

Minutes
Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee
May 7, 2014

Members Present: Carlos Agurto, Pestec; Jerry Casey, Public Works Facilities; Scott Cashen, Mt. Diablo Audubon; Terry Davis, Public Member At-Large; Doug Freier, Public Member At-Large; Vince Guise, Agriculture Department; Susan Heckly, County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Michael Kent, Health Services; Marj Leeds, Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board; Cece Sellgren, County Clean Water Program; Patti TenBrook, Public Member At-Large; Cheng Liao; Public Member Alternate; Allison Knapp for Joe Yee, Public Works

(13 members present/8 voting members)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Matt Slattengren, Agriculture Department; Peter Gollinger, Public Works; Jill Ray, Supervisor Andersen's office

Members of the Public: Stella McMillin, California Department of Fish and Wildlife; Susan JunFish, Michael Sullivan, Shirley Shelangoski, Parents for a Safer Environment

1. Introductions

2. Announcements

The IPM Coordinator asked to switch items 6 and 8 because Carlos Agurto had to leave the meeting early.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

There was none.

4. Approve minutes from March 5, 2014

Several amendments were made to the minutes.

A motion was made and seconded (MK/VG) to accept the minutes as amended.

The motion passed:

AYES: Cashen, Davis, Freier, Heckly, Kent, Sellgren, TenBrook

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Leeds

5. Hear presentation on anticoagulant rodenticides—California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Stella McMillin from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) provided the presentation (see attached). The following are some of the points that Ms. McMillin made during her talk:

- CDFW analyzes dead animals for rodenticide poisoning. The animals generally come from a wildlife rehabilitation center and are sent to the CDFW Wildlife Investigations Lab. Results from the lab are sent to the County Agricultural Commissioner and to USEPA. Counties not represented on the mortality list generally don't have active wildlife rehabilitation.
- It's not possible to determine when an animal was exposed to anticoagulants and it is hard to tease apart the effect of disease, nutrition, and pesticides.
- Raptors, foxes, and bobcats are the most common animals that have rodenticide poisoning.
- It had been 20 years since the Department had a case of strychnine poisoning, but now they are seeing a number of cases because of the new regulations making it difficult to get 1st generation rodenticides for use on field rodents.
- Mortalities from 1st generation anticoagulants (such as the diphacinone that the County uses for ground squirrel control) are not common though some exposure is documented.
- What they see in the lab is often a reflection of the sale and use of products in the field.

- Last year the lab saw the first kill from bromethalin. This was primary toxicity since bromethalin is not a concern for secondary poisoning.
- There have been experiments using 1st generation anticoagulants in a lesser dose combined with cholecalciferol; the combination appears to kill rodents faster and without as much chance of secondary toxicity to predators and scavengers.

Vince Guise noted that as part of the Agriculture Department's ground squirrel program, they are monitoring for dead ground squirrels and other rodents, such as mice. They have not found dead ground squirrels above ground and have not found dead mice.

Susan JunFish asked about CO₂ asphyxiation for ground squirrel control. Stella McMillin replied that CO₂ can kill everything that is in the ground squirrel burrow and that the technique needs to be evaluated.

8. Hear reports from the Agriculture and Public Works Departments

Public Works, Facilities Division-Carlos Agurto, Pestec

- There has been a bee hive in one of the olive trees at the Regional Medical Center for at least 3 years. This hive was left there last year because it was high enough that the bees' flight pattern was out of the way of any pedestrians. This year an arborist is coming to assess the safety and health of the tree because of its age and the cavity in which the bees have been nesting.
- This year there was a bee swarm in a conifer on the campus of the Regional Medical Center. Pestec collected the swarm and gave it to a nearby beekeeper.
- Pestec removed between 50 and 100 paper wasp (*Polistes* sp.) nests in Byron.
- Pestec performed some rodent-proofing near the Martinez Detention Facility loading dock, which has resulted in the immediate reduction of rodents getting into the building.
- Skunks were found at the West County Detention Facility along with mosquito larvae in a disused pond. Pestec used coyote urine and Critter Ridder (capsaicin) to move the skunk away from the facility. The mosquito larvae were reported to Vector Control.
- Other recent pest problems around the County have been Oriental roaches, some ants, and some mice.
- Pestec set up a motion detection camera on the roof of 651 Pine in downtown Martinez and saw at least one owl. The owls have been using the roof for at least 20 years.
- Carlos reported on his research into pumping sand into ground squirrel, or other rodent, burrows. The technique uses a quite a bit of water and sand and the equipment is bulky.

Agriculture Department, Vince Guise

See also the attached report.

- Ground squirrel work may start before July.
- The attached report contains a note reiterating that live trapping for ground squirrels does not work for the linear buffer the Department is creating along roads. Live trapping could be used in sensitive areas.
- The Department is finding new infestations of hoary cress and perennial pepperweed that they are trying to eradicate. They surmise these infestations are from contaminated hay, and it is hard to police the movement and cleanliness of hay.
- The azalea lacebug the Department found in a nursery shipment was treated with acephate.

Public Works, Vegetation Management Division, Peter Gollinger and Cece Sellgren

Peter Gollinger is now the new Vegetation Manager, replacing Ed Swan.

- Crews have been doing a small amount of weed spraying—fencelines, flood control channel access roads, and weeds in cracks at the airports
- There will be one more "high line" treatment in lower Walnut Creek Channel. High lining uses 2 trucks, one on either side of the creek, with a cable strung between the trucks. Piping with nozzles is hooked to the cable so that the crew can quickly spray the banks and onto the high flow area of the channel. The very bottom of the channel, or the low flow area where the water is, is not sprayed. This is a low volume application of between 10 to 20 gallons per acre.
- Mowing along access roads is continuing.

- Because of the drought and the extreme dryness of vegetation in the County, the fire marshal has moved the weed abatement completion date from July 4 to the end of May for East County, which is putting pressure on the Vegetation Management crews.
- The County will have 2 separate herds of goats (200-400 head/herd) working this year. On May 6 grazing started and the Division is increasing the number of sites where goats will be used.
- Cece Sellgren's grazing study will begin on June 2, and they will try to get the grazing done in one week.
- The Division is having good luck with perennial pepperweed in the Walnut Creek channel. At the end of October last year they treated with Renovate® (triclopyr) and have had hardly any resprouting. They have only seen seedlings.
- The drought and unusual pattern of rain this past season has changed weed germination periods, e.g., Russian thistle is germinating very early.
- *Dittrichia* (stinkwort) started in dry areas of the County and is now moving into wet areas.

6. Hear updates from the Decision-Making, Cost Accounting, and Transparency subcommittee

This item was not addressed because of lack of time.

7. IPM Coordinator report

- The IPM Coordinator investigated the rodent bait boxes at 651 Pine in Martinez, as requested by Susan JunFish. They were from Orkin (the County's previous contractor), not Clark Pest Control. They were empty and had been there since 2010 when Pestec took the County's contract. Pestec was asked to remove them, which they did.
- The IPM Coordinator spent a good deal of time working on subcommittee tasks.
- The IPM Coordinator also spent considerable time working with the Cities of El Cerrito and San Pablo and Beth Baldwin of the County Clean Water Program on IPM guidance documents for municipalities in Contra Costa County. The IPM Coordinator has written a structural pest management guide that includes how to hire a structural IPM contractor and examples of IPM contract language. She has also written a general landscape weed IPM guide. Stephen Prée of El Cerrito is developing guidance on turf IPM. The final documents will be put into a binder along with U.C. IPM Pest Notes and other fact sheets and distributed to the municipalities.
- At the end of September, the County's contract with Pestec will end, so the County must go out to bid for a contractor. The IPM Coordinator has been working with the Facilities Division to develop a request for proposal (RFP). The RFP is essentially the same as the one from 2009 and will be posted on May 15. Interviews will be in August.
- The IPM Coordinator gave an urban IPM presentation in San Mateo to about 100 people.
- U.C. Cooperative Extension was awarded a bed bug research grant which includes members of the Contra Costa Bed Bug Task Force as partners. Research will be conducted in both Southern California and in Contra Costa County in multi-family buildings to compare "traditional" bed bug treatments with an IPM approach. Pestec will be one of the companies offering IPM for bed bugs.
- The City of Concord is piloting a procedure for addressing bed bug complaints in apartment buildings in the city. Both the County's Environmental Health Division and the IPM Coordinator assisted in developing the procedure.
- The Environmental Health Division put on a training session for their staff who will perform bed bug inspections as part of Concord's procedure. Code enforcement officers from throughout the County also attended.
- The County's bed bug prevention protocol for homeless shelters continues to be successful at the County's 2 homeless shelters. There have been no bed bug infestations for almost 2 years.

10. Plan agenda for next meeting

- Presentation on one of the priority topics that were identified at the beginning of the year, depending on what the IPM coordinator can arrange
- Updates from the Departments

- Updates from the subcommittees

Respectfully submitted,
Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator