**October 4, 2023**

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

Present: Karen Moon, Harney County Watershed Council; Tyler Goss, CWMA; Dustin Johnson, Oregon State University; Jim Campbell, Harney County; Kaylee Littlefield, High Desert Partnership; Sam Cisney, Bureau of Land Management; Bonnie Rasmussen, Oregon Department of Agriculture; Jason Kesling and Barbara Pearson, Harney Soil & Water Conservation District

The meeting was called to order at 3: pm. The time of welcome and introduction were dispensed with as all present knew each other.

Action items

1. Minutes from the previous two meetings were presented (August and September). Jim moved and Sam seconded approving the meeting minutes without additions or corrections. All present who were eligible to vote were in favor, and the motion passed.
2. Financial Reports for August and September were presented. Jason Kesling said the CWMA is “sitting pretty good.” There is the Stinkingwater renewal and Tyler charging to it now. The fiscal year with the Forest Service is completed. Salary for the BLM has been billed. Contracting as been completed. The Med Sage and Purple Loosestrife are complete, final reporting needs to be completed. The new truck is set to arrive shortly. The HSWCD is in negotiation to purchase its office building, and part of that may be billed to CWMA. The HSWCD is doing a fundraiser for truck, and some businesses and landowners have expressed interest in assisting.

Sam asked about post grants showing a balance—some have funds and some don’t. Jason said Beaver Table still has funds for monitoring, but is negligible.

3:03pm Bonnie Rasmussen arrived.

Karen moved to approve both financial reports as presented. Jim seconded. There were no oppositions. The motion passed.

Project updates:

1. The CWMA had the weed booth at the Harney County Fair. There was a game for folks visiting the booth to guess how many puncture vine (goat heads) seeds were in a jar. There were 1592 goat heads. The winner was within 13. Three Shop Harney County gift cards were awarded for the three closest guesses. The gift cards were donated by the Harney County Watershed Council. Tyler thanked all present who helped with the weed trailer. This year the trailer was placed toward the end of the vendor area; next year he will try to get the spot from previous years. There were no questions or comments.
2. BLM: The last bill from Morris Ag Air was received and paid. This was for the Wildhorse area. Plateau was sprayed. Tyler has also been helping the BLM at Roaring Springs with load counts (this was prior to the fair). Bonnie asked about the Catlow area. Eighty acres were aerially sprayed, including an area of concern near the school house. The CMWA donated the Rejuvra. Bonnie asked if Long Hollow was addressed. Tyler said he didn’t check. Bonnie said a trailing herd brought in medusahead and it could affect the Pueblos Mts. There was further discussion about other sites in the area (Long Hollow and most of the southern area have medusahead. It is not yet at the Pueblos), their locations, surveys, and the need for future treatment.

Sam gave an overview for the BLM’s work. 74,000 acres were treated. The sites were scattered throughout the district. Some areas were rolled over to the next year. The Steens is a high priority. There is hunting going on now. She talked about including a noxious weed brochure in hunting regulations. The review of the project was good. Management was in the room and saw how the SWAT crew and CWMA were a big help, which may affect the funding discussion. Next year the BLM will attempt to do 40-50K range next time. Jason asked if there was an update on BLM approving the use of Rejuvra? Sam said it is still working through the national EIS. A draft was presented in June. It was to be approved in December, but more steps may be needed until it is approved for local use. She estimated optimistically it may be two more years.

Other BLM project areas were discussed: Page Springs and Frazier. Jointed goat grass has been located along the road. The area was treated last fall, but there is more of it being seen. She asked Bonnie if agencies should be concerned. Bonnie responded with, “I don’t think we need it.” She said it has been found at rodeos and fairgrounds. It is pretty common here and in Jordan Valley. She doesn’t think people are too “keyed into it now. It doesn’t surprise me. I would target it. Wise to target it class A here.”

Tyler said the Virginia stickseed he recently located in a campground is worse than he previously thought. Jim said there needs to be an identification and conversation with someone who knows about the plant. Bonnie suggested a sample or photograph be sent to the state herbarium. She said that Page Springs has nightshade, poison hemlock, etc.

Sam said she has also seen around town, behind DQ, near the Thrive well clinic. She has seen the noxious weed Bouncing bet in yards. Bonnie said the weed is very toxic for livestock. It was another she suggested to mail a sample in.

Bonnie said that Palmer amaranth has also dropped onto radar and is trying to find locations. This weed is resistant to all herbicides. Jason suggested educating the public to ornamentals during the free spray day.

1. The CWMA truck was built last week, Tyler hopes it will arrive by the end of the month. He plans to take it to Washington state for a weed conference at the end of the month. Sam said the Society for Range Management will hold a conference in Reno, NV in January in 2024. It will be in Spokane, WA the following year.
2. Tyler contacted the publishers for the eastern Oregon field guide weed identification books, and they will reprint. He requested 500, at an estimated cost of $2000. Tyler said he has handed at out least that number of books since he’s been here. No noxious weed control are listed in the field guide. Bonnie said that Troy wants to revamp the weed profiles. Locations, weed treatments, and the most effective ways to inform the public were discussed. Jim thought the best way would be to have printed on a label for users to contact the weed board.
3. There was a youth outreach at Idlewild this morning (it included students from schools in Burns, Seneca, Crane, and other smaller local schools). Jim did a presentation for kids and enjoyed it—he said the children were attentive. This was led by the Forest Service. Sam said the 4th graders will receive a pass to the forests and a Christmas tree. Erin Johnston would be the contact person this event in the future.

New business:

1. Tyler said for next month he will prepare grant reports and attend the conference in Washington. Because he will be gone when the CWMA would otherwise meet the next meeting will move to the second Wednesday in November.
2. Tyler asked about new grants and projects. He said that he and Jim would like to do a Purple Loosestrife project using a drone or helicopter in the vicinity of the Lamb Ranch. The hazards of the area were discussed as well as best method of application (broadcasting herbicide vs. direct application), and if a permit would be required for use of a drone. Using an ATV or horse would probably not be the best method. Jason asked who source of funding would be sought and Tyler thought it best to run first through the state weed board, and then Title two.
   1. Regarding Med sage, Tyler said he scanned Frenchglen and saw nothing there. He said he spoke to the owner of 30 acres in the area and did not see any med sage. He proposed dropping Frenchglen and instead add the Drewsey dump site that is connected to the BLM for treatment. Jason asked about funding source, and Tyler said he planned to go through the state weed board and then Title Two. The CWMA will pay the landowners’ 50% cost share.
   2. Jason asked about the specialty weed. Jesse has located salt cedar at the Lawen area. Jim said that area may be difficult to address as the land has fractured ownership with many out of state. Jason thought some ownership has recently changed. He asked Tyler how this could be funded. Tyler was unsure if the refuge would be interested in funding; he will attempt to determine the project area size first and number of landowners impacted. Jason suggested scheduling a meeting with the refuge before it shows up there. Jim said it doesn’t seem to be priority now as the weed is in a locked in area.
   3. Jim has noticed a lot of Russian knapweeds near the airport, which led to a discussion on the history and types of treatment in that area. Grazing with grass management had been the most effective, but it needs to be continually grazed. Other locations and techniques were discussed. Bonnie said the Oregon Weed board would not provide funding for that location because it has already been provided. Jason said OWEB may fund. There was discussion on what plant could be put in that area to compete with the knapweed? Dustin said grass or alfalfa have been there in the past, but a hard winter and the resulting flood killed it. Who owns goatherds in Harney County and may be interested in grazing the area was discussed. Jason proposed researching new treatment methods and to approach landowners to change their perspective. Dustin felt it wouldn’t hurt but Bonnie said, “No one wants goats.” Jason said the CWMA has two more years to spend out money. Bonnie suggested addressing both diffused and spotted knapweed.
   4. Jim asked about spotted knapweed in Riley, and Bonnie discussed previous treatment in that area and how it spread. She thought it was still present in the areas. Jim said he sprays in the area of the old state housing. Jason suggested applying for a grant through Title Two. Bonnie suggested to also treat the area for diffuse knapweed.
   5. Tyler said the Rejuvra test plot is looking good.
   6. Bonnie asked about med sage in an area of Hwy 395 and provided the location. Tyler said he saw mostly rosettes and treated the area. The landowner also placed cows in the area. Jason have $40K available for treatment. Jim thought Tyler could get to the area and treat it using the four-wheeler.
   7. Someone asked about Spotted knapweed located in the Drewsey cemetery? Jim said he has treated that area. Someone has been mowing the cemetery. Tyler will contract that out.
   8. Sam asked if Japanese brome and grass fuel brome are being addressed or is it just a phenomenal year for the weeds? Bonnie said a survey was completed on Hart Mountain and mentioned Japanese brome.
   9. Bonnie would a hoary alyssum (annual) site addressed as a Class A, sighted on Highway 395 at Devine Canyon. The thought it would be a good idea to survey that creek, talk to ODOT and find out how it came about. ‘

The meeting ended at 4:32 pm