

MINUTES OF THE COLORADO NOXIOUS WEED ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 13, 2013
700 Kipling St., 4th Floor Conference Room
Lakewood, Colorado

The meeting was called to order by vice chairman Fred Midcap at 9:50 a.m., chairman Terri Schulz being unable to attend due to severe flooding issues along the Front Range of northern Colorado. Terri participated in the meeting via conference call, as did George Beck. Those in attendance were: Fran Pannebaker, Karn Stiegelmeier, Sheila Grother, Jack Flowers, Ken Harper, Shawn Wissel, Fred Midcap, and Randy Malcom, and from the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA), Steve Ryder and Patty York. Not in attendance were Ben Duke, Ed Norden, Pat Hayward, Louis Bridges, and Larry Vickerman

After reviewing the meeting agenda with some discussion, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as submitted. Terri asked when new members to the Committee begin their service--2 are needed. Steve said they would begin in January 2014. Fred expressed interest in hosting the Committee at a future field trip to Morgan County. Sheila said the Colorado Weed Management Association (CWMA) has an award they give to a deserving county commissioner for supporting noxious weed control work, and suggested a commissioner from Lincoln County be considered for the award, after seeing the work being done at the Limon field trip. There was brief discussion about getting more cities and counties to comply with state weed law.

Next, Steve spoke on legislation extending the existence of the Committee. It's been re-authorized to continue until 2023, then be reviewed. Two non-voting positions will be added to the Committee, one from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and one from the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (CDNR). Also, management of noxious weeds on public lands and surface waters has been added to the Committee's purview, and the Committee can make recommendations to any of the governmental entities working on (or charged with the responsibility of working on) noxious weeds in the state. Karn mentioned that the Forest Service is lax on weeds in her area. Fran said communicating with them, to request their assistance on certain weed projects, can sometimes help them secure more funding to enable them to do more weed work.

Next, Steve reviewed some changes to the Weed Rule. For Russian olive, within 100 feet of any waterway or other contiguous infestations, the Rule goes into specifics for all counties. The "15 foot rule", which refers to the distance from a roadway or riparian area where weeds must be controlled, has been made more specific for roadways, and more reasonable to enforce for riparian areas. For riparian areas more responsibility is placed on upstream counties.

Some general discussion of the Rule followed. Steve said some would like to have a cost analysis for controlling a weed completed before that weed is placed on the state weed list. CDA does not require that as yet, but Executive Order #5 gives some guidelines to the process. Karn said the economic impact of a weed species might be useful information to have in the Rule. Steve said there is some language to that effect already in place. Fran said eradicating a weed like Tamarisk can bring many benefits, not just monetary benefits, and these

non-monetary factors could possibly be useful to include in the Rule. Steve said the Economic Impact Study currently being worked on at CSU, and to be presented at the CWMA annual meeting in December, may contain information to address some of these ideas. Further discussion followed on the size of the Rule, how accurate the maps are, and how they are developed. The Rule is regularly reviewed and updated.

Next, George gave an update on the Healthy Habitats Coalition (HHC) work, specifically the Invasive Species Control and Management Act currently being formulated in Congress. The Committee received an information sheet explaining the Act, its goal being to improve structure, coordination and cost effectiveness of federal agency actions and create a state structure to control and manage invasive species that harm land and water ecosystems across all states and territories of the U.S., to reduce invasive species threats or management gaps.

The proposed legislation is currently being prepared for introduction in the House, and should have a committee assignment and efforts begun on its passage within a couple of months. Sheila asked George if he thought it would become law. George said yes, he thought it would, eventually. Steve asked how monies would be spent within each state. George said some states will likely focus on non-plant species, some on weeds, but it all depends on the governor of each state. Karn asked if money will come from reductions in other departments. George said the system has become so complex that it is difficult to track monies, but that no new monies are supposed to be involved.

Next, Steve gave an update from the CDA. He is in the process of replacing two members (Sheila and Terri) of the Committee. The application for Committee positions in on the CDA website, local newspapers, and through other media. A county weed manager representative, and a conservation organization person are needed. No applications have been turned in yet. Steve spoke about the status of Spruce Gulch near Boulder. A lot of knapweed is still present there. Steve gave a brief history of the ongoing work taking place. George said this area has been in the process of control long enough, and the work needs to be completed. The Forest Service has been somewhat timid with enforcement due to the particular situation of the site. Steve said they will continue work for one more field season, then all involved will review results and focus on eradicating the knapweed in the area.

Steve talked about the Poudre Partnership which includes the cities of Ft. Collins and Greeley, the Forest Service, the State Land Board, and other agencies. This partnership is working on Dalmatian Toadflax which is very dense near Seaman Reservoir. Steve said Larimer County has done a great job of taking the lead on this project. George added that federal agencies are required by law to comply with Colorado weed law.

In November the Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting will take place. Steve is the chair for 2013-2014 and is organizing the meeting. This committee works to help states coordinate cooperative weed control efforts. Steve also talked about our state's Strategic Plan for weed control, which was developed many years ago. He would like our Committee to have some input into updating this Plan once he has done some preliminary work on a draft outline.

Next, Patty York talked about the weed mapping work she is doing. The maps are online and available to all county weed managers, and she demonstrated how the system works. She plans to start training county weed managers next month on how to use the system. Patty next talked to us about Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) efforts she is leading. Her field crew has been working about 6 months and has another 3 weeks to go, and has been making progress. More orange hawkweed has been found, in El Paso County and Trappers Lake. African rue is being treated. The city of Colorado Springs has been helping with rush skeletonweed. CDOT is contracting with Deangelo Brothers to do their statewide weed mapping. Good progress is being made among Front Range cities to control knotweeds, Mediterranean sage, and myrtle spurge. The Midwestern Invasive Species Coalition wants samples of Phragmites (Common Reed) for testing and research.

Next, Steve spoke of the work Cecily Mui is doing, including education about noxious weeds, Rule drafting, and gathering information on lesser known List B's. We were given a questionnaire about four of these species: quackgrass, spurred, Venice mallow and yellow nutsedge.

Next, Terri talked about a new plant assessment tool for aquatic species, called the New Zealand Aquatic Weed Risk Assessment, which is being considered for use in the United States. George and Terri both thought this tool, with some modifications, could work well for us. Steve asked if CSU would be able to do the plant assessments for us as they have in the past. George said its uncertain at this time if CSU will have adequate personnel to complete the testing. The university is de-emphasizing land grant work, at present, and he suggested that the CDA lobby CSU to continue the important weed science work they have been doing.

Next, we discussed weed law compliance issues. Steve said he received responses from about 30 cities to the letter he sent out earlier this year encouraging all governmental entities to comply with state weed law. He thought letters should go out again next year to counties as well as cities. There is a constant need to educate and encourage the citizenry. George said at the city level, money is always an issue, and that there needs to be a champion within every organization of government, such as the municipal league or association of county commissioners, to invite weed people in to educate. With that, Karn asked George if he could speak at the state convention of county commissioners (Colorado Counties, Inc.) in December if it could be arranged with the organizers. George said he would do so, schedule permitting. Sheila suggested adding data from the upcoming Economic Impact Study to any communications sent from the CDA. Steve said he and Cecily will be putting together a brochure for individuals, cities and counties and agencies about state weed law. George suggested an occasional co-authored bulletin with city and county participation to assist with the compliance. Karn added that private landowners be considered for co-authorship. Fred said getting fishermen and sportsmen to become more aware of the mussel issue, will also help with raising concern about the noxious weed issue. Sheila said the state of Idaho has a good weed enforcement program, and the citizens are very knowledgeable about weed issues. Steve mentioned that most western states have more money than Colorado for weed work. George said the topic needs to be continually brought before the Colorado legislature, and Fred added our Committee might help by attending pertinent legislative meetings.

In conclusion Steve said he will look into how best to encourage CSU to continue their weed science department. He will also see about contacting Buckley Air Base, which came up in discussion earlier in the meeting. Shawn commended Patty's EDRR efforts near Chatfield Reservoir. There is some hairy willow-herb there. This weed is on the Watch List, but may be considered for noxious weed listing next year. Sheila invited all to attend the CWMA meeting at Cheyenne Mountain Resort on December 4-5. The Committee's next meeting will be November 15th in Lakewood. Also, the first meeting of 2014 will be on January 26th, tentatively. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Submitted by Randy Malcom, secretary