

Minutes
Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee
November 6, 2013

Members Present: Jerry Casey, Public Works Facilities; Scott Cashen, Mt. Diablo Audubon; Doug Freier, Public Member Alternate; Michael Fry, Public Member At-Large; Vince Guise, Agriculture Department; Michael Kent, Health Services; Marj Leeds, Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board; Tunyalee Martin, Public Member At-Large; Cece Sellgren, County Clean Water Program;

(9 members present/6 voting members)

Members Absent: Luis Agurto, Pestec; Michael Baefsky, Public Member At-Large; Jim Hale, County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Joe Yee, Public Works

Staff Present: Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator; Karen Adler, Beth Slate, Larry Yost, Lucas Pattie, and Gene Mangini, Agriculture Department; Ed Swan and Peter Gollinger, Public Works Department; Jill Ray, Supervisor Andersen's office

Members of the Public: Susan JunFish and Shirley Shelangoski, Parents for a Safer Environment

1. Introductions

2. Announcements

The IPM Coordinator announced that the Contra Costa County Agriculture Department, Vince Guise, Agricultural Commissioner, has received an IPM Innovator Award from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. This is the first time the award has been given to a county agriculture department.

Cece Sellgren announced that the County is partnering with Restoration Trust, a non-profit organization that will be conducting an experiment in planting a native rye grass and two native sedges along a portion of Pacheco Drain. County staff, Restoration Trust staff, and volunteers will be installing plants on Saturday, December 7 starting at 9:00 AM. All are welcome.

Michael Kent noted that this is the last meeting for public members Michael Fry and Michael Baefsky. He thanked both members for their service.

Michael Kent displayed a poster intended for pharmacies and medical offices that provides information on where to safely dispose of pharmaceuticals. County household hazardous waste programs and County advisory boards have been collaborating on this project.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

Shirley Shelangoski brought up items in the Triennial Review Report, but since this topic was on the agenda, the comments were deferred until the item (number 9) was discussed by the Committee.

4. Approve minutes from September 4, 2013

Susan JunFish contested various parts of the minutes. Approval of the minutes was tabled until the January meeting so that Ms. JunFish's comments could be considered. Staff will meet with Tunyalee Martin, IPM Committee secretary, to resolve the issues raised by Ms. JunFish in written comments to staff.

5. Hear report from the IPM Coordinator

Recruiting for IPM committee members

- The terms of the three public members and the public member alternate will end on December 31, 2013.
- Starting on September 27, 2013, the IPM Coordinator widely advertised the openings, and on September 30, 2013 sent a notice to the IPM Committee's entire email list asking that recipients send the notice to anyone who might be interested in applying.

- The deadline for applications was November 4, 2013. All applicants will be interviewed by County Supervisors on the Internal Operations Committee on November 13, 2013 at 9:00 AM.

Bed bugs

- The IPM Coordinator has been working with Pestec to help a low income housing facility in Richmond develop a bed bug action plan and training for staff and residents.
- The IPM Coordinator is also working with the offices of Supervisors Gioia and Mitchoff and the cities of Richmond and Concord to develop advice about jurisdiction over citing landlords for bed bug issues.

6. Hear updates from the Agriculture and Public Works Departments

Agriculture Department—Vince Guise, Agricultural Commissioner

Noxious Weed Program

- Perennial pepperweed management along Rodeo Creek near the remnant population of endangered Contra Costa goldfields was successfully completed. Managing perennial pepperweed in other areas in the county is becoming very difficult due to the fast spread of this noxious weed. The Department is especially seeing this in San Ramon riparian areas. The Department hopes that extra efforts in survey and treatment will be effective in abating this trend.
- Perennial pepperweed is very challenging to control. The Department currently uses Telar® (chlorsulfuron) which works well, but has toxicity issues. Vince Guise has learned from a colleague that Milestone® (aminopyralid) works to control perennial pepperweed in Inyo/Mono Counties when used at this time of year (it does not work when applied in spring). The Department is currently conducting side-by-side trials comparing Telar and Milestone to see if it will work in this ecosystem. It could take several years before results are clear.
- The Department currently treats Pampas grass in transportation corridors to prevent its spread to open space and rangeland in the County. The Department is not treating natural areas for Pampas grass. Vince Guise has learned from researchers at U.C. Davis that Roundup® (glyphosate) at 10 ½ oz. per gallon can work on Pampas grass. The Department is currently experimenting with using Roundup, rather than the usual Habitat® or Stalker® (imazapyr), and it seems to be working.
- The Department has been mapping the properties on which they manage noxious weeds. This project is about 90% complete.

Ground Squirrel Management

- The Department has been working to reduce the amount of rodenticide used in the ground squirrel program. Current treatment procedure has reduced the number of treatments from three to two. A third treatment is applied only if monitoring shows that significant squirrel activity still exists at a particular site. At least two treatments are needed because the first generation rodenticide bait used by the Department requires multiple feedings to be effective. The Department has also changed the treatment procedure to include two staff members in the truck instead of one. This improves safety for staff and increases the accuracy of the application by allowing one staff member to concentrate on driving while the other focuses on applying bait only to areas where there is ground squirrel activity.
- The Department is designing and fabricating a new bait station that will reduce or eliminate spillage from the entry tube.
- Vince Guise thanked his staff for coming up with innovations to reduce rodenticide use.
- The County map of areas treated with rodenticide for ground squirrel management has been completed.

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

- Perennial pepperweed is very widespread in the Walnut Creek Flood Control channel, and Pacheco Drain is almost solid perennial pepperweed.
- Staff has been spot spraying *Dittrichia* near the airport.
- Tree trimming continues.
- Homeless encampment clean up continues.

Public Works, Facilities Division, Jerry Casey

- Facilities continues to work with Pestec on making repairs to buildings

7. Hear update and recommendation from the IPM Decision Making subcommittee

The IPM Coordinator reported the following:

- The Departments have produced 5 different decision-making documents:
 1. Perennial pepperweed management near endangered Contra Costa goldfields
 2. Ground squirrel management around critical infrastructure
 3. Rat and mouse management in and around County buildings
 4. Vegetation management along flood control channels
 5. Vegetation management in medians along Camino Tassajara
- The subcommittee thoroughly reviewed each decision making document.
- The subcommittee has found that pest management decision making is very site-specific, and that there are many complexities, limitations, and restrictions that must be taken into consideration.
- The subcommittee recommends to the Departments that they continue to work on decision making documents for the types of pest management problems they have.
- The subcommittee understands that these documents are examples of how the Departments make decisions and that they are current as of the date on the document.

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

- The decision making documents are a good approach. They help the Departments step back and think about what they are doing and consider alternatives. (CS)
- Cost breakdowns for treatment strategies should be included in the documents. (SJF)
- Michael Kent asked if there had been amendments to the decision making form since the Committee last saw it. The IPM Coordinator responded that the form is the same, but that not all of the questions are applicable to each situation/pest.

8. Review IPM Annual Report

The IPM Coordinator reviewed the report.

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

- This is a robust document. There are no questions that could not be answered by the report. (MF)
- The graphs and photos are a good addition. (TM, VG, SJF)
- The Public Works grazing study does not reflect the true cost of grazing in real life. The costs from actual implementation of grazing by Public Works across the County should be used. (CS)
- Grazing costs vary widely depending on many factors at the site, including the ease of access for goats, the availability of water for the goats, and whether the goats have to be moved around at the site. (ES)
- Grazing costs are overestimated and weed spray costs are underestimated. Is Public Works taking into account the cost of writing permits and training and licensing staff to spray herbicides? (SJF)
- It was unclear what costs were included in the grazing, mowing, and herbicide cost figures in the report since Joe Yee was not available to answer the question.
- Marj Leeds noted that the work of the 2 subcommittees appears to be converging.

A motion was made and seconded (CS/MF) to approve the report with the reservation that the chart on page 21 should be revised to indicate which costs are not included in the figures.

The motion passed: 5 in favor, 1 abstention (Scott Cashen abstained because he had not reviewed the report yet.)

9. Review IPM Advisory Committee Triennial Review Report for the Board of Supervisors

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

- There are unresolved issues that should be reported in Section VIII of the report. (SS and SJF. Written documents were provided to the Committee.)

- The Committee is an advisory body and not a decision making body. If the public feels that issues have not been resolved, the public can present their concerns to the County's Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee, and ultimately to the Board of Supervisors itself. (MK)
- Video or audio recording of meetings (a request from Parents for a Safer Environment) should be added to the Committee's agenda for discussion. (MK)

A motion was made and seconded (TM, SC) to list the 7 unresolved issues brought by Parents for a Safer Environment along with a report on how the Committee has addressed the issues and worked to resolve them.

The motion passed: 4 yeas (Cece Sellgren, Michael Fry, Scott Cashen, Tunyalee Martin), 2 nays (Marj Leeds and Michael Kent), and 1 abstention (Doug Freier, voting for the absent Michael Baefsky)

10. Review and vote on the issue of an IPM policy vs. an IPM ordinance

Scott Cashen thanked the Committee for entertaining his indecision at the last meeting and postponing a vote until this meeting. He said he had no further comments on the issue.

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

- Michael Fry appreciated the summary of information provided by the IPM Coordinator. He re-read the documents and remains convinced that an IPM policy is the way to go and that there is a considerable amount of supporting information.
- Doug Freier read through the documents and agrees with Michael Fry. He feels that the direction the Committee took was valid, and sees no benefit to an IPM ordinance.
- Susan JunFish presented written documents to the Committee expressing her opinions. She asked that County Counsel specifically address her concerns.
- Jill Ray from Supervisor Andersen's office noted that both of Susan JunFish's documents had been sent to County Counsel for review, and Counsel stood by their original opinion that the County should develop an IPM administrative bulletin to support the County's IPM policy. County administrative bulletins are enforceable on staff, have monetary components, and the option of other disciplinary action.
- Jerry Casey noted that Contra Costa County Counsel does sometimes provide opinions that are different from other counties.
- Susan JunFish asked that if the Committee rejects the idea of an IPM ordinance that it should do so because it believes that County staff are doing a good job. The Committee should not base their decision on the analysis by County Counsel.
- Tunyalee Martin and Scott Cashen noted that their opinions were not based on County Counsel's analysis. Tunyalee Martin said she had done her own research on the issue, including talking to other counties.
- Michael Kent expressed two reasons for opposing an IPM ordinance: 1) the way Contra Costa County directs staff is through administrative bulletins and 2) there is no compelling argument that an ordinance will provide the County with added value.

A motion was made and seconded (CS/MF) to follow the advice of County Counsel. Michael Fry made the following friendly amendment: The Committee has done its due diligence, there is ample justification to continue using the administrative bulletin, and that this supports the opinion of County Counsel.

The motion passed unanimously.

10. Plan agenda for next meeting—January 8

- Elect new officers
- Plan Committee work for the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator