

**Minutes**  
**Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee**  
**September 4, 2013**

Members Present: Michael Baefsky, Public Member At-Large; Scott Cashen, Mt. Diablo Audubon; Doug Freier, Public Member Alternate; Michael Fry, Public Member At-Large; Larry Yost for Vince Guise, Agriculture Department; Michael Kent, Health Services; Tunyalee Martin, Public Member At-Large; Ed Swan for Joe Yee, Public Works

(8 members present/5 voting members)

Members Absent: Luis Agurto, Pestec; Jerry Casey, Public Works Facilities; Jim Hale, County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Marj Leeds, Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board; Cece Sellgren, County Clean Water Program

Staff Present: Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator; Gene Mangini, Agriculture Department; Jill Ray, Supervisor Andersen's office

Members of the Public: Susan JunFish, Parents for a Safer Environment; Robin Bedell-Waite, Citizen

1. Introductions

2. Announcements

There were none.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

There was none.

4. Approve minutes from June 26, 2013

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

The motion carried (7-0). Doug Freier abstained because he was not yet appointed to the Committee on 6/26.

5. Hear report from the IPM Coordinator, including report on rodenticides in county parks

Bed bugs

- A member of the housekeeping staff at the Extended Stay America in Pleasant Hill took bed bugs back to her home in May. When she made a formal complaint to the corporate headquarters, she was fired from her job. After the involvement of the District Attorney the hotel reinstated the woman. The D.A. is requiring the hotel to develop a written bed bug action plan and provide training to their staff.
- UC IPM Advisor, Andrew Sutherland, continues to look for funding sources for the bed bug research project comparing conventional and IPM treatments in an apartment complex in the county.

Vertebrate pest management in parks

- Jon Katayanagi is contracted by Special Districts to manage moles, voles, gophers, and rats in Livorna Park and around/on the playing field at Alamo School (the only "parks" where vertebrate pest management is being performed).
- The people in the Livorna Park area are very particular about the way their park looks and complain vociferously if it is not kept up to their standards. The burrowing rodents in Livorna Park were also attracting coyotes and making the residents anxious. Alamo school asked the county to provide vertebrate pest control because the field was supporting a very high population of gophers and children were getting injured stepping into their holes.
- Pest management decisions are specific to the site and based on a number of factors. There is no one control method that works 100% of the time in every location, or that is always the safest in every

location. Traps can pose a hazard to curious children, and Jon must consider that in his management decisions.

- Jon is doing more and more trapping at Livorna Park, but he also uses aluminum phosphide and diphacinone bait blocks. At Alamo school the main control method is trapping for moles and gophers. He uses some diphacinone grain bait inside of tamper resistant bait boxes for ground squirrels.
- Over the last few years, Jon has eliminated most of the moles and gophers from the interior of Livorna Park and the Alamo School field. He is now using control methods primarily along the periphery of each of the sites.
- There had been rats at Livorna Park, but the Grounds Division trimmed the hedge that was providing them cover and they have moved elsewhere.

Susan JunFish expressed the opinion that traps are not a concern because they are hard to snap, but aluminum phosphide can poison veterinarians attending a poisoned animal. Michael Baefsky explained that the chemical that is a hazard to veterinarians in emergency rooms is zinc phosphide, not aluminum phosphide, and that zinc phosphide is not used as much because of its toxicity and because its bitter taste is repellent to rodents. Aluminum phosphide is more a hazard to the operator.

Susan JunFish mentioned that other counties are using only traps for burrowing rodents.

Susan JunFish also stated that she has not received contracts with IPM language for Special Districts' contractors. The IPM Coordinator replied that she has sent them at least twice now.

Susan JunFish has a list of contractors who use alternatives to rodenticides and she would like them to be included when Special Districts goes out to bid for vertebrate pest management. Jill Ray asked Susan JunFish to provide her with the list and she will see that it gets to the proper staff in Public Works.

#### 6. Hear updates from the Agriculture and Public Works Departments

*Agriculture Department*—Larry Yost, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner

Noxious Weed Program

- Staff have finished the bulk of the work on noxious weeds.
- The Department surveyed all 26 Japanese dodder sites, and found no evidence of dodder.
- They also visited the 12-13 red sesbania sites and pulled all seedlings they found.

*Public Works, Road and Flood Control Maintenance Division*—Ed Swan, Vegetation Manager

- The Division is currently grazing goats for vegetation management along Walnut Creek downstream from the Public Works Department grazing study.
- Staff is finishing up herbicide applications for cattail control in creek channels.
- Tree trimming continues.
- Staff have been cleaning up homeless encampments.

#### 7. Hear updates and recommendations from the Data Management and IPM Decision Making subcommittees

*Data Management subcommittee*—Michael Fry

- Michael Fry provided a summary of the attached written report.
- The subcommittee's recommendations are as follows:
  - Using the Assessment Tool, the Decision Documents, and the Annual Report, have the Departments identify one significant pest management problem and determine costs to implement a more robust IPM approach that is more cost effective over time.
  - For a continuing recommendation: Have the Departments update and continue using the IPM Priority Assessment Tool.

Some of the points from the Committee discussion were as follows:

- A great deal of time has been spent learning what the Departments do. Now that we see they are doing IPM, it's not easy to determine what next steps to take to improve IPM practices.(TM)
- Michael Baefsky likes electronic posting of pesticide use, even though it takes time.
- Susan JunFish asked why online posting was not implemented 3 years ago.
  - It was only last year (fall 2012) that the Committee recommended online posting, and because of lack of time and staff to configure the website, it is still not completely finished. (TD)
- Susan JunFish asked that in addition to the above recommendations the Departments be asked to track target pests and the effect on pest control methods being used.
- Michael Baefsky asked what the subcommittee meant by "robust."
  - It meant moving further along the IPM spectrum. To use less chemical-intensive management, the Departments need to understand the cost of alternatives. Money has such a profound impact on pest management. Overtime money invested in prevention can be recouped. (MF, MK, TM)

The Committee voted unanimously to adopt the above recommendations of the Data Management subcommittee. (5-0)

A motion was made by Scott Cashen and seconded by Michael Fry to have the subcommittee investigate having the Departments track pests. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

*Decision Making subcommittee update—Michael Baefsky and Tanya Drlik*

- In each meeting the subcommittee has been reviewing a decision making document from one of the IPM programs. At the last meeting, the subcommittee reviewed the Grounds Division's weed management on medians.
- Pest management is very site specific on the medians, and varies even within the same stretch of median.
- There are many complexities that must be taken into consideration, such as variations in available funding, the kinds of plantings, the soil type, and the width of the median, as well as understanding which management options will work at a particular site and can be accommodated within the site budget.
- Kevin Lachapelle, the Grounds Manager, considers mulching the first option for weed control, if it can be used effectively at the site. The Division now has equipment to allow them to chip prunings on site. The Division has also been working with tree companies to supply clean wood chips for mulching county landscapes and medians.
- Kevin is working hard to get the right plants in the right place, and to make county landscapes more resistant to weeds.
- Because of the variation in the sites, it is difficult to write up a decision making document that covers all medians.
- The subcommittee is waiting to review the decision making document from Public Work before deciding on recommendations, which will be presented to the Committee at the November meeting.

8. Review the issue of an IPM policy vs. and IPM ordinance

Michael Kent reviewed the history of the issue.

- In 2009, Susan JunFish proposed the need for an IPM ordinance to the Board of Supervisors who directed the IPM Committee to investigate the issue.
- In 2009, County Counsel rendered an opinion that said that Contra Costa County directs employees by means of Administrative Bulletins and that the most efficient and effective way of regulating the use of pesticides on County property would be to develop an IPM Administrative Bulletin.
- In 2010, the Committee devoted extensive time to the issue and in 2011 voted unanimously to develop an administrative bulletin.
- In 2011 the Committee also voted to revisit the issue in 2013.
- In 2013, County Counsel was asked to review the issue, but said their opinion had not changed.

Susan JunFish presented her opinion that statements in County Counsel's opinion were questionable and therefore nullified Counsel's conclusion. (See attached) She also noted that she has 1500 signatures on a petition to adopt an IPM ordinance in Contra Costa County.

Some of the points from the Committee discussion were as follows:

- Scott Cashen had reviewed the code sections cited in Susan JunFish's opinion and thought that her points had merit. He asked Susan JunFish why an ordinance was needed over an administrative bulletin.
  - Susan JunFish replied that an administrative bulletin is a method to communicate to County staff. It is an internal document, so departments may vary in how they enforce it. An ordinance would allow citizens to sue the County.
- The Committee has had lengthy discussions on this issue in the past. The sticking point is whether or not the IPM policy offers a sufficient club. In 2011, it was the opinion of the Committee that there was no need to have a corporal punishment clause to enforce IPM. The county programs are staffed by professionals who do a good job. The best way to improve IPM is to work on program goals. (MF)
- Ordinances passed by the Board of Supervisors cover only unincorporated areas of the County. Administrative bulletins are the "law" of the County and the way to enforce desired actions. (JR)
- This group is on a good track to get the IPM process incorporated into county operations. There is no advantage to an ordinance over a bulletin. (DF)
- We should shift our focus to studying how we can use money more effectively to accomplish things that will improve the IPM programs. Time should be spent next year researching proposals to the Board for specific things that will improve IPM in the county. (RBW)
- Susan JunFish said that Contra Costa uses 3 times more pesticide than Marin, San Francisco, and Santa Clara combined, and is the only county applying rodenticides in open space. She wants to see progress and long term prevention, ~~not band-aids.~~

Scott Cashen asked to table this issue until the next meeting because he needs more time to review the issue. The issue could be voted on at the next meeting when perhaps more members would be present.

Scott Cashen made a motion to table the issue until the next meeting. Larry Yost seconded the motion. The motion did not carry—3 noes (Michael Fry, Michael Baefsky, Tunyalee Martin) and 2 ayes (Scott Cashen and Michael Kent)

Using the discretion of the chair, Michael Kent reversed the decision. The ordinance vs. policy issue will be reviewed at the November meeting.

9. Plan agenda for next meeting—September 4

- Final recommendations from the Decision Making subcommittee
- Final review of the ordinance vs. policy issue
- Update on grazing study
- Review of draft IPM Annual Report for the Board
- Review of draft Triennial Review of the IPM Committee

Respectfully submitted,  
Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator

## Corrections to IPM Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes from Sept 4, 2013

*NOTE from Tanya Drlik: This memo will be attached to the September 4, 2013 minutes*

To: Tanya Drlik

From: Susan JunFish, Parents for a Safer Environment

Please see highlighted comments from Tunyalee Martin, IPM Advisory Committee Public Member and Secretary, and Tanya Drlik, staff to the IPM Advisory Committee

Pg 3: Please correct the statement that was attributed to me that I believed that “traps are hard to snap.” I did not say that.

Both Tunyalee Martin’s and Tanya Drlik’s notes reflect the same wording “hard to snap”.

I stated that although traps are not preferred by our county and its contractor, other counties are using only traps for burrowing rodents. Even the Acalanes Union High School District only uses traps now and says it works better than poison. They know how many rodents they catch each season and that they’re not risking pets and wildlife. Since gophers are caught mostly at night when they are active, the traps can be set out after hours and checked in the morning before hours when there’s a concern about exposure of traps to children. There are cinch traps that are buried underground with a flag marking the location. **It’s very unlikely for children to even know to look for buried traps.**

This is additional information recorded neither in Tunyalee Martin’s nor Tanya Drlik’s notes.

In the paragraph above 6. Hear updates from the Agriculture....

I stated that the contracts we have with the two contractors using rodenticides in the county parks contain no IPM language, thus inconsistent with our county’s IPM policy and asked that the county provide a copy of the contracts as soon as IPM language is added and also provide a bidding process to contractors who have a track record with other public agencies using trapping instead of poisoning. I offered the name of trappers to the Public Works Dept so that they would consider them when the request bids for contractors.

This discussion has been added to the September 4, 2013 minutes. Please note that Special Districts’ contractors responsible for pest management work under purchase orders and not contracts. Purchase orders are not the appropriate vehicle for IPM language; thus, these contractors are required to abide by the Contra Costa County Public Works Department *Landscape Design, Construction, and Maintenance Standards and Guidelines for County Managed Facilities* (See attached.)

In 2012, only 2 contractors for Special Districts were allowed to perform pest management, and they were sent special letters on March 1, 2012 (see attached) reminding them that they should use an IPM approach and detailing information from the County’s landscape standards mentioned above. Note that in 2013 only 1 contractor was allowed to perform pest management.

Correspondence between Susan Junfish and Tanya Drlik regarding contracts:

11/28/12: Susan JunFish requested that she be provided with “electronic copies of contracts with each contractor [for Special Districts]”.

11/29/12: Tanya Drlik sent Susan JunFish via email the purchase orders for the 2 contractors allowed to perform pest management along with the letters (mentioned above) sent to them on 3/1/12. Also included were contracts for contractors that are only allowed to perform landscape maintenance.

2/14/13: Susan JunFish requested “letters containing instructions to follow the county’s IPM Policy [that] were sent to the PWD’s special district contractors...”

2/15/13: Tanya Drlik again sent the letters sent by the County on 3/1/12.

Pg 4: Didn’t Michael Baefsky specifically state that he had nothing to report for the Decision Making committee at the meeting? My notes indicate that you were the one who provided at least some of the bulleted items listed under his name. Please attribute these comments to your presentation and not to a member who did not make them if you agree this was a mistake. Thank you for making this correction. I spoke to Michael about this to make sure he was o.k. with this. He said he didn’t realize that he was expected to present, so was caught off guard and thus had not prepared anything.

Both Tunyalee Martin and Tanya Drlik recall that Mr. Baefsky presented some of the report from the Decision Making subcommittee. Tanya Drlik’s name has been added to the minutes for this item.

He also said he was not planning to come to the meeting on Nov 5<sup>th</sup> b/c he is too busy with his work but would give you a call about this.

This is additional information not relevant to the minutes.

Pg 4: At the bottom: I did not say that the county counsel’s opinion was “questionable”, I said that there were errors in the document and thus the conclusion that an IPM Ordinance was moot should be reassessed by the County Counsel.

Direct quote from the second paragraph of Susan JunFish’s memo to the IPM Advisory Committee on September 4, 2013:

“The counsel’s opinion about why the ‘*IPM Ordinance would be difficult to enforce against County employees, and could not be enforced on County properties located in cities,*’ [Italics in original] is questionable...”

Pg 5: I did not say that the advantage of an IPM Ordinance was to allow citizens to sue the county. Perhaps someone else said this or this is what some county staff may believe.

Both Tunyalee Martin and Tanya Drlik recorded a statement by Susan JunFish to that effect.

The purpose of an Ordinance is to hold county staff accountable for actually practicing Integrated Pest Management and when they violate the ordinance, administrative penalties can be imposed upon the staff such as the Marin County IPM Coordinator who was fired due to lying to his IPM Advisory Task Force.

This appears to be additional information, not recorded by either Tunyalee Martin or Tanya Drlik.

Pg 5: Last bullet point on 8. I did not say “bandaids” because it’s not a term I use in reference to rodenticides.. it is not a bandaid..

This is the word Tanya Drlik recorded Susan JunFish having said. Tunyalee Martin has no record of the word.

“Bandaids” has been deleted in the minutes

It’s a backward and archaic means of trying to control a pest but actually making this much worse in the long run.

This is additional information recorded neither in Tunyalee Martin’s nor Tanya Drlik’s notes.

I would like to see the county work towards long-term solutions and prevention and not quick and dirty fixes that do not work and require one to repeat the same ineffective routine.

This sentiment is recorded already in the minutes.

Einstein defined this as insanity.

This is additional information recorded neither in Tunyalee Martin's nor Tanya Drlik's notes.