

MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

Meeting/ Project Name:	Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council - Business Meeting and Grant Hearings		
Date of Meeting:	March 8-12, 2021	Start Time:	9:00 a.m. – March 8, 2021
Minutes Prepared By:	Carol Bearden	Location:	Zoom Meeting
1. Meeting Objective			
Council Business Meeting / Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant Hearings			
2. Attendees			
<p>Council Members: Amber Burch, Linda Eklund, Joel Farkell, Kenny Keever, Kellieann Morris, Jeanette Nordahl, Brian Ostwald</p> <p>Agency Representatives: Jacob Bradford - BOR; Bob Cloninger - MDT; Michelle Cox - USFS; Joey e’Silva - APHIS; David Hopkins - BIA; John Gaskin - USDA-ARS; Aaron Kneeland - DNRC; Dan Lucas - MSU Extension; Monika Pokorny - NRCS; Adam Sieges - FWP; Tracy Sterling - Montana State University-AES; Wendy Velman - BLM</p> <p>Montana Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) Staff: Mike Foster, Ian Foley, Jasmine Reimer, Carol Bearden, Greta Dige, Andrew Lam</p> <p>Guests: Jason Allen, MDT</p>			
3. Meeting			
Topic	Discussion		
Welcome	Director Mike Foster introduced himself and the meeting was called to order. The council was thanked for their commitment and Director Foster expressed confidence in the council funding recommendations. Director Foster provided an update on Department related legislative activities before turning the meeting over to Ian Foley, Administrator for the MDA Agricultural Sciences Division. Roll call was taken.		
Minutes Review	<p>Jasmine Reimer reviewed the minutes from the January 13th council business meeting. Jasmine noted that petitions for listing puncturevine and Scotch thistle had been reviewed at the January 22nd weed list work group meeting, however neither were approved for listing. A follow up meeting will be held in April to discuss updates to currently listed weeds and consideration of a biennial thistle group listing. The council was encouraged to contact Jasmine if they would like to join the April weed list meeting.</p> <p>Jasmine advised the council that presentations will be provided during the business meeting for Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) grant applications T21-001 through T21-008. The eight projects consist of statewide activities and task force projects. Following council discussion on Friday, the eight projects may be recommended for funding as a group or pulled out of the group for individual consideration and deliberation.</p> <p>Action items from the January minutes were reviewed. Action item #1, regarding application evaluation criteria questions, was set for Friday morning discussion. Council members were reminded to contact Jasmine by May 1st to be considered for continuing council representation of Livestock Production, Agricultural Crop Production, Biological</p>		

	<p>Research & Control, Western County representative, and herbicide Dealer/Applicator, which have terms ending June 30th.</p> <p>Amber Burch moved to approve the minutes as written and was seconded by Jeanette Nordahl. The motion passed unanimously.</p>																																
<p>Budget Report</p>	<p>Meeting documents were reviewed by Jasmine Reimer, including an overview of the noxious weed program budget and estimate of funds available for FY 2021 Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant awards. Allowable non-grant expenditures, calculated at 12% of the prior year grants awarded from fund 02068, were reviewed. Fiscal year 2020 NWTF grant awards from fund 02068 totaled \$1,896,210.</p> <p>Previously allocated and pending 2021 grant awards and expenditures were reviewed:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="487 609 1266 1039"> <tr> <td>State Special Revenue (estimate)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,967,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MDT Pass Through Funds</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Council Expenses (estimate)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-\$6,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-Grant Expenses (estimate)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-\$227,545</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pending Special County/Reservation Awards</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-\$472,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MDT Pass Through Distribution to Counties</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-\$100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>General Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$90,397</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Forest Service- FWEED20 Cooperative Weed Management</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$105,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Forest Service- Sage Grouse Habitat (prior allocation)*</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$80,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Forest Service- FWEED17 (prior allocation)*</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$20,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Reverted Funds</u></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>\$13,265</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance Available for 2021 Hearing Awards</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,569,117</td> </tr> </table> <p>Historic information related to program revenue, grant hearing requests/funding history, and unspent awards were provided to the council.</p> <p>2021 Application Breakdown</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="462 1207 1185 1354"> <tr> <td>Research</td> <td>11 applications requesting \$297,643</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education</td> <td>7 applications requesting \$140,857</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local Cooperative</td> <td>49 applications requesting \$1,706,008</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statewide/Taskforce</td> <td>8 applications requesting \$348,087</td> </tr> </table> <p>Funds requested for the 75 submitted NWTF grant applications totaled \$2,492,595 resulting in a funding shortfall of \$923,478 for the hearings. Jasmine advised the council that Forest Service funds allocated in prior years for weed program expenses had been moved to grant funding due to the large shortfall this year.*</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding funding needs for the noxious weed seed free materials program if HB 93 passes. Jasmine and Michelle Cox had previously discussed the possibility of funds from the National Forest Service and Ian Foley added that if HB 93 passes the Department would begin rule making authority for fees to support the program.</p> <p>Hearing protocol and council conflict of interest were reviewed.</p>	State Special Revenue (estimate)	\$1,967,000	MDT Pass Through Funds	\$100,000	Council Expenses (estimate)	-\$6,500	Non-Grant Expenses (estimate)	-\$227,545	Pending Special County/Reservation Awards	-\$472,500	MDT Pass Through Distribution to Counties	-\$100,000	General Fund	\$90,397	Forest Service- FWEED20 Cooperative Weed Management	\$105,000	Forest Service- Sage Grouse Habitat (prior allocation)*	\$80,000	Forest Service- FWEED17 (prior allocation)*	\$20,000	<u>Reverted Funds</u>	<u>\$13,265</u>	Balance Available for 2021 Hearing Awards	\$1,569,117	Research	11 applications requesting \$297,643	Education	7 applications requesting \$140,857	Local Cooperative	49 applications requesting \$1,706,008	Statewide/Taskforce	8 applications requesting \$348,087
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<p>Application/Hearing Updates</p>	<p>Mapped locations of the 2021 applications were reviewed by Greta Dige along with county weed district budget/mill information. Comments from the Research Review</p>																																

	<p>Work Group, and summarized council review comments were provided to the council. Evaluation scoring form and pink sheet updates were reported.</p>
<p>Agency Updates</p>	<p>Ian Foley requested agency representative updates.</p> <p>FWP – Adam Sieges reported two WHIP projects (Missoula and Wheatland counties) were recommended for funding by the Advisory Council.</p> <p>MDT – Bob Cloninger advised that Jason Allen (MDT) was attending the meeting and hearings to learn the process. Bob reported a new director on board at MDT.</p> <p>DNRC – Aaron Kneeland represented DNRC and reported that former representative Dan Dobler had resigned. Dan’s position is in the process of being rewritten and may be filled by late April/early May. Aaron has been involved with noxious weeds since 2008, including being a NWTF grant recipient.</p> <p>BIA – David Hopkins reported being in the second year of a two-year project with the University of Montana, working on a remote sensing project for ventenata on the Crow Reservation. David reported increased findings of ventenata on the Reservation, which impacts range resources.</p> <p>BLM – Wendy Velman reported that monitoring information provided by the AIM Program listed two reports of Palmer amaranth. Wendy will follow up on the reports and provide details to Jasmine/MDA when the locations are confirmed. Ian Foley discussed the continued monitoring of fields planted with millet seed containing Palmer amaranth, and the need for information from BLM.</p> <p>NRCS - Monika Pokorny reported activities at NRCS involving county level long range planning with TIPS - Targeted Implementation Plans. Monika encouraged agencies and weed districts to partner together for these opportunities.</p> <p>USFS – Michelle Cox advised that Region 1 is adjusting to fall budget cuts and focusing on maintaining partnerships. Funding opportunities may be available through the Climate Sustainability Program. Efforts are underway to include Forest Service mapping information in EDDMapS and the Natural Heritage Program. Michelle reported completion of the risk assessment for Indaziflam, allowing its use, if included in NEPA regulations.</p> <p>APHIS – Joey e’Silva reported that APHIS is gearing up and conducting interviews for the field season. Grasshoppers in Montana are expected to increase in 2021 with about four times more red map areas (15+ grasshoppers per square yard) than in 2020. Grasshopper map link: hazard.pdf (usda.gov) [aphis.usda.gov]</p> <p>ARS – John Gaskin reported stable funding at ARS. Currently ARS has four scientists working on noxious weed projects including research on low success rate of leafy spurge biocontrol in some areas; field bindweed consortium for biocontrol agents; pollination resources and weeds; and juniper/woody encroachment. John also reported involvement with MSU on an organic grant for Canada thistle and field bindweed.</p> <p>MSU/AES – Tracy Sterling reported that Dr. Mary Burrows has been named MAES Associate Director and suggested Dr. Burrows participation in the July council meeting.</p>

	<p>MSU/EXT – Dan Lucas reported growth in gaining skills and flexibility during the COVID-19 restrictions. Extension staff continues to interact with the public and work with MDA to develop opportunities for safe private applicator trainings.</p> <p>BOR – Jacob Bradford reported reviewing/updating integrated pest management plans for several area offices including Montana. Jacob is also working on data centralization for noxious weed control on BOR land.</p>
<p>Other Business/ Public Comment</p>	<p>Other business discussed by Jasmine Reimer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDA is in the early stages of moving to AmpliFund as a new grant system. The new system may be in use for the 2022 grant hearings. • The council was advised of a free EDDMapS Summit provided by NAISMA March 31st and April 1st. Link for more information: https://naisma.org/eddmapi-summit-2021/ • Ideas for July council meeting agenda and project tour? • Ideas for Noxious Weed Awareness Week, first week of June – pending passage of HJ 17? • Upon passage of HB 93, MDA will look to the council for assistance with the weed seed free materials program. <p>Ian Foley opened the meeting for discussion of new business and public comment. None was heard.</p> <p>Statewide and task force project presentations T21-001 through T21-008 were heard.</p> <p>Kenny Keever moved to recess the business meeting until the conclusion of applicant presentations. Aaron Kneeland seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.</p> <p>Monday, March 8th applications T21-009 to T21-014 were heard. Tuesday, March 9th applications T21-015 to T21-035 were heard. Wednesday, March 10th applications T21-036 to T21-055 were heard. Thursday, March 11th applications T21-056 to T21-075 were heard. Each day concluded with a review and discussion of presentations that had been heard.</p>
<p>Business Meeting Resumed</p> <p>Evaluation Criteria/Participation Form Discussion</p>	<p>The council reconvened at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, March 12th. Director Foster thanked the council, noting his interest in the process and the variety of approaches to weed control he had heard while listening to presentations during breaks from legislative commitments.</p> <p>Jasmine Reimer requested input from the council on the updated evaluation/scoring criteria. Discussion followed that development projects had been planned to be combined with research projects in 2022, but may be a better fit as a separate, stand alone category.</p> <p>Cooperator participation forms, which were required this year for local cooperative projects, were discussed and compared to individual landowner weed plans. Amber Burch, Brian Ostwald and Kellieann Morris noted value in the cooperator participation forms. Jasmine asked that the council email additional thoughts and suggestions on improving the reviewer process.</p>

<p>Grant Award Deliberations</p>	<p>Application ranking/score sheets were emailed to the council Thursday evening following evaluation/score submittals. Suggestions were made and agreed on that an additional “project type” column would be added to future ranking/score sheets.</p> <p>Grant deliberation protocol and conflict of interest instructions were reviewed. The deliberation voting process and Robert’s Rules of Order were discussed. Application deliberation order was determined by the combined application review scores submitted by council members and agency representatives. Council funding recommendations will be provided to Director Foster for review and final approval. Director Foster commented that he highly respects the council recommendations. The council was advised that business meeting and hearing deliberation motions can only be made by voting council members.</p> <p>Statewide/taskforce applications T21-001 through T21-008 were discussed. Jasmine advised that T21-008 (Sanders County Rush Skeletonweed) had been withdrawn. Kenny Keever moved to remove T21-001, (Montana Noxious Weed Education Campaign 2021) from the group. Amber Burch seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.</p> <p>Joel Farkell moved to fully fund the remaining six statewide/task force applications T21-002 through T21-007. Jeanette Nordahl seconded the motion, which was approved. Kenny Keever, Amber Burch, and Kellieann Morris abstained from voting.</p> <p>The deliberation process began. Voting proxy for Director Foster was given to Jasmine Reimer in the event of a tie vote. 2021 Funding Recommendations are attached.</p>
<p>Other Business</p>	<p>Other business was discussed.</p> <p>July meeting tour suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellowstone County saltcedar project (inclusion of Dr. David Weaver) <p>July meeting agenda topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project update from Mark Schwarzlaender, NWTF Grant 2020-001 • Grant hearing deliberation discussion <p>The council was asked to provide additional agenda and tour suggestions for the July meeting.</p> <p>Although council member Todd Wagner was not present, the council and MDA staff recognized and appreciated his many years of service on the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council. Amber Buch noted that as an applicant she has always appreciated the work done by the council, and now as a council member she values the council efforts even more.</p> <p>The meeting was opened for public comment. Several Zoom attendees added chat comments thanking the council for making tough choices and the hard work everyone put in.</p> <p>Jeanette Nordahl moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:25 p.m. and was seconded by Joel Farkell. All in favor.</p>

Director Review of Funding Recommendations		NWTF grant funding recommendations from the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council totaled \$1,569,117 for 68 of the 75 grant proposals. Recommendations will be provided to Director Foster for review and approval.		
4. Action Items				
Action		Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Submit letter of interest to MDA if interested in serving an additional council term.	Term ending council members	May 1	
2	Contact Jasmine for details if interested in joining the April weed listing meeting.	Council members		
3	Follow up on AIM Program monitoring report listing Palmer amaranth - provide details to Jasmine/MDA.	Wendy Velman	asap	
4	Provide agenda and tour suggestions for July council meeting.	Council members		
5	Provide suggestions for Noxious Weed Awareness Week, first week of June, pending passage of HJ 17.	Council members		
6	Email Jasmine thoughts and suggestions to improve the reviewer evaluation process.	Council members		
7	Add "project type" column to future deliberation ranking/score sheets, which are distributed to the council following application scoring.	MDA staff		