HCWMA meeting Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Present: Tyler Goss, Barbara Pearson, Jason Kesling from Harney Soil and Water Conservation District; Harney County Weed Coordinator Jim Campbell; Aurora Potts of High Desert Partnership; Sam Cisney, BLM Burns Weed Specialist

Remote: Bonnie Rasmussen from ODA; Randy Wiest Department of State Lands, Carey Goss from Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

Jim Campbell called meeting to order at 1:33 pm.

Welcome and Introductions

Aurora Potts is the new native seed collections seeds and restoration, newly formed at the High Desert Partnership. The group collects seeds for federal, state and tribal agencies in Harney County and is currently cleaning and storing the seeds. The group is looking to expand its current facilities and staff. The rest of those present at the meeting introduced themselves and welcomed her.

Last meeting minutes

There were no issues, corrections or additions to last month’s meeting minutes Jason moved they be approved; Sam seconded. All eligible to vote were in favor and they were approved.

Financials

Jason presented and explained the financial report, highlighting the salary and cost of Tyler’s employment, fair purchases, and . He said the association’s finances were good. There were no questions regarding the financial report. Randy moved to approve; Jim seconded. All eligible to vote were in favor and the motion passed. Jim complimented Jason on the budget presentation.

Project progress and updates

Tyler said the Beavertable seeding bid closed today. One bid was received and it will be opened at the next Soil and Water Conservation District’s next business meeting, Thursday, September 23, 2021. The project should be able to proceed.

Crane-Buchanan—one person interested in Rejuva project. It would utilize RCP funds only. Tyler said he’s still learning funding processes.

The Harney County Fair was last week and HSWCD had a Booth. Tyler said it went well. He had earlier ordered a promotional merchandise and handed out the all of the squeezy footballs and most of the frisbees, not to mention merchandise from previous years. Many young people visited and interacted. Jim complimented Tyler for the presentation, looks of the trailer. Though no one from Deschutes County was present at the meeting he also expressed gratitude for the agency for the use of the trailer. Tyler said he would next like to purchase a banner to fit across the table front that lists HCWMA and explains what the group represents.

Jim relayed that Tyler suggested taking “County” from Harney County Weed Management Agency title in order to mentally separate the group from the county. Jim said he agreed and suggested in ordering any future promotional merchandise not have the “C” for County in them.

Future presentations for schools and over the radio were discussed.

Randy discussed spraying for medusahead. The state will not do any this year, hopes to do a number of acres next year. Instead it looks like the state will have to pay for fire rehab in Jonesboro. Tyler said acreages will need to be submitted earlier and if the expected amount is over $100K it will need to be submitted as a bid. Jason explained the new bidding process for the HSWCD.

Jason said the HSWCD website will be updated as well, which will save the district money otherwise spent on advertising.

Tyler has a project to test a new herbicide, Rejuva. It is more expensive than Plateau, but more cost effective for landowners. He is attempting to locate a landowner that will allow a two 100-acre test plots one with Rejuva and the other Plateau. The rancher he has in mind has a CCAA, so it would need to be adjusted or he would need to find another rancher(Tyler explained that the CCAA has same spray list as BLM). His goal is to provide the results and wants to do a test plot half rejuva, half plateau 100/100. Rancher found under CCAA so may need to be adjusted or find another rancher. The goal is to show the Rejuva is cost beneficial. Applications November 1st. Jim said if Tyler can coordinate, he can provide the Rejuva. Funding would be needed for the plane unless there is a landowner who would donate use of a plane.

Randy said if a location was needed that perhaps the state land would and he will check some locations. Jason thought it might be good to work on more than 200 acres. Methods for conducting the study were discussed. Jim said Rejuva is an “impressive herbicide”. Aurora asked if landowners would have to pay? Jim said the association might offer to test at a reduced cost to the landowner. He suggested one property as he would like the location to be visibly accessible to transport landowners to witness test results.

Carrie Goss and Tyler discussed a weed control project for Refuge Permittees for pepper weed. Carrie has contacted 10 landowners/permittees that want to spray for pepper weed. Two permittees have had contracts in past 6 years. Carrie will next ask if landowners would pay 20% of spray costs. Eleven permittees have expressed interest in a cost share program. She will contact them again and confirm the go-ahead with the cost share. She will select permittee—Buck Taylor, Red Dunbar (Andy) in particular. Jim deadline would be “Novemberish”. Bonnie will find out if is best to run this program through OWEB or the state weed board. Jason said he could also OWEB. Tyler said the district has the beginning of a grant prepared; it would just need to be updated to submit. Carrie said she appreciated the opportunity to do the project. Jim expressed concern about refuge hay from the South Malheur River going to Venator.

The HCWMA’s website is currently on the County’s webpage. This will be changed so viewers can select a link on the county’s webpage to take them to the HSWCD webpage. Jason said he was unsure if this needed a formal action. Jim offered to do so to make it official: Jason moved the HCWMA information be moved from the county’s webpage to the district’s; Sam seconded. Motion carried.

Any other topics? There were none. Next meeting, 3rd Wednesday, 1:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 2:09 pm