

**MWCA Board of Directors Meeting
April 14, 2005
Bozeman – First Interstate Bank**

Minutes

Board members present: Bob Gilbert, Scott Bockness, Margie Edsall, Dave Brink, Jack Eddie, Paul Wick, Jim Freeman, Kim Goodwin, Jim Gordon, John Maki, Jerry Marks, Marilyn Marler, John Moodry, Steve Saunders, Marijka Wessner, (Ex Officio: Dave Burch, Carla Hoopes)

Board members absent (excused): Becky Kington, Dave Schulz, Amy Adler, Ellen Engstedt, Diane Rice

Board members absent (unexcused): John Day, Kelly Leo, Jennifer Cramer

Guests: Alan Bemis (Blaine Co. WD), Theresa Hanley (BLM), John Simons (BLM), Carla Lawrence (NRCS)

Meeting was called to order by MWCA President Bob Gilbert at 9:10 a.m.

Terry Profota update to board- Terry Profota of Sage Solutions has been working on retainer with the Executive and Assessment Committees to evaluate the current organization of the MWCA and develop a potential restructuring strategy for the future. Terry gave a presentation on the work to date and asked the whole Board for comments/feedback and provided a questionnaire and SASE, asking the Board to return comments by the end of next week (4/22).

The group has identified the following as future goals of the MWCA and possible Committee and Board restructuring.

Goals

1. Networking: “Umbrella” goal of the MWCA, to keep communication and cooperative efforts going between (1) groups, agencies and other organizations currently dedicated to noxious weed management efforts, (2) groups, agencies and other organizations indirectly (or directly) involved with noxious weed mgt. efforts who may not be currently partnered with the MWCA, and (3) the public.
2. Education: Both “hard skills” (i.e. “how to” management training) and “soft skills” (i.e. professional development, grant writing, teaching skills).
3. Research Assistance: The MWCA acting as a conduit between the needs of the public and managers on the ground and the research community in general. Also

the dissemination of research findings to the public and managers in an effective manner.

Committee (Re)Structure

The group has discussed and identified the need for Standing Committees, those necessary for the operation of the MWCA and to be identified in the By Laws, and Ad Hoc Committees, those needed merely to address emerging issues. In addition to MWCA officers serving as specific committee chairs, it was also highly suggested that other committee chair positions be filled by existing board members. At present, some committees are chaired by MWCA members who are not board members.

Suggested Standing Committees and Chairpersons:

1. Executive Committee – President
2. Finance Committee – Treasurer
3. Nominations/Orientation – Vice President
4. Weed Coordinator Support – Elected by Weed Coordinators
5. Fundraising/Membership – President Elect
6. Education – appointed from Board

Ad Hoc Committees and Chairpersons:

1. Annual Conference – President Elect and Executive Secretary
2. Biocontrol and Research - appointed from Board
3. Public Policy - appointed from Board

Board (Re)Structure

The group has discussed the current and future composition of the MWCA Board, in part concerning the number of board members, but, more importantly, ensuring a board composition which enables the MWCA to meet its goals and representation. Board member terms and limits were discussed and the group has suggested staggered, 2 year terms with no term limits.

This topic is in need of further discussion and review by the group, but a preliminary makeup has been suggested as follows:

- 4 Elected Officers (Pres., Pres. Elect, Vice Pres., Treasurer)
- 1 Past President
- 7 Area Representatives (Chosen by the individual areas)
- 1 Weed Coordinator Representative (Elected by Weed Coordinators)
- 2 MACo &/or Legislative Reps. (Elected by membership)
- 2 Agriculture/Industry Reps. (Elected by membership)
- 2 Natural Resource Reps. (Elected by membership)
- 2 Conservation Reps. (Elected by membership)

This would give a Board makeup of 21 individuals as opposed to the current 28 member board. As stated earlier, more discussion and input is necessary for this particular topic.

Following questions concerning the process to date, Terry outlined the next steps for the group; that of developing Action Plans for the committees and refining the Board re-structure proposal. Additionally, she encouraged all board members present to comment on the questionnaire distributed earlier and return them to her in a timely manner.

Introductions- At the request of several new members, introductions of all present were made.

Treasurer appointment - With the election of John Moodry, former MWCA Treasurer, as Vice President, Margie Edsall was appointed interim Treasurer. ***Jim Freeman moved to appoint Margie Edsall as Treasurer for the remainder of the term until the next election. Jerry Marks seconded the motion. All were in favour.***

Introduction of new board members – New board members Marilyn Marler, Jim Gordon and John Maki were welcomed by President Bob Gilbert and other new board members not present, Ellen Engstedt and Melissa Half, were announced.

January minutes approved – The minutes from the January 24, 2005 board meeting were reviewed and the following corrections made:

November minutes approved – Amy Adler motioned ~~we~~ be approved; and
Legislative report – John Moodry reported that the e-committee was introduced to the house.

John Moodry moved to accept the minutes as amended. Scott Bockness seconded. All were in favour.

Financials reviewed – Treasurer Margie Edsall handed out Profit/Loss summaries and a financial report. John Moodry distributed an Income report for 2005. ***Scott Bockness moved to accept the financial reports. Jim Gordon seconded the motion. All were in favour.***

There was discussion of budget approval and committee funding requests and timelines for said requests and approval. This is the first year with the current Fiscal Year structure and future budgets should be approved at the Spring board meeting with budget requests submitted at the January board meeting.

Old Business – The matter of personal expense reimbursements in the amount of \$400 per person for delegates on the Washington DC trip was brought up for action. ***Jim Freeman moved that the \$400 reimbursement for personal expenses to the two people who attended the Washington DC trip be paid. Jerry Marks seconded the motion. All were in favour.***

Educational brochures – Kim Goodwin presented a “mock up” of the membership brochure and a 3 option marketing/distribution plan developed by Kim Goodwin and John Moodry. The recommended option (#2) would generate 10,000 brochures with reply envelope and mailing panel as a stand-alone product. This option would cost \$540 more than previously budgeted for the project. *Steve Saunders moved to approve the \$540 additional to fund the project, contingent on the development of a marketing strategy plan, with full board approval, to distribute the brochures. Jerry Marks seconded the motion. Motion was rescinded by Steve Saunders.*

Following additional discussion, *Steve Saunders moved to approve funding the project in the amount of \$4340 for production of the brochures and address (A) “promoting the MWCA through brochure dissemination via their networking avenues and the groups they represent” and “the area committees and county weed districts shall disseminate brochures through their local level work with landowner and community groups and community groups to promote the MWCA, and then use the brochure to invite membership”; and (B) develop a long-term distribution plan. Jim Freeman seconded. All were in favour.*

In order to accomplish the aforementioned motion, *John Moodry moved to amend the special projects budget in the amount of \$340 to implement the membership brochure project. Marilyn Marler seconded the motion. All were in favour.*

Bob Gilbert appointed an Ad Hoc committee to prepare a long-term membership brochure distribution plan. Marijka Wessner will serve as Chair of the committee and members will include Steve Saunders, Kim Goodwin, Scott Bockness and Dave Burch.

Legislative/Congressional report – John Moodry and Bob Gilbert reported on several state and federal legislative issues concerning noxious weeds. On the state level, SB 259 (Dave Lewis), requiring transfers of property from private to public include weed management plans, was amended and sent back to the Senate; HB 359 (Gail Gutsche), revising pesticide application notification requirements, was most likely dead in the Senate; HB 266 (Diane Rice), implementing the NWTF, went to the Governor wherein several line item vetoes (internal housekeeping, all favourable) were enacted. Several other state bills concerning the DNRC were dead as of last report.

On the federal level, SB 144, formally signed by the President but awaiting appropriations, was discussed in Washington DC and the estimated funding is to be \$15 million. This bill and the subsequent appropriation are supported by the MT Legislators.

New Business – Jefferson County is budgeting for a full-time Weed Coordinator position and the weed board has requested a letter of support from the MWCA for such a position. Bob Gilbert agreed to prepare such a letter.

Appointment of committee chairs and other appointments – Bob Gilbert made the following MWCA committee Chair and other appointments:

- Education Committee – Marijka Wessner
- Research Needs Committee – Jim Freeman
- Budget & Finance Committee – Margie Edsall
- Coordinator Support Committee – Jennifer Cramer
- Annual Convention Committee – Becky Kington
- Nominations Committee – John Moodry
- Legislative Committee – Ellen Engstedt
- Prevention Committee – Paul Wick
- Management Plan Committee – John Day
- Biocontrol Committee – Jim Larson
- Mapping & Inventory Committee – (awaiting names, appt. will be made later)
- Assessment Committee – Jerry Marks
- NAWMA Representative – John Moodry

D.C. Trip – Scott Bockness and John Moodry attended the National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week in Washington DC on behalf of the MWCA. They report that the MT Legislative support for the federal Noxious Weed Control Act and the impending appropriation remains strong. USDA-APHIS is currently set to be the “pass through” agency for getting money down to the ground; however, APHIS has no existing infrastructure to handle such disbursement. Suggestions to route money through USDA-FS, via the Cooperative Forestry Program, to the MT Dept of Ag, then into the NWTF, are being made.

Several issues regarding salt cedar were also discussed. At present, the Bureau of Reclamation plans to invest a majority of control efforts in “down stream” states. Several states (MT, ND, SD & WY) are coordinating with the US Army Corps of Engineers to adopt a “headwaters” approach to manage salt cedar and prevent reinfestation of down stream areas. A meeting is planned in Huntley for later this month (4/19).

License plate income and expenses – Kim Goodwin reported that MWCA license plates continue to sell well, averaging about 150 plates per month (approx. \$36,000 per year). Currently, this additional revenue goes into the general operating fund of the MWCA; no special appropriation is designated. Discussion ensued concerning the possible designation of all or a portion of this revenue to fund special projects, membership promotion, investments or other committee action.

Funding proposal for CD visor directory inserts – Carla Hoopes introduced Carla Lawrence, NRCS, who gave a presentation on the new “Zero Spread” campaign. This cooperative effort between NRCS, MT Dept of Ag and SNWAEC aims to increase noxious weed awareness and education through directed marketing, media and response mailing. Samples of media ads, informational brochures (including MWCA membership information), sun visor attachment and resource pamphlets were displayed. An informational phone number and follow-up contacts through the NRCS, MSU Extension Service and County Weed Districts will enable dissemination of educational information. The inclusion of MWCA membership material will hopefully garner new support for the

MWCA. *Jim Freeman moved to use any proceeds to the MWCA from this campaign, up to \$2000, to support the Zero Spread campaign costs. Margie Edsall seconded the motion. All were in favour.*

Committee reports

Education Committee – Marijka Wessner announced that the committee was awaiting word on the NWTF grant submitted and that she will begin work on the membership brochure marketing strategy as directed earlier.

Research Needs Committee – Jim Freeman reported that his committee had evaluated and advised the NWTF Council on the research grant proposals submitted this year. They will also be working with the MT Dept of Ag to revise the request for proposal process concerning research grants to give the research community a little more guidance in acceptable materials and submission materials.

Budget & Finance Committee – Margie Edsall reported she is familiarizing herself with the budgets, records and financial processes of the MWCA.

Coordinator Support Committee – It was reported that Jennifer Cramer had asked all 7 Area Reps to serve on her committee to serve the training needs of the weed coordinators.

Annual Convention Committee – Scott Bockness invited input into the planning and programming for the Annual Convention, please contact Scott or Becky. A preliminary planning meeting is planned for the last week of June.

Nominations Committee – John Moodry reported that a replacement for his previous position as Treasurer had been appointed and confirmed (Margie Edsall). He is seeking nominations for several upcoming vacancies on the board; please send names to John.

Prevention Committee – Paul Wick met with his committee just last night (4/13) to evaluate what has been done and establish priorities and develop an action plan and goals.

Biocontrol Committee – Jerry Marks reported that his committee is working with the BLM and will be meeting May 4, 2005 in Billings to discuss future biocontrol needs and efforts. Information on insects available has gone out to all counties and survey results are being tabulated.

Assessment Committee – Working on reorganization plan proposal with Executive Committee and Terry Profota of Sage Solutions.

Area reports

Western – Dave Brink reported their next meeting would be April 20, 2005 and that the area was planning its crew training for May 25, 2005 in Kalispell. Six counties in the area have been working with Montana Rail Link (MRL) and Celestine Duncan to prepare a weed management plan for MRL right-of-ways in the western area. The area council is also trying to coordinate some weed tours for the benefit of the NWTF council and other interested parties.

Southwestern – Jack Eddie reported their area has discussed hiring a weed education specialist for the area, will soon produce its spring newsletter and is working on a weed informational insert for area newspapers (@ 30,000). A Weed Festival is planned for July 9, 2005.

Triangle – Paul Wick reported his area is producing a newsletter about summer events, fairs, tours and their annual Weed Whacker Rodeo. Area weed districts will be meeting with the MT Dept of Transportation next week (4/19).

Southcentral – Scott Bockness reported that they are coordinating insect collections with the BIA in Lodgegrass and will be working with the southeastern area on crew training in June.

Agency and organization reports

SNWAEC – Carla Hoopes reported that her committee has now been in existence for 10 years and they are in the process of evaluating the work that has been done and deciding which way to go in the future. Work on the “Zero Spread” education campaign with NRCS is nearing completion and should be out soon.

BLM – Theresa Hanley introduced John Simons who will be assuming weed duties in the state BLM office. Future budgets for weed management will most likely be decreasing and the BLM is attempting to revise priorities and workloads to accommodate. Current fiscal year monies are available for weed control in some BLM cost share programs but not in others, although next fiscal year may include funding in these. The BLM is coordinating the Stillwater Weed Tour set for July 13, 2005. Buses will leave the BLM office in Billings and travel to Columbus.

MDA – Dave Burch discussed another bill, SB 285, which affects how monies from vehicle registrations will be allocated to various funds, most notably the NWTF. It appears that all money will be collected into the general fund and a set percentage will be allocated to the NWTF. It also reduces the impact of permanent registrations and “other” vehicle registrations. Dave believes this will fund the NWTF at a slightly more favourable rate than the MDA had previously anticipated.

In other MDA news, the Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage (NWSFF) committee has proposed a fee increase to cover operating costs. The cost per acre inspected will increase from \$1.50 to \$2.50. The MDA will keep \$1 of this fee for its costs and the remaining \$1.50 will stay with the Inspector. The Noxious Weed List Advisory

committee is meeting next Monday (4/18) to review several weed petitions that the MDA has received.

The Dept of Ag is hosting a weed pull and picnic on June 21, 2005 for department employees at a local state park to demonstrate the “hands on” dedication of the department. Also, NWTF Council tours are currently planned for the Marias River and Havre area. Forest Service monies for the NWTF (through the Cooperative Forestry program) in FY 06 were approximately \$813,000 and have the potential to increase in the future. Also this year, MDA will hire 3 interns to assist with various programs and help FWP monitor Fishing Access Sites (FAS) for noxious weeds.

Noxious Weed List Advisory Committee (MDA) – Jack Eddie, representing the MWCA on this committee, reported on their upcoming advisory meeting to discuss and evaluate the following weed petitions: Hoary allysum, common mullein, knotweed complex, Scotch broom, flowering rush, myrtle spurge and babysbreath.

MDT – In the absence of Dan Williams, Dave Burch reported that the Bozeman & Butte Districts of MDT have met to discuss weed control contracts with the counties involved. Funding for weed control has been increased by the Legislature and the MDT weed management plan is nearing completion. Progress is being made between MDT, BIA and the Blackfeet tribe for increased weed management along right-of-ways.

Industry – Jim Gordon reported continued consolidation of companies in the ag-chem industry. Increased fuel costs may cause increased delivery and/or production costs but most companies are trying to avoid this to keep costs down. Next Thursday (4/21) there will be a custom applicator training in the southwestern area addressing calibration, safety, proper application techniques and other topics. Steve Saunders, Dow AgroSciences, announced a new herbicide currently under review and testing as a reduced risk chemical and provided a brief informational handout. This marks the first new chemical development from his company in quite some time and initial results are very promising.

Agriculture – The continuing drought remains a high concern for most ag producers with statewide water supply indices 65-70% below normal. Stock water and irrigation concerns, coupled with decreased forage availability and stress to crops, may outweigh weed control efforts. Subdivisions continue to be an issue as more and more ag-land is converted to homes or empty lots; which in turn increases weed opportunities.

Other business – John Moodry requested clarification by the board for his appointment to represent the MWCA to the NAWMA Board of Directors. *Jim Freeman moved to accept John as the MWCA representative to NAWMA. Jack Eddie seconded the motion. Bob Gilbert opposed. Motion passes..*

Margie Edsall passed out 2005 MWCA Directories to those present.

Meeting adjourned – Meeting was adjourned by President Bob Gilbert at 4:05 pm.

Next meeting date, September 15, 2005 in Columbus, Montana

Minutes submitted by /s/ Dave Brink