

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/Project Name:	MT Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council – Awareness & Education Funding Conference Call		
Date of Meeting:	October 20, 2011	Time:	2:30 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.
Minutes Prepared By:	Carol Bearden	Location:	Dept. of Justice Training Room

1. Meeting Objective

Discuss early grant funding request for the Montana State University (MSU) Awareness & Education Campaign (\$50,000).

2. Attendees

Council Members: Ron de Yong, Dan Jackson, Todd Wagner, Jim Gordon, Jim Story, Jack Eddie, Margie Edsall, Dick Zoanni

Agency Representatives: Joe Weigand, Mike Miller, Larry Beneker, John Simons, Peter Stevenson, Steve Shelly, Jim Jacobs, John Gaskin, Gary Adams

Montana Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) Staff: Dave Burch, Kim Johnson, Carol Bearden

3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues

Topic	Discussion
Council discussion of MSU request for Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) grant funding prior to grant hearings.	<p>Dave Burch reviewed the request for funding (\$50,000) that had been received from Liz Galli-Noble. The funding need had been discussed earlier with the council at the June 2011 council meeting and more recently the council had been asked for their recommendation via email. Responses from council email had shown the need for a conference call discussion.</p> <p>Dave said he felt there was agreement that an education program was needed – whether it was housed at MSU, MDA, or the Montana Weed Control Association (MWCA). Dave said the program needed baseline funding for wages, benefits, and a small operating budget to allow the person in the position to put their efforts into education rather than seeking funding.</p> <p>Dave had concerns about setting a precedent with funding prior to the hearings but thought a delay in funding may cause issues with the other funding partners. Ron de Yong said he wanted the council's input and recommendation but wants to spend the funds wisely. Ron said he also had concerns about this request not being included in the competitive process of the grant hearings.</p>

<p>Move education program to the MWCA</p>	<p>Dave Burch noted that the MWCA Executive Committee had met prior to this meeting to discuss the proposal. Jack Eddie agreed with concerns that early funding would set a precedence, but encouraged moving funding for the education position to the MWCA.</p> <p>Discussion followed with concerns about setting a precedence by funding a project prior to the grant hearings and suggestions of partial funding or limiting the early funding commitment to one year. Jim Story voiced concern that providing partial funding would make a commitment to continue. Jim asked how the council would defend paying salaries with NWTF dollars that should be directed more toward weed management. Jim and several others felt it was the wrong timing and was unfair to other grant fund competitors.</p> <p>Continued contributions from other agencies were discussed with John Simons advising that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) planned to continue its funding. Steve Shelly added that the US Forest Service also planned to continue with \$15,000 per fiscal year. Mike Miller said the Montana Dept. of Transportation (MDT) was waiting to provide \$15,000 until the future plans for the program were finalized. BLM and MDT funding was noted as being project rather than salary oriented. Representatives for MDT, USFS and BLM were all fairly confident that funding currently allotted for the education project could be moved to the MWCA.</p> <p>The 17.5% in indirect costs taken by MSU from agency funding was discussed. Dave Burch said that would not be taken from funds provided from the NWTF. Jack Eddie noted that if the program went to the MWCA, all funds would go to education, salary/benefits, with no indirect costs being taken by the organization.</p> <p>Discussion on oversight of the program followed with Jim Gordon noting the need for quarterly reviews. Larry Beneker commented that Liz's proposal was well prepared and he was confident that she would be responsive and had a structure in place so past problems would not be repeated. Structure of the program if funded through the MWCA was discussed with questions on where the employee would be housed and what role the MWCA Executive Committee would have. Jack Eddie said that Becky Kington would be in a supervisory role over this position if it was moved to the MWCA.</p> <p>Margie Edsall moved to recommend immediate funding of \$50,000 to the MWCA for the education position based on the application submitted by MSU and pending the transfer of other agency funding currently provided to MSU. The motion was seconded by Jim Gordon.</p> <p>Ron de Yong said a proposal from the MWCA would be needed and asked for discussion on why the funding could not wait until the March grant hearings. Dave Burch felt the program would lose continuity and noted there would be delays in start up during May and June, the busy time of year. John Simons questioned what would happen to the remaining agency money at MSU and the existing projects. Jim Story said he didn't understand the urgency and encouraged not rushing, thinking it through and waiting until the hearings, which met with agreement from Todd Wagner, Dan Jackson, and Pete Stevenson.</p> <p>A vote was called for with Ron clarifying that those not in favor of recommending funding prior to the March hearings to the MWCA would vote no. A roll call vote was taken with the following results.</p> <p>No votes: Dan Jackson, Todd Wagner, Jim Story</p> <p>Yes votes: Jim Gordon, Jack Eddie, Margie Edsall, Dick Zoanni</p> <p>Ron said that he will need the loose ends pulled together before he makes a decision. Ron said that the council will be provided with all information that he receives related to this funding.</p>
---	--

4. Action Items				
Action		Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Dave will talk with Liz and Tracy Sterling and provide information to Ron on Monday.	Dave Burch	10/24/11	Open
2	Jack Eddie will talk with Becky Kington about preparing a proposal.	Jack Eddie	12/1/11	Open
3	Dave Burch will set up a MWCA Executive Committee conference call meeting next week. Mike Miller asked that Phil Johnson be included as the MDT representative.	Dave Burch	10/28/11	Open