

PENNINGTON COUNTY WEED & PEST BOARD

Pennington County Weed & Pest Office

3607 Cambell Street, Rapid City, SD

Wednesday, June 16, 2021, 12:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Mark DiSanto

Deb Hadcock, County Commissioner Liaison

Paul Paulsen

Members Absent:

Bert Jocks, Chairman

Jerry Hirrschoff, Vice Chairman

Others Present:

Scott Guffey, Director

With both the chairman and vice chairman absent, Hadcock chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Additional Items / Approve Agenda

Motion made by DiSanto to approve the agenda, seconded by Paulson, motion carried. Motion made by Paulsen to approve meeting minutes for the April 14, 2021 meeting, seconded by DiSanto, motion carried.

Budget Report

Scott Guffey presented Budget Report for Weed & Pest (615) and Natural Resources (616) budgets. Weed & Pest (615) has 64% remaining, Natural Resource budget (616) is at 53% for the remainder of the year. Guffey said that the Bobcat is at Jenner Equipment for scheduled maintenance, additional repairs are going to cost \$7k. That will eat up some of the over-collected revenue that was earmarked for the drum masticator attachment. Guffey doubts they will have enough over-collected revenue to pay for one now.

OLD BUSINESS

Shaded Fuel Break Update

All log decks have been hauled off of S. Rochford Rd thus far, a total of 20 truck loads have been taken to the mill for a total of \$17,582. There are another 15-20 loads to be cut and hauled of this fall and winter, the sale closes at the end of the year. The new bridge construction starts next week and should be able to haul across it this fall, which will save on trucking costs. Guffey met with John Ball, SDSU, on June 2nd to look at pine regen herbicide test plots. They found a great site down by Bear Mtn, forest service won't let them do the test plot there because it is in an active timber sale area. Guffey and forest service are looking for an alternative site, test plot will be sprayed in mid-July. The test plot is to identify the most effective herbicide that can be used under a mature tree canopy to control pine tree seedlings, this would be a more efficient way to control the pine regen in the shaded fuel break areas.

2022 Budget

Guffey submitted the 2022 budget proposals to the county commissioners and auditor according to the budget guidelines. Budget increases were allowed for salary increases according to the county wage policy. Guffey submitted a separate (615) Weed & Pest budget request with a \$27k increase for the purchase of a 1-ton diesel pickup as discussed at the last meeting. Guffey double checked the state bid price for a 1-ton diesel pickup and it is \$42k, not \$34k as he stated at the last meeting. The department's budget hearing is scheduled for June 25th it starts at 8:30, probably won't get to ours until 10:30 or so.

Keystone Fuels Project

Guffey attended a meeting for doing fuels reduction projects around the community of Keystone, it doesn't look like there will be much work the county can contribute to the project. Most of the forest service property will be thinned through timber sales and state wildland fire is working with the private landowners. Guffey will stay involved in case there is something the county can contribute.

30 x 30 Initiative

Right before the board's last meeting Guffey was given information on the 30 x 30 Land and Water Conservation Initiative proposed in President Biden's Executive Order 14008, "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad". The American

Stewards of Liberty organization was asking counties to adopt a resolution opposing the imitative, proclaiming it was private land grab attempt by the federal government. Guffey researched it more and found out that no specific details had been proposed at the time. Guffey had a hard time recommending the commissioners to adopt the resolution, when there was no specific details on the initiative. The Biden Administration has since published the "Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful" that is a policy document for the 30 x 30 initiative. Guffey read the document and everything pertaining to private land ownership is stressed that it is voluntary conservation efforts and it will honor private property rights. Guffey recommended to the county commissioner at this time there is no need to adopt the resolution and he'll keep an eye out for anything that appears to be a federal government overreach.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 Chemical Cost-share Program

Guffey recommended that the county offer a \$100 chemical cost-share program for private landowners this year. Last year the amount was \$50 due to the COVID19 budget cuts. Guffey said there would be enough grant funds to support a \$100 program this year. Motion by Hadcock, seconded by Paulsen, for a \$100 chemical cost-share program, motion carried.

NE Pennington County Grasshopper Project

Guffey was asked to provide assistance on a landowner-initiated grasshopper control project in the Northeastern part of Pennington County north of Quinn. Guffey, APHIS and Preston Johnson with Asend Ag. Inc., an aerial applicator in the area, meet with a group of landowners on the evening of June 1st at landowner's residence. The landowners are concerned the grasshoppers could be bad this year and in what is looking like a dry year, could be hard on their livestock pastures. They were wanting to do a preventive spraying to reduce the grasshopper populations. AHPIS provided technical advice on the insecticide Dimilin, that is an instar prohibitor and is safer on other insects than Malathion. Guffey made a landowner map for the meeting, so they could draw up the spray block. They returned the paper map to Guffey with a 76k acres plot to be sprayed and he created a GIS shapefile for the aerial applicator to use with the plane's GPS system. Johnson said all the spraying got completed yesterday and Guffey sent him an excel spreadsheet with all the landowner's information involved for billing. Johnson said there is another group of landowners that want to spray by Wasta and he would get the area to Guffey to make another GIS shapefile for him.

Crew Update

Guffey said that the seasonal staff is now working, they have been spraying leafy spurge and absinth wormwood. Now are starting to spray Canada thistle. Crews will be focusing on the eastern part of the county the next couple weeks, spraying the county roads, BLM, and on the Buffalo Gap National Grasslands. Been off to a slow start with technical issues with the mapping tablets and phones, a new app has been introduced by ESRI called Field Maps and it is replacing Arc Collector that department had been using. The new app is not supported on the older tablets and phones, Guffey had order 4 new tablets and has had issues with the tablets and the Wi-Fi in the office. The county IT department has seemed to fix the WIFI issue. They have issues with the enforcement letters too, along with a new person in that position there hasn't been a lot of voluntary compliance letters sent out thus far.

Agency Report

None

ADJOURN

Motion made by DiSanto to adjourn the meeting at 1:25 pm, seconded by Paulsen, motion carried.

Next meeting will be August 4th, 2021.

Submitted by Scott Guffey