

Island County Noxious Weed Control Board
Quarterly Meeting: June 24, 2024
10:00 am, Island County WSU Extension Meeting room and zoom teleconference,
406 N. Main St. Coupeville, WA 98239

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 10:04

Present

Board members present: Mark Systma (chair), Jennifer Carlson, Clark Bishop, Russ Holmes; Program Coordinator Seth Luginbill

Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve Feb 27, 2024 ICNWCB quarterly meeting minutes, with the amendment that Russ Holmes term on the weed board expired on July 6th, 2023 as opposed to July 6, 2024. by Clark Bishop, second by Jennifer Carlson. Minutes approved without amendment by unanimous vote.

Weed Control Board positions and filling vacancies.

Russ had reached out to the native plant society, FOCIP, Sound water stewards, Backyard wildlife Habitat to see if there are willing community members to serve in the District V position.

Coordinator will put post for position in the Crab Cracker and touch base with Commissioner St. Clair.

Mark suggested that we add further information on the board to our webpage. Who is on the board? how often do we meet? Coordinator will add information to webpage.

Budget Discussions

Coordinator presented several basic scenarios on potential different funding options worked up in cooperation with public health accounting manager and public health director.

Board discussed the various options and determined that we would move towards with submitting a request that would fund the coordinator position to a full time and increase the seasonal technician position a nine to ten-month position in 2025.

This will be achieved through grants and other intergovernmental agreements (Garlic mustard grants & IAA's with WA state parks, continued CFF M & O funding) and through requests to increase our time working with our public works department roads program and the amount allocated through the general county budget.

To support this proposal the weed control board agreed to have coordinator draft a letter of support and explanation of our request. The funding would help our program meet the deficiencies identified by the coordinator and weed control board members. Weed board provided comment on initial letter draft presented by the coordinator but added to emphasis the shortfalls and how ICNWCB and Island County as a government entity were not fulfilling the intent of the program when it came to compliance with RCW 17.10.

Board also discussed that the need to emphasize education as one of the most powerful tools and how increase to the budget will increase knowledge base and allow are program to reach a wider demographic.

Coordinator would attempt to get a letter edited and to board over the course of the next couple of days.

New grants and agreements:

WA state parks contract:

Staff from State parks approached program coordinator about assisting with noxious weed control in the parks. Contract will run from June 15, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Contract amount will be a \$14,170.00.

This will add an extra day a week to coordinators time, and we will re-structure how we delegate time for seasonal staff. The agreement will run through June of 2025.

Project would involve control work at nine different state parks located on Whidbey and Camano. Contract moving through risk and other approvals to be sent back to State parks. Coordinator hoping fully executed contract signed soon.

WSDA Class A and Class B eradication grant: We will be applying for garlic mustard funding to continue supporting landowners located on South Whidbey. In addition, we are considering adding our one lesser celandine infestation into the RFP as landowner has had trouble finding qualified help that will come do eradication/control work. This might be an opportunity to eradicate lesser celandine in Island County. Grant would be for \$5,000. Grant would run from July 2024 to June 30, 2025.

Formation of a CWMA (Poison hemlock working group):

Ebey's trust board meeting (NPS, Ebey's reserve trust board, Washington state parks, The nature conservancy, local farmers) requested my presence at a meeting to discuss noxious weed control in Ebey's landing.

Clark being part of the Ebey's trust board brought up the lack of coherence and continuity in weed efforts in the historic reserve.

Coordinator is looking into funding options to help support getting this off the ground. Possible grant through USFS.

Board expressed support to look into bringing this back and creating a group that could help address these shortfalls. It was also agreed that initially we would focus the effort on poison hemlock and the Ebey's landing area.

Compliance Case:

We have sent out 27 notifications to landowners (mostly poison hemlock related, but also for knotweed, tansy ragwort, spurge laurel, and thistles). We have about a 50% response rate on notifications.

Clark wanted to know if this also accounted for the notification to the Coupeville School district. Coordinator said we haven't because they have been on the poison hemlock. Clark asked if they would get on there thistle population. Coordinator mentioned he would have a conversation with grounds and maintenance staff about also addressing the thistle problem.

Enforcement update: We applied the initial treatment to the infested parcel on 6/6/24. An Island County Sheriff's deputy met us on site but was not needed as the landowner in question was not present. It is likely that we will require a follow up treatment to occur in July and same protocol will be used to notify landowner. Two additional designated species were observed to be growing on infested parcel in the form of yellow archangel and poison hemlock. Coordinator is working with treasurer's office and PA to now assess the cost of control efforts. As specified under the RCW this will be assessed towards the non-compliant landowner's taxes.

Coordinator worked out that we are only billing out at around \$200-\$250 for cost of control. This was a reminder that financially pursuing enforcement is not profitable for the program. Coordinator mentioned that it might be a good consideration to see if we can hire a contractor to do the enforcement treatments rather than weed control program staff.

Program Updates

- Program Updates:
 - **Spartina (WSDA grant):** Spring regional partners meeting and pre-season meeting with Pat Cole. Initial survey and control work starting in Grasser's lagoon and Freeland County Park. Work will begin in earnest in July-September.
 - **Barnum Point/Iverson spit CFF:**
 - **Barnum point:** The long-term English holly removal component of this project continues. Scotch broom down along the beach trail appears to be greatly reduced. Thistle and common teasel along the beach trail continue to appear and have been removed.
 - **Iverson spit:** Scotch broom removal in zones 1,3,4, and 5 continues in an effort to suppress persistent seed bank. Small clusters of poison hemlock continue to emerge along the dike trail in one small area. Six poison hemlock were treated in the native shrub planting area and eight small plants removed along the beach access/forest loop trail. Common teasel population finally looking down to a handful of plants.
 - **Kettles/Saratoga/Ala spit CFF:**
 - **Kettles trails work:** Survey work for all the twelve infested trails began in April. Work has been focused primarily to Scotch broom and tansy ragwort in the main kettles complex and tansy ragwort, spurge laurel, Bull and Canada thistle located throughout the Alito addition portion of the complex. In conjunction with efforts in the main complex we did a removal workshop around the parking lot and entrance

to the main kettles trail in April. We removed 740 lbs. of Scotch broom from the site which will hopefully continue to deprive area of new seed to infest along the trails.

- **Saratoga woods:** Scotch broom removal work has begun in the main field by parking lot and shelter. Early spring work saw us remove 136 plants from the main field. This is a significant reduction in overall plants present in 2023. On 6/17/24 only a total of 10 small plants were pulled from this area. Survey work has occurred along the main trail and arterials through the park with little weed material observed. Three tansy ragwort were observed and removed along the old airstrip trail during early spring treatment work. Work remaining in this park includes English Ivy and Scotch broom removal to the north of parking lot.
- **Ala spit:** (How many square feet) of yellow archangel treated in the March/April 2024. We also treated remaining knotweed plant as well as bull and Canada thistle in the areas adjacent to parking lot.

Public Works: We have currently done survey work on over 150 roads and conducted treatment work on 91 of these. Species treated include: Garlic mustard, poison hemlock, tansy ragwort, yellow archangel, spurge laurel, Japanese knotweed, shiny geranium, wild chervil, hairy willow herb, purple loosestrife, spotted knapweed, sulfur cinquefoil, orange hawkweed, common tansy, Canada and Bull thistle, common fennel, Scotch broom, common teasel, Italian Arum, Himalayan Blackberry.

- **Other partnership project**

- **Deer lagoon:** Had seasonal staff do some follow up control along the High dike side of the egress road. Focus was on control of Scotch broom and tansy ragwort population. We continue to downgrade our commitment to this project and mostly are providing technical support to Audubon society as they go about doing thistle and broom removal along the egress.
- **Ebey's Landing poison hemlock work group:** See item pertaining to CWMA.

- **Education and Outreach**

- Program updates to BOCC
- SWS workshop series (Scotch broom – Kettles trails (April); Poison hemlock/tansy ragwort – Rhododendron Park (May)
- Noxious weeds 101 – Oak Harbor library

- **Upcoming Education and Outreach**

- SWS weed workshop series (Scotch broom – Iverson spit preserve)

- **Trainings and Professional development:**