

APPROVED: _____

**MINUTES
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
November 10, 2010**

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Sundquist, Ross Penhallegon, Jan Nelson, James LaRue, Jan Wroncy, Lynn Bowers, David Rosenblatt

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Arno Nelson, Orin Schumacher, Steve Smith

B/CC PRESENT:

GUESTS PRESENT:

PUBLIC PRESENT:

John Sundquist called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

N/A

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Sundquist suggested a clarification to the sentence regarding signed release forms from adopt a weed participants on page 2, Rosenblatt said that he referred to short-handled shears on page 4, Sundquist said the PSA scheduling logs distributed by Arno Nelson should added on page 5.

Motion: Rosenblatt moved to approve the September 8, 2010 minutes as amended. LaRue seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

III. GENERAL COMMENT

Sundquist said will reapply for his expiring position, David Rosenblatt will take over the Yamhill County roadside practices issue, and the next subcommittee meeting is December 14 at 1 pm. Wroncy said at the next Hwy 36 Project meeting, with ODOT & Oregon Toxics Alliance, they will evaluate this year's efforts and plan for next year. She added that the weeding this year was completed in two instead of three days. Additionally, she asked if the Clear Lake Road resurfacing job was done by the County or ODOT, and if gravel spread over the roadside edges would make mowing difficult.

A. Nelson said that the job was funded by federal monies via the State with payment to the County for the work. The gravel spreading is standard practice and does not impact mowing. LaRue said that the county crews did an excellent job, especially with the number of driveways.

IV. TEMPERATURE OF THE COMMUNITY

1. Guardrail Vegetation Management Report

Bowers said that she watched a County crew performing guardrail maintenance/mowing work for blackberries, and how they were able to complete 284 feet in approximately twenty minutes. She added that blackberries are best mowed in the Fall, and after a couple of years the blackberries will disappear. She suggested that the County mow guardrails each year.

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Schumacher said the crews currently attempt to mow all the guardrails each year, but a small percentage might be missed. For example, Bear Creek Road was missed last year.

J. Nelson agreed that yearly mowing does reduce blackberries.

Bowers added that the guardrails looked good after the work was done.

Rosenblatt said that he had seen a complimentary letter to the editor in the newspaper.

Schumacher said that crews mow the blackberries along Delta Hwy three times per year, but they still grow back in a couple of weeks.

2. ROW Seed Mixes

David Rosenblatt had asked Orin Schumacher what seed mixes were currently used by the County, in order to determine a list of additional seed candidates.

Schumacher said that the County buys seeds in thirty to fifty pound bags, wildflowers come in smaller bags (ounces), and that there is no standard seed mix. Primary grass seeds include perennial rye grass, blue wildrye, and fescue. Wildflowers are sometimes used but can be expensive; however, Black-Eyed Susan seeds are not too expensive.

Sundquist asked if California Poppies were used.

Schumacher said that they are not considered to be native. He added that the County's primary goals include shoulder edge erosion control, filtration, and quick establishment; that they never exceed more than three grasses per mix; and that fifty to sixty pounds of seed mix are usually used per acre. Hydro seeding is used for large projects and hand seeding is used for small jobs.

Sundquist asked if seeds are distributed after guardrail maintenance.

Schumacher said that there is usually not much bare ground to seed, that they seed any existing bare patches, and that there is already existing seed that may grow. Topsoil is added if needed.

3. Adopt-A-Weed Report

Schumacher distributed draft forms for a county adopt-a-weed program, which are based on the ODOT program forms. The forms included liability release forms for groups and individuals, a program provision sheet, an application form with instruction page, a weed removal plan, and a check-out sheet. He requested that the members review the forms and provide feedback.

LaRue inquired how many of the forms would be need to be completed to apply, and he expressed the concern that too many forms might intimidate potential applicants.

Rosenblatt said that it appeared that four of the forms would be required to apply.

J Nelson said that a group would be likely to complete all the forms, but individuals might not.

Schumacher said that the forms were necessary and interested parties would understand.

Wroncy suggested that property owners could adopt the right of ways in front of their properties, and their neighbors could also be encouraged to apply.

Rosenblatt asked how adopt-a-road roadside acknowledgement signs are earned.

Schumacher said that two litter patrols per year are required, and that two patrols are required before their signs can be erected. He suggested twice per year weed patrols, with a one year commitment before they get an adoption sign. A pamphlet for the program will be developed.

Rosenblatt suggested the pamphlet could be given to other organizations for distribution.

4. Annual Report to BCC

Schumacher distributed a draft copy of the 2010-2011 Annual Report to the members. He said that the annual report is a part of the Last Resort Policy. The report is still submitted each year to report chemical use, even though the County no longer uses chemicals.

Wroncy said that the report still has merit, as it reports on routine maintenance activities.

Schumacher agreed but added that the maintenance activities could be submitted in a simpler manner, as the annual report requires a packet and BCC action.

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Wroncy said the committee could propose that the annual report no longer be submitted since chemicals are no longer being used by the County.

Schumacher said he would prefer to submit an end-of-year VMAC report instead.

Rosenblatt inquired if the 2008 year figure for total road miles (2,870) on page 6 was accurate.

A. Nelson said that mileage has been added, but the figure listed in the report is not yet updated.

Sundquist said that the annual report should include budget costs and expenses.

Motion: J. Nelson moved that VMAC recommend that the BCC no longer require the “Annual Report – Roadside Vegetation Management and Last Resort Herbicide Use Policy” due to the herbicide use moratorium.

Wroncy seconded. Six in favor and one opposed (Sundquist). Motion passed.

Motion: Penhallegon moved to approve the Draft 2010-2011 Annual Report – Roadside Vegetation Management and Last Resort Herbicide Use Policy.

J. Nelson seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

5a. Changes & Additions to the 1999 IVM Policy Document (emailed agenda item)

Sundquist said that the policy was first written in 1990, amended in 1999, and has now been recreated in electronic format. The policy can now be reviewed and modified as needed.

Wroncy said that Commissioners Handy and Sorenson and Lisa Arkin of the Oregon Toxics Alliance have suggested that the Precautionary Principles be incorporated into the document.

Bowers said that the version of the document under discussion includes the principles.

Wroncy said that she did not have the version with those changes.

Sundquist recapped the draft changes to the Precautionary Principles language: Removed references to chemical applications, titled the document “2010 IVM Policy Document, added additional goal statements, amended Vegetation Management Philosophy statements, amended Chemical Application statements, amended Preservation of Native Plant Habitat statements, removed the Public Notification of Planned Chemical Applications section.

J. Nelson stated that the changes essentially remove references to herbicide applications.

Wroncy said that she has not reviewed the changes under discussion and needs more time.

Penhallegon said that the public health statements are not VMAC jurisdiction.

Schumacher added that staff uses the Management Prescription Plan in the 1999 IVM Policy Document, as it is the only policy document approved by the BCC.

Motion: Bowers moved to approve the IVM Policy Document and recommend to the BCC.

J. Nelson second. Four in favor (Sundquist, Bowers, J. Nelson, Rosenblatt), two opposed (Penhallegon, LaRue), one abstained (Wroncy). Motion passed.

5b. Changes & Additions to the Management Prescriptions (emailed agenda item)

Sundquist said VMAC should recommend to the BCC that the Management Prescriptions currently on the County website should be removed as deficient. They were approved with the adoption of the 2007 annual report.

J. Nelson asked if the current Management Prescriptions were written to implement the Last Resort Policy.

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Schumacher said that the Management Prescriptions were written to be in accordance with the Last Resort Policy, that the documents are still in effect even with the herbicide moratorium, and that staff has been directed not to work on this subject unless directed by the BCC. Wroncy asked for further discussion.

Motion: Sundquist moved to recommend to the BCC that the Management Prescriptions be rescinded from County policy and eliminated from the County website.

Rosenblatt second. Four in favor (Sundquist, J. Nelson, Bowers, Rosenblatt), two opposed (Penhallegon, LaRue), one abstained (Wroncy). Motion passed.

Motion: Wroncy moved to extend the meeting for ten minutes.

J. Nelson seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

6. Fairgrounds Weed Garden

Rosenblatt discussed the Fairgrounds Public Education Weed Display handout. The educational garden would show the plant from seed to maturity; however, the fairgrounds staff has been reduced and cannot take on this project. An alternative would be an educational outreach at Vickery Park which is being used to demonstrate watershed protection and organic farming. Sundquist asked about the Vegetation Right of Way handout.

Rosenblatt said the handout shows the system of how water moves in to a river. The no-spray outreach may not be the best approach. He recommended changing from a herbicide use approach to a water protection and soil conservation approach, and that might open new project funding sources.

V. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ADVISORY

VI. COUNTY ADVISORY

VII. VEGETATION COORDINATOR & STAFF UPDATES

VIII. WORK PLAN UPDATE

IX. FINAL COMMENTS

Schumacher reminded the committee that there will soon be three vacancies, new members need to be appointed, a new chair must be chosen at the next meeting, and that this is the last meeting for John Sundquist.

Sundquist said that he will write up his Benton County report and distribute it to VMAC and the BCC. The next subcommittee meeting is in December and accomplishments for the year will be discussed. He said that VMAC will contact the BCC regarding sending a letter to the Department of Agriculture informing them that no permission is granted to spray in the right of way.

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X. SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Steve Smith
Recording Secretary