

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council - Business Meeting		
Date of Meeting:	November 8, 2023	Start Time:	10: 00 AM
Minutes Prepared By:	Greta Dige	Location:	Dept. of Agriculture, Helena
1. Meeting Objective			
Council Business Meeting / EDRR Program Grant Status Reports			
2. Attendees			
<p>Voting Members: Kellieann Morris, Amber Burch, Joel Farkell, Bill Curran Virtual: Dana Weatherford, Jeanette Nordahl, Jeff Littlefield,</p> <p>Advisory Members: Jason Allen - MDT; Adam Sieges – FWP Virtual: Dan Lucas - MSU Extension; David Hopkins - BIA; Kenny Keever – BLM; Kylie Max- APHIS; Michelle Cox- USFS; Monika Pokorny – NRCS; Parker Osterloh - DNRC;</p> <p>Montana Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) Staff: Ian Foley, Jasmine Chaffee, Greta Dige, Josh Wagoner, Sam Yonan, Lori Leaf, Kima Traynham, Amanda Coyle-AgCorps</p> <p>Guests:</p>			
3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues			
Topic	Discussion		
Welcome Department Updates	Jasmine Chaffee, Program Manager, called the meeting to order. Introductions were made both in the room and on Zoom.		
Minutes Review Budgets and Program Updates	<p>Jasmine reviewed the minutes from November 8, 2023, council business meeting. Joel Farkell moved to accept the minutes as written, Amber Burch seconded; minutes were approved.</p> <p>Meeting documents were reviewed by Jasmine Chaffee, including an overview of the noxious weed program preliminary budget and estimate of funds available for FY 2024 Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant awards. Discussed the house bill 821 for control of woody invasive species and awarded three projects. Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) was awarded bipartisan infrastructure funds again in 2023.</p> <p>Jasmine reviewed revenue history over time looking at the last 4 years and is looking good.</p> <p>Other program updates: Western Weed Coordinating Committee put in for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds to subaward to states for dashboard development to show state and federal awarded projects. Dashboards will be public facing and show treatments, points, and monitoring based on EDDMapS database.</p> <p>Jasmine Chaffee, Jason Allan, Liz Lodman, Steve Wonderass, Karen Latatlia attended NAISMA Conference in September. MDA petitioned to have ventenata listed on NAISMA’s noxious weed list so states cannot certify materials with vententa even if it’s not listed in their state. EDDMapS Summitt coming to Montana in spring of 2024.</p>		

	AGCorps: Amanda Introduced program based out of MDA. Will have 11 members hopefully starting in January and looking for members.
Applications/Program Update Site Visit Review	<p>Greta Dige provided the council with application updates; EDDMapS point map as the infestation map will be required. One project was not awarded due to a change in coordinator. She gave a field summary report for 24+ visits while highlighting a few projects from education, research, development, and local cooperatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull Your Share • Madison Youth Biocontrol Program and Statewide Program Montana Biocontrol Project • Multi-scale Analysis of Ventenata Control treatments on the Crow Reservation • Moccasin-Boyd – Fergus County Monitoring • Gallatin County – Lyman Creek and Bill Smith • Lower Sheep Creek – Meagher County • Shields Valley – Park County • Powder River Leafy Spurge – Custer County • Powell County – Avon VWM and Blackfoot VWM • Park County - East Mill Creek and Paradise Valley Field Day • Ravalli County - Blueweed and Rush Skeletonweed • Dyer’s Woad – Beaverhead state wide <p>Other adventures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSKT Project • Powder River County Tour: looked at ventenata and leafy spurge issues • Highlighted trainings and revamped workshop, continues testing protocols, attended landowner meetings, attended task force meetings. EDDMapS trainings, showed a couple slides from Mapping 101 and Where to Start Mapping. <p>Discussed what NZ did upon entry to the country to protect it and that is was great.</p>
AAT and Education Program Updates	<p>Sam Yonan, AAT and BSWC</p> <p>AAT events wrapping up with installation in the Bozeman area. Went to Two-Moon Park and installed an AAT signed there. Went to MT educators conference and tabling at the Gardenwerks events. Working with GrowWild and the Forest Service to get those installed and complete. Sam will be returning to run the program as an AGCorps member.</p> <p>Lori Leaf, Education Specialist</p> <p>Most of summer was spent following weed staff on field visits to increase photo library of weeds to use on social media and for outreach materials. She has been running the new Facebook page. Working to get kids items: coloring pages, crosswords, and finger puzzles.</p>
EDRR Program Updates	<p>Josh Wagoner gave a brief program and field summary. Discussed tansy ragwort and the various events that occurred in both Lincoln County and in the town of Lincoln. Visited Mineral County’s rush skeletonweed site and noted their lack of funding and the difficulties they face with keeping up with EDRR species. Rush skeletonweed in Ravalli had an explosion which doubled their current know infestation. Discussed treatments and this plant’s resiliency. Lake County had new infestation of rush skeletonweed. They used a drone to map the infestation in addition to treatment. Lewis and Clark County had an infestation report from iNaturalist on the Fort and were able to confirm about an acre of mature plants, some found on BLM. They were able to treat it with Mark Andreason (RS</p>

	<p>Task Force Lead). A week later, Lewis and Clark County staff were reviewing a subdivision plan and found another site. They informed the developer and stopped all work on infested piece. They made agreement to have access to site for L&C staff as well as MDA staff indefinitely. Josh took all the rush skeletonweed bags to Ravalli to burn in their incinerator. Lori has helped with getting message out.</p> <p>Josh noted the difficulty with the Blueweed river project and how selection of herbicide is extremely important. The contractors selected have done great work as there was little blueweed onsite. Showed photo point from last year to this year which shows a drastic change in the amount of blueweed with a major improvement. Sanders County blueweed issue is mostly in the right of way. MDT and Ravalli collaborated to get a contractor to treat the location.</p> <p>Dyers woad site in Whitefish used Working Dogs for Conservation and didn't locate any plants. New dyers woad sighting south of Livingston and when visited the site no plants were found. Fall Taskforce meeting went well and everyone was engaged. Josh traveled to Hill County to look at phragmites for the first time. A week later MSU notified MDA of sample of phragmites that was found at the farmer's market. They were able to trace its original location and treated it with burning and herbicides, and clipped seedheads. Patches are very dense which makes it difficult to get through. Other parts will be burned and buried. Woody Invasive Working Group meeting Lewistown was a success with lots of discussion. Josh helped put in AAT kiosk at Two Moon Park. Josh noted that he believes common buckthorn is in more places than what people are reporting.</p> <p>Plamer Ameranth was found in Daniels County. Only a handful of plants, both male and female. Projects that have been completed to date are: Dyer's Woad color page and dash stickers. Ventenata will be added to NASIMA's noxious weed list. Garden loosestrife is a new species that is more aggressive than purple loosestrife. Josh treated the site in Ravalli and is looking for new sites. Scotch broom was found on highway 200 in Sanders Co. Josh and Jason Allen went to investigate and there was a lot. Called in reinforcements from Lincoln County to assist. Plant went right to the water's edge. Huge patches of knotweed in addition to the scotch broom. Discussed plans for 2024 including going back to CSKT for rush skeletonweed treatments and possibly the council doing a field work day.</p>
<p>NWFM Program Updates</p>	<p>Jasmine Chaffee discussed program summary starting with revenue. No longer forage council and this council no servers that purpose. Jasmine will run the program to add stability. Went over revenue last year was higher than last year. Hope is once gravel program starts the program will be out of the red. 31 active inspectors (47 total) 6 counties. Acres inspected is going up. There are draft guidelines for gravel and forage and need a lot of work. Those counties that don't want to inspect either gravel and forage MDA will do those and back up others as needed. Looking for suggestion to increase participation for gravel and forage. Kelliann suggested working with USFS workers to increase awareness through them for promotion.</p>

<p>Updates, Issues, Successes</p>	<p>Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Allan: MDT - thanks county partners and letting us know what they were seeing. Treated \$1.38 worth of ROW on top that \$15,000 of ventenata was treated. Missoula treated rush along I90. Got mowers to not mow it. Blueweed in the Hot Springs area is bad and were treating every 2 weeks. Spent \$11,000 in Sanders County and looked really good. \$845,000 worth of treatments and \$25,000 of ventenata treatments. Scotch Broom for along the highway and looking to stop it from going any further. There are two biocontrol agents for scotch broom, hopefully not to that stage. • Kelliann Sweeney, Ravalli County: Western County Representative - She had a meeting with working dog for conservation and discuss the basics of training dogs to the public how to smell for noxious weeds. WD4C was excited and will be discussing it with her next week. Josh mentioned one weed to train for would be Palmer Amaranth. Dogs are a great tool and have been as asset to the Dyer's woad program working towards eradication. Look at holding classes how to use the native plants, bees, and noxious weeds and uses. Try to bring in the other groups of folks that may not be as open to herbicides but others uses for noxious weeds. Discussed having a class to assist landowners with "rewilding" their landscapes in a beneficial way. • Adam Sieges: FWP - Business as usual and working year reports and renew pesticide applicator license. • Amber Burch, Beaverhead County: MWCA Representative - Kelsey Miller will be leaving in March so MWCA will be looking for a new executive director. Gearing up for annual conference, fall training was very good. Did find some ventenata in the Horse Prairie area on private and BLM and should be managed. Suspect there is more. Found with the assistance from the Nature Conservancy doing stream work and it was right in the middle. County requires gravel pits to do a weed plan, however they are only getting notice. May need assistance or look into ways to make doing the weed plans better for gravel pits. • Joel Farkell: Consumer Group - Definitely kudos to department and MDT doing more communication and awareness across the state. Really happy as a council member to see the headway that has been made it this area. Continue to push awareness crossover with EDRR species especially Palmer. Moving in positive direction. • Bill Curran: At-Large Member - Was an extension specialist in Pennsylvania and in the last 5 years worked with Palmer. Worked on a big awareness campaign for it. Worked with herbicide trails and in the last 10 years getting involved in organic agriculture. • Dan Lucas: MSU Extension -- Express appreciation of council and bringing the research side together. Private applicator is having a lot of classes 200-300 programs a year. Still see participation even with the reduced use of restricted chemicals. Did get an education about using drones and the challenges they bring. Biological controls at a larger scale and working with Melissa. • Park Osterloh: DNRC - 1400 lease evaluation collected 500 new weed infestation polygons. Had 20 patches of ventenata found and treated. Parker will be taking a new
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position and they will be filling his position. Not sure what that means for grants. Not sure how much data is shared with EDDMapS, but polygons yes.

- Kylie Max- APHIS No Updates
- Kenny Keever – BLM Wendy sends her regards to council. MT/Dakotas recently approved lead as a permanent full-time position will be cycling through detailees. It may take time to get it filled.
- Jeff Littlefield, MSU: Noxious Control Research Representative - Runs containment lab at MSU and works with CABI, BBKA, and biocontrol consortium all over the US and Canada. Main function over overseas labs screen agents and help run them through regulatory process. Been at MSU for 35 years working to transition projects. Works with whitetop and a mite has 16 release sites. Seeing significant increase at initial release sites where they are stunting plants. Learn techniques to move from site to sites. Root fly on hawkweed. Two root moths one for rush skeletonweed and will start on petition for field release and the other agent for oxeye daisy. Hope to get a permit next year. CABI getting close to being petition for field release. Looking into options to submit proposals to maintain continuity with some projects. Asked about CABI submitting vs others to the trust fund. Thanked council for support.
- Jeannett Nordahl: Recreation - None
- Jacob Bradford: BOR - Field season award herbicide contractor for Clark Canyon Dam \$35,000 to spray for spotted knapweed and leafy spurge to help out Beaverhead county and BLM. Projects coming up hired new GIS coordinator and wants to develop a new UAS program and want to spray using drones. Funding to do biocontrol releases at Canyon Ferry and setting up monitoring at Tiber to check historic releases.
- David Hopkins: BIA - continue to educate agencies at Crow and neighboring agencies and what it looks like about ventenata. Found some on the Northern Cheyenne. They have worked with NRCS to use Equip funds.
- Michelle Cox, USFS - Complete inventory gravel pits and treated 375 acres. Will need to with engineers to sustain funding to inventory and treat these areas. Geotechnical mapping projects using UAS 2 in Idaho, 1 in Flathead, and 1 in Beaverhead/Deer Lodge. Working with communication specialist to get the word out on what is going on. Working on invasive annual grasses. UM Digital Spatial Lab received fund to map regional to map adjacent to forest service to model for invasive annual grasses. Present data next week and figure out how to refine it for treatments. They will be hiring permanent teams to do work. Some funds went to Jeff Littlefield for the Eastern Heath snail. Workshops for Ecological IMP that included seeding for Idaho pan handle.
- Natalie West, USDA-ARS - In Sidney there is a diminishing group as John Gaskin retired. Working on Flowering Rush with Both ARS in Eastern MT and serve the whole state which is directed by stakeholders and need. They are seeking input regarding problems that need to address with federal research dollars.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dana Weatherford, Stillwater County: Livestock - Cattle prices are awesome. Hay isn't moving as bad. Using this as a stock on their inventory. • Monica Pokorney: NRCS - FY23 good participation in TIPS Provided \$3.6 Million in weed management. Been encouraging local offices to reach out to county weed districts and have districts contact them as well. Will be having in-person weed management trainings this summer. • Jasmine Chaffee, MDA: Education Campaign - have sent out survey to gather feedback about the campaign. Reviewed preliminary results from the survey. Discussed about housing the campaign at MDA and are open to it. As forage was not filled there is an FTE available. If occurs the trust cannot be involved. It means agencies counties and others for projects will need to step up. Asked for councils feedback and or comments. DNRC proposal is still on the table. Can bring this up at stakeholder meeting. Discussed how if MDA houses it and NWTF is out for funding projects what are options. Jason rest area posters are up and
<p>State Program Status Report Updates</p>	<p>State Program Status Report Updates (15 min each)</p> <p>Melissa Maggio - Montana Biocontrol Coordination Project</p> <p>Brief program history discussed most recent program assessment with the top 3 of focus were education, collection days and distribution, and research updates. Current focus areas are insect collection and distribution, education, and monitoring with the priority on newer systems. Went over objectives and planned activities for the 2023 season. Events 21 in-person educational program/workshops and 2 virtual. Educational materials: 3 articles written/co-written, distributed posters and field guides, will complete resin project, stickers and tattoos, and how to videos on hold. Insect collections and distribution: 48 days collecting over 350 participants, 7 species collected, Over 700,000 distributed and over 9000 grams of thistle rust harvested (enough 120 sites), 40 counties, 4 reservations, and 12 other states received biocontrol agents. Monitoring 108 sites. In the process of starting the program assessment with the assistance of the Montana HELPS Lab. In last assessment Houndstongue, cheatgrass, whitetop, and Canada thistle were the top four weeds people wanted targeted for development. Canada thistle Rust monitored and inoculated 53 sites and harvested from 4 sites. Gave all data to Dr. Tim Seiple and Dr. Lisa Rew to analyze data to develop predictive tools. Houndstongue root weevil applied funding to conduct impact monitoring which wrapped up this year. The summary is coming by the end of April.</p> <p>Amber Burch - Montana Dyer's Woad Cooperative Project</p> <p>Started with project history for newer members. Discussed objectives for taskforce. Reviewed identification for woad from rosettes, vegetation, flowers and seeds. Measuring success is set within the management plan with 4 goals. The plan is reviewed every 5 years. There are 12 active sites that are monitored each year. Snowline this year no thing found till fall with the assistance of the dogs. Tally Lake had only 5 plants this year. Flathead single plant reported. Mount Sentinel escaped from behind ethics building. This site is inspected by Marlynn Marler and her crew as well as WD4C. Sweet Grass county site using dogs now hillside was covered in rosettes. Success is there was no flowering plants. In late October with dogs only</p>

found 15 total rosettes. Park County usual site no plants found this year. Did have happen is a new plant found from landowner this site is a little interesting how this one popped up. Will be doing a mailing with Theresa to see if there is anymore. Carbon County found a single plant in a previous location. Finds along MDT Jefferson, Powell, Treasure, Silverbow, and Stillwater counties lots of unknown as how these got there. Stillwater near Columbus found one then next year found more plants opposite side. Not sure as to why, however that is the reason for dash stickers. Lewis and Clark County was an intentional planting to be considered for eradication. Overall in MT has had an 81% decrease since 2019. In the winter is to look online for dyers woad and Amazon flagged the purchase, however others online stores still allow you to purchase, scary. She turns the information over to the Department of agriculture to notify seller. One thing not accomplished was the boat survey for Park County. WD4C great organization and have seen a huge decrease with this partnership.

Kellieann Sweeny - Ravalli County Rush Skeletonweed

- Been making really good headway till this year. Surveyed acres they have been doing about 10,000/year now that will change. Discovered 100's of acres in the Skalkaho area. Do to size had to in this area had to hire an aerial applicator. Prior everything was going really well. Prior to this recent find every plant was being clipped and sprayed. Do to circumstances with previous contractor they are now doing reviews with current applicators. They are doing a great job. Education and making sure following protocols. Will need to come before the trust for a new grant as the new infestation added a significant expense. Showed mapping of EDDMapS. While at a site found a missed plant which was clipped and bagged then treated. Making progress because the infestation was found. One seasonal has a drone and had a donation and was able to purchase 4 little drones for recon as it is easy to spot.

Kellieann Sweeny - Ravalli County Bugloss

A plant or two in Mineral County. First found at a helicopter repair area and found what to treat it with. Once started working on the area found 30 helicopter tails all hidden by this plant. Now dealing with much smaller plants and clip and bag it. This last season used a gallon and half of spray. Pulled a whole lot means plants that grew last fall flowered and seeded before we got to them. Finding nice tall plants. Finding new sites and clipped bagged pulled and sprayed. Showed EDDMapS points. All landowners in the area all have bugloss. Working with crew on how to enter information into EDDMapS. This grant is to hire a strike team and with it we are able to keep moving forward.

Kellieann Sweeny – Blueweed

- Looking great. Hire a contractor to treat river and a strike team to treat private ground. Used to pull hundreds and hundreds of grants now this year only 20+ bags. Pulling more and spraying less. Biggest problem is haven't found a place without it and timing. Want to catch before it goes to seed. Same plant that Sanders County is fighting as well. Eradicated out of county gravel pit after 15 years. Float 60+ miles and pull bag and spray plants. Contractors are great and are very aware of the sensitive of the system in which they are working in. Blueweed will grow anywhere. Weed Board and MDA tour of this site and did find one spot that was taken care of. Have a chunk FWP property extremely steep. Use mules to treat

	<p>slope. Showed EDDMapS of project and the work that is being done. Struggles were minimal and blueweed is being reduce in areas that were treated.</p> <p>Rush along the river is doing good.</p> <p>Jasmine: Will you look at contracting out Bugloss? Difficult with having to check every 2 weeks.</p>
<p>Other Business/ Public Comment</p> <p>Adjourn</p>	<p>Jasmine Chaffee, Program Manager</p> <p>No public comment.</p> <p>Amber Burch motioned to adjourn, Kellieann Sweeney seconds; meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.</p>
	<p>Save the Date: Business Meeting and Grant Hearings, Helena/Delta Hotel March 18 – March 22, 2024</p>

4. Action Items			
Action	Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Jasmine invite council to Education Steering Committee Meeting	Nov. 16,2023	Completed
2			
3			