

Minutes
Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee
September 3, 2014

Members Present: Carlos Agurto, Pestec; Jerry Casey, Public Works Facilities; Scott Cashen, Mt. Diablo Audubon; Doug Freier, Public Member At-Large; Chad Godoy, 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

(11 members present/7 voting members—8 when Cece Sellgren arrived)

Members Absent: Terry Davis, Public Member At-Large; Joe Yee, Public Works

Staff Present: Jill Ray, Supervisor Andersen's office

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

1. Introductions

Chair Cece Sellgren was not present when the meeting began, so Vice Chair Patti TenBrook chaired the meeting.

2. Announcements

There were none.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

Shirley Shelangoski and Susan JunFish were absent when the meeting began.

It was moved and seconded to address this item at the end of the meeting (MK/DF)

The motion was approved unanimously:

AYES: Cashen, Freier, Heckly, Kent, Leeds, TenBrook, Liao

NOES: None

ABSENT: Davis, Sellgren

ABSTAIN: None

4. Approve minutes from July 2, 2014

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

The motion passed unanimously:

AYES: Cashen, Freier, Heckly, Kent, Leeds, TenBrook, Liao

NOES: None

ABSENT: Sellgren, Davis

ABSTAIN: None

5. Hear reports and recommendations from the Decision-Making, Cost Accounting, and Transparency subcommittees

Decision-Making subcommittee

Since Terry Davis, the subcommittee chair, was absent, the IPM Coordinator presented the subcommittee's report (see attached).

Comments from the Committee included the following:

- There was much discussion in the subcommittee about how the least toxic approach was determined. (MK)
- The documents are great, easy to read. They could easily be used to train a technician. (CA)
- Going through this process was an excellent exercise. (DF)

Comments from the Public included the following:

- The Agriculture Department treats artichoke thistles on Mulholland Ridge with glyphosate. The Department should try painting glyphosate on the thistles. Digging out artichoke thistles is very feasible. The Department should try using Cub Scouts to dig them out. (SJ)

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Decision Making subcommittee report. (SC/SH)

The motion carried unanimously:

AYES: Cashen, Freier, Heckly, Kent, Leeds, TenBrook, Liao

NOES: None

ABSENT: Sellgren, Davis

ABSTAIN: None

Cost Accounting subcommittee

Marj Leeds, chair, presented the report (see attached) and noted that the costs of management are very dependent on the site plus a large array of factors. This makes figuring costs a complex task.

- The committee did not find systematic, programmatic changes that would be beneficial to all sites.
- The amount of herbicide used in the County landscapes is small and wouldn't change significantly with changes the Committee researched.
- Energy, water, and maintenance are much more costly than herbicide applications.
- The biggest bang for the County's buck would be to change people's expectations for what County landscaping should look like.
- The committee concluded that artificial turf was not the answer.

Comments from the Committee and staff included the following:

- The County animal shelter installed artificial turf in their animal yard when they could not afford to maintain living turf. For them it is much easier to maintain. (JC)
- Kevin Lachapelle, the Grounds Manager, was extremely helpful in explaining the complexities and challenges of maintaining County grounds. (MK)
- There are opportunities to make changes in new landscaping and landscapes being renovated to move in the direction of lower maintenance, and lower water, energy, and chemical use. (DF)
- The County is doing just that with all new landscaping. (JR)

Comments from and the public included the following:

- Parents for a Safer Environment (PfSE) requests that the Department re-address maintenance and herbicide spraying costs and make sure to include labor, permits, and the cost of staff to work with the Water Board regarding pesticide use. (SJ)

Note: Cece Sellgren arrived at this point and took over chairing the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Cost Accounting subcommittee report. (PT/SC)

The motion carried unanimously:

AYES: Cashen, Freier, Heckly, Kent, Leeds, Sellgren, TenBrook, Liao

NOES: None

ABSENT: Davis

ABSTAIN: None

Transparency subcommittee

Patti TenBrook, chair, reported presented the report.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Transparency subcommittee report. (ML/SH)

Michael Kent introduced a friendly amendment adding a phrase to the report (see attached). Marj Leeds agreed to accept the friendly amendment.

Comments from the Committee included the following:

- Data requested by PfSE on pesticide use on roads, real property, and flood control channels is available for PfSE in the Maintstar report that was given to them at one of the Transparency committee meetings. Public Works is recording that data by activity code and it is available for the County to use if it finds the need. (DF)
- The County is not obligated to create, for public records requests, reports that do not already exist. (CL, JR)
- Cheng Liao thanked the chair of the Transparency subcommittee for clarifying what transparency in government means.
- Public comment is appreciated, but it needs to be specific about when the issue occurred, where it occurred, and who was involved. The public can always go to the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee or the full Board of Supervisors if they are not satisfied with results from committees. (CL)

The motion, with its friendly amendment, carried unanimously:

AYES: Cashen, Freier, Heckly, Kent, Leeds, Sellgren, TenBrook, Liao

NOES: None

ABSENT: Davis

ABSTAIN: None

6. IPM Coordinator report

Over the last two months the IPM Coordinator

- Spent the majority of her time on committee work—researching various topics, writing documents and reports, and staffing the committees.
- Coordinated the proposal review and interviews for the County’s structural IPM contractor. Six companies submitted proposals, three companies were interviewed, and Pestec was awarded the contract.
- Arranged to have Dr. Igor Laćan, U.C. Cooperative Extension Urban Horticulture Advisor, speak on maintaining landscapes during drought. Eighteen County Public Works staff attended (from Administration, Grounds, Special Districts, and the County Clean Water Program) along with two City of Danville staff.
- Provided a bed bug awareness presentation to the residents of a senior living facility in Danville.
- As part of the City of Concord’s pilot for addressing bed bug complaints in apartment buildings, accompanied the County Environmental Health Inspectors on their second bed bug inspection in Concord.
- Chaired the quarterly meeting of the County’s Bed Bug Task Force.
- Began work as a partner on the grant secured by the University of California to compare “conventional” bed bug treatments with an IPM approach.

The IPM Coordinator announced that Scott Cashen’s term as the Environmental Organization representative on the Committee will end on December 31, 2014. Advertising for applicants will begin in mid-September.

7. Discuss the IPM Annual Report

The IPM Coordinator will work with the Departments to prepare the Annual Report and will bring a draft to the next meeting. The report will be presented to the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee in December.

8. Hear reports from the Agriculture and Public Works Departments

Public Works, Facilities Division-Carlos Agurto, Pestec and Jerry Casey, Facilities

- Pestec performed extensive rodent proofing at the Martinez Detention Facility.
- A dead animal smell at a Richmond child care facility turned out to be two dead rats in the ceiling.
- There were 10 call backs in August, mostly for ants, and there were 14 new deficiencies in the month.

- Pestec regularly inspects around 200 County buildings. The remainder are visited if complaints are called in.

Public Works, Grounds Division

Michael Kent noted that he is close to securing a grant to help landscape companies purchase electric equipment, such as lawn mowers, blowers, and trimmers. He would like to involve the Grounds crew as well as private companies. The Grounds Division has already researched purchasing electric equipment and is very interested. The electric equipment is lighter and less noisy and produces less pollution and vibration.

Agriculture Department, Chad Godoy

- The Department is working on its annual financial report for the state.
- In the ground squirrel program, they are following the improved procedure from last year.
- The Department is looking at making changes in the noxious weed program.
 - They will not be taking on new weed projects, but will try to maintain what was previously achieved.
 - Constraints on working on private land are increasing. The Department would like to see lessees have better management plans and do more of their own weed work.
 - The Department has been meeting with its weed partners, the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the Resource Conservation District, to develop a new plan for the future.
 - The Agriculture Department will probably take on a more advisory role, but they will continue to survey for “A” rated noxious weeds and perform identification.

3. Public comment on items not on the agenda

Susan JunFish mentioned the following:

- Even organic products can kill bees if they are exposed to them.
- Dr. Eric Mussen mentioned adjuvants in his slides on the current state of honeybees. She is concerned about the adjuvants used by the County.
- The County should consider using the EPA terms for carcinogens in the Decision Making documents.
- She thanked Pestec for not broadcast spraying.

9. Plan agenda for next meeting

- Review IPM Annual Report
- Set priorities for next year
- Look at staggering terms of members so they do not all expire at once
- Updates from the Departments

Respectfully submitted,
Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator

Report of the Decision-Making Subcommittee to the Contra Costa County IPM Committee.

Prepared by Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator September 2014

Members

Carlos Agurto
Terry Davis—chair
Doug Freier
Vince Guise/Chad Godoy
Michael Kent
Cece Sellgren

The Decision-Making Subcommittee met five times in 2014: February 24, March 17, May 19, July 21, and August 11.

In conjunction with the Departments, the subcommittee discussed which pests or pest management situations should be documented this year.

Decision-making documents were developed for

- Japanese knotweed (Agriculture Department)
- Artichoke thistle (Agriculture Department)
- Purple starthistle (Agriculture Department)
- Weed management on Buchanan and Byron Airports (Public Works)

The subcommittee reviewed each document with the appropriate Department and made requests for a number of changes, clarifications, and improvements. Some of the improvements that were added are as follows:

- A box for the question, “Is there a well head nearby?”
- A statement under “Possible herbicide choices” that indicates that the Department has used research, experience, consultation with colleagues, and review of pesticide labels to determine which options it considers effective and economical.
- An additional statement under “Possible herbicide choices” that indicates that herbicide choices are always under review to find more effective and less hazardous products.
- An indication of the signal word on the label of each pesticide and an explanation of what a signal word is.
- Information about adjuvants and why they are added to the herbicide mix.
- Maps where possible and appropriate.

It was decided that any improvements would be added to documents going forward, and previous documents would be updated in the future. Decision-making documents are considered current as of the date on the document.

Report of the Cost Accounting Subcommittee to the Contra Costa County IPM Committee.

Prepared by Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator September 2014

Members

Vince Guise/Matt Slattengren/Chad Godoy
Susan Heckly
Michael Kent
Allison Knapp/Joe Yee
Marj Leeds—Chair
Cece Sellgren

The Cost Accounting Subcommittee met five times in 2014: February 20, March 18, April 15, June 17, and August 19.

After considerable discussion during the first two meetings about the areas on which to focus the committee's attention, the committee agreed to investigate the cost of a long-term transition to more sustainable landscaping around County buildings that would require less maintenance, energy and water, and minimal or no pesticide use. The committee researched the costs of turf vs. ornamentals and the cost of artificial turf. Over the 5 meetings, the committee learned the following:

- The Grounds Division uses most of its herbicide on the Marsh Creek Firing Range where they must maintain bare ground because of fire and other safety regulations.
- The Grounds Division has quite a diverse portfolio of landscapes around County buildings as well as other sites to maintain—over 100 sites. It is extremely difficult to make generalizations about County landscapes because they are so varied, and the amount of funding is so different from one site to another.
- When Kevin Lachapelle took the position as Grounds Manager, he made the decision to stop using insecticides, miticides, or fungicides. The Grounds Crew tries to keep the landscapes healthy enough that these pests are not a problem, but if plants succumb to damage from insects, mites or fungus, they are removed.
- The Grounds Division uses only herbicides, and the majority of the herbicide is Roundup® (glyphosate) that is used in spot treatments around County buildings. These spot treatments are primarily in cracks and crevices in pavement. Cracks can be sealed in pavement, but this is expensive, has environmental consequences, and will always provide spaces for soil to collect and allow weeds to germinate. Pre-emergent herbicides are no longer used around buildings, so the amount of pre-emergent used is small.
- The Grounds Division has been de-landscaping buildings and medians (and covering the soil with mulch where feasible) over the last few years because of lack of funds for maintenance. Summit Center on Arnold Drive in Martinez is one site where this has been used extensively.
- Artificial turf is costly to install (around \$25K for 1000 sq ft). Conversion to artificial turf would entail the substantial use of herbicide to kill any vegetation at the site. Artificial turf is a petroleum product, it still uses some water (for cleaning), it must be vacuumed and raked, weeds can grow on top of it when enough soil accumulates, in the summer it can increase the heat in the immediate vicinity, and it could pose environmental problems at the end of its life. In the best case, the return on investment is 20 years.
- Artificial turf might be appropriate at sites with tiny, odd-shaped pieces of turf that are difficult and expensive to maintain, if there is some pressing reason the turf is needed. Artificial turf has been used at some Head Start sites where they like to use it for play areas.
- The costs of maintaining different kinds of landscapes is complicated:
 - So much depends on the site, how it is planted, and with what.
 - Formal ornamental plantings with high water needs and fast-growing plants can take just as much or more water and maintenance as a similar area of turf.
 - Informal plantings with moderate water-use plants need less maintenance and water.
 - Informal plantings with drought-tolerant plants use much less water and need less maintenance.

- If plants are chosen properly (right plant/right place) and are planted properly (enough room for each plant to reach its natural size), they can be left alone and require maintenance perhaps only 2 times per year.
- Drought tolerant plants will need water for around 3 years to get established, but then should be able to make it on their own (although in severe drought, they may need supplemental water)
- Other factors contribute to the cost of maintenance:
 - Deferring plant maintenance (which the County started doing during the recession) can greatly increase maintenance time when the decision is made to resume maintenance. Often plants have grown into a jungle that can take a huge amount of work to tame, and the site looks unattractive once the work is done.
 - Overplanted sites take much more maintenance and water because there are more plants to maintain, and often more kinds of plants that must be treated differently.
 - Plants in the wrong place increase maintenance—for example, if plants are too close together or too close to the building or the sidewalk, they will need constant pruning.
 - No-mow turf that is allowed to go dormant during the summer can use much less water and need much less maintenance, but people will have to accept brown grass in summer.
 - Old irrigation systems need much more maintenance because there are so many more problems as they age.
 - Drip irrigation can require much more attention than traditional sprinklers because the lines are delicate and vulnerable to vandalism, chewing from animals, clogging, or being accidentally cut by shovels or other tools.
- Determining the maintenance costs and herbicide use on any particular County site would be time consuming and would have to be done by hand. The Public Works accounting system would be unable to produce such a report electronically, and the data available in current reports are not suited to understanding the cost of maintenance, water, and equipment.
- People’s expectations for the kind of landscapes around County buildings, and the way those landscapes will look, need to change.
- There are many County sites with dead and dying plant material. These are prime sites to examine for re-landscaping with drought-tolerant plants. The irrigation systems at those sites are designed for the old plant material, and the cost of fixing the irrigation would have to be factored in.

Suggestions from the committee

- The County could look for opportunities to change people’s expectations regarding landscaping:
 - People cannot expect perfect turf, or any turf.
 - People cannot expect County landscapes to be weed-free.
 - During the dry season, and especially during times of drought, people cannot expect lush, green landscapes.
- The Grounds Division could find opportunities to educate building occupants and citizens, for instance, by using a sign at de-landscaped sites or areas with brown turf explaining that the County is saving water in time of severe drought.
- The County could consider developing a strategic plan for sustainable landscapes around County buildings.
- The County could adopt a policy specifying that any new landscapes that are created or any landscapes that are renewed should be planted with drought-tolerant plants that are appropriate to the site and planted with minimizing water use and lowering maintenance in mind. The policy would have to be general enough to accommodate the diverse uses of County landscapes.
- Since we are in the midst of a several year drought and the prospect for ample rain this winter is poor, this is not the time to begin extensive renovation projects.

Report of the Transparency Subcommittee to the Contra Costa County IPM Committee.

Prepared by Patti TenBrook, September 2014

Members

Cheng Laio
Vince Guise/Chad Godoy
Scott Cashen
Cece Sellgren
Patti TenBrook—chair

The Transparency Subcommittee met four times in 2014: February 26, April 2, June 4, and August 6. Three main topics were addressed:

- 1) **Demonstration of the new pesticide use posting website.** At the April 2 meeting, Dan Jordan of Public Works demonstrated the web site. He noted that Public Works is hosting the website and currently there is no way for the Grounds Division, Pestec, or the Agriculture Department to add information. As of the last Transparency Subcommittee meeting on August 6, the website was not live.
- 2) **Separating Public Works pesticide use reports.** Parents for a Safer Environment (PfSE) had requested that Public Works divide their Pesticide Use Reports that are submitted to the California Department of Pesticide Regulation into use on roads, flood control channels, and real property. For a number of years, up until FY 2011-12, Public works had submitted 3 separate hard copy use reports each month under these 3 categories. This separation is not required by the state, and [reporting separately](#) serves no practical purpose for the Department. Pesticide use reports are now submitted electronically, and it is not possible to separate the data with the new reporting system. Vince Guise, Agricultural Commissioner, suggested that he could issue 3 separate permit numbers to Public Works if they wanted to continue to separate the data. Public Works has no need to separate the data on the Pesticide Use Reports, and it would entail extra work for their very limited staff and would serve no practical purpose for the Department. Reformatting of information is not required for public records requests.

Although Public Works does not separate pesticide use on the Pesticide Use Reports, they collect separate data. Every time a crew goes out, data regarding when, where, and how much pesticide is applied are entered into Maintstar, the Department's computerized maintenance management system, which is a work planning tool. Pesticide use information is collected by 4 different "Activity Codes" for weed spraying:

- a. Access (access roads along creek channels)
- b. Creek (banks of creeks and flood control channels)
- c. Aquatic (herbicides used for weeds growing in the water)
- d. Road (County roads other than those along channels)

Joe Yee provided PfSE a copy of a 72-page Maintstar report on pesticides used in calendar year 2013 by the Public Works Road and Flood Control Maintenance Division. The report divides pesticide use by the Activity Codes mentioned above.

Maintstar records the name of the pesticide used and the quantity but cannot report on the units for that quantity. It was not intended as a pesticide use reporting program.

The subcommittee would like to hear back from PfSE as to whether this report meets their needs.

- 3) **Process for addressing public concerns.** Jill Ray of Supervisor Andersen's office explained to the subcommittee that the IPM Advisory Committee takes concerns from the public at each meeting, and frequently works on them. If the public brings concerns that are not on the meeting agenda, the Committee can ask staff to research the topic and report to the Committee, and/or the Committee can add the topic to a future Committee agenda for discussion. The IPM Coordinator reports to the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee (TWIC) about IPM Committee activities and public comment is allowed before and

after that report. The Supervisors may direct the IPM Coordinator to do certain things and report back to TWIC, or they may ask the IPM Committee to review or work on an issue. Some issues might only be heard before TWIC; others might go to the full Board. The public is not always satisfied, but the Board of Supervisors is the final decision-making body. The Public can always go to the full Board of Supervisors with their concerns.

Jill Ray also noted that in regard to the IPM ordinance vs. policy/administrative bulletin issue, both TWIC and the full Board of Supervisors were kept informed and followed the issue. The Board has accepted the IPM Administrative Bulletin and has not asked for more research on an ordinance. In Contra Costa County, Administrative Bulletins are the law.

The committee discussed the meaning of “transparency” and, based on that discussion, has drafted a short reference document for IPM Committee participants (members, staff, and public). The document is attached to this report. It is intended as a reminder of why transparency is important, what is required by law, and what the CC County IPM Program is doing to implement those requirements.



Transparency for Contra Costa County IPM Program

Laws and Ordinances

California Public Records Act: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=gov&group=06001-07000&file=6250-6270>

Brown Act: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=gov&group=54001-55000&file=54950-54963>

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=gov&group=11001-12000&file=11120-11132>

Sunshine Amendment (Article I, Section 3(b)): http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/const/article_1

Contra Costa County Better Government Ordinance: <http://firstamendmentcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Contra-Costa-Ordinance.pdf>

Contra Costa County Administrative Bulletin: Public Access to County Records:
http://64.166.146.155/docs/2009/BOS/20090602_70/1209_ADMIN%20BULL%20120%20PUBLIC%20RECORDS%20ACT%206-1-09.pdf

Transparency tools used by the CCC IPM Program:

- 1) IPM Committee and Subcommittees
- 2) IPM Plans
- 3) IPM Program documentation of response to public concerns
- 4) Website: <http://cchealth.org/ipm/>
 - a. Policies
 - b. Reports in friendly formats
 - c. Meeting agendas and minutes
- 5) E-mail
- 6) Public meetings
- 7) IPM Decision documents
- 8) Posting at application sites
- 9) Responding to public records requests
- 10) In the works: posting website