

Montana Weed Control Association
Board of Directors Spring Meeting
April 16, 2002 – Yogo Inn, Lewistown

Meeting was called to order at 9:05

Members Present: Amy Adler, Stacey Barta, Fred Bell, Scott Bockness, Dave Brink, Dave Burch, John Day, Bob Gilbert, Grant Godbolt, John Halpop, Dennis Hengel, Becky Kington, Rosemary Koch, Kelly Leo, Marty Malone, Marko Manoukian, Jerry Marks, John Moodry, Barbra Mullin, Barry Rice, Stuart Schilling, Roger Sheley, Gloria Sundquist, Paul Wick, Ken Babcock, Larry Brence, Vic Roberts, and Paul Helland.

Members Absent: John Beaver, Kevin Chappell, Jim Freeman, Jim Larson, Hank McNeel, Lee Ohlinger, Diane Rice, Dan Williams, and Brenda Witkowski.

Guests Present: Tonda Moon, Kim Goodwin, and Jack Eddie.

New Area Reps

Rosemary Koch is the new Central Area Representative replacing Clint Clark, and Ken Babcock is the new Northeastern Area Representative replacing Julie Walker.

Minutes Approved

Both the November and January board minutes were approved. Roger Sheley motioned both minutes be approved, Scott Bockness seconded and all approved.

Secretary Report

Becky reported that there were about 500 members, taxes were complete, the MWCA was awaiting approval from the IRS to change fiscal year, and 55 people were signed up for the spring training.

Budget Report

Scott reported more on the fiscal year change, presented the current budget, and explained mutual fund increases. Bob Gilbert motioned to accept the budgets, Rosemary seconded, and all were in favor.

2002 Annual Conference/ budget

John presented the figures for the annual convention and reported that we made about \$19,000 on this year's conference. Numbers and monetary figures were outstanding and he expressed his wishes that these numbers only continue to grow.

Fire/Weed Grant

Kim Goodwin reported on the grant funding, described the affected fire areas with the handout, and with continued funding from the Forest Service would continue developing plans and writing grants for this project. The Extension is creating a document for distribution to the public with the idea to build on the Statewide Weed Management Plan. John recommended adding weed districts to the advertisement and Kim agreed.

Spring Coordinator Training

Stacey Barta reported that the Spring Training Conference would be held in Lewistown at the Yogo Inn on April 17 & 18. Around 55 people were signed up, and that the only hitch was that a mapping meeting was being held at the same time which might affect the numbers. Barb Mullin stated that the meeting would not conflict with the training due to time differences.

MACo Update

Scott Bockness reported on three resolutions being presented to the legislature for support: weather collection stations, development for drought, and wildlife management. He had received the agenda for the WIR conference in May with around 1,000 commissioners in attendance in Billings. The MWCA will be hosting an educational booth during that convention and Scott had solicited the funding for the cost of that booth. He also reported that the Ag Committee and the Public Lands Committee were the most active in MACo and the ones that want the Association to be involved in.

SNWAEC Renewal of Memorandum of Understanding

Roger presented a document that summarized the accomplishments of the Education and Awareness Program. He explained that letters of support for the continued funding of the program be sent in to Carla Hoopes. Jerry Marks moved that we write a letter of support and Dave Burch seconded the motion. All were in favor and Jim Freeman would draft the letter.

Goals and Direction of the MWCA

John Day reported that he had sent out a letter asking for input from the board on the goals and directions of the Association. He would take all responses up until May 10. He would then process all answers and have them ready to be presented and voted on during the next board meeting. He stressed that he wanted the Association to take some steps toward some positive direction and not just create strategic plans.

Weed Prevention Grant Proposal

Roger presented an outline for a grant to fund a weed prevention program through the Montana Weed Control Association. The idea of the grant is to prevent weed infestations in Eastern Montana to primarily focus on prevention. Discussion ensued on the need for this type of grant, the financial figures of the grant, and the targeted audience for the grant. It was decided that this grant be officially presented at the fall board meeting.

Tax Incentives for Land Owners

Roger introduced a discussion of the possibility for tax incentives for people who entered into prevention programs. There was discussion on the difficulty of the passing tax incentive proposals with the legislature and Roger asked that the Legislative Committee and MACo pursue more information on this issue. They were asked to report back at the next board meeting.

Designer License Plates

Kim proposed the idea of creating specialty plates for the MWCA. The idea was readily accepted and Gloria Sundquist motioned we create more concrete plans on the design of the plate as well as funding be added to the budget to provide for the plates at the next board meeting. Amy Adler seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Idaho Annual Weed Conference

John Day and Scott Bockness attended the Idaho Annual Meeting held at the Napa Convention Center and reported back to the board. The conference in Idaho is strictly for information. No lunches or entertainment were provided, but the conference contained outstanding content and was well worth attending. Their focus was more of a revenue maker for their association and not

as much of a production of entertainment and meals as ours is. They have an executive director who heads the entire thing.

Weeds of the Prairies Books

Becky proposed that we obtain more of the Weeds of the Prairies books to provide for sale, as they have been real profitable to date. Becky motioned that we purchase fifty more of these books and Bob Gilbert seconded the motion. All were in favor. It was decided that the area reps would coordinate with Dave Brink for the purchase and distribution of those books.

Washington DC Weed Awareness Week

Marty Malone reported the Kelly Leo, Barb Mullin, Marty, Dave Schulz, and Jim Larson all traveled to Washington D.C. for Weed Awareness Week. They attended eight delegations and talked with House and Senate aides. After that attending such meetings, Marty reported that weed districts should look to EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Programs) an NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) program, as they would be receiving a large increase in funding. A new director of the NFWS would be the one to work with concerning biological control issues with the environment. They discussed ESA (Endangered Species Act) issues as well. All in all, the food was great; the sightseeing was minimal because they were constantly on the go, and most importantly, that Montana is seen as a leader for the noxious weed movement.

NAWMA Update

Kelly Leo reported that the North American Weed Management Association met in Washington D.C. at the weed awareness week as on of their regular board meetings. Kelly works on the membership committee for that organization and that their annual meeting would be in Minneapolis in July. She said that things were relatively quiet right now with little to report.

2003 Annual Meeting Report

Roger Sheley presented the preliminary agenda for the 2003 MWCA Annual Meeting, which is to be held in Butte at the Copper King in on January 14 – 16. The meeting will cover a longer span of time this year, and the theme for this year's meeting is "Implementing the Montana Weed Management Plan." He asked the board for input on the agenda.

Education Committee Report

John Halpop reported that the committee is expanding the proceedings for the annual meeting and they have discussed a plan to create an annual report document. They were also discussing a plan to have all documents within the MWCA work together to provide educational information. He addressed budgeting factors for the committees and asked that the Association look into funding travel cost for non-agency or government personnel to increase participation within the committees.

Research Committee

Marko Manoukian said that his committee is using the Montana Weed Management Plan as a guide for discussion on the prevention grant as proposed by Roger and Kim. He said they would work with the plan and have a proposal ready for the next board meeting. The proposal would include a susceptibility profile, modeling, and a riparian weed management search.

Montana Association of Realtors

Fred Bell was present to ask about the new weed law (21- 16) concerning the sellers' obligation to disclose weeds upon selling. He asked how it was being enforced. John Moodry explained how he was handling the new law in Silverbow County, and that the weed coordinators did not want

this law to become an enforcement issue. Weed coordinators need to work with realtors to make this law effective.

Western Area Council

Dave Brink said they were organizing crew training for May 14 in Kalispell for the entire western region. Their council reorganized membership dues within the council and was working on a centralized theme for education at county fairs in their region. The theme this year will be “New Invaders” and they volunteered to man a booth at the Missoula Big Sky Show this year.

Forestry Representative

Grant Godbolt announced that he was planning on hosting a booth for the MWCA at the annual Montana Logging Association Convention.

Southwestern Area Council

Dennis Hengel reported that their crew training was taking place on June 4 – 6 in the Alder area. On April 23, the MDOT section foreman and the area reps would be meeting and topics would include weed ID training for MDOT personnel and proper flagging techniques. On April 24, the Southwestern area would be training for commissioner and weed boards.

Montana Weed Summit

Marty Malone said that he and Dave Schulz had met with all area land management agencies and that the prison system was by far the most effective in the control of noxious weeds. They spent more money on weed control than any other agency. Marty also reported that the DNRC was undergoing a legislative audit, and that Adam Brooks had resigned his position of weed coordinator within the FWP. Marty and Dave also visited with Ralph Peck and the Lt. Governor on land management issues.

BLM Update

Vic Roberts filled in for Hank McNeel and reported that the BLM Weed Course now had over 1000 people participating. This integrated weed management course has been growing steadily for twenty years. He also reported that the BLM had finally replaced the weed specialist in Washington D.C., and that the EIS proposals were on track. It was motioned by Roger to purchase a gift for Hank McNeel for his dedication to the Association and Marko Manoukian seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Legislative Committee

John Moodry reported that the Craig bill had moved through both houses and was now in appropriations. RIT funding was coming directly to the counties in 2003 and Senator Lewis was drafting legislation to make this an annual deposit. Any new contracts with the NRCS will be able to get \$15,000 with 25% match. Grazing and irrigation projects have no limits. John also reported that he and Jack Eddie were traveling around the state to explain the new weed laws. State agencies are not increasing funding in counties and the legislative committee would be meeting in the near future to prepare for the upcoming legislative session.

Montana Department of Agriculture

Barb Mullin reported that Tonda Moon had replaced Jay Cole as the department's weed specialist, on June 17 & 18 the new guidelines for grants will be presented, and that the department hoped to have a new weed list out by the end of 2002.

Ag Representatives

Barry Rice stated his frustrations with non-compliance issues and the job that county crews were doing on noxious weeds. He also complained that ranchers are going broke and that they don't have money to spray noxious weeds. Gloria Sundquist said she was educating kids in her area on noxious weeds and that while it took a great deal of time and work, it was turning out very successful. This project was presented through WIFE during Ag Awareness Week.

South Central Area Council

Stuart Schilling reported that realtors' training took place in their region recently.

North Eastern Area Council

Ken Babcock reported that his area was working on continuing the "Across the Border" theme (from the annual convention) with Richland and Dawson counties involved in working with North Dakota. He discussed the Redwater Watershed Project and that crew training would take place in Glasgow with dates and times to be announced.

Triangle Area Council

Paul Wick said his area was working with watershed groups and private landowners. The DNRC runs all leases through Paul's office for approval, and he had no complaints.

South Eastern Area Council

Amy Adler stated that their crew training would be on June 3 & 4 in Forsyth.

Erroneous Report

Roger Sheley took a moment to explain the misunderstanding concerning his comments in a local newspaper. The paper reported him as saying that weed districts don't have good weed educational programs. He explained that the comment was taken out of context and he apologized on behalf of the newspaper's interpretation.

Meeting Adjourned

Dave Brink motioned the meeting be adjourned at 3:15 and Dennis Hengel seconded the motion. All were in favor. The next Board of Director's meeting will take place in Billings on Wednesday and Thursday, September 11 and 12 with the meeting starting at 1:00 p.m. on the 11th.