

Environmental Quality Council (EQC) Meeting
July 20 - 21, 2016
Noxious Weed Coordination Report

State Noxious Weed Coordinator

State Noxious Weed Coordinator Report submitted by Dave Burch.

Primary duties and responsibilities of the position are to provide statewide noxious weed coordination, management of the Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund and Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage Programs and supervision of three (3) FTE.

Status Report for July FY17:

State Noxious Weed Coordinator Activities March - June 2016:

Program Management:

- Reviewed 86 grant applications and approved 84 Noxious Weed Trust Fund contracts.
- Organized and managed the Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant hearings February 29 – March 4, 2016.
- Continued to oversee the operations of the Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage Program.
- Continued to train the new Noxious Weed Grant Coordinator.
- Resolved a violation of the Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage Program involving inappropriate labeling of pelleted forage products.

County and tribal weed district support:

- Provided technical and regulatory compliance assistance to County and Tribal Weed coordinators, weed boards and county commissioners: assisted Jefferson County with weed program responsibilities and discussed incorporating the mosquito program with the weed program; presented an overview of the County Weed Act at the McCone County Winter Workshop with over 50 people in attendance.
- Montana Weed Control Act Interpretation and Implementation assistance; form and process assistance: April – assisted Petroleum County Weed Board with Weed Program functions and the issue of firing and hiring a Weed Coordinator.
- The program goal is to meet with one-third (1/3) of county and tribal county weed districts annually:
 - March – gave a presentation at the Western Weed Managers Workshop along with the Montana Association of County Officials regarding potential legislation to increase funding to county weed districts to help them enhance weed program activities and to tie new funding to professional development of county coordinators.

Conduct Training and Outreach:

- Coordinated an EDDMapS (GPS weed mapping system/program) for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and eastern county weed districts on April 27th in Billings and again on April 28th for county weed districts in Dillon.
- Serve as Chairman of the Statewide Noxious Weed Awareness and Education Campaign; we are scheduling five new "Adopt A Trailhead" sites for the spring of 2016; in Missoula, Beaverhead, Madison, Park and Cascade Counties in conjunction with the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, USDA Forest Service, County Weed District, and the Montana Department of Agriculture.
- Assisted with the planning and implementation of the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council (MISAC) - Invasive Species Summit held April 12-13, 2016.
- Assisting in the final review of the Invasive Species Survey and IS Summit Summary.
- Assisted in reviewing and letting of the "Request for Quote" for the IS Strategic Plan.
- Assisting the Montana Weed Control Association with the 60th Annual Conference planning.

Respond to Noxious Weed Infestations:

- Continued to coordinate Noxious Weed Task Force issues for Rush skeletonweed with Sanders, Ravalli and Lincoln Counties.

State, regional and national coordination:

- Working with the 56 counties to get their county weed management plan updates submitted to the department as required by the Montana County Weed Control Act.
- Completed processing the State and County reports for the legislative biennial weed report for FY 14 and FY 15; will release the report in July.
- Serve as the Department representative on the Aquatic Invasive Species team, along with departments of Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Natural Resources and Conservation; and Transportation. We have monthly meetings (every third Tuesday).
- Serve as a member of the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council (MISAC). Attended meetings and met on sub-committees for the summit meeting and strategic plan.
- Met with the *Greater Sage-grouse Conservation* Action Team for two days in Salt Lake City and developed an Action Plan to help guide state and federal agencies, local governments and private entities in a coordinated and effective approach to addressing this important conservation issue.
- Producing an MOA between the State Weed Coordinator Alliance and the Federal Agencies so that additional federal funding for Sagebrush Ecosystems Restoration can be given to the States and Counties.
- Completed the Cooperative Agreement between the four agencies for Aquatic Invasive Species; Montana Department of Agriculture, Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Montana Department of Transportation; and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.
- Drafted and sent an MOA out for signatures between the Western Departments of Agriculture forming a State Weed Coordinator Alliance. This MOA will strengthen lines of communication and

promote and sustain regional initiatives and projects that address regional noxious weed issues that cannot be addressed effectively by single states.

- Drafted a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds (FICMNEW) and the State Weed Coordinator Alliance. The purpose of this MOA among these Parties is to facilitate and enhance cooperation and collaboration among the Parties resulting in more effective management of noxious weeds; provide a forum for intergovernmental communication between the states and federal agencies; and support sound public policies that will further the goals of detecting, managing and, wherever possible, eradicating noxious weeds.