

**Minutes**  
**Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee**  
**May 4, 2011**

Members Present: Jim Hale, County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Michael Kent, Health Services; Roland Hindsman, General Services; Marj Leeds, Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board; Joe Yee, Public Works; Nancy Stein, Public Works Watershed Program (via telephone); Michael Fry, County Public Member At-Large; Christine Hagelin, Walnut Creek Open Space Foundation; Carlos Agurto, Pestec

(9 members present/6 voting members)

Members Absent: Vince Guise, Agriculture; Michael Baefsky and Ted Shapas, Public Members At-Large

Staff Present: Robin Bedell-Waite, Health Services Department, Susan Cohen, Public Works; Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator; Dan Jordan, County Watershed Program, Larry Yost, Agriculture Department

Members of the Public Present: Susan JunFish and Bellal Daunish, Parents for a Safer Environment; Phillip Ciaramitaro, City of Martinez; and Tanyalee Martin, County residents

1. Introductions

2. Announcements

- Jim Hale announced that Friends of the Creeks is holding their creek cleanup on Saturday, May 14.
- Tanya Drlik announced that the PGE-sponsored weed pull in Antioch Dunes will also be Saturday, May 14.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

There was none.

4. Approve minutes from March 2, 2011

A motion was made and seconded (ML/JH) to approve the minutes.

The motion passed unanimously (6-0)

5. Hear IPM updates from Agriculture, General Services and Public Works

*Facilities*

Roland Hindsman reported that Pestec has been doing an outstanding job for the County.

Construction on a County building in East County has caused some mice problems that Pestec has now resolved.

Carlos Agurto noted that the Concord homeless shelter is still battling bed bugs. Pestec has been steam cleaning, vacuuming and using detergent water to kill the bed bugs. They took apart some of the wooden bunk beds at the shelter and found bed bugs hiding so far back in the cracks that they suspect the steam is not reaching the bugs. The shelter is considering the purchase of metal bed frames as budgets allow.

Tanya Drlik reported that she had spoken to the head of homeless services and will meet with her next week to work on intake and cleaning protocols for the shelter.

~~Last meeting~~, Roland ~~reported-reiterated~~ that the Grounds Division is in the process of removing much of the landscaping at 2530 Arnold Drive in Martinez (the Summit Center) in order to minimize weed problems and reduce the amount of maintenance and the need for herbicide at the site. Herbicide has been used to kill grassy areas and acacia seedlings.

The Grounds Division is working on a contract with Anka Behavioral Health to provide low cost physical labor for hand weed abatement at 2530 Arnold, and at other sites as needed. Anka Behavioral provides vocational training for people with behavioral health problems and contracts with public agencies to provide landscaping services, among other things.

#### *Public Works*

Joe Yee reported that a tree trimming crew has been working on trees along roads and the Iron Horse Trail.

During inclement weather crews were cleaning trash racks.

The Department has been doing some limited contact herbicide treatments WHERE??

One of their spray trucks is fitted with a data recorder that includes a weather station and GPS, but the truck has not been used much this year because smaller trucks have been used in the recent herbicide applications.

Last week the State Department of Fish and Game (DFG) signed off on the Public Works Department's Routine Maintenance Agreement (RMA). DFG is requiring Public Works to submit a list of expected activities and sites in DFG jurisdictions so DFG can make site inspections.

#### *Agriculture*

In Vince Guise's absence, Larry Yost reported that the Department's Noxious Weed Program is at its height. Artichoke thistle and purple starthistle are the main targets. The Department uses backpack sprayers to treat individual plants. Next week they will begin work on Wildcat Canyon Regional Park, their largest area.

The Department is working with the California Department of Food and Agriculture to develop a training program for ground squirrel control in conjunction with changes the EPA has made restricting certain rodenticides including diphacinone and chlorophacinone for ground squirrel control. The first training will be in Dublin on May 10 and is a joint project of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. The Department's Knightsen office will host a training on May 21. The Department is targeting people who purchased ground squirrel bait from them prior to the registration changes.

In response to several questions from the public and the Committee, Larry made the following points:

1. The Department staff is licensed to continue to use ground squirrel baits with the active ingredients diphacinone and chlorophacinone.
2. The Department lowers the risk of secondary poisoning by
  - a. using first generation anti-coagulants, such as diphacinone and chlorophacinone which require successive feedings to kill the animal rather than the second generation materials that are toxic in one feeding
  - b. broadcasting the bait at a rate of only a few kernels per square foot and only in areas where high numbers of ground squirrels are damaging critical infrastructure such as railroad embankments and bridges
  - c. using bait dyed bright blue to discourage birds from taking the bait
  - d. burying any animals that die above ground (only a small percentage die above ground)
3. Diphacinone is not known to leach from dead bodies and contaminate ground water.
4. The Department does not have the budget to make a map with dots marking pesticide applications, but the Department maintains written records of each application.

Susan JunFish asked the Department, and Larry Yost agreed, to review why other counties have stopped using rodenticides and report back to the Committee. Susan JunFish stated that the public needs to know where the County is applying pesticides. This issue was referred to the Data Management subcommittee, which is working on making information more readily available to the public.

6. Hear report from the IPM Coordinator

The IPM Coordinator

- a. Took Christine Hagelin's appointment to Internal Operations Committee; they recommended it to the full Board of Supervisors; the full Board approved Christine's appt.
- b. Sent the letters developed in the Committee's last meeting on South American spongeplant to the California Department of Food and Agriculture and to the California Natural Resource Agency; although County Counsel had approved the letters, Supervisor Gioia requested that in the future, no letters of support be sent from advisory bodies.
- c. Provided bed bug management information to a citizen in Pittsburg and to her child's elementary school; asked the school not to recommend pesticide fogging or bombing for bed bugs because those methods do not work and expose people to considerable amounts of pesticide
- d. Spoke with the individual public health nurses who had also recommended fogging and bombing to the citizen
- e. Provided a 1 ½ hour bed bug awareness training for the County public health nurses
- f. Provided a ½ hour bed bug awareness training for representatives from most of the PTAs in the County
- g. Continued to staff the monthly meetings of the County's Bed Bug Task Force
- h. Met again with staff from Supervisor Mitchoff's office about bed bug issues in the County
- i. Researched bed bug prevention protocols in homeless shelters in Berkeley and Hayward
- j. Met with the head of Homeless Services regarding bed bugs—they will join the Bed Bug Task Force and the IPM Coordinator will assist them with prevention protocols
- k. Arranged and staffed subcommittees, except the Data Management subcommittee since the committee was waiting for Michael Fry to recover enough to participate
  - i. Researched building and landscape design elements for pest prevention
  - ii. Researched roadside vegetation management programs in Santa Clara County
- l. Gave a progress report to the Transportation, Water & Infrastructure Committee

7. Hear report from Jim Hale on his activities with wildlife in the County

Jim grew up in Contra Costa County and is an expert on the County's natural history. Jim has been a wildlife biologist, naturalist, ethnobiologist, and ecological consultant for more than 40 years. He is on-call for rescuing orphaned and injured wildlife, and leads interpretive natural and cultural history walks throughout the East Bay.

Jim's current research involves the fisheries of the Walnut Creek watershed, (including mapping salmon and steelhead spawning, ~~at Los Vaqueros~~) and mountain lion ecology in Contra Costa County. Jim has 30 remote cameras recording mountain lion movements, and he estimates that there may be as many as 45 mountain lions in the County.

When asked by chair Michael Kent about the biggest threats to mountain lion survival, Jim replied that loss of habitat is a big one, along with habitat fracturing by freeways. and that illegal trash dumping in creeks, and nutrient pollution of creeks from dumped lawn clipping and other plant debris are ~~also~~ serious issues for the fisheries.

Recently Jim found a two year old illegal marijuana growing site in Contra Costa with over 1000 plants. At the site he found large quantities of pesticide, including parathion and malathion.

Jim is vice chair of the County's Fish and Wildlife Committee and helped start the Watershed Forum. He has recently finished revising his pamphlet entitled, "Wildlife in Your Backyard! A Guide to Living with Wild Animals in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties".

8. Hear reports from 3 subcommittee: Data Management, Roadside Spraying, Design Review

*Design Review—Roland Hindsman, Kevin Lachapelle, Carlos Agurto, Christine Hagelin, and Michael Baefsky, Chair*

Tanya Drlik, as staff to the committee, reported that the committee met a second time on April 14, 2011 and discussed additions to the list of structural and landscape elements to prevent pests. The structural elements will be incorporated into the proper sections of the County's Building Design and Construction Guidelines.

The committee discussed best practices inside occupied buildings. A list of these best practices can be adopted as policy by each department.

The County has no current landscape design guidelines, so the committee will research creating a set of guidelines.

*Roadside Vegetation Management—Joe Yee Nancy Stein, and Michael Baefsky, Chair*

Tanya Drlik, as staff to the committee, reported that the committee met on March 17, 2011. The committee has been gathering data on the expenditures for Roadside Vegetation Management in both Contra Costa and Santa Clara Counties.

Contra Costa County (CCC) and Santa Clara County (SCC) have the virtually the same number of road miles to manage: around 700.

Contra Costa Public Works Roadside Vegetation Management expenditures = \$1,323,000

Santa Clara Roadside Vegetation Management expenditures = \$3,600,000

69% of CCC's roadside vegetation management expenditures is on non-chemical management.

98% of SCC's roadside vegetation management expenditure is on non-chemical management.

CCC's cost for machine mowing rights-of-way = \$355/acre

SCC's cost for machine mowing rights-of-way = \$709/acre

CCC's cost for herbicide spraying = \$215/acre

SCC's cost for herbicide spraying = \$272/acre

CCC has 2 tractor mowers

SCC has 9 tractor mowers

SCC has a Weed Seeker which only emits herbicide when it senses chlorophyll. This device is used in spraying medians on expressways. The device cannot be moved from one side of a truck to the other once it is mounted. If it encounters an obstacle, the arm must be laboriously retracted. The SCC Road Superintendent does not recommend the device for rural roads because it would be too slow to use efficiently. SCC is looking at the Sidewinder Roadside Weed Sprayer.

Staff will meet with the San Ramon Valley Fire Chief in a couple of weeks to better understand fire suppression requirements and whether there is flexibility in those requirements.

Susan JunFish asked Public Works to determine the number of road miles sprayed in Contra Costa County.

9. Develop a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on whether or not to develop an IPM ordinance

The chair explained that everyone was encouraged to voice their opinion on the issue and that when a motion was formulated it should include major points in support of the motion.

The public asked to participate in the discussion before the motion was made and the Committee agreed.

The IPM Coordinator reviewed County Counsel's opinion and the presentations from Santa Clara and Alameda Counties on their IPM program development (Santa Clara County has an IPM ordinance and

Alameda has an IPM resolution). County Counsel's opinion is attached. For details on Santa Clara's presentation, see this committee's minutes from May 5, 2010. For details on Alameda's presentation see this committee's minutes from July 20, 2010.

The following were the main points of discussion:

- a. The statistics show that the Departments have been willing to reduce pesticide use and to look at alternative pesticides and alternative non-chemical methods. There are things the Departments do not have control over, such as budgets. Having to write an ordinance would tie up the Committee and detract from real work that needs to be done. (JY)
- b. General Services adheres to the IPM Policy. An administrative bulletin would be better than an ordinance because it would regulate things General Services does not have control over, such as employees of other departments bringing pesticides to work. (RH)
- c. Either an ordinance or a policy is acceptable in the Municipal Regional Permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. An ordinance could not be enforced in the incorporated parts of the County and the County needs the broadest reach for its IPM program. (NS)
- d. An ordinance would be difficult to enforce and it is unclear who to target. That should be considered heavily. (JH)
- e. There is no advantage to an ordinance. It should be either a policy or an administrative bulletin. The activities of the subcommittees are encouraging and among County staff and Committee members there is a genuine spirit of wanting to use IPM. (MF)
- f. How would the ordinance be enforced? Possibly there would be more teeth in an ordinance. (CH)
- g. It is not enough to look at percent reduction in pesticide. The County needs to look at the pounds of pesticide used. San Francisco uses 500 lbs/yr and Contra Costa uses 15,000 lbs/yr. Over the last five years the Agriculture Department has increased its pesticide use by 30%, Public Works has decreased its use by 5% over the last five years, and General Services' use has gone way down. The public wants to know where pesticides are being sprayed. With a policy, administrative penalties cannot be enforced. Staff fear an ordinance because there would be no loopholes. There are loopholes in an administrative bulletin. Santa Clara's and San Francisco's IPM Coordinators have said they couldn't have done their jobs without their ordinances nor could they have reduced their pesticide use as much. An ordinance would not have to be written from scratch; it could be adapted from another county. (Susan JunFish, member of the public)
- h. It would be impossible for citizens to fight a policy in court. When supervisors and staff change, then the policy could change. An ordinance stands as a voice for those most impacted by pesticide. Corporate lobbying is being dealt with at every level of government, and there must be a law so the individual has recourse. Opposed to not having an ordinance. (Phillip Ciaramitaro, member of the public)
- i. County staff genuinely want to implement IPM and reduce pesticide use. But County budgets can't be overlooked. If the County had more money, it would be possible to do a lot more to implement alternatives. What would we really get out of an ordinance and how much time do we want to spend developing an ordinance rather than doing actual IPM work? It's difficult to compare pesticide use from county to county. Most counties don't have IPM ordinances. There happen to be three in the Bay Area. (Robin Bedell-Waite, County staff)
- j. What more would an ordinance get us in terms of direction to staff? It is important for citizens to have recourse, but the ordinances in Santa Clara and Marin wouldn't provide citizen recourse. The County has an IPM policy, not a pesticide reduction policy. It is more important to use IPM than to just reduce pesticide use. An administrative bulletin remains in effect even if staff and supervisors change. The subcommittees are working on the priorities determined by the Committee, and we are moving in the right direction. (MK)

A motion was made and seconded (MF/NS):

We recommend to the Board of Supervisors the use of an IPM Policy through the adoption of an administrative bulletin as the administrative tool for implementing the County's IPM program.

Points supporting the motion were these:

- Based on County Counsel's opinion, there are difficulties in enforcing an IPM ordinance

- The Committee sees no advantage to an ordinance
- It is the Committee's belief that staff are making a good faith effort to implement the policy and are participating in subcommittee activities to improve their application of the policy.
- The issue of an IPM ordinance should be revisited in two years.

The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

10. Plan agenda for next meeting

- Hear a report on the endangered species injunctions
- Hear reports from the Departments
- Hear report from the IPM Coordinator
- Hear subcommittee reports

Respectfully submitted,  
Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator