 and 2008. A volunteer group will be controlling the *Phragmites* at Edmonds Marsh. No progress was made to get the City of Everett to control their patch. DOT had sprayed the *Phragmites* in Hwy 529 and 522. Boeing and the Nature Conservancy had dealt with their patches. A new *Phragmites* infestation was discovered in Quilceda Creek at the Tulalip Reservation.

Common Fennel was found a community garden and a few private properties in downtown Everett. We will contact them about this issue. Policemen Helmet is found in Price Rd and we will control it this year. Diffuse Knapweed is prevalent in the Lowell City Park and contacts had been made to the City of Everett but no further action was done. Mel offer to work with the City of Everett. Meadow knapweed was not seen at roadside in Snohomish this year. The parrot feather in Lake Nina was not checked last year. The Homeowner's Association is cooperative, but two of the homeowners were not interested. No parrotfeather was observed at the Monroe's site. Perennial pepperweed is just at a survey stage at this point. There are few Gorse sites. The Gorse at the Edmonds dog park and Everett Silver Lake sites were cut short. Cutting them

short prevents seed sets and complies with the weed law, but it would be more effective if the gorse is dead so we don't have to monitor these sites yearly. Other sites include Lowell Park and Picnic Point.

Our services were offered to various municipalities such as the City of Everett, Edmonds and Sultan but none were interested. The City of Mukilteo requested information on knotweed and we have not heard back since. ENVIS is happy with the work assigned to us in the 27 mitigation and 13 special project sites. The number of mitigation sites is growing and the money is increasing slowly. Steve feels that it is not the Board's mission to do contract work although these contracts supplement our budget. The property owners should do the work with their own funds. As our own funding grows, we should not be contractors. The State grants were provided to us and they are not doing the work themselves. Sonny responded the grants and contracts pays part of his salary and the trucks. The grants are an avenue for us to lead by example. 6 grants were written and submitted. 5 are written for knotweed control. A title II grant was submitted to control weeds in the Mountain Loop Hwy.

The knotweed project went good last year. \$80,000 will be available for knotweed control this year. No funding is secured beyond 2011. Without continuous funding, the progress made in knotweed control will be wasted. No funding is in place for purchasing purple loosestrife beetles this year. In the past, a lot of bugs had been released and they seem to be doing well in the wetlands. Roadside funding remains the same. Sonny showed a chart depicting a drop in roadside spraying 2 years in a row. This year, one of the reasons may be the hiring late. A budget versus actual expense was explained. A line chart of the weed threads over the years shows a drop of all weed except for knotweed. Mel asked if population numbers are falling. Sonny said that there may be different reasons. Milestone had been efficient in controlling roadside weeds and weeds species has shifted. At one point, there were a lot of hawkweed but it was not a major target at that time.

No survey for new infestation was conducted. Steve said it is because we do not enough funds. He added that surveying for new infestation and monitor for progress is part of the weed law. King County has a person for each section of the county to ensure that the weed law is followed. Sonny reported that the number of property owner contacts had declined since 2007. In 2007, an inspector was hired to make property inspection and keep records. He made 250 owner contacts in 2 months. We have over 500 tansy property owners that have to be contacted. We are also behind in sharing information with the Invasive Species Council, the State Board and the HWS.

15% of the general fund budget is spent on education and materials. We get requests from various groups to attend and present in meetings and classes. Curt suggested a plan that outlines the weed law, what we are suppose to accomplish, what we are doing and what we are falling short in different columns. Steve hoped that he could show to council what we have and our deficits. According to the RCW, the council is responsible to come up with the money to cover the insufficiency.

Action Items

Sonny read the list of action items and reported the outcome.

Action: Board writes letter, make phone call, directs Sonny to make arrangements for meeting with County Executive.

- Nothing has been done. Steve was unsure what results will come out from the meeting. Keith said that in the past, attempts to meet with the Executive had not been successful. Sonny said that the opportunity is unique this time because the Executive had missed the Board's appreciation event and had offered to meet with the respective Boards instead. The Fund comes from the council but it is the Executive that appoints the Board.

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

- Sonny has made contact with Toni Finko who will help us with matters relating to grants.

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

- Sonny is working on it.

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

- ECAF is done. The ECAF should go to Dawn and then council.

Action: Board representatives meet with the budget planner.

- Michael Smith will be assisting us in our Strategic Plans.

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

- Sonny was unsure how to tie \$63,000 to the strategic plan.

Steve said that the updates made on the action items should be written down in the next meeting.

Old Business

Open Board Positions in District 3 and future open positions

The vacant positions are posted in our website and Sonny has been announcing them during presentations. He will also email the Agriculture Advisory Board or attend one of their meetings. Curt suggested the Conservation District newsletter.

Action item: Sonny will contact the Agriculture Advisory Board and include an article in the Conservation District newsletter, The Nexus.

New Business

Strategy for 2011 and beyond

Sonny said that the 2011 strategic plan is identical to the 2010 except the inclusion of reed sweetgrass. Emphasis will be on gravel pits, top soil producers, government properties, complaints, and past owners that we have been working with. There are only a few gravel pits that we can inspect. We have experience in conducting weed free gravel inspections. Louis asked if the inspector a part-time position. Sonny said that the inspector is a 7 month position but would prefer if he could have 2 full time inspectors instead. Curt likes the plan to inspect larger entities. A strategic plan would take us where we want to go. Steve said that we need something in writing. Sonny recommended the board to take a look at the 2010 strategic plan and let him know what the board wants modified. If he does not hear any feedback, he will have to make the decisions. Louis asked about Mike's background. Mike gave a summary of his credentials and professional experience. Mike would like our budget and strategic plans from 2006 onwards to come up with a plan. Sonny will send Mike a list of the board members so that he could contact them. Steve would like to show council the deficiency in our program, where we need to be and the services they are buying. Discussion about general fund breakdown ensued.

Action: Sonny will meet with Mike on the following Tuesday.

Meeting adjourn at 12:25 pm

Respectfully submitted by Geraldine Saw and Sonny Gohrman