

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council - Business Meeting and Grant Hearings		
Date of Meeting:	March 6-9, 2023	Start Time:	1:00 p.m.
Minutes Prepared By:	Jasmine Chaffee	Location:	Delta Hotel, Helena
1. Meeting Objective			
Council Business Meeting / Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant Hearings			
2. Attendees			
<p>Voting Members: Amber Burch, Joel Farkell, Kenny Keever, Kellieann Morris, Jeanette Nordahl, Brian Ostwald, Dana Weatherford, Jeff Brennan</p> <p>Advisory Members: Jacob Bradford - BOR; Jason Allen - MDT; Hanna Lewis- APHIS; David Hopkins - BIA; Dan Lucas - MSU Extension; Parker Osterloh - DNRC; Monika Pokorny – NRCS; Adam Sieges – FWP; Wendy Velman - BLM</p> <p>Virtual: Natalie West- USDA-ARS; Lovreet Shergill- Montana State University-AES; Michelle Cox- USFS</p> <p>Montana Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) Staff: Kima Tranyham, Jasmine Chaffee, Greta Dige, Andrew Lam, Josh Wagoner, Sam Yonan</p> <p>Guests:</p>			
3. Meeting			
Topic	Discussion		
Welcome Minutes Review Department Updates	<p>Kima Tranyham, Department of Agriculture (MDA), Agricultural Services Bureau Chief, called the meeting to order. Introductions were made both in the room and on Zoom.</p> <p>Kima gave a department update which included the passing of all MDA sponsored bills in the 68th Legislative Session. She explained how the department has reorganized it's pesticide training and licensing division: a new licensing group has been formed for all MDA licensing including pesticide products and applicators; the training group now includes Matt Deaton, manager, Beth Thomas, trainer, and Lori Leaf, education specialist who will conduct several CORE trainings in April; the enforcement group hired four new positions within the last year, revised the Certification and Training Plan with the Environmental Protection Agency and will provide information to stakeholders when the process is complete.</p> <p>Kima reviewed the minutes from the February 6th council business meeting. Jeanette Nordahl moved to accept the minutes as written, Kenny Keever seconded; minutes were approved.</p>		
Application/Hearing Updates	<p>Greta Dige provided members a document that summarized council review comments and questions, and the Research Review Work Group comments. She thanked the Council on behalf of applicants for sending the comment list prior to grant hearings. Greta noted there were a few budget changes and a few additional zoom presentations.</p> <p>The new scoring system was discussed, and members generally thought it was an improvement because it made the scores more consistent, followed the application, and keeps members on track.</p>		

<p>Budget Report</p>	<p>Meeting documents were reviewed by Jasmine Chaffee, including an overview of the noxious weed program budget and estimate of funds available for FY 2023 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 2022 NWTF grant awards from fund 02068 totaled \$1,919,645.</p> <p>Previously allocated and pending 2022 grant awards and expenditures were reviewed:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">State Special Revenue</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,037,661</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;">(\$14,000)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-Grant Expenses</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(\$230,357)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Special County/Reservation Awards (estimate)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(\$450,000)</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- FWEEED22, INFRA23</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$333,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Reverted Funds</u></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>\$62,510</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance Available for 2022 Hearing Awards</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,829,211</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>2023 Application Breakdown</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Funding Type</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Number of Applications</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Funding Request Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Research</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$126,981</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$109,606</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Development</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$277,291</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local Cooperative (New & Cont.)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">34 (8/26)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,177,312</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EDRR & Statewide Education 3yr</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$332,257</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Funds requested for the 55 submitted NWTF grant applications totaled \$2,023,447 resulting in a funding shortfall of \$194,236 for the hearings.</p> <p>Jasmine reviewed the conflict-of-interest statements and hearing protocol with the Council. She provided the council with a document that shows the percentage of grant funds that was awarded to each funding type since 2014 and reviewed the deliberation caps for the 2023 grant hearings. The council will deliberate on each funding opportunity type separately and award funds in each category up to the cap, once all grants have been recommended for funding the council will have an opportunity to award uncommitted funds to any funding opportunity type.</p>	State Special Revenue	\$2,037,661	MDT Pass Through Funds	\$100,000	Council Expenses (estimate)	(\$14,000)	Non-Grant Expenses	(\$230,357)	Special County/Reservation Awards (estimate)	(\$450,000)	MDT Pass Through Distribution to Counties	(\$100,000)	General Fund	\$90,397	Forest Service- FWEEED22, INFRA23	\$333,000	<u>Reverted Funds</u>	<u>\$62,510</u>	Balance Available for 2022 Hearing Awards	\$1,829,211	Funding Type	Number of Applications	Funding Request Total	Research	3	\$126,981	Education	5	\$109,606	Development	6	\$277,291	Local Cooperative (New & Cont.)	34 (8/26)	\$1,177,312	EDRR & Statewide Education 3yr	7	\$332,257
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<p>Education Campaign Presentations</p>	<p>Kelsey Miller, Montana Weed Control Association (MWCA)- Executive Director, presented her proposal to house and coordinate the State Noxious Weed Education Campaign, followed by a presentation from Liz Lodman, Montana Invasive Species Council (MISC)- Administrator, and her proposal to house and coordinate the Campaign. The council were provided time to ask questions of the two presenters.</p>																																						

<p>Other Business/ Public Comment</p>	<p>Kima opened the meeting for discussion of new business and public comment; none was heard.</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned from 2:30 p.m. until Thursday morning.</p> <p>Monday, March 6th applications T23-01 to T23-09 were heard. Tuesday, March 7th applications T23-10 to T23-31 were heard. Wednesday, March 8th applications T23-32 to T23-53 were heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each day concluded with a review and discussion of presentations that had been heard. • Application ranking/score sheets were emailed to council members Wednesday evening following evaluation/score submittals.
<p>Protocol Review Thursday, March 9th</p>	<p>The meeting was opened at 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Greta requested that members send her a list of projects they would like to visit in July and mentioned Big Horn County for ventenata, Yellowstone County saltcedar, or Stillwater County may be a possibility.</p> <p>Members were asked how they liked the scoring and ranking of projects by funding opportunity rather than as a whole group. Members were unanimous that it was an improvement. Members were asked to email Greta or Jasmine with any changes or suggestions to improve the evaluation process.</p> <p>Jasmine listed which five voting members had terms ending and asked that council members send her a letter of interest if they would like to continue to serve another term or if they would like to be done after June 30, 2023.</p> <p>Jasmine reviewed the deliberation protocol once again noting how each funding opportunity will be deliberated on separately with a funding cap. She discussed how the EDRR and Statewide Education grants will be deliberated on, noting the council will be approving three years of funding, but grantees will only receive one year's worth of funds each year. Grantees will be required to give a project update during the winter meeting.</p>
<p>Education Campaign Deliberation</p>	<p>The council opened discussion of the Education Campaign proposals and grant applications. Amber Burch said she was confident that MWCA could take this on now that they have new leadership. Wendy moved to fund both projects at \$0, Jeanette seconds. Wendy added she would like to see this discussion taken to MDA's leadership team to find a path forward. Jasmine noted it would be around \$10,000 to \$15,000 to keep the program running through the year without a coordinator. Members agreed they would like more time to make this decision and engage additional stakeholders through listening sessions, so the Campaign does not end up in the same place as it was. Hannah Lewis said it was very important that the Campaign's Steering Committee join the decision-making process. Question was called; 1 abstain, all others in favor, motion passes.</p> <p>Joel moved to set aside \$25,000 to put towards Campaign activities for the next year including costs for listening sessions, Kenny seconds; all in favor, motion passes.</p>
<p>Grant Award Deliberations</p>	<p>Application deliberation order was determined by the combined application review scores submitted by voting members and advisory members, separated by funding</p>

	<p>opportunity type. Deliberation order and cap: EDRR & Statewide Education at 17.36% or \$317,468, Research at 6.94% or \$126,981, Local Cooperatives at 56.97% or \$1,042,111, Development at 11.11% or \$203,164, and Education at 5.66% or \$103,445.</p> <p>The deliberation process began. Voting proxy for Director Clark was given to Kima Tranyham in the event of a tie vote.</p>
Director Review of Funding Recommendations	NWTF grant funding recommendations from the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council totaled \$1,714,061 for 49 of the 55 grant proposals. Recommendations were provided to Director Clark for review and approval. 2023 Funding Recommendations are attached.

4. Action Items

Action		Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Provide agenda and tour suggestions for July council meeting.	Council members		
2	Email Jasmine or Greta thoughts and suggestions to improve the reviewer evaluation process.	Council members		
3	Submit a letter of interest to MDA if interested in serving an additional council term.	Term ending council members	May 30	