

Minutes
Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee
July 6, 2011

Members Present: Vince Guise, Agriculture Department; Jim Hale, County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Michael Kent, Health Services; Joe Yee, Public Works; Michael Fry, County Public Member At-Large; Christine Hagelin, Walnut Creek Open Space Foundation; Ted Shapas, County Public Member At-Large; Carlos Agurto, Pestec

(8 members present/5 voting members)

Members Absent: Michael Baefsky, Public Member At-Large; Roland Hindsman, General Services; Marj Leeds, Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board; Nancy Stein, Public Works Watershed Program

Staff Present: Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator; Dan Jordan, County Watershed Program, Allison Knapp, Public Works Department; Larry Yost, Agriculture Department

Members of the Public Present: Susan JunFish and Maksym Tsvetkov, Parents for a Safer Environment; and Tunyalee Martin, County resident

1. Introductions

2. Announcements

Jim Hale noted that he had found another illegal marijuana growing operation in Los Vaqueros watershed. Again he found gallons of the pesticides malathion and parathion and evidence of trapping and killing wildlife. The Contra Costa County Water District has hired a consulting firm trained in cleanup and hazardous waste removal on illegal grow sites.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

Susan JunFish asked about the status of providing the location of herbicide treatments along the creeks. Maks Tsvetkov commented that Parents for a Safer Environment has been compiling the pesticide use reports for the County and that the County continues to use 16,000+ lbs. of pesticide.

4. Approve minutes from May 4, 2011

Susan JunFish contacted Naresh Duggal, IPM Coordinator for Santa Clara County, about the roadside vegetation management figures in the minutes. Susan JunFish said that Naresh Duggal said the figures are incorrect. Susan JunFish has submitted a formal request for a document that will clarify the figures. When Susan JunFish has secured the document and provided it to the IPM Coordinator, the IPM Coordinator will report back to the Committee.

The Chair asked for the following changes under item number 5. Hear IPM updates from Agriculture, General Services and Public Works:

~~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

Jim Hale asked to have the following changes made in the minutes from his report:

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.

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

The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

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

Facilities

Carlos Agurto noted that the major pests in and around buildings at present are spiders, flies and Oriental cockroaches. Bed bug issues continue in the Concord Homeless Shelter. Pestec has reported 47 deficiencies in County buildings since May.

Public Works

Joe Yee reported that in May the vegetation management crew concentrated on tree trimming and machine and hand weed abatement along the 16 miles of the Iron Horse Trail. In June the crew sprayed cattails. The lack of a Routine Maintenance Agreement (RMA) with the California Department of Fish and Game prevented the crew from spraying the cattails when it was cool and the plants were dormant. During that time, the crew was removing cattails by hand in order to improve the flow of water in the flood control channels. Other herbicide treatments have been curtailed by the lack of an RMA.

In answer to Susan JunFish's question recorded under Public Comment, Joe Yee said there are no maps indicating where Public Works applies pesticides. The Department maintains paper records of the treatments to specific creeks, but these records do not contain precise locations of the treatments. The Department maintains a list of "no-spray zones" where citizens have committed to taking care of the vegetation themselves. The Department has outfitted their large spray truck with a data collector that has both GPS and a weather station. The large spray truck cannot be used everywhere, so Joe is looking into outfitting one pickup truck with this kind of data collector. This technology can record data on exactly where pesticides are used.

Agriculture

Vince Guise reported that the Department had completed the bulk of treatments for noxious weeds by the second to third week of June. All areas that have historically had noxious weeds were surveyed and treated, and a few new areas were added. Plants continue to appear in historic areas because of the longevity of the seed bank. Examples of seed longevity for two of the noxious weeds that are treated are 15 or more years for purple starthistle and 25 or more years for artichoke thistle.

The Department has only one small area where smooth distaff thistle has been found. It has been chemically spot-treated each year since it was first found in 2006. The infestation has diminished to the point that the intent was to mechanically remove the plants found this year. Forty-two smooth distaff thistle were removed by hand, but unfortunately, a new population was found nearby that required chemical spot treatment because of the large number of plants involved.

The Department is also trying to keep perennial pepperweed from moving into wildlands and parks by treating satellite/leading edge infestations. It is also trying to prevent red sesbania from becoming established in the County as it would have the potential to cause severe environmental damage to riparian areas. Red sesbania is removed mechanically by hand in infested areas that includes eight residential sites and small portions of two riparian areas.

The Department has secured a \$10,000 grant from the Bay Area Early Detection Network (BAEDN) to help with removal of red sesbania, purple loosestrife, Russian knapweed, and castor bean.

The Department continues to monitor 23 raptor perches in three locations that have been up for two years. Only once has a red tailed hawk been sighted on a perch. Mostly kestrels and other smaller birds are using the

perches. Unfortunately, up to this point there is no evidence that the perches are having an effect in reducing ground squirrel populations in the perch areas.

6. Hear report from Public Works on the new Routine Maintenance Agreement from Fish and Game

Allison Knapp, Public Works Department, provided the following report:

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) has jurisdiction in riparian corridors, including bed and bank. If a creek runs very close to a road, Fish and Game can exert their authority on the road.

For eight years the County had an MOU with CDFG to conduct routine maintenance along and in creeks and flood control channels. In October 2010, CDFG asked for a Routine Maintenance Agreement instead of a MOU. Negotiations started in October and only in April of 2011 did CDFG finalize the agreement with the County. This agreement allows Public Works to do routine maintenance, including vegetation management, minor bank repair, and sediment and debris removal. The RMA is much clearer than the MOU. The County pays a yearly fee of \$12K to \$15K to CDFG for the RMA. CDFG uses this money for education, staff (wardens), preserving habitat, and mitigation projects in various areas.

The Vegetation Management and Flood Control crews went through a rigorous training for habitat assessment for endangered and threatened species. Before work can commence in an area, the Vegetation Management Supervisor must conduct a habitat assessment that identifies habitats that are endangered. If habitats are identified, they must be reported to CDFG, who will then provide County staff with guidelines to move forward. These guidelines may include full time monitoring of the jobsite by a licensed biologist. Before any herbicide spraying, the Vegetation Management Supervisor logs on to the Department of Pesticide Regulation's PRESCRIBE Database to check for habitat in the township, section and range where they will be working. The database provides information on any restrictions on the particular herbicide that the crew proposes to use in the area.

The County must submit quarterly reports to CDFG on proposed work, and bi-annual reports on activities performed within CDFG's jurisdiction. The County must also pay any fees associated with the work performed.

Recently the crew found evidence of an active burrowing owl nest at a detention basin they were planning to mow. They fenced off the area where the owl was living and abated the weeds outside of the fenced area.

The biggest change resulting from this RMA is the protection of threatened and endangered species habitat, along with the training of Public Works Vegetation Management and Flood Control crews to identify those habitats.

7. Hear report from the IPM Coordinator

The IPM Coordinator

- a. Worked with the Chair to draft the Administrative Bulletin and memo to the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee
- b. Made a quarterly progress report to the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee
- c. Continued to organize monthly meetings of the Bed Bug Task Force
- d. Developed fact sheets on inexpensive do-it-yourself bed bug management techniques to help low-income tenants
- e. Collaborated with the Michael Chavez Center and Supervisor Mitchoff's office in a public meeting in Concord to address bed bug issues
- f. Has been meeting regularly with Health Services Department staff in charge of the homeless shelters to develop strict intake and cleaning protocols for the County's shelters
- g. Has been asked by the head of the Homeless program to develop a bed bug awareness training for their staff and a training for the new bed bug intake and cleaning protocols; these trainings and protocols will be offered to other shelters in the County.
- h. Has been working on compliance with the IPM section of the Municipal Regional Permit with the County Stormwater program; last year the County got high marks for its compliance from the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

- i. Provided training on the County's IPM policy to all County staff that apply pesticides
- j. Convened a meeting of IPM Coordinators from the Cities of Walnut Creek and Richmond and from Central Sanitary District to develop a series of IPM workshops that will provide their staff and County staff with a basic understanding of IPM, an understanding of pesticide and storm water issues, information on documenting an IPM program, and more
- k. Arranged the 4th periodic meeting of the Bay Area's IPM Coordinators to discuss designing pest prevention into buildings and to share information on work projects

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

Data Management—Marj Leeds, and Ted Shapas, and Michael Fry, Chair

Michael Fry reported for the subcommittee.

- a. The subcommittee has had two meetings, one in January and one in June.
- b. At the June meeting the committee reviewed annual reports from Santa Clara and San Francisco to identify similarities to Contra Costa in their data reporting and to determine if they are reporting data we should also be reporting.
- c. At the next meeting, on July 20, the committee will hear from the Agriculture Department about the pest management data they currently collect.
- d. The committee is also examining how data can be reported to the public.

Susan JunFish alleged that the County is not collecting pesticide use data from contractors. The IPM Coordinator responded that data is being collected from contractors and that information on contractors' pesticide usage was reported in the 2010 IPM Annual Report.

Susan JunFish would like to have the following data reported on the County's website:

- a. Which pesticides are being used and their toxicity categories
- b. Where the pesticides are being applied
- c. When they are being applied

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

The meeting of this subcommittee was cancelled due to illness.

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

Joe Yee and the IPM Coordinator reported the following:

- a. Joe Yee and the IPM Coordinator met with the San Ramon Valley Fire District to understand the Fire District's expectations for vegetation management along roadsides.
- b. The fire code is developed at the State level (CalFire), but there are a number of fire districts that oversee Contra Costa County. Each of these districts may impose additional regulations depending on local conditions and activities. This has happened in Santa Clara County where they have very strict regulations surrounding roadside mowing because of a large fire accidentally set by a County mowing crew several years ago.
- c. The San Ramon Valley Fire District suggested that the County meet with each fire jurisdiction to determine if the County's roadside vegetation management program is aligned with the priorities of each fire district.

Michael Kent asked the subcommittee to analyze the cost of doing more mowing in the County.

Susan JunFish commented that Chuck Jeffries, retired Public Works Vegetation Manager, had said the County needs to treat 120 miles of road. Joe Yee responded that the County has 660 road miles to manage, and the number of road miles managed mechanically and with herbicide can vary from year to year.

Susan JunFish mentioned that Santa Clara County is doing a pilot study with Ron Alexander to put in competitive plantings along roadsides.

9. Discuss the process for converting the County's IPM policy into an administrative bulletin

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft memo to the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee and to accept the draft Administrative Bulletin (JH/MF).

The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

10. Discuss expiring terms for public seats

The terms for the three at-large public seats on the Committee will expire on December 31, 2011. Supervisor Gioia has indicated that he would like to see those seats filled by January 1, 2012. The process must be completed in time for the Committee to vote on recommendations to the Board at the November 2 meeting. Christine Hagelin and Jim Hale volunteered to be members of the nominations committee.

Pesticide Use Figures for the County

Susan JunFish has disagreements with the County's pesticide use figures. Susan JunFish, Michael Kent and the IPM Coordinator will meet to go over figures.

11. Plan agenda for next meeting

- Hear speaker from the Department of Pesticide Regulation on stipulated injunctions for endangered species
- Discuss Annual IPM Report—what should be included?
- Discuss Department IPM Plans—are there any changes or updates?
- Hear reports from the Departments
- Hear report from the IPM Coordinator
- Hear subcommittee reports

Respectfully submitted,
Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator