

Early Fall Board of Directors Meeting
September 12, 2002
4-B's, Billings

John called the meeting to order at 8:15

Members Present:

Scott Bockness, Becky Kington, John Day, Amy Adler, Barry Rice, Roger Sheley, Jerry Marks, Kelly Leo, John Moodry, Stacey Barta, Hank McNeel, Dave Burch, Grant Godbolt, Brenda Witowski, Dan Williams, Jim Larsen, Marko Manoukian, Rosemary Koch, Bob Gilbert, Dave Brink, Marty Malone, and Dave Schulz.

Guests Present:

Doug Habermann and Kim Goodwin

Members Absent:

John Beaver, Jack Eddie, Fred Bell, Kevin Chappell, Clint Clark, John Halpop, Dennis Hengel, Carla Hoopes, Lee Ohlinger, Diane Rice, Stuart Schilling, Gloria Sundquist, and Paul Wick.

Minutes Approved

Dave Burch had corrections to the minutes under the Department of Ag report and have been recorded correctly.

Minutes were approved.

Secretary Report

Becky reported on scholarship recipients, Katy Sparks, Milee Malone, Valorie Adolf, and Jennifer Wagner Lang. She reported that the Barb Mullin fund was active and going and that she received a new laptop.

Budget Update

Barry had concerns over the cost of the annual meeting. The Eboard explained that costs for conventions were pretty standard. Motion to accept the budget by Rosemary Koch and seconded by Amy Adler. Motion passed.

2003 Annual Meeting Update

Roger reported on the agenda for the annual meeting and reviewed it with the board. He asked again for the support of the board to fill the symposium section of the annual meeting.

Fall Coordinator Meeting Update

Fall Coordinators meeting is October 8 – 10 in Billings and Stacey reported that she sent out registration forms to all supervisors via the web and snail mail. The training will not have credits available and it is open to everyone.

MACo Update

Scott reported that they are working on draft resolutions with MACo for the upcoming legislature and are working on getting counties status as a cooperating agent with federal agencies. The MACo conference is in Big Sky during the last week in September and the MWCA is providing an educational booth and breakfast. Wednesday, the 25th, an informal weed breakfast as an opportunity for weed coordinators and commissioners get together to discuss issues, especially legislative concerns. He highly recommended all weed supervisors work closely with commissioners to establish professionalism and rapport.

Designer License Plates

Kim passed around a sample plate to the board. Several board members asked technical questions of the plates. Scott asked about the \$1200.00 cost for the plates and Kim replied that was the fee for having the plates initiated. The graphic design artist was incurring some fees as well. The set cost of the plates has not been established yet, but will be between 20 – 30 dollars to purchase the plates when finished. Roger thought we should think about a trust fund grant to cover the initial costs of making and designing the plate. The MWCA will need to put together an advertising campaign to promote these. John proposed that the board approve this as a line item detail in the budget. Barry Rice motioned we fund this project and it was seconded by Marty Malone. Discussion for funding was called for by Bob Gilbert and a figure of \$2000.00 was proposed. Motion passed. The cost will be reflected in the budget at the next board meeting. Kim had an idea that everyone who buys plates gets a yearly membership and John Moodry will investigate the logistics of this with the DMV.

Barb Mullin Memorial Fund

Becky reported that close to \$3,000.00 has been given to that fund at this point. Dave Burch suggested forming a committee to decide how to use these funds. Celestine Duncan, Jerry Marks, Hank McNeel, Dave Burch, Becky Kington, and John Day would all sit in on that committee. John Moodry suggested we wait until the annual meeting to make a decision on the funds. John Day suggested a silent auction to raise more funds.

Committee Goals and Directions

Prevention Committee

Kelly reported in place of Jack Eddie on the Prevention Committee. Jack has put together three main objectives: to prevent the introduction of new species, to stop the movement of large infestations, and look at how to stop each species from moving any further across the state. The committee developed a timeline, which included a fall plan for 2003 as well as to implement a winter plan for 2004. They also submitted a budget of \$1100.00 for next year's budget. Each member of the prevention committee will be asked to chair a sub committee. Jack is also asking for a vice chair so that person can take over when his two years are up.

Legislative Committee

John Moodry reported that Diane Rice (legislative representative) is working very hard for the MWCA. The next legislative session will be a tough one for all involved. The first topic was the issue of protecting the Trust Fund. The committee would like to change

legislation to a required $\frac{3}{4}$ vote approval of raiding that fund. The next issue would be to approach Ralph Peck about the \$1.50 license plate fee and see about protecting that. A recommendation by the committee was made to go to the Department of Ag to see about securing that fee. Stacey Barta moved we go forth, Scott Bockness seconded the motion. Motion carried. Diane Rice was requested to be at the MACo Breakfast. Another request was for the MWCA to draft a letter to Baucus, Rehberg, Burns, and Martz to push the Craig/Heffley bill through the Appropriations Committee. It was motioned by Bob Gilbert to do so and seconded by Grant Godbolt. Motion carried. The committee will be requesting help from the Education Committee to design and distribute a one page attachment to present to the legislators. This would be distributed with weed ID books and 2003 calendars at the next session. The RIT funding through the special session was preserved and \$300,000 of \$500,000 was saved. Representative Lewis is drafting a bill to secure the RIT funding and all county coordinators were encouraged to contact local legislators and get them on board.

Education Committee

Jerry Marks reported that they hadn't met and had nothing to report.

Management Committee

No report

Mapping and Inventory Committee

Dave Burch reported that a meeting will be held in Bozeman on October 1, 2002.

Support Committee

Nothing new to report.

Nominating Committee

Jerry Marks reported that he needed to know who was up for nominations and they would set up a meeting at a later date.

Awards Committee

Rosemary reported that she would also be requesting \$700.00 again and the awards will be presented at the Wednesday luncheon at the annual meeting this year. John Day suggested a life-time achievement award and asked we have this award in Barb's name. Barry Rice motioned we do this and Brenda Witowski seconded the motion. Motion passed. Becky reported that these nominations would be posted in the next newsletter.

Research Needs

Marko Manoukian reported on two proposals they were working to develop an inventory and monitoring program for noxious weeds in Montana. He also reviewed the steps taken to develop inventory and monitoring methodologies at the county level. The first proposal was to look at developing a sample strategy that would be useful for early detection purposes. Sampling would include number a samples and where you should sample on a landscape basis to be confident that you are not missing infestations. Additionally, they would investigate rate of expansion for individual species. The second

proposal looked to identify dispersal pathways these weeds are spreading by and also looked at predicting the next infestation based on GIS information of infested and non-infested areas. These proposals are not overlapping Peter Rice's program.

Budget and Finance

Scott asked for committee chairs to submit budgets to him by the next board meeting so we can present a preliminary budget to a board at the next meeting. As committees grow stronger and become more effective, they will require more costs. Other funding opportunities for these committees need to be looked into.

Summit Committee

Marty Malone reported that there will be a meeting on the Sept. 17th and the Summit Committee name may be changed. They will also be deciding on a direction to take this committee. Marty Malone is the chair of the committee, Dave Schulz represents MACo, Jerry Marks represents Extension, Jim Ghekerie represents the Coordinators, Jim Olivarez represents the federal agencies, Phil Johnson is the state agency rep, and Ralph Peck is the Governor's representative. The committee is working on the same issue of protecting the Trust Fund as the Legislative Committee. Roger asked to get the Woolgrowers, Farm Bureau, and Stockgrowers and other such organizations involved in the statewide plan.

Education, Awareness, and Outreach

John Day requested someone step forward and chair this committee. As of now, it is not active.

Bio-Control Committee

Jim Larsen reported that his committee has over 50 involved and they are meeting in November. Objectives are to bring research development and counties to the table to discuss bio control. They had many distributions for knapweed, spurge and Starthistle, and they had several field days this summer put on by the department of Ag. The committee will look at new research, what will be available in MT and what will work. They are trying for the Houndstongue bug, which is currently not available in the US. They are trying to work with the FWP on the process of being able to bring certain bio control agents into the state, and they want to tie into the monitoring side of the statewide weed management plan more effectively. APHIS has undergone changes and they are now involved more with homeland security. Roger suggested we send a letter of support from the Bio-control Committee of the MWCA to MSU for hiring a bio-control agent specifically for weeds.

Other Business

Hank wanted to make sure the board understood that the MWCA is heading in the right direction but that we take things slow so we don't crash. Dave Schulz let everyone know he would be heading to Nevada to help promote a weed program similar to the Madison Valley Ranchlands Group. He felt Montana has proven itself to be a leader in the noxious weed efforts and we should be proud of that.

Amy Adler, as member at large, reported that she is planning a big educational event in the Tongue River Basin. They have money to spend for weed control in that area and are hoping for a large turnout for educational purposes.

Bob Gilbert gave some updates in general. He is working with Vince Thomas on weed issues through his position as assistant executive director for the MT Association of Coal Gas & Oil counties. As ED for Walleyes Unlimited he reported that there is an article coming up in the September edition of *Fishtales* about noxious weeds written by Terry Turner. He is trying to get the Walleyed Association more involved.

Grant Godbolt reported that in Oregon, they don't spray equipment as it comes in, but in Montana he has seen this done, and would like to see this continued. The Forest Service will have continued funding. Beaverhead/Deerlodge NF did get their EIS done for areaial application as well as which herbicides can be used in that forest.

Area Council Reports

Western Area

Dave Brink reported that things have been quiet. Tried to go with a centralized theme this summer: New Invasives.

Central Area

There is a new weed coordinator in Meagher County, Otto Ohlson, and Rosemary had not met him yet. Rosemary will have to resign from area representative. She is looking for a replacement.

Southwestern Area

John Moodry reported they had 46 participants in their weed board training this spring. They invited state agencies to participate and it was very successful. They have not met this summer and will meet at fall supers training.

Southeastern Area

Brenda reported that they will have an area meeting towards the end of October. They are trying to get commissioners and weed board members to attend the meeting as well.

Southcentral Area

Marty Malone reported that Stuart Schilling will report later.

NAWMA

Kelly didn't attend the annual meeting in July. They are working on finding ways for other states to get federal funding passed. If the Craig/Heffly bill passes, Montana will be the only state ready to receive this type of federal funding. National Weed Awareness Week is held in February in Washington, and NAWMA is hoping to organize this event a little better. Their next annual meeting will be in Park City, UT in September. They are developing a Train-the-Trainers program designed to create a national standardization to help elevate our level of education. It will be a course and it will be web-based. NAWMA

is asking for everyone from different states to come up with a bank of questions. They are using a lot of information from the Montana State Weed Management Plan.

BLM

Hank reported that the BLM EIS has a contract and they are trying to combine the four previous EIS statements from 13 western states. They have included Alaska. They are not only including weed control but fuel management as well in this EIS. When this comes out, he is asking the board to be sure to send in comments on that. The BLM ended up with less in operational funding this past year, but they have been able to increase full time employees by 400%. They are also working to keep bio-control agents in the state, as they don't want to lose them due to an EIS.

Department of Ag

Dave Burch reported that the WSFF (Weed Seed Free Forage) producers list should be out the first part of October. The WSFF and the Trust Fund councils will meet at the annual meeting. No decisions have been made on the state weed coordinator position. The department is sending Dave out to see about support for the Trust Fund within the counties. Ralph wants to know that the commissioners are behind this. Guidelines for grants have been sent out and funds are available for projects next to forest lands. There are two separate funding sources available, one from the Trust Fund and one from the Forest Service. The Salt Cedar Management Plan is in its final stages and nearly finished. The Yellow Starthistle Management Plan is completed and another infestation of this has been found in Sanders County.

Department of Transportation

Dan Williams reported that the DOT has distributed \$1,025,000 million and of that, \$75,000 was unexpended. Those dollars went to five of the eleven management areas. With the excess funds applicators were hired to manage weeds in certain areas and it was very successful. They are hoping to have an accurate inventory and assessment for all right of ways in the state in the next few years. He is asking the counties to be a part of that process. This fall they will invite contractors in to evaluate the job the DOT is doing. They are also looking to manage their contracts internally at some point. Their weed management program is being audited by the legislative audit.

Montana Association of Counties

Dave Schulz followed up from MACo. He encouraged the board to work with proactive commissioners around the state. He discussed the breakfast being held at the MACo convention in Big Sky in September. He asked Dave Burch to be there. He felt that the tie the MWCA has with MACo is a very positive step and can only continue to grow. Clearer lobbying standards are going to be in place at this next legislature, and he recommended the MWCA have information relayed to them through John Moodry.

Fish Wildlife & Parks

Doug Habermann reported that the FWP weed coordinator position needs to be filled. An person needs to be on the MWCA board representing the FWP since Adam Brooks has left. The legislature hit the parks weed control in the last special session. They are

being audited by the legislature at this time. John Day suggested the MWCA send a letter of support for reopening and hiring a coordinator within the FWP.

The next board meeting will be held in Great Falls on November 14, 2002, at the Heritage Inn unless otherwise noted. The next E-board meeting will be October 25, 2002, at Wheat Montana Bakery in Three Forks at 1 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.