

State Noxious Weed Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
Garden Park Building, 201 North 6th St., Canon City, CO
August 21, 2015

Revised Final 11/2/2015 following 10/29/2015 meeting

Introductions and Attendance:

Members present: Fran Pannebaker, Ed Norden, Matt Moorhead (via phone), Larry Hoozee, Matt Scott, Karn Stiegelmeier, Shawn Wissel, Larry Vickerman

Members absent: Louis Bridges, Jack Flowers, Evan Jeffries, George Beck, Pat Hayward, Tom Talley, Lauren Kolb, Jim Walker, Elizabeth Brown

Public: Charlie Pannebaker

CDA Staff: Steve Ryder, Patty York, Cecily Mui

Discussion of quorum:

Committee members present discussed and agreed that a meeting quorum will consist of a majority of voting members of the committee.

Minutes from the last meeting:

Minutes from the last meeting were accepted as presented.

Staff Update Questions/Follow-up

The phreatophyte program bill that was passed by the Legislature this spring will draw funding from severance tax. The bill authorizes a 2-year, \$2 million/year program to be administered by the Colorado Water Conservation Board. The CWCB seemed like a good alternative to CDA, as this agency has funded phreatophyte removal projects in the past.

Regarding phragmites, the data received from the U. of Chicago study was thin but indicated that both the native and exotic strains were present in the state. CDA will continue to gather information on this Watch List species, as identification in the field may be a key challenge for weed managers.

Re-cap of Compliance Waiver Request from Denver Botanic Gardens

Cecily reported that the request had been denied by CDA, following an extensive review process. Larry Vickerman commented that the process was fair and handled tactfully. He spoke to DBG staff at the Gardens and they felt that their interests and concerns were fully discussed.

Report on the Status of Moth Mullein

Cecily gave a presentation on the status of moth mullein. This plant has been considered a fairly benign List B species, limited in distribution to the Larimer-Boulder County lines. This year, however, the plant's distribution has grown impressively, and the county weed managers have been surprised at how extensive the plant is found, although still focused in the Larimer-Boulder area. Weed managers in those counties will keep a close eye on these populations and treat aggressively. The species will remain on List B.

Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) Update

Patty made a presentation on the work done by the CDA EDRR crew so far this year, starting with the African rue in Las Animas County. Due to increased USFS funding for the State and Private Forestry grant, the crew has been able to travel to other parts of the state where List A species are being treated, and assist the local weed managers. Additional multi-day trips have included meadow knapweed in Ouray County, elongated mustard in Chaffee and Fremont counties, yellow starthistle in Pueblo County, purple loosestrife and yellow starthistle in Montrose County, and purple loosestrife in Mesa County. These trips are in addition to the annual field work done along the Front Range.

Morrison knotweed compliance waiver request – Patty’s been working with Jefferson County and the landowner on small populations in the Morrison area. The landowner submitted the waiver request due to the plant’s screening value, but wrote that it would not be a hardship to remove. Related populations occur on nearby county ROW and the county intends to remove them. CDA will deny the waiver request and ask that the county oversee removal of the plants.

Update on the Watch List –Local entities were sent a survey in 2013 of known occurrence and/or distribution of Watch List species and received responses from 39 counties. Patty is preparing a follow-up online survey for 2015. Larry Vickerman said he’d be interested in knowing the extent of the baby’s breath cut flower industry, and its potential impact on distribution. The 2015 rule amendments propose moving parrotfeather and flowering rush from the Watch List to List A.

2015 Amendments to the Administrative Rule - Recommendation

Steve and Cecily made a presentation describing the proposed changes to the administrative rule. These changes include:

- Moving parrotfeather and flowering rush from the Watch List to List A
- Adding the spotted x diffuse knapweed hybrid to List B
- Adding the yellow x Dalmatian toadflax hybrid to List B
- Revising the management plans for nine species
- Clarify rule language concerning “eradication” vs. “elimination”

A motion was made (Shawn) and seconded (Ed) to recommend that these changes be made to the administrative rule. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Yellow Sweetclover Use and Distribution Since 2011 Correspondence

Steve initiated a discussion of the current status of the sweetclover (YSC), and asked the committee if there were any different concerns to be raised following the 2011 letter sent to land managers. The gist of the discussion was that YSC has had very big years recently and has established itself on many ROW’s, public open spaces and private lands. It’s no longer used in revegetation seed mixes, and it may be showing a cyclical rise and decline that is common with many species. Karn believes it is a relatively new intruder to Summit County. There is no current intent to list YSC, and if so, it would likely be a C-listed plant, and we would have to determine the value of such a listing. Beekeepers like the plant as forage for bees.

Disaster Relief Component of the Noxious Weed Fund – Possible Use for Drought-related Projects

Steve brought up this topic which has come up a few times in the last 2-3 years having to do with drought-related weed proliferation assistance. With the increased funding of the Noxious Weed Fund, inquiries have been made by local entities and some in the legislature about using some of these funds to deal with weeds such as Russian thistle and kochia – primarily tumbleweed-related. It is an enormous and important problem, CDA agrees, but the sheer scope of the distribution and spread of these plants makes it difficult to justify expenditures of funds from what is still a relatively small pot of funds for noxious weed control. CDA continues to research possible means to assist these areas, but it will involve a combined response of CDA, NRCS, other public and private landowners.

Preliminary Discussion: Sustaining Statewide Noxious Weed Management

This was intended to be a brief discussion about how to proceed with the committee promoting the sustainability of local noxious weed programs. A number of comments were offered below:

- Education is needed to clarify responsibilities for weed management in the Act; the Act keeps separate counties and municipalities – could be refined to facilitate greater cooperation between these entities; possible educational avenues include CWMA and perhaps CPW;
- Local individual champions make a huge difference in getting effective programs started and sustained, although the risk is that there is often too much reliance on these individuals and programs may founder upon their departure;
- Some counties and many municipalities aren't doing anything – how to achieve consistency across the state?
- Start-up funding is needed by new programs, and these programs (plus the well-established ones) could benefit from the focus provided by strategic planning;
- Focus more on sustaining programs and less on treating particular species; outreach to associations such as CCI and CML could help with getting local entities' attention to jurisdiction-wide weed management plans;
- Seemed to be a consensus to set aside 2-3 hours at the next committee meeting to focus on statewide strategic planning ideas with the purpose to further the effectiveness of local entity noxious weed control.

Roundtable/Announcements

Next meeting: October 29, 2015, CDA Office in Broomfield

Roundtable:

Committee members signed thank-you cards for those who provided their time and expertise on the previous day's field trip. Members also thanked Ed Norden and Jana Rapetti for arranging the field day.

Respectfully submitted by Patty York, and Steve Ryder