

Noxious Weed Advisory Committee Meeting
January 2, 2008
Colorado Department of Agriculture, Lakewood

- Meeting called to order at 1:10 pm
- **Members present:** Harley Ernst, Sarada Krishnan, Margaret Paget, Jonathan Rife, John Taylor, Bill Wilkinson, Heather Knight, Steve Anthony, Scott Nissen, Ken Lair, Tom McClure, Jimmy Dunn, Raymond Burgess, Roc Rutledge, and Eve Pugh
- **Others present:** Eric Lane, Director Conservation Services Division, Cindy Lair, State Conservation Board Manager, Kelly Uhing, State Weed Coordinator, Crystal Andrews, Early Detection Rapid Response Specialist, and Mike Rigiroszi, High Plains Weed Specialist.
- **Excused:** Jay Jutton, Moe Schifter
- **Nikki Simpson** from the Department of Agriculture recorded the minutes.
- During the catered lunch with the Commissioner of Agriculture, John Stulp, and the Deputy Commissioner, Sheldon Jones, the outgoing Colorado Noxious Weed Advisory Board members were acknowledged by Kelly Uhing (State Weed Coordinator) and the board.
- **CNMI:** The visitors from CNMI provided excellent presentations on the various aspects of agriculture the islands face as well as some brief history of the islands.
- **October draft minutes and current agenda:** Jonathan opened the floor for any additions to the October minutes, seeing none minutes were approved unanimously. Jonathan inquired if any items needed to be added to the current agenda, seeing none it was voted and passed that the agenda was approved as is.
- **Pulling for Colorado (CNWAC)** (Margaret had update):
 - There is a statewide awareness day schedules on Saturday, July 12th, 2008. The event is scheduled to help spread education and awareness throughout the state about noxious weeds. Various locations across the state will be hosting different festivities/educational opportunities. Margaret mentioned that it would be nice if the board members be involved either locally (near them) or to attend the metro area location at Bear Creek Lake Park (off C470 and Morrison Rd.)
 - Tom McClure added that the event is similar to Earth Day, but Earth day is a global event where as this event is Colorado only. There are about 6-8 locations throughout the state besides Leadville and Bear Creek State Park. The goal is to get more than 600-800 people at Bear Creek, have media involvement to assist the spread of awareness and education of noxious weeds through other facets. Hopefully this will become an annual event.
- **Change Specie Classification:**
 - Myrtle Spurge:
 - Jonathan mentioned the difficulties in eradicating Myrtle spurge since it is heavily populated in Douglas County. Kelly had sent out an email about the advantages and disadvantages of removing Myrtle

spurge from List A and placing it on List B. The map that was sent out shows approximately 500 acres of infestation. The other A species have far less infestation, the closest one is Purple loosestrife with about 300 acres.

- Eric mentioned (in response to a question from Ken about what the acreage infestation requirements for the various listing specifications) that it never made sense to have a acre number set for A, B, and C listing but to look at the other considerations such as seed longevity, etc. Tom McClure asked if the Green Industry was still selling myrtle spurge to which Eric confirmed that it was no longer being sold. John Taylor raised the question that if it was moved from A to B would that de-emphasize it? Jonathan Rife stated that currently it would be in violation of law since he is not enforcing it in Douglas County as it is in a very large number of private yards. Cindy asked why it was not being enforced and maybe the committee needs to look at a different approach. She shared the LaSalle story of how the whole town spent a certain day (or weekend) getting rid of myrtle spurge. Mike Rigirosso mentioned that the push factor to get the city to help with the effort was the health issues. Eric: myrtle spurge could be easily sold to remove since it can send kids to the hospital with skin irritations; it would be a direct and tangible aspect for people to get behind it. It is more common than yellow starthistle but the health hazard has various impacts: heightens awareness backs itself, and there are places where it was planted everywhere. These are good reasons to press on the specie, and just work neighborhood by neighborhood.
- Scott asked if the committee has the legal support for liens. Eric responded that yes they do. Kelly mentioned that the main problem is along the front range, involving three large counties specifically. Steve: it is a problem in municipalities? Eric: that is the majority of where it was sold. Steve raised the option that possibly it could be moved from A to B temporarily. Eric: technically yes, but it would require lots of education and substantial reasoning. Tom McClure mentioned that it has always been hard to have yellow starthistle (which is much easier eradicated and more of a large threat) in the same category as myrtle spurge (that is seen everywhere as it is already heavily infested along the front range). Bill mentioned that what the committee is willing to do for one specie (as far as enforcement and eradication) we have to make sure it is the same for each specie in that list.
- Kelly mentioned it is easy to focus on and could be a good poster child. Also myrtle spurge can provide good PR. The other side is that if it is moved to List B then it may be helpful for front range counties to develop specific management options for it. Tom asked if it was moved to B would that be lumping wild lands with municipalities, could it remain on A and just exclude urban areas.
- What is the end role? (Eric) Would the committee be OK letting it set where it is? Need to have good reasoning why it was removed from

A, and what if it is needed to move it back to A? Need to figure out the end point and then tailor a solution to get there.

- Bill: this plant could be the selling point, the committee should probably think of attacking it different ways (using the health approach) and different ways to educate. Steve mentioned that if it is moved to B there could be more management, eradication and may stop the spread more effectively; there would be more of a plan. Sarada suggested this would be great educational opportunities for urban areas. Tom asked about the feasibility of eradication? Eric disagreed that feasibility be entirely used to remove from list A and that code enforcement in municipalities have a stronger foothold then we think. Margaret thinks it is a great poster child, good plant to use even as each city varies with enforcement it could be a good way to get urban involvement with noxious weeds. Jonathan mentioned that as long as the committee is aware he is working on the weeds and it won't happen overnight. Scott suggested that if a standard article was written and sent out it would be good to get people thinking about invasive ornamentals. Run the article in home and garden sections of papers, also a good plant to use since we can use it's relation to leafy spurge.
- Cindy said it would be helpful if there could be a more focused group of these target counties. Could also have local nurseries offer discounts to homeowners for removing noxious weeds and replanting with something else. Jonathan mentioned he could get on the Douglas County late TV to do PR work on it. Heather: after looking over the plant and criteria for list A, myrtle spurge does meet the requirements but the trick is the human factor – how to deal with people about it? It is a great opportunity to get everyone to go after it. Kelly: is dealing with a specific problem of enforcement with a city, she needs to get a decision soon so as to know if to proceed with attorneys and establish some sort of precedence. Ken: the committee needs to determine what are we trying to do as far as regulatory/enforcement; do we want to legally attack municipalities? group of these target counties. Could also have local nurseries offer discounts to homeowners for removing noxious weeds and replanting with something else. Jonathan mentioned he could get on the Douglas County late TV to do PR work on it. Heather: after looking over the plant and criteria for list A, myrtle spurge does meet the requirements but the trick is the human factor – how to deal with people about it? It is a great opportunity to get everyone to go after it. Kelly: is dealing with a specific problem of enforcement with a city, she needs to get a decision soon so as to know if to proceed with attorneys and establish some sort of precedence. Ken: the committee needs to determine what are we trying to do as far as regulatory/enforcement; do we want to legally attack municipalities? Maybe we should focus more on education/awareness, the current documents need cleaned up as this is a very grey area.

- Eric brought up the fact that the committee has never told the front range to go after the weed NOW, but they just don't do anything when it isn't put like that. There needs to be some sort of start somewhere and each year keep moving (Salt cedar has made drastic improvements over a long period of time – just keep going).
- Steve motioned to recommend to the Ag Commission to move myrtle spurge from list A to list B during the next rule making session. Tom seconded the motion. There were 4 in favor and 8 opposed. Motion dies. Steve asked if there was any information that could influence the vote. Heather motioned that a subcommittee be formed to update the management plans on myrtle spurge so the committee can make a more informative decision. Cindy suggested more of an action plan with incentives for landowners and resources (as grants) for towns and municipalities. A more organized effort to make it happen. Tom suggested an assessment team of front range counties to do a feasibility of eradication and also how many acres vs. how many yards are infested. Kelly mentioned that she is meeting with w Med.Sage committee in early February (consisted of counties, etc.) that are affected by the plant and re-look at how to manage it and it could be possible to do something similar with myrtle spurge. Cindy suggested Kelly meet with municipalities before next meeting. Jonathan said the sub committee could fill out a PAF, which would also help determine what to do with the plant. Ken: motion includes feasibility to convince people to eradicate. Heather restated motion: Establish a subcommittee task force to include committee members meeting with municipalities and other entities to determine the feasibility, resources, and infestation amount as well as the PAF to assist the committee in deciding about removing myrtle spurge from list A to list B. All members were in favor: unanimous vote. The sub committee will include Jonathan, Margaret, Kelly, Steve, John and other members who would like to be involved.

- Jointed goatgrass
 - Fred Raish sent Kelly the information on moving goatgrass from list C to B. More will be discussed in April in Sterling (next meeting)
 - Roc asked if Kelly would keep updated about the legal issues/enforcement she finds out (she agreed).

- **Colorado Department of Agriculture update:**

- Weed Act Revision Schedule
 - Kelly will email the Act revisions.
- Restoring Noxious Weed Fund
 - Blessings from Isgar, Eric updated that he and Sheldon were going to try and get a few more members involved
 - Kelly gave a brief update of what the funding was: money from unclaimed property interest would go to hire 2 FTE's and let the weed fund grow so that money would be available for 2009 grants
 - The text is done, is just needs to go to the drafter.

- When it is completed, Kelly will send out emails letting everyone know who their representatives are and contact points.
- **CDOT response to committee letter**
 - Kelly feels the response is positive and it could finally be on the right track. Jim Walker is the new weed coordinator who has experience in farming and his supervisor Mark Muller would be very helpful. They both have had good communication with the weed team and have attended meetings.
 - Since the response from CDOT is looking up, Kelly suggested continuing to build relationship with them and now focus hard on Division of Wildlife (DOW). The new director, Tom Remington, may be a good time to try to communicate with them. Kelly was suggesting requesting the Commissioner of Agriculture to speak/welcome Mr. Remington about the weed problems. There is currently no representative on the weed team from DOW.
 - Jonathan suggested sending another letter to DOW requesting presence on the weed management team. Heather said it would also be good to send a letter to CDOT to encourage them, that we look forward to working with them. Jonathan and Kelly will write the letters. Tom said it would be a good opportunity to re-iterate where our focus is, and Margaret suggested mentioning the right of way management issues.
- **Next meeting is April 29th-30th, 2008 in Sterling, CO.** Kelly will get in touch with Randy Bueller to set the arrangements; the actual meeting will be the 29th with field tours on the 30th.
- Meeting adjourned at 3:15pm.