

**Montana Weed Control Association
Spring Meeting
April 3, 2003
Bozeman Holiday Inn**

Meeting called to order at 1:15 p.m.

Members present: Stacey Barta, Ken Babcock, Paul Wick, Marika Wessner, Clint Clark, Bob Gilbert, Mack Cole, Jerry Marks, Roger Sheley, John Day, John Moodry, Kelly Leo, Rosemary Koch, Carla Hoopes, Amy Adler, Dave Brink, Becky Kington

Guests present: Jim Gordon, Stuart Schilling, Kim Goodwin, Margie Edsall, Vic Roberts,

January minutes approved by Mack Cole and Rosemary Koch seconded. Question was called, all approved. Minutes were approved.

Annual Meeting 2003

Becky reported that the annual meeting was another success based on this year's budget figures. The Butte facility was decent and cheap so it came in under budget.

Approximately 305 people registered and 290 showed up. Roger asked for input and Jerry commented that he was working on food issues and was in favor of supporting a committee to have input on this year's function. Becky reported that she heard from several about the need for proceedings both pros and cons, and although we have a grant, should we continue with proceedings? Several board members indicated a need for proceedings and it was decided to continue with them.

Bid Package for 2005

Jerry asked that the Association look into putting together a bid package in written form and go out with our expectations and then get bids for the annual meeting. Based on this year's survey, there is a need to get more private citizens involved, and the bid process would increase competition and therefore lower prices. Bids would also negotiate better prices. It was agreed that we would try a bid process on a trial basis with Bob Gilbert setting up the 2005 annual meeting.

Education and Awareness

Carla reported that a great amount of work was accomplished at this last meeting, and that Sept. 11 will be the next major meeting in Bozeman 10 – 4 p.m. at First Security Bank West. On Sept. 12 the agenda will include talk about where the SNEAC is going. Other committee meetings may be scheduled around that date as well. Carla asked for advice from the board of how to continue funding as she needs \$10,000 to match funding for place mats. At this time, the BLM has committed \$2,000. Meeting results and agendas for future meetings will be in the Weed Times. An Education Curriculum Committee and Reservations and Education Committee have formed. The Education Curriculum will work with Montana Education Association to form curriculums and discuss resources available to them for the classroom. The Reservation & Education Committee will focus on education on the reservations. American Express may be involved in dealing with the funding because of the contact Kelly and John have had with them over an ad they've placed in nationwide papers. Each person on committee has identified funders and are nearly at their fundraising objectives for calendar. The DNRC has committed funding and

now the committee needs to work with supervisors to flush out funding issues for each county. They will also be going to Forest Districts in each county to fund this. Currently, counties only contribute 10 – 15% of the total funding for calendars. This year's calendar will be 14 pages with an insert. The calendar will have one page for the MWCA with the license plate design and logo, and calendars will be available early this year.

License Plates

Kim reported that the plate has been submitted to the Dept. of Justice, and should be available in May. Roger asked the sub-committee that was created to decide on the design to come up with a marketing strategy for the board at the next board meeting. Scott asked for clarification on the \$800.00 that is available from board allocations for marketing. Applications are made at local DMV offices, but currently certain counties deal with the process internally, while others use application forms and have a process that requires two parties and they would have to go to Becky to get approval. Kim will work on this process within the sub-committee.

Secretary & Budget report

Scott asked for a fiscal year change once again – need to go from July 1 – June 30 to better reflect our revenues and income, and since summer is quietest time for taxes, revenues etc., this fiscal year change will work out better for the Association. He also asked that the MWCA look into hiring a professional bookkeeper to handle the books from a legal standpoint, provide more accuracy for the Association, and back Becky up as she completes the books. Amy moved to approve a fiscal year change from the current fiscal year of Feb. 1 – Jan 31 to a July 1- to June 30 time frame, and Stacey seconded. All were in favor. Stacey asked about a reduction in Becky's wages, Scott explained that her wages would stay the same, as her job has been expanding and this change wouldn't lessen her duties. Bob motioned that we hire a bookkeeper, subject to the bylaws, and that Becky and Scott would oversee this process. Amy seconded. John suggested getting quotes and what services will be provided from other people. Jerry suggested that Becky deal with someone who has access to her. All were in favor. Becky was asked to look into employer match on taxes and come to the e-board with the information. Scott reviewed the budget with the board. He moved the donations from the Barb Mullin fund to a separate checking account. The DC Grant was approved for the next two years. John Moodry added that the Coordinators Support Committee would fund the raffle dollars and the extra money from coordinator trainings would go towards the DC trip above and beyond the funds needed for MACo. He also asked the Association to look into continuing to obtain donations to sponsor individuals from the Association to attend that function every year. Jerry Marks asked about historical revenues and expenses, and Scott reported that we've steadily increased our annual meeting attendance and we are growing.

Industry Representative Position

Scott explained that Dan Watts had been relocated and therefore had to vacate the Industry Representative position he had just been elected to. Jim Gordon was suggested to replace Dan. John Moodry motioned to approve Jim as the industry representative and Bob Gilbert seconded. All were in favor.

Washington DC trip

John Day thanked everyone for sending him and Marty to DC this year, and he appreciated Marty's leadership and advice during the week. He reported on the meetings they attended and their reports will be presented in the next newsletter. He had a great time and learned a lot. Jerry asked about the phone calls he's received about the Montana Delegation suggesting that the Center not receive monies, as those should be used on the ground. John felt that *any* money coming into the state is money well used. Scott stated that all monies coming into Montana need to be held in accordance to the state plan. The overall result of the DC trip was that invasive species are on the President's agenda.

Ad Hock Committee

John Day reported that the Ad Hock Committee doesn't hold any legal grounds, they just serve as an advisory committee. Communication issues have been addressed in recent meetings, and the advice from the advisory committee was for Roger to draft a letter regarding communication issues between Roger and the weed districts. The letter from Roger has been reviewed and re-drafted by members of the advisory committee. John passed the draft letter around for board review. Jerry Marks had initiated communications with some of the counties and mentioned that there was a need for the Prevention Committee to move forward and pull together. The heart of the issue was a lack of communication, and the Ad Hock Committee wanted to develop protocol for the board to address issues. One solution is to have weed coordinators and extension agents meet at a neutral place and discuss the problems and solutions surrounding communication problems, as well as the roles that each party plays in noxious weed control. John suggested that the state plan needs to come first, and then the area councils need to stand behind that plan and move forward. John Moodry was asked by several coordinators to produce a survey about the WPAs in Eastern Montana, and that the reason that the weed districts felt there was a back door effort was because only extension agents were approached and weed supervisors weren't addressed. Roger stated that the idea was brought to the Association several years ago and the Association needs to be the center point for all ideas. Roger went on to say that the MWCA board suggested he talk to other associations and organizations about his ideas. Roger emphasized that the board pay attention to what is approved at the board meetings in the future, and that everyone has enhanced communications. Scott stated that it was an abstract proposal brought to the board several months back, and then when the process came to bear, people were ill informed and the proposal was perceived to have changed.

Area Council Incentives

Becky suggested that we strengthen our area councils through incentives of some sort, and that Kelly Leo had some ideas on how to do this. Roger asked that at the next board meeting Becky and Kelly have some ideas for doing this. John Day suggested a survey in the paper about incentives for these areas. Marjika suggested eastern areas look towards western for advice and support. Stuart Schilling asked about the responsibilities of an area rep and what an area council should be doing – was there any description in the bylaws of this? Roger suggested forming a group to look into discussing these issues. He asked for those who would participate in that group and Jim Gordon, Stuart Schilling, Clint Clark, John Moody, Rosemary Koch, Amy Adler, and Dave Brink volunteered to work on these issues. John Day suggested involving county commissioners as well.

Need and Role of the E-board

Jerry Marks explained who the members of the E-board are and explained that one of the issues the board is struggling with is traveling funds for those members who wish to meet regularly but don't get reimbursed by their counties or agencies. Jerry also wanted to discuss how issues are handled between the E-board and the Board of Directors. Bob suggested the E-board meet face to face but maybe not as regularly as every month. Roger asked that the board be informed of the E-board's activities. Becky stated that she tried to make sure the board was informed of E-board meetings and that there hasn't been an E-board meeting since October. Roger and Jerry want everyone to be informed of E-board's activities. Bob suggested we have at least one face-to-face meeting between the board meetings. Roger said we would address that at the next E-board meeting.

Noxious Weed Trust Fund

Roger reminded everyone that this is Bob Gilbert's last year as the MWCA Representative on the Noxious Weed Trust Fund Council. Bob explained the term limits and that Ralph wanted people to have term limits. Jerry Marks suggested we have nominations for this position, and Bob suggested Diane Rice. Roger asked that Jerry Marks, Bob Gilbert, and Scott Bockness and John Day all participate in nominations for a member from the MWCA to be on the Noxious Weed Trust Fund. John Moodry motioned that the Nomination Committee chose nominees for that position, and the E-board and that committee make a final decision on who the nominees are. This was seconded by Marijka Wessner. Bob reminded the board that there is a great deal of responsibility to connected to this position.

Prevention Committee

Amy Adler reported for Jennifer Cramer and reported objectives for the committee

Legislative Committee

John Moodry reported that the legislation this organization supported was heavily supported by many people. The support for the protection of the Trust Fund was overwhelming. Now the MWCA needs to be involved with the advertising and education of the wording on the ballot. The verbage on the ballot really need to be explained and promoted before 2004 because it appears that there is a new Trust Fund being established. Amy suggested a standardized press release be sent out to counties for clarification on constitutional amendments. SB287 (non-motorized decals through FWP to fund fishing access sites) was still alive in the legislature. HB465 was to put a moratorium on new construction on fishing access sites, and this bill died. HB466 was to take and put dollars towards weed control through FWP, and HB444 was to allow permanent registrations on recreational vehicles and didn't take decal fees into the fray. The latter bill is most likely dead. At the national level, the Craig bill has been approved but partner bill HR119 has run into roadblocks dealing with aquatics. John asked the Montana Association of Realtors to add disclosure of weeds on the sellers' property disclosure forms and they have.

Management Committee

The Management Committee met at annual conference to take input from others for their committee. Stuart Schilling, Dan Williams, and Dennis Hengel are on the committee. They are taking the information that was gathered there and are composing it now. The county commissioners don't take an active role in the Statewide Weed Management Plan and the committee is trying to involve everyone in the process.

Coordinator Support Committee

Stacey Barta reported that the Spring Coordinators' Training did well and speakers were informative. Fall training will be in Sidney at the end of September. Kelly Leo was nominated the new chair of the Coordinator Support Committee, and she was helping with the planning and coordination of the fall training.

Bio-control

Jim Larson represented us well in D.C.

Awards Committee

Rosemary stated that there used to be an award for a Supervisors Award and the award could only be given to the same supervisor once. Rosemary asked the board if we should follow this protocol. Roger asked Rosemary to look into that and report at the next board meeting.

Mapping Committee

Tonda Moon reported that the mapping program was working well and that the BLM houses the program within INRS. The system is working well with Jim Larson. (Roger stated that the area reports will be listed first on the agenda at the next meeting.)

Western Area

Dave Brink reported that his area decided to make a contribution to the Barb Mullin fund for \$500.00 and presented Becky with the check. They will be having a spring meeting next month and they are holding crew trainings in their area. Other events the area is involved with include Weed Week in Missoula July 20 – 26 and the theme is “Celebrate Open Lands”, Weed & Feed Fair, July 25, which will have beer, food, and educational materials on weeds at Harrison Park, and Weed Awareness Week in Kalispell. This area council will be working with other areas in the future as well.

Southwestern Area

They had just met before spring coordinators' training and were working with MRL and Montana DOT on coordination efforts. This area is trying to come up with a budget to fund meetings and trainings for the southwestern area as well.

Triangle Area

Commissioner training meeting in Havre on April 8 and this will be an opportunity to discuss MDOT issues and all weed coordinators will be there. Crew training will be in Liberty County in May. Some interest in lining up a meeting with regional BLM office and agrees with ideas on strengthening area councils and looks forward to working with other councils.

Central Area

Clint Clark reported there would be a meeting in April and this area was working on getting involvement and trying to get coordinators and boards to show up. Clint will personally attend board meetings and discuss with other area councils the apathy issues they are facing. They did assist the Southcentral area with the MORE show.

Southcentral Area

This area would be meeting in May with local weed coordinators. The Friedly Fire grant is in their area and they are looking at hosting a tour for the management efforts on that. Stuart is trying to involve more private individuals in their area, and he is working with Malone on this. Scott is setting up a Salt Cedar Tour in August.

Northeastern Area

Ken Babcock reported that they are trying to do a better job of involving people. Three people showed up for the meeting at the Spring Coordinators Conference. Crew training will be June 3 in Glasgow this year. Excited to have coordinator meeting in Sidney and they plan on doing it up well. Amy asked for a Salt Cedar tour at the fall meeting.

Southeastern Area

Amy reported that her area is holding an area meeting and crew training is on June 2 and it will be in Forsyth. Jennifer is holding a Salt Cedar Tour and Rosebud County is holding Weed Day in Colstrip, which has a significant weed problem. They plan on hosting a major educational effort in that area. The MDOT meeting was held recently and all is well with them.

Chemical Industry Rep

Jim Gordon reported the chemical industry is undergoing huge amounts of change and facing many different issues. The current economic climate has greatly impacted all industries.

Environmental Interests

Marjika reported that she is now a member of the Montana Native Plant Society and they are really focusing on long-term sustainable solutions. In June Marijka will talk with this group and she is hoping to have more diversity at our annual meeting. She reported that the Native Plant Society is sponsoring workshops on the proper plants to put in seed mixes and such for landscaping

Ag Rep

Mack Cole has been working with MACo a great deal and feels this group can help the MWCA. He is working on addressing better coordination and communication within the counties between commissioners and weed districts.

Member-at Large

Amy is working with a group of landowners to deal with Salt Cedar in their county and has generated a great deal of interest with surrounding folks and agencies to work with this task force.

BLM

Vic Roberts reported that they still don't have a budget, and they are operating on the same premise as last year.

Montana Dept of Ag

Dave Burch has taken the State Coordinator position and Tonda thanked everyone for their support, however, more input is needed from everyone to help define Dave's role in the future. Roger would like to have input on behalf of the MWCA on Dave's job description. Roger will call Ralph and implement this idea. He will send his ideas to the board first for comments, suggestions, and ideas before passing on to Ralph. The grants coordinator position is now open with Dave's move to the state coordinator position.

Other Business

Becky reported that the deadline for the next newspaper is May 20, and there has been overwhelming support of the new format. Rosemary thanked everyone for the card and support as of late.

Meeting was motioned to be adjourned by Dave Brink at 5:50 p.m. and several seconded this motion.

