

**Jefferson County Noxious Weed Control Board
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, May 16th , 5:00-7:00 pm, Tri-Area Community Center, Chimacum

Board Members Present:

Bob Hoyle, Patricia Robinson and Jill Silver.

Others Present:

Eve Dixon, Gail Chatfield, Norm Norton, Jim Davis (briefly) and Richard Doherty (arrived around 6 pm). Alex Huelsdonk (prospective board member for District 4—West end), attended via telephone for part of the meeting.

▪ **Introductions:**

Introductions were made. Norm Norton and Gail Chatfield were present because the Weed Board's Management Plan for county roads includes the option of spraying, which they are opposed to.

▪ **Approval of Minutes of February 21st:**

Jill proposed to approve the minutes as presented. Pat seconded.

▪ **Coordinator's Report:**

Eve handed out copies of her report, and added some updates about wild chervil on county roads. John Haas, the contractor who weed-whacked last year, estimates that populations have increased by around 20%. Eve agrees with this estimate. No comments on the coordinator's report.

▪ **Discussion and Approval of the Noxious Weed Management Plan for Jefferson County Roads:**

Eve handed out draft copies of the Management Plan and Jill described the process that had been used to create it. The Board had looked at Thurston County's Integrated Pest Management Plan, as well as Risk Assessments put out by DOT on different herbicides. The Weed Board wants to be very clear with the public and with the Board of County Commissioners as to how decisions are made. On May 6th the Draft Plan was presented to the Commissioners at a regular work session. One comment was made by the Commissioners, regarding the weed-control responsibility of landowners if county roads have an easement over their land. This issue is still under discussion.

Jill mentioned that the Chain Gang might be used for manual weed control.

Only two chemicals have been approved by the Weed Board for use on county roads—glyphosate when it appears effective, and imazapyr in cases where glyphosate does not seem effective. Many studies have shown these to be the least-toxic chemicals and the least likely to move in water.

Jill also commented the Weed Board only uses herbicide when all other weed-control methods have been tried; it is the last option. Also, less than 1% of county roads have been, or are likely to be, sprayed by the Weed Board.

There are very small stands of knotweed on some county roads and knotweed is a plant which studies have shown can ONLY be effectively controlled by herbicides.

The Commissioners understand that if plants spread onto private property from the roadsides then people will probably use herbicides on their own property—and those available to the public are more toxic than the Weed Board would use.

Disposal of pulled plants has been an issue—people have had to pay to take them to the landfill—even non-toxic plants which can be composted. Eve will look into this issue and try to resolve it.

Jill Silver referred to the Del Moral study of weeds and weed control on Jefferson County Roads. The study was done a long time ago (1979) and is outdated, especially in that it focuses on control of horsetail (a native), and recommends the use of soil sterilants, which are extremely harmful to the environment.

Gail Chatfield asked if it was correct that we would not spray if adjacent landowners did not want us to. This was confirmed. Gail also asked how many years we intend to spray, particularly in reference to Larson Lake Road, which she thought had been sprayed three times last year. Eve said that although three spray records had been filled out, that was because the job took three days. Each section of road was sprayed only once. One record needed the road mile section to be corrected.

There was some discussion about wild chervil's life cycle. It is normally a biennial, but if cut or mowed can become a perennial, much harder to get rid of. Using cardboard and mulch to smother plants was suggested as a control method. Norm said that doing it was really easy—cardboard can be obtained from the landfill and sand can be used to weight it down. Eve commented that much of the roadside wild chervil is on slopes where it would be hard to keep cardboard and mulch in place. Plus, the logistics of laying down cardboard and mulch on 3-4 miles of road would be difficult. Jill mentioned that mill felt works much better as a control agent because it does not break down and can be moved to another site and re-used. There was some discussion about what is in the mill felt. Bob commented that it is used in the paper-making process and water is run through it, probably washing out most substances. The Native Plant Society has used it for years and reports no ill-effects. Norm commented that his group had established 19 test plots, experimenting with different methods of control.

Gail suggested trying mill felt on Larson Lake Road—Eve said there is a dense patch around MM 3.75 that is flat. Also, MM 4 on Eaglemount Road would be a good candidate. Norm, Jill and Eve will work on both of these.

There was some discussion about glyphosate vs. RoundUp—the other substances in RoundUp, especially POEA, the surfactant, are known to be harmful to amphibians, rather than the active ingredient, glyphosate. The Weed Board does NOT use RoundUp. Someone mentioned that some of the studies which claim that glyphosate is not harmful to the environment were actually funded by the chemical companies that manufacture it. Richard Doherty arrived during this discussion and said that every peer-reviewed article has to say who funded the study and people should keep this in mind when reading the study. He also mentioned that some studies are done to show the effects of pesticides on agricultural workers where very large amounts are applied directly to them; and that demonstrating effects in the environment is very different.

Jill Silver moved to approve the Noxious Weed Management Plan for Jefferson County Roads. Bob seconded the motion. All were in favor.

▪ **Other Business**

Jill gave a few updates:

- Blue Heron—the new principal and groundskeeper are committed to dealing with poison hemlock and are following the plan proposed by the Weed Board.
- A dedicated group are meeting every Tuesday to pull ivy at Sather Park, with great success!
- We had a successful meeting with DOT, enlisting their support for control of reed canarygrass and teasel on roadsides. Jill and Bonnie Eyestone from the Quinault Nation mapped reed canarygrass from Port Angeles to Forks. It is a problem because it can impede fish passage.
- We hope to get more articles in the Leader, and appreciate the Peninsula Daily News article on poison hemlock.

▪ **Schedule Next Meeting/Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00. The next meeting will be on Thursday, August 15th, in Forks. Eve will find a location and send out a notice.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Eve Dixon, Noxious Weed Control Coordinator.