

## MEETING MINUTES

<b>Meeting/ Project Name:</b>	Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council Business Meeting		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	January 31, 2022	<b>Time:</b>	1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
<b>Minutes Prepared By:</b>	Jasmine Chaffee	<b>Location:</b>	Billings Conv. Center, Billings
<b>1. Meeting Objective</b>			
Business Meeting			
<b>2. Attendees</b>			
<p><b>Council Members:</b> Amber Burch, Brian Ostwald, Jeanette Nordahl (virtual), Joel Farkell (virtual), Kellieann Morris (virtual), Kenny Keever (virtual), Dana Weatherford, Ron McOwen (virtual), Jeff Brennan, Karissa Floerchinger</p> <p><b>Agency Representatives:</b> Gary Adams- APHIS; David Hopkins – BIA (virtual); Wendy Velman – BLM (virtual); Aaron Kneeland &amp; Ryan Call - DNRC; Adam Sieges – FWP (virtual); Bob Cloninger &amp; Jason Allen- MDT; Dan Lucas - MSU EXT (virtual); Monica Pokorny – NRCS (virtual)</p> <p><b>Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) Staff:</b> Beth Eiring, Jasmine Chaffee, Greta Dige, Andrew Lam, Josh Wagoner, Ian Foley (virtual)</p>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>		
<b>Welcome</b>	Beth Eiring, Bureau Chief, called the meeting to order and rollcall was taken. Beth gave Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) updates to the group. She announced that Christy Clark had just been appointed as the Director of MDA by Governor Gianforte. She talked about the Department’s ARPA fund grant program and the mini grants for Stress Assistance programs. She encouraged anyone interested to contact the Department for more information.		
<b>Minutes Review/Action Items</b>	Minutes from the July 28, 2021 council meeting minutes were reviewed. All action items were completed. <b>Jeff Brennan moved to approve the minutes as written; Brian Ostwald seconded the motion; minutes were unanimously approved.</b>		
<b>Department Updates</b>	Each council member was given the opportunity to give an agency or organizational update. Bob Cloninger, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), let everyone know he would be retiring in the fall of 2022 and that Jason Allen would likely be stepping into his role at MDT. Dan Lucas, Montana State University Extension Services (MSU), told the group that Jane Mangold, MSU, would be hosting the Level 1 Weed Management Course on September 8-9 <sup>th</sup> , 2022. He also said that MSU was starting to fill extension staff positions across the state.		
<b>Program Updates</b>	<p>Jasmine Chaffee gave the council program updates which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department’s newest program, Early Detection, Rapid Response, and that Josh Wagoner would be leading the program as the Task Force Coordinator. He is charged with building capacity in the state’s current task forces and striketeams and creating a more proactive program for dealing with species not yet present in the state.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year MDA will assemble a team to review and update the State Noxious Weed Management Plan. Jasmine encouraged all who were interested to participate and let others know that she will reach out to them when the time comes for their input.</li> <li>• There will be a Weed List Workgroup meeting this spring, date TBD. Jasmine noted that there were no new weed petitions to date, but that there were other pending issues the group will need to address like the status and position of certain species such as Scotch Broom and Tansy Ragwort. She encouraged those interested in being a part of the workgroup to contact her.</li> <li>• Jasmine let the council know that there are five voting member positions whose term will end June 30, 2022 and let the current members in those positions know that letters of interest are due by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The open positions include Recreationist/Wildlife Group, Consumer Group, Montana Weed Control Association Representative, Eastern County Weed District Representative, and Member At-Large.</li> </ul> <p>A summary of the noxious weed program budget and funding estimate for the FY22 Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) grant awards was provided by Jasmine Chaffee. State Special Revenue funding, including the \$100,000 MDT pass-through, for the FY22 MDA noxious weed program was estimated at \$2,051,800.</p> <p><u>State Special Revenue pre-allocated grant awards and expenditures</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>\$442,500</td> <td>FY22 Special \$7,500 County/Reservation grant awards Grants will be distributed to 4 tribes and 55 counties in early spring</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$100,000</td> <td>MDT pass through of \$1,785.72 to each county</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$ 14,000</td> <td>Estimated council expenses</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$218,155</td> <td>Estimated FY22 non-grant expenses (Amount is based on 12% of the prior year fund 02068 grant awards, which totaled \$1,817,955. Non-grant funds are utilized for noxious weed program operating and personal services costs, and a portion of MDA's Central Services Division costs)</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>Funds available for additional grant awards</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>State Special Revenue Fund (estimate)</td> <td>\$1,377,145</td> </tr> <tr> <td>General Fund</td> <td>\$90,397</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Forest Service Funding</td> <td>\$130,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Reverted Funds (YTD estimate)</u></td> <td><u>\$24,618</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Estimated funds for March grant awards:</td> <td>\$1,622,660</td> </tr> </table> <p>Historical weed vehicle fee revenue, Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) interest revenue, reverted fund totals, and hearing request totals were provided to the council. Funding requested for the 2022 grant hearings currently totals approximately \$1.78 million, leaving a shortfall of approximately \$160,000. Available grant funds will continue to be assessed prior to the March hearings.</p> <p>Jasmine provided the council with a summary and history of county weed budgets.</p>	\$442,500	FY22 Special \$7,500 County/Reservation grant awards Grants will be distributed to 4 tribes and 55 counties in early spring	\$100,000	MDT pass through of \$1,785.72 to each county	\$ 14,000	Estimated council expenses	\$218,155	Estimated FY22 non-grant expenses (Amount is based on 12% of the prior year fund 02068 grant awards, which totaled \$1,817,955. Non-grant funds are utilized for noxious weed program operating and personal services costs, and a portion of MDA's Central Services Division costs)	State Special Revenue Fund (estimate)	\$1,377,145	General Fund	\$90,397	Forest Service Funding	\$130,500	<u>Reverted Funds (YTD estimate)</u>	<u>\$24,618</u>	Estimated funds for March grant awards:	\$1,622,660
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<p><b>Grant Updates and Project Reviews</b></p>	<p>Greta Dige provided a field visit summary, highlighting several of the 30+ past season project reviews of education, research, and local cooperative projects. The council was also updated on the following program activities Greta provided to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant Writing Workshop in Lewistown, MT</li> <li>• Weed Trainings- in conjunction with MDA's training/certification program</li> </ul>																		

<p><b>Application Updates</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDDMapS and biocontrol training-provided for the Youth Forestry Program and Eden CWMA</li> <li>• Weed Monitoring – five grant areas were set up with permanent monitoring transects using MSU’s draft monitoring protocol system</li> </ul> <p>Greta advised the council that 57 applications were received for consideration at the March grant hearings and provided a map of project locations. The 2022 applications consist of 10 education, 4 research, 6 development, and 37 local cooperative projects. Application requests currently total \$1,781,374. Applications will be sent for council review through WebGrants at <a href="https://funding.mt.gov">https://funding.mt.gov</a> on February 1<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p><u>Application Form Changes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development applications were broken out into a separate funding opportunity this year.</li> <li>• All awarded grants will be managed in Amplifund and all 2023 grant application and reviews will be completed in the new database. Both applicants and council members will be trained on how to use the new system this fall and at the winter meeting.</li> </ul> <p><u>Evaluation Criteria Changes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some wording, formatting, and arrangement of questions have been changed on the Education, Research, and Development evaluation sheets. Minimal changes were made to the Local Cooperative evaluations.</li> </ul> <p>Greta encouraged all new council members to attend a quick training on how to review grants in WebGrants after the business meeting.</p>
<p><b>NWSFF Program Update</b></p>	<p>Andrew Lam presented the 2021 season report for the Noxious Weed Free Materials (NWF) program. A decline in certified forage in 2021 was discussed and attributed partly to the extreme drought, lack of available hay, and high prices for local hay this past year. Other factors affecting program numbers included travel and outreach limitations due to COVID-19 restrictions and program fatigue. An overall total of 7,232 tons of certified hay and straw was reported for 2021, which ranked as the programs lowest number in thirty years. He noted that pellet and wattle plants were not experiencing the same downward trend, but that prices have gone up due to the price of hay.</p> <p>Andrew reported 55 active NWSFF inspectors in 2021, consisting of MSU Extension agents, county weed district staff, and MDA staff. Montana currently has 10 certified pellet processing plants and two certified straw wattle plants. Andrew plans to increase program advertising, outreach to rodeo participants, outfitters and packers, and has a program newsletter that will go out in February.</p> <p>Andrew noted that the 2021 training and certification course was posted in Moodle and has worked quite well for inspectors. He said he would like to continue to improve the program with better ID cards and adding a gravel certification course.</p> <p>Andrew talked about the new gravel certification program and said he had been getting some interest including opportunities like US Forest Service leases that he hadn’t thought of previously. He mentioned that he would be doing several in-person gravel pit inspection trainings this Spring across the state to get inspectors up to speed on the ins and outs of the program. Jasmine added that Andrew will be looking</p>

	for a small team of experts to review the draft procedures once completed and encouraged anyone interested to contact him directly.
<b>Other Business/ Public Comment</b>	<b>The council business meeting and grant hearings will be held at the Delta Hotel in Helena on March 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>.</b> Hearings conclude on Thursday, March 10 <sup>th</sup> with deliberations and the council funding recommendations for Director Clark.
<b>Adjourn</b>	<b>The council was asked for agenda suggestions for the March business meeting and encouraged to contact Jasmine if any come to mind.</b>  Beth Eiring opened the meeting for discussion of other business and public comment. None was heard.  <b>Dana Weatherford moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:30 p.m.; Amber Burch seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.</b>

4. Action Items				
Action	Assigned	Due Date	Status	
1	Provide Jasmine agenda items for March Business Meeting	Council Members	March 1st	
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				