

Minutes
Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee
May 2, 2012

Members Present: Carlos Agurto, Pestec; Michael Baefsky, Public Member At-Large; Jerry Casey, General Services Department; Michael Fry, Public Member At-Large; Vince Guise, Agriculture Department; Christine Hagelin, Walnut Creek Open Space Foundation; Jim Hale, County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Dan Jordan, County Clean Water Program; Michael Kent, Health Services; Marj Leeds, Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board; Tunyalee Martin, Public Member At-Large; Joe Yee, Public Works
(12 members present/8 voting members)

Members Absent: Myrto Pretreas, Public Member Alternate

Staff Present: Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator

Members of the Public Present: Robin Bedell-Waite, resident of El Sobrante; Susan JunFish and Shirley Shelangoski, Parents for a Safer Environment

1. Introductions

2. Announcements

Jim Hale announced that sheep ranchers in Marin County and on up the Coast are using Great Pyrenees very successfully for coyote protection.

Susan JunFish handed out summaries of the presentations given at the March IPM Committee meeting. She will send the IPM Coordinator electronic copies.

The IPM Coordinator announced that Dr. Andrew Sutherland has been hired as the U.C. Extension Urban IPM Advisor for the Bay Area. His office is in Alameda County and he started work on April 1, 2012. He will be assisting public agencies, pest control operators, and other U.C. advisors and will be doing research on urban IPM issues.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

Susan JunFish asked why her question about whether the Departments are complying with the three injunctions preventing the use of certain pesticides within certain distances of specified sensitive areas was not included in the minutes from the March meeting. She reiterated that this is still of concern to her and she would like the departments to provide proof that they are complying with the injunctions.

4. Approve minutes from January 18, 2012

A motion was made and seconded (MB/JC) to approve the minutes as written.

The motion carried unanimously (8-0).

Susan JunFish said that not enough information on her Bad Actor presentation was included in the minutes and asked that her handouts be included with the minutes.-

5. Hear reports from the Agriculture General Services, and Public Works Departments

General Services

Jerry Casey reported that on July 1, 2012 General Services will become part of the Public Works Department.

General Services maintains three million square feet of building space including three jails and the County hospital. Their work includes dealing with locks, card key access, burglar alarms, clogged sewer lines, tenant improvements up to a certain amount, pest control, and other issues. Many of the County's buildings are very old and have considerable deferred maintenance. There are roof leaks and subsequent mold issues. The County is moving into the 21st century, and the buildings were not designed for the extra heat load of all the

computers. Electricians, plumbers, stationary engineers, the painter, and the Grounds Division will be under Public Works. Fleet is already a part of Public Works.

Carlos Agurto reported that there have been a lot of structural pest problems in the last couple months. There are humpbacked flies in the jail kitchen, and Pestec has been investigating where the flies are coming from and working with kitchen staff to thoroughly clean hard-to-reach areas. Pestec is also working with General Services on repairs that will prevent food from collecting in areas that are hard to clean. In Antioch there have been large numbers of Oriental cockroaches. This may have been caused by the odd weather this spring. Pestec is using cockroach bait and General Services is installing doorsweeps.

Agriculture

Vince Guise reported that a pest detection specialist found Japanese dodder in Richmond on two adjacent properties. There are 43 other properties that have been clear of Japanese dodder for three years, and the Department considers the dodder to be eradicated from those properties. There are three more properties that are now at the three-year point. Japanese dodder takes over and kills all plants it twines around, sapping the energy of the plant and smothering it. The dodder can grow six inches a day. Little strands only three inches long can still infect a plant even after weeks of sitting in a truck. Dodder is removed physically and taken to a landfill where it is buried. The Department is working on outreach (flyers and personal communications) to Hmong residents to explain the severe problems Japanese dodder causes in California.

The Department has also found some hoary cress.

Vince Guise noted that the Department is fully aware of the three injunctions and the endangered species act.

Public Works

Ed Swan reported that in the next few weeks the Vegetation Management Crew will begin mowing. He will be putting goats into rocky, steep areas that are difficult for people to access, and he is currently making a list of possible sites.

The Department has erected raptor perches on several dams, and owl boxes are being placed in detention basins. An Eagle Scout will make the boxes, Public Works will supply the materials and install the boxes.

6. Hear report from the IPM Coordinator

In a letter to Municipal Regional Stormwater Permittees, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board noted that they paid particular attention last year to provision C.9.d which requires municipalities (and counties) to require their pest management contractors to use IPM. Contra Costa County was singled out for special recognition in this area along with 5 municipalities.

The IPM Coordinator

- provided a regular IPM report to the County's Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee on April 15 where she explained the Data Management subcommittee's IPM Priority Assessment Tool. The Supervisors asked to see bed bug specimens at their next meeting.
- continued to schedule meetings and provide staff support for the Committee's three subcommittees
- continued to work on Head Start bed bug prevention protocols with the County's Bed Bug Task Force
- visited the Concord Homeless Shelter to evaluate bed bug management; Shelter staff are managing well with client intake prevention protocols and a full time staff person whose only job is to inspect for and clean up bed bugs
- prepared a bed bug awareness talk for the Northern California Entomology Club in Davis
- contacted Al Hom, Program Manager for Alameda County Vector Control, about collaboration on bed bug outreach and education

7. Hear reports from the subcommittees: Data Management, IPM Decision-Making, Transparency

Data Management

The committee is refining the IPM Priority Assessment Tool and is meeting with the Departments to receive comments.

IPM Decision-Making

This committee is continuing work on a weed management decision tree for Public Works.

Transparency

The Health Services Department has changed the web address for the IPM pages to cchealth.org/ipm. This makes it easier to remember. The committee reviewed other IPM websites and is developing ideas for Contra Costa's web pages. The committee is also looking at ways to post pesticide treatments on the website.

Susan JunFish asked when the County will have data on spraying on the website.

8. Hear update on the Public Works grazing study

Cece Sellgren, Public Works Storm Water Program Manager provided the update. The goal of the grazing study is to determine the safety, effectiveness, and economics of using animals for vegetation control along streams and flood control channels.

The study is being conducted on Reach 1 of Walnut Creek near the Highway 680/242 split and Reach 2 of Walnut Creek, near Highway 680 and Willow Pass Rd. The study will last 3 years, and there will be 9 plots with 3 different treatments: goat grazing, sheep grazing, and herbicide.

The herbicides used will be Aquamaster (glyphosate) and Garlon 3A (triclopyr). Although these herbicides should be applied in December/January for optimum effectiveness, circumstances prevented their application until March. Next winter they will be applied at the appropriate time. In March the two herbicides were applied at a reduced "chemical mowing" rate of 1/5 pt/acre for Aquamaster and 2 pts/acre for Garlon 3A.

The animals will begin grazing June 11 and will finish on June 23.

The consulting firm that Public Works has hired to assist with the study will conduct various kinds of monitoring in the water and on the creek slopes throughout the course of the study to measure water quality, erosion, and plant species composition and height along the banks.

Susan JunFish asked about water monitoring during storm events. Cece Sellgren replied that it is very complicated to monitor during a storm event. Susan JunFish asked for another fecal coliform sample further downstream. Cece agreed to add the extra sampling point.

Michael Fry mentioned that it would be very important to purge the animals so that weed seeds, especially noxious weed seeds, are not deposited in the study area. Cece Sellgren said she would make sure the animals are purged.

9. Hear presentation from Beth Slate (Agriculture Department) on raptor perches

In 2009 the Agriculture Department received a \$4000 grant from the County Fish and Wildlife Committee to erect 20 raptor perches at three different sites. Six raptor perches were strategically placed in the City of Concord Lime Ridge Open Space, seven in the City of Walnut Creek Lime Ridge Open Space, and seven were installed in the City of Walnut Creek Shell Ridge Open Space. There had been many calls from residents who live next to these areas complaining about road damage and residential damage from the ground squirrels.

The goals of the project were to create good will with the public, to improve wildlife habitat, and to control ground squirrels by attracting golden eagles and red tailed and red shouldered hawks to prey on the squirrels.

The perches are monitored monthly. Beth Slate received training from UC Cooperative Extension wildlife specialists on how to count ground squirrels. She records the number of ground squirrels, any raptors or evidence of raptors, time of year, temperature, and weather. She has found owl whitewash and owl pellets along with insect parts and a wood rat head. It appears that mostly owls and kestrels are using the perches, although young red tailed hawks seem to be accepting the perches. She has seen kestrels chase off red tailed hawks. Kestrels are not large enough to take a ground squirrel. The owls are taking gophers but not ground squirrels, and the insect remains are probably from kestrels. Some of the perches are being undermined by ground squirrel burrowing and by dogs digging around the base of perches.

The raptor perches have created good will with the public and made an improvement to wildlife habitat in the three areas where they were erected, but the Department has not seen any significant change in the number of ground squirrels. Perhaps it is too early to tell. The Department could not measure whether or not the perches affected the amount of pesticide used by residents in the three areas (the Agriculture Department has not been baiting ground squirrels in the raptor perch study areas).

Contra Costa Central Sanitary District has also erected raptor perches in an effort to reduce ground squirrel numbers.

10. Hear report on the Vertebrate Pest Conference held in Monterey in March

Beth Slate mentioned a new concussion device manufactured by a New Zealand company called Goodnature to kill rats, stoats, and opossums. The trap does not use any pesticide and can reset itself numerous times.

Carlos Agurto mentioned a device that pressurizes exhaust from an engine to kill animals such as ground squirrels.

11. Plan agenda for next meeting

- Report from the Data Management subcommittee
- Report on the three pesticide injunctions affecting Contra Costa
- Presentation by Stella McMillin from the Department of Fish and Game on anticoagulants
- Department reports

Respectfully submitted,
Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator