**CWMA Monthly Meeting**

**December 4, 2024**

**Conference room, 90 W Washington, Burns**

Present: Aaron Johnston, High Desert Partnership; Jim Campbell, Harney County; Sam Cisney, Bureau of Land Management; Dayne Galash, US Forest Service; Andrew Donaldson, Natural Resource Conservation District; Tyler Goss, Harney County Weed Management Agency; Jason Kesling and Barbara Pearson, Harney Soil &Water Conservation District

Attending, remote: Jessie Brunson, Malheur National Forest; Jacob Rose, Portland State University

The meeting was led by Jason Kesling, who called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm. There was a time of introductions.

**Item #1: October Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were provided prior to the meeting for the CMWA members. There were no corrections or additions. Sam Cisney moved and Jim Campbell seconded approval of the minutes. No one present who was eligible to vote were opposed and the motion passed.

**Item #2: Financial Report**

Jason Kesling said the CWMA is in a good position. The purple loosestrife project was postponed due to the fires. Half of the project’s budget is available for the next spraying season. Jim Campbell moved and Andrew Donaldson seconded approving the financial report. No one present who was eligible to vote were opposed and the motion passed.

**Item #3: New Business**

1. Tyler Goss said the Interagency Noxious Weed Symposium will be next week. He and Jim Campbell will attend. Tyler will study for vegetation management certification this winter. It is the highest regulatory weed license to be obtained and is only obtained by a public employee, allowing that person to apply herbicide in any location (for instance, a residential yard). There are a lot of regulations to learn. Jim said it will be good for Tyler to be able to assist with Forest Service land or the Bird Refuge. Tyler hopes to obtain this certification by next spray season. Tyler said he would also need to retake his drone test to keep his license current. There were no more questions.
2. Education: Sam Cisney requested this discussion be put on the agenda. She is open to ideas and discussion. This time of year is a down time and it would be good to work toward this, sort out projects, set priorities, and schedule. Jason suggested listing the existing CWMA projects and set the dates for them now: Seed exchange, free spray day, certification class, fair booth. Proposed education outreach mentioned were:
	1. City Weed Wipeout. This might entail public tours held on spring weekends to teach weed identification and discuss treatment. It was suggested to schedule this sometime in late June or early July. Jim said the county has a listing of noxious weeds (among them Diffuse knapweed) and the list was recently challenged by ODA Bonnie Rasmussen for the county to treat or relist. Jim suggested the CWMA hire a contractor through the county who would set a fee schedule for treating lots or yards. The CWMA would then promote through the paper, radio, and Facebook, and the contractor would treat the subscribed property. It would be good to set up a booth near the line during the Free Spray Day to encourage people to sign up and target knapweed and other weeds. He said the city does not have a weed ordinance. Tyler has an at large position on the County Weed Board. In the past the weed tour generated a lot of interest. He suggested making the tours open to the public and take the attendees around the city with sites that have a particular weed and discuss treatment. Tyler also mentioned there is a lot of Scotch thistle in town as well. If a contractor cannot be obtained, then (if he obtains certification) Tyler can treat. Jim suggested Jessie Barnes or another contractor be present to hand out business cards.
	2. Jason said the BLM and USFW pay the CWMA for education outreach. Are we doing enough? Sam liked the idea of a booth and said the group need to explore. Another idea was for a CWMA meeting to be held in a public place and maybe draw the public in, perhaps combining a meeting room and site visit. The recent purple loosestrife drone demonstration was mentioned and that went over well. Tyler said he found a new Russian skeleton weed site. Sam suggested a quick meeting and then a tour.
	3. Aaron suggested sending ideas out for collaboration. Sam suggested to poll people to see what would interest them. Jim suggested making education events more open to public than agencies. Tyler mentioned the Rejuvra site. Jim suggested incorporating Nic Schott with a tour so the public could view his plane, see the GPS. Tyler said Nic Schott usually prepares his aerial spraying in a remote place on the airport property.
	4. Sam mentioned the BLM weed ID program, expanding it to make it open to all, maybe hold in a different location. Jim suggested participants see the weed in a field instead of a pulled weed in an ID class. Sam also suggested a mini session that focuses on a particular weed.
	5. Someone in the meeting said the more education outreach the better. Outreach can change year to year. Previously the Forest Service held an ID class at Idlewild Campground. Tyler said elementary school students really liked it (grades 5-8, including Crane school participants). Tyler has been discussing a presentation with a Crane teacher. Jim suggested recruiting Jessie Barnes with this project, citing her talents and said she could keep the attention of the students.

Jason suggested Tyler create a spreadsheet of what events are already planned, including dates, materials needed, agencies offering to assist. Meeting guest Jacob Rose suggested an event in Juntura with that area’s CWMA the end of June. Jessie asked about funding outreach work—will the CWMA be using Title 2 funds? This could be a reasonable inclusion, and the capacity side of Title 2 includes outreach, mostly implementing spray. Tyler said the plan is currently insufficient to chase funding. Normally the plan is put in place and then securing funds is attempted. Jessie said that an OWEB grant will be available in about the next month. Tyler said OWEB has an education outreach grant, but CWMA didn’t apply for it in time and may do so next year. Jacob said there is an outreach grant for Oregon invasive species. It may not be offered again.

**Other:**

1. Salt Cedar: The CWMA applied for a 2025 Salt Cedar grant for Lawen, which will cover 10K acres for surveying and treatment. The County Weed Department wrote the grant with support from ODA’s Bonnie Rasmussen. It is the only grant applied for and was submitted this morning. Jim thought the grant being awarded was a long shot; he heard there was a lot of competition. Agencies are fighting salt cedar as they are cheat grass. Tyler wondered if a cost share arrangement might be successful. All landowners he had spoken to were in favor of the survey and treatment. Jim suggested contacting Ducks Unlimited. The Gray Family Foundation was also suggested. This is a group that funds Oregon projects for outdoor schools and environmental outreach.
2. Recertification: Tyler is looking at possible dates of February 13 or 20, 2025. Jordan Valley’s recertification class is already scheduled. Sam said there is a potential conflict with the Range Management Society (which will meet in Spokane). Tyler will put some dates together and present to the Board.
3. Sam Cisney said at the last meeting there is currently no Oregon/Washington Invasive Lead for the BLM. This position should be filled in January 2025.

**New business:**

1. Jacob Rose of Portland State University gave an overview of his project. His scope of research is invasive species in Oregon lakes and reservoirs. It involves a lot of early detection work, with the most effort now being toward invasive animals (mussels, crayfish). He has been working with ODA directly on weed board grants and early detection surveys. PSU is proposing a survey at Chickahominy Reservoir surveying via boat. The body of water hasn’t been surveyed for 10 years. Sam said it was dry a few years ago. Jim advised it has no native fish and is weedy, but many people stop at the reservoir on the way through. Jacob plans for the survey to take place in June and he opened up the survey to those in the meeting if they wanted to learn some of the aquatic plants. He will pass details to Tyler. Jim asked if this offer would be open to the public and Jacob said “probably not for this offer.” He will be doing another survey in Juntura that could be open to the public.
2. Another project is working with Travis and another at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge to survey a segment of the Donner und Blitzen (this segment has not been surveyed or reported on) regarding milfoil and carp. The segment will involve an 8 mile kayak trip from the Diamond swamp area.
3. A project downstream from Warm Springs Reservoir regarding geothermal activity, which could support some problematic aquatic weeds. Jason advised there is a hot spring near Juntura. He and Tyler will send GPS information to Jacob.
4. Krumbo Reservoir: This will be a boat launch and is open to anyone interested. The tentative date is July 16-22, and will involve part of a weekend. Jacob asked about site specific information to pass on.

Sam asked about the publication resulting from the survey. Jacob said he is applying for grants for early detection. He will apply for a BLM aquatic grant in February and pitch for an aquatic weed guide to eastern Oregon as part of it. There are a few guides for the west side of the state, but nothing good for the east side. This could be comprehensive. He presented a guide from Benton County that included a general message and specific weed profiles. Sam asked if the eastern Oregon guide would include treatment, and Jacob said he is considering it. Other weed guides are heavy on weed identification and tend to pass the buck regarding treatment due to liability concerns. Most guides don’t have a lot of faith in the public to apply treatment wisely. He said he is open to suggestions. Jessie said she didn’t think it reasonable to include treatment in a guide. Jim said any treatment with water requires a permit through the state. Permitting and the danger of water application of herbicide were discussed.

**Plans for next month/new business**

Jessie spoke regarding post-BAER funding (BAER is an acronym for Burned Area Emergency Response). Additional funding for post fire seeding does not look promising and is not expected to come through. There is another timeline running against BAER funding that was approved. She is attempting to find partners to work with us and hopes to use CWMA partnership to being portioning out that work for Whiskey Mountain and the Telephone fires. The project would involve rapid response for surveying and see if weed patches are found. The Myrtle Creek Trail had a medusahead patch near the trailhead. The survey would involve looking for weeds. The timeline with the CWMA agreement expires January 31, 2025. BAER agreement, Title 2 agreement projects and apportion discussion followed.

Jessie presented a map regarding the survey. Discussion followed on the best approach to survey and funding sources. Sam suggested agencies meet to discuss this and best prioritize as the fires often went from one agency’s land to another. Aaron asked about monitoring. BAER defaulted to invasive monitoring often concurrent with ongoing treatment, usually in late September. The information would then go into a national database.

The meeting adjourned at 3 pm.