

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council Meeting		
Date of Meeting:	January 22, 2014	Time:	8:30am – 12:00pm
Minutes Prepared By:	Jasmine Reimer	Location:	MDA – Rm#225 Conference Call / GoToMeeting

1. Meeting Objective
Business Meeting
2. Attendees
<p>Council Members: Ron de Yong*, Todd Wagner, Jennifer Vermillion, Jim Gordon, Jim Olivarez, Kenny Keever, Jack Eddie, Doug Dupuis, Kellieann Morris*, Dick Zoanni</p> <p>Agency Representatives: Tracy Sterling, Mike Miller*, John Cook, Floyd Thompson, Steve Shelly, Jim Jacobs, John Gaskin, Joe Merenz</p> <p>Montana Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) Staff*: Greg Ames, Donna Rise, Dave Burch, Kim Antonick, Carol Bearden, Libbi Lovshin, Jasmine Reimer</p> <p>* Attended in person</p>

3. Agenda and Notes,	Decisions, Issues
Topic	Discussion
Welcome & Introductions	Ron de Yong opened the meeting and introductions were made.

Noxious Weed Trust Fund Budget Report

Greg Ames provided a budget report with estimates of the amounts expected to be available for grant awards at the March 2015 hearings. The Council was provided with information on grant awards and expenditures that have already been made or are pending for FY 15. Non-grant expenses for FY 15 were estimated at \$206,210, which was calculated as 12% of the prior year grants awarded. The estimate is pending the passing of HB 108.

Estimated remaining funds for the March 2015 grants awards were as follows:

State Special Revenue Fund	\$1,236,848
General Fund	\$101,159
Forest Service Funds	\$150,525
Unspent past Forest Service Funds	\$10,094
Reverted Funds	\$42,588
Total (estimate)	\$1,541,214

Greg explained that the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) has requested \$150,000 per year from the general fund in HB2. The money will fund a state weed coordinator position as well as the noxious weed program's share of Central Services and 25 percent of the Bureau Chief's salary. He encouraged anyone willing to write a letter of support. Donna offered to send any interested parties a link so they may submit their letters to the subcommittee.

The Noxious Weed Trust Fund balance was reported at \$10,000,000, where it will remain, since reverted funds are now re-awarded rather than being added back to the trust fund. Historical information on the weed vehicle fee, NWTF interest amounts, reverted funds and March hearing funding requests was provided to the Council.

<p>June 12, 2014</p> <p>Minutes Review</p>	<p>The minutes from the June 12, 2014 meeting were reviewed. Jim Olivarez moved to approve the minutes as written. Kenny Keever seconded the motion.</p> <p>Motion passed unanimously.</p>
<p>MDA 2015</p> <p>Legislative Report</p>	<p>Donna Rise discussed several bills being tracked by MDA. Dan Salomon is sponsoring HB108 which will allow MDA to base non-grant expenditures on 12% of the prior year's grant awards. It will be affective upon approval.</p> <p>Jeff Welborn is sponsoring HB167 which increases non-resident use permits of off-road vehicles from \$5 to \$25. There is an amendment that could ensure part of the fees go towards weed control. Kellieann Morris encouraged everyone willing to send letters of support for the amendment.</p> <p>HB2 includes \$150,000 per year of general funds for MDA to reinstate the position of state weed coordinator. The funds will not only be used for the coordinator's salary, but also benefits, operating costs, 25% of the Bureau Chief's salary and indirects to the Central Services Division which include IT, accounting, human resources and legal counsel.</p> <p>Donna noted that several LC's are being watched, but none are of great concern at present.</p>
<p>Weed Program Overview</p>	<p>Dave Burch reviewed the reverted grants in fiscal year 2015. He commented that the Montana State Noxious Weed Plan has been put on hold for the last couple of months due to limited weed staff and funding. Dave said after the Weed Listing Workgroup meets the following week, he will let the council know what was recommended by the group.</p>
<p>Emergency Grant Presentations</p>	<p>Kellieann Morris gave a presentation on the emergency grant for rush skeletonweed in Ravalli County. Her crew, along with help from a National Forest helicopter, surveyed over 6,300 acres in ten days and collected 102 bags of rush skeletonweed. She emphasized the importance of being able to receive emergency grant money for projects like this, and the need for a state weed coordinator to work with other states and counties to stop the spread of noxious weeds in Montana.</p> <p>Doug Dupuis gave a presentation on the emergency grant for medusahead on the Flathead Reservation. His crew completed 1,300 acres of grid inventories, 1,000 acres of aerial applications and published a variety of educational materials. He said they found the weed mostly on degraded range land, and suspected the seed source may have come from out of state vehicles.</p>
<p>Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage Program</p>	<p>Kim Antonick gave an update on the Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage (NWSFF) program. The annual production of certified forage for 2014 was approximately</p>

<p>Update</p>	<p>22,000 tons which has been fairly consistent the last four years. The acreage of straw production increased, total tonnage remained the same and the number of producers dropped slightly. The program has 40 active inspectors; 12 of which were newly trained in 2014.</p> <p>Kim discussed her goals and projects for 2015 which include producing educational materials targeting gas and oil groups, rodeos, retail feed and US Forest Service users. She will be developing a web based inspector recertification training module, continuing to encourage 4-H and fair grounds to make NWSFF mandatory and getting NWSFF added to the reclamation permitting process. Ron suggested she talk to Cort Jensen to discuss the permitting process, and to supply him a contact sheet with both suppliers and buyers to take to an upcoming meeting. Kim said she will bring ideas of how to label bulk loads to the NWSFF Advisory Council next meeting, as well as supply Kellieann with signs to post in her county.</p>
<p>Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council / Invasive Species Advisory Council Update</p>	<p>Ron de Yong announced that the Governor's office has approved the initiation of an Invasive Species Advisory Council (ISAC) which replaces the Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council. The ISAC will discuss both terrestrial and aquatic species. Membership applications and appointments for the new council are being accepted at present. Funding for the ISAC is dependent upon the Department of Natural Resources (DNRC) 2015 legislation. Until the council has funding, it is unknown when their first meeting will occur.</p>
<p>Other Business Public Comment Agenda Items Adjourn</p>	<p>Dave Burch advised the Council that the 2015 Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant hearings will be held March 2nd – 6th at the Wingate hotel in Helena.</p> <p>Ron encourages anyone willing to write a letter of support for HB2 and send it to the subcommittee before the next hearing.</p> <p>Dave asked if there were any new agenda items for the March hearings; there were none. Meeting was adjourned.</p>

4. Action	Items	Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Send the Noxious Weed Listing Workgroup recommendations to the Management Advisory Council	Dave Burch		
2	Provide a link to submit support letters to the subcommittee	Donna Rise		
3	Provide Ron de Yong a list of NWSFF suppliers and buyers	Kim Antonick	2/2/2015	
4	Send Kellieann NWSFF signs to post in Ravalli county	Kim Antonick		