**June 8, 2023**

**CWMA Monthly Meeting, Basement Courthouse Conference Room**

Present: Tyler Goss, County Weed Management Agency (CWMA); Jim Campbell, Harney County; Karen Moon, Harney County Watershed Council (HCWC); Josh Hanson, High Desert Partnership (HDP); Lisa Foster, United States Forest Service (USFS); Samantha Cisney, Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Manuel Mose, Burns Paiute Tribe (BPT); Jason Kesling and Barbara Pearson, Harney Soil and Water Conservation District (HSWCD)

At the last meeting, Jason agreed to serve as the board chair, and he called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm. Everyone present knew each other, so the time of welcome and introduction was dispensed.

Action Items:

1. Review and approval of last meeting’s minutes. Samantha said the minutes used the word “contract” between the BLM and CWMA. The appropriate term instead should be “assistance agreement.” Tyler suggested this phrase should also be used for the USFS. The minutes will be amended to reflect this change. Jim moved to approve the minutes, pending corrections; Samantha seconded. There was no opposition; the motion passed.

Last meeting’s minutes reflected the new board chair and approval of Samantha to serve as a vice chair. Samantha said she could not serve in that position as it would be a conflict of interest. A new vice chair will be discussed next meeting.

1. Review and approval of Financial Report. This was included in the meeting packet. Jason explained the financial report. The Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (MNWR) has been invoiced but a check has not yet been received, and discussion followed. Tyler said the payment should be $1500 more than in the previous year.

Jason said finances are good and salary has been charged to Title II. The HSWCD board of directors approved purchase of a CWMA new truck and it has been ordered. There is a current backlog of 4-8 months.

Jim moved to accept the financial report; Lisa seconded. There was no opposition and the motion passed.

Jim asked about the Poison Creek project for BLM—will the CWMA do the entire section? Tyler said he was advised by the Oregon Department of Agriculture’s Bonnie Rasmussen that the SWAT crew would do the BLM side. Samantha explained the financial workflow between the agencies. Jim said he or Tyler and not the SWAT crew would do the herbicide treatment. Tyler said Bonnie wanted the SWAT crew to get the weed entirely off BLM land. Jason said funds for this project does not include the BLM.

3:12 pm Karen Moon, Manuel Mose arrived.

Project progress and updates:

1. Harney CWMA/MOU/MOA: Copies of the Bylaws had been sent out via email to members and copies were available for meeting participants. Tyler gave the option of reviewing as a group; Samantha, Jason and Karen have already provided input. Lisa said she was not able to access the bylaws, and Tyler will resend to her. Due to this and the amount of time it will take to review, discussion was tabled. Samantha suggested giving CWMA members advance notice when discussion will take place, as that will require a longer meeting. Tyler said review would probably be in the fall (both MOU and Bylaws). It’s been 11 years since they were last updated. Jason suggested that meeting be held at the BLM office.
2. Puncture Vine Pull Tee-shirts: A puncture vine weed pull competition has been scheduled for next month. Participants will be given a tee-shirt and gloves. Tyler priced two vendors and suggested going with Switch Canyon, a local business. He displayed on his computer a video sample of the shirt (a gray shade with the CWMA logo on the left chest and the puncture vine character on the back. Cost for each shirt would be roughly $18 each and he would get a variety of sizes. Additional money from the MNWR and a $150 donation from HCWC will go toward prizes (Harney Gift cards). He also has water bottles for some prizes that he wanted engraved, but as of the meeting time had not heard back from the Oregon Youth Authority contact to get this done.

Jim said the local radio station has been playing the ad for the puncture vine pull often. Tyler said radio charged for the free spray day, but has not yet for the puncture vine pull. Samantha asked if there are any other social media platforms this could be publicized on. It will be added to HSWCD’s website. Lisa asked what would happen if a child won the competition (the child’s prize was less than the top prize). After discussion the consensus was a child could win in two categories (largest weight for children and top weight) He will contact the radio station to make sure the information broadcasted is correct.

Tyler will also contact Ken Bentz, who has offered to pay for a complimentary beer for participants. The shirt design was approved (no one opposed). Jason suggested the CWMA fund for up to 50 shirts. Jim suggested Tyler check a website that breaks down tee-shirt sizes based on size demographics. Manuel and Samantha suggested ChatGP. Any extra tee-shirts may be donated as prizes or swag for the weed trailer during the Harney County Fair in September.

Tyler said there is a lot of excitement; he is getting feedback about the pull. The competition will last 2 weeks.

1. Poison Creek EDRR: The bid tour was two weeks ago. Jesse Barnes was awarded the bid, and she is ready to begin the project. Tyler will write an interim report for that grant. Jesse will go to the area in the next two weeks to treat for Hounds Tongue. Josh asked if there was a specific plan and Tyler said herbicide treatment would be for Hounds Tongue, Scotch Thistle, and spotted knapweed.

On a side note, Jason asked about Scotch thistle he located in a horse corral near the storage sheds in Hines. Jim said he would stop by and check with landowner and maybe treat, even if it is outside his scope.

1. Stinkingwater Purple Loosestrife: The CWMA (Jim and Tyler) will treat the area from the Lamb Ranch to Drewsey. Tyler has received signed landowner agreements and the herbicide has been ordered. The CWMA will also treat an area at Stinkingwater/Stinkingwater creek, which the ODA has treated for years.

CWMA will also treat county wide med sage; the BLM advised of another spot in Drewsey to treat. All but two landowners have been contacted. Locations of public and private were discussed. One landowner wanted her land treated but refused to sign an agreement, so her land will not be treated. A signed landowner agreement is a requirement by the OWEB. Jason asked about equipment; it has been purchased and is at the SWAT shop but will need some modification. Jason said he was not sure if the equipment cost qualified under the grant due to the time it was purchased. This will require investigation, but Jim thought it would be good.

There was no further discussion or questions about grants.

1. BLM work/contracts: The BLM gave three additional contracts for med sage and medusahead treatment under the assistance agreement. Burke Springs and Long Hollow ran as a bid; the tour took place this morning. Jesse Barnes was the only participant and she will submit a bid shortly (per acre). Tyler did not give her a cap. There is currently $15,000 in the account for aerial application and $15,000 acres left. Samantha asked if the aerial would be for 500 acres and Tyler said 600. Jason said after submission the bid would go through HSWCD approval. Jason, Tyler and Ken Bentz would review.
2. Forest Service work: Tyler is waiting for July to survey trails. Title II will be big this year; he spoke to the county weed board about it the previous day. Tyler will consult landowners in Riley. Jim Campbell suggested Gary Miller since his land is adjacent to Forest Service property. Tyler also spoke to the county weed board about Highway 20 north broadleaf treatments, Landowners would pay 25% toward herbicide treatment, directed toward listed A or B weeds. This would be in land from Hwy 20 up or somehow related to the Forest Service.

Karen left the meeting at 3:50 pm due to another commitment.

Trails and lookouts, random campsites will be surveyed. Jason suggested Lisa provide a route. Jim agreed, saying the SWAT will spray a campground if it is near a road. The county may treat in an area that Tyler plans to treat, and he wanted to prevent duplicate efforts.

Tyler may use the CWMA drone to survey a post fire area to determine noxious weed presence. He was unsure how to bill the cost of drone operation. Jason suggested using this as a test to find out how much the drone would be used and then determine future cost. Tyler will prepare a document to ask permission for drone use on Forest Service land.

Manuel asked about using the drone to survey reservation roads; he needs video or photographs. The Tribe does have some funding (See above paragraph re: cost). Tribal roads and their locations were discussed. Some roads near or through the reservation are actual county roads, so Jim would need to treat. Manuel said the Tribe wants to formalize recognition of the road ownership and who will be responsible for treatment.

There was discussion regarding how many agencies may begin using drones or if there would be a need to contract. Samantha said many drones are not allowed with on federally owned land or with federal agencies because many drones are manufactured in China and there is a potential danger of spying. Tyler also displayed drone video footage on the Rejuvra test plot.

New business:

1. The Harney County Fair will take place in September. Tyler asked meeting participants if anyone had an idea for a fair booth or theme. It did not have to tie in with the fair theme. Jason suggested focus on medusahead and puncture vine and their treatments. Samantha suggested that as a foundation and then branch out on some weeds in town.

Side note: Jason described an unknown plant he located on the reservation to Jim and Manuel. This piqued the curiosity of meeting attendees who said they would locate and try to identify after the meeting.

1. Review of the Free Spray Day, held last Saturday, June 3rd. Tyler said it went well: 765 gallons of herbicide were prepared and 730 gallons were given out. Jim said he would like to see it changed next year that if someone would like 20 gallons of spray that they be given 10 gallons and then return later to get 10 more. This would avoid a bottleneck of people waiting (some waited for over an hour). Tyler also said the ODA did not want the herbicide being distributed in clean paint containers. Jim said they would not be able to inspect containers when herbicide is given out. Last year 650 gallons were distributed.
2. Time change for future meeting(s). Tyler sent out a Doodle poll and asked people to respond. Jim suggested moving the locations of meeting.

Meeting adjourned 4:25 pm