

Minutes of the November 15, 2013, meeting of the Colorado State Noxious Weed Advisory Committee, in Lakewood, Colorado

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by chairman Terri Schulz. Members present were: Ben Duke, Karn Stiegelmeier, Pat Hayward, Fran Pannebaker, Fred Midcap, Ed Norden, Sheila Grother, Louis Bridges, Larry Vickerman, and Randy Malcom. Members absent were: Shawn Wissel, Ken Harper, Jack Flowers, and George Beck. Attending as advisors to the Committee were Elizabeth Brown from the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Jim Walker from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). Attending from the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) were Steve Ryder (State Weed Coordinator), Patty York (Early Detection Rapid Response Coordinator), and Cecily Mui (Noxious Weed Specialist—List B). Terri welcomed everyone and all were introduced.

The meeting agenda was reviewed, then minutes of the previous meeting were approved with one correction: the second paragraph of page three contained the entry “spurreda”, which should be “spurred anoda”.

Steve talked about Rule amendments to the Noxious Weed Act. He said the CDA, along with the state Attorney General’s office, and others, made some clarifications to the Rule. He said the Rule would be published in December, and administrative hearings would take place in January, 2014. Elizabeth asked if Rule provisions are evaluated to see which are met, which are not, and why. Steve said he would consider that possibility with CDA. A discussion of the Fifteen Foot Rule, which pertains to riparian areas and road rights-of-way, ensued. There was some discussion of four List B Management Plans that were inserted into the Noxious Weed Act Rule, for these four species: yellow nutsedge, quackgrass, Canada thistle, and Russian Olive. There was discussion about weed law compliance around the state. Ben said our Committee needs to help, possibly, with those counties currently out of compliance with noxious weed law. Elizabeth said the definition of “public open space” needs to be more precisely understood, i.e., should all park lands be considered open space. A discussion of weed control by ditch companies followed, centered around the question of whether or not irrigation ditches should be subject to the riparian rule. Then Steve talked some about Watch List species. They are listed in the Rule, but there are no Management Plans included for them. After these discussions with regards to the Noxious Weed Act Rule, Steve asked for a recommendation from our Committee to adopt the Rule as presented. Sheila made a motion to do so, seconded by Ed, which was passed the Committee.

Next on the agenda Steve gave the Committee some updates from CDA. He mentioned the Western Weed Coordinating Committee, which he is currently chairman of. It is a group of federal and state entities that work to coordinate weed control efforts across state lines. He also mentioned the Missouri River Watershed Coalition and the State Weed Coordinator Alliance, both of which he serves on, and some of the work they do with noxious weed issues. Funding of weed work in

Colorado was discussed. There will be less funding available in 2014. There will be about \$50,000 to award from the State and Private Forestry funds, and sources of funds for the Western Weed grants for 2014 are still uncertain. Sheila said the state of Utah is doing very good work when it comes to funding of noxious weed control. In Colorado the State Land Board shares the cost of weed control on state lands. The DNR also has a budget for weeds, but it is small. Steve also mentioned the Interagency Noxious Weed Team which will have its quarterly meeting in December. It is comprised of state and federal agencies that manage land in Colorado, and does a good job of coordinating weed work around the state.

Next, Patty spoke about her EDRR work. Mapping of weeds was discussed. Patty said she is working on utilizing Shapefiles to help map the locations of List A species. Cecily also spoke to us about mapping of List B species, and a discussion of getting accurate and more complete data on weed infestations followed. It was concluded that mapping is a work in progress, with improvements in accuracy being an essential goal to work toward. Patty is working on a three-year Strategic Plan for EDRR in Colorado. She hopes to have a paper ready to present to the Committee within the next few months. Patty talked about the specifics of what EDRR accomplished during the summer. She had two full time seasonal workers on her crew. They worked on Spurge awareness in Denver, biking streets and leaving door hangers: also worked on List A's and one Watch List throughout the state, in Salida, San Luis Valley, Trinidad, Beulah, Colorado Springs, Peyton, Boulder, Pitkin County, Chatfield area, Deckers, Ridgeway, Trappers' Lake, Moffat County, Routt County, Logan and Sedgwick Counties. No new List A species were found in Colorado in 2013. Patty said there are about 1250 List A sites in the state, and about 90% of them are being treated. Orange Hawkweed sites have increased this year—near the Vail ski resort, and near Deckers. She said Larry informed her of Hairy Willow-herb at Chatfield. It's a Watch List species. Larry said its hard to kill, and we may need to put it on List A. Patty also said that Myrtle Spurge work in Denver and Boulder is making good progress.

Next, Elizabeth talked about the Economic Impact Study regarding noxious weeds in Colorado. The Study has been two years in the making, and will be finished in December. It has been a joint project of CDA, DNR, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), Colorado State University (CSU), and the Colorado Weed Management Association (CWMA), with CWMA being the contracting entity. It cost about \$24,000 to produce, and was initiated to quantify the economic impact of noxious weeds to the state of Colorado in three specific areas: agricultural production, wildlife habitat, and recreational activities. The final draft of the Study will be released at the CWMA annual convention in December. Elizabeth presented some preliminary results of the Study. There was some discussion as to the accuracy and completeness of mapping data utilized in the Study, with a general concern that the total area of noxious weed infestations reported seems significantly less than what actually exists. There was also general appreciation for the complexities associated with undertaking a thorough study of this nature, and a desire that additional information be acquired to supplement the current data in order to make the Study

as accurate as possible. Steve, Elizabeth, and CWMA will be involved with any ongoing work associated with this Study.

Next, Pat gave an update on Plant Select, presenting an overview of the program and its objectives. She talked about the protocol used by Plant Select to test potential new ornamental species. The testing process takes seven to ten years, and hopefully results in the release of beautiful plants that do not pose a threat to become noxious/invasive. Pat talked about several foreign-origin species that are being tested at Plant Select, and said that Denver Botanic Gardens also does this kind of testing at Chatfield. She said there are times when the interests of those concerned only with the unique beauty of a plant, conflict with those concerned with the invasive potential of that plant. The work of trying to accommodate both objectives is ongoing at Plant Select. Cooperation with, and oversight of, the nursery/greenhouse industry is very important to protecting Colorado's native plant species.

Next, Cecily gave a presentation on lesser-known List B species, as well as some other work being done on List B's. She has been working on mapping for management plan information included in the rulemaking process. She is also updating some weed species fact sheets, and updating management plans, with counties, for seven List B species, to be concluded around April of 2014. Cecily is also preparing a List B Noxious Weed Management Plan Strategy white paper. With regards to lesser-known List B's she talked about the results of a survey she conducted on Yellow Nutsedge, Quackgrass, Venice Mallow, and Spurred Anoda. A survey was sent out to locations across Colorado, forty surveys in all. Twenty two were filled out and returned. The general results were that Nutsedge is a big problem with onion producers, and is present mostly where conditions are fairly wet. Quackgrass has been planted in some grass mixes. It could possibly be moved to the C List, because it does have some usefulness as livestock forage. Venice Mallow is found mostly in irrigated cropland, and could possibly be moved to List C. Spurred Anoda is also mostly in irrigated cropland, especially the Arkansas Valley area, and poses significant problems to row crop producers. More of it is found in New Mexico, and is a significant problem in cotton producing regions.

As the meeting concluded Ben mentioned that in Douglas County Yellow Toadflax has been reduced significantly by livestock grazing. I asked Steve if Buckley Air Base had been contacted about their noxious weed infestations. He said he would look into it. I also asked if Colorado State University will be discontinuing their weed science department, as George had expressed some concerns about that possibility. Terri is on the advisory committee for that department of the university, and will be lobbying to keep weed science as an important part of the work there. Steve said CDA will also stay abreast of that situation. Terri mentioned that nationally known singer Katie Perry is pushing the sale of seed packets worldwide, and had some concerns as to what seeds were in the North American version of her project. Sheila encouraged everyone to attend the CWMA annual convention on December 4-5. Sheila and Terri were thanked for their service on the Committee.

Both will be leaving on January 1, and will be replaced by Matt Scott of Rio Blanco County, and Matt Moorehead. Our next meeting will be January 31, 2014, in Lakewood. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Randy Malcom, secretary
Colorado State Noxious Weed Advisory Committee