



1517 Broadway Suite 101

Phone: 308-633-1264

Scottsbluff, NE 69361

Fax: 308-632-7671

highplainsweed@allophone.com

www.hpwma.org

High Plains Weed Management Association

Board Meeting Minutes: August 14, 2008

1. **Call to order** - The August 14, 2008 meeting of the High Plains Weed Management Association was called to order by President Jeff Schledewitz at 1:30 p.m. Those in attendance included: Terry McCord, Owen Walker, Gerald Davis, Emily Munter, Dan Weinreis, Jeff Schledewitz, Verlin Bruns, Kay Grote, Mike Marker, and Robin Lapaseotes.

Technical Advisors in attendance included: Georgette Jordening, Curtis Cloud, Nick Sanderson and Dallas Johannsen.

Staff in attendance included: Dennis Beyer, Project Manager; Roy Lyles, Field Coordinator; and Jennifer Rogers.

Guests in attendance included: Jason Rust and Robin Rust from Rust Enterprises.

2. **Minutes:** The previous meeting's minutes (July 10, 2008) were reviewed. Motion made by Kay Grote to accept the July 10, 2008 minutes as presented; Gerald Davis seconded. Motion carried - unanimous

3. **Treasurer's Report:** Everyone went over the Treasurer's Report. Deposits included: \$500.00 from Deuel County, \$649.62 from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, \$6,187.50 from BASF, \$500.00 from DuPont, \$460.00 from Scotts Bluff County Treasurer, \$283.00 from JG Elliott, \$2,500.00 from DOW.

Expenses included: \$1,276.36 to Van Diest, \$122.01 to Cyclone Express Mart, \$80.26 to Connecting Point, \$518.00 to Smith, Snyder, Petitt & Wallien, \$60.20 to Allo Communications, \$5,469.62 to Van Diest, \$518.85 to Panhandle Acceptance Company, \$517.50 to Scotts Bluff County Weed Control, \$2,066.40 to Garden County Weed Authority, \$13,000.00 to Blackshirt LLC, \$10,400.00 to Blackshirt LLC, \$466.13 to Visa bill, \$160.00 to Scotts Bluff County Fair, \$25.00 to the Morrill County Fair, and \$65.48 to USPS. The ending balance as of August 14, 2008 was \$107,947.83.

Motion to accept the August 14, 2008 Treasurer's Report by Owen Walker; seconded by Verlin Bruns. Motion carried - unanimous.



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Bills for Approval. Everyone went through the bills-to-be-paid. The only addition included a payment to H&S Habitat for \$18,281.48. Motion to pay the “Bills for Approval” as presented made by Gerald Davis; seconded by Terry McCord. Motion carried – unanimous.

Bid Opening 2:00 p.m. – At 2:00 p.m., Project Manager Dennis Beyer opened the two bids that were received for the project along the North Platte River #LB-MC-56-2008.

First bid: PlatteTracks located in Lexington, NE. Plattetracks has the following equipment available for ground work on Section III of the project: a marshmaster, amphibious machine, and a supply pickup. Bidding only on section three (Garden County), but they can come up the stream if they need to. Total cost: \$750 an hour.

Second Bid: Sky Copters, Dan Lyles located in Ulysses, KS. Sky Copters is bidding this along with Rust Enterprises in order to provide aerial and ground equipment. Phragmites and SaltCedar and phragmites ground spray bid: \$175/hour.

Aerial saltcedar spray and leave stand: \$2300/hour

Motion made for Jeff, Dennis and Roy to rank the bids according to the Bid Selection Criteria sheet to then be presented to the Executive Committee for final approval by Gerald Davis; seconded by Mike Motion. Motion carried.

Motion made for Jeff, Dennis and Roy to rank the bids according to the Bid Selection Criteria sheet to then be presented to the Executive Committee for final approval on the chemical bid process which is underway right now by Mike Marker; seconded by Terry McCord. Motion carried – unanimous.

4. Reports:

a. Project Manager Report – Recently Sky Copters was able to complete some aerial mapping work for High Plains along the river in which they were able to GPS and give reports on all by Garden County. Curtis Cloud was able to ride along in the helicopter one day and got some really great pictures of what the infestation is like.

There are currently five contractors that are working, and another one will begin on Monday. We are still receiving applications almost daily and have a lot of inquiries. So far, all of the landowners’ projects that have been completed have been more than satisfied with the results. There are a couple of projects around Henry that were done the first of June, and things are looking really great, and the grass is growing back in.



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On July 22, BASF came up to Scottsbluff with Dr. Jeff Burke – from North Carolina - who writes the sets and writes the restrictions for their products. They held a meeting with the irrigation districts, regarding about the chemical Habitat. There are some restrictions regarding Habitat being used in and around the irrigation season, in that you cannot put habitat 120 days before the start of the season through the end of the season. Basically what this means is that extra caution will have to be taken by our contractors to ensure that we don't violate the one-part-per-billion restriction for getting chemical in the water. It's very important for the contractors to not get close to the water, and stay far enough back from the edge. Since the irrigation season in our area is longer due to the sugar beet crop, we can't wait for the season to end otherwise we might not have any time to get work done before the first freeze.

On August 27th, the Platte River Partners are going to meet in Ogallala, which will be a group of interested individuals involved in invasive species from Nebraska and the surrounding states. The idea for the group began with the Summit (the Nebraska-Wyoming Task Force), in which obviously High Plains was a big part of. Colorado now wants to be a part of the group in order to see what sort of coordinated efforts can be accomplished. There was over \$11,000 left over from the Summit to be used for the next time. This will be an organizational meeting and at least Dennis, and possibly Jeff and Roy will attend.

On August 20th, the Natural Resources Committee from the Nebraska legislature is going to have a hearing at the Harms Center at 7:00 p.m. dealing with surface water irrigation and return flows. This will be very beneficial to attend. There is also a hearing on the 19th in Chadron and Alliance. Representatives from High Plains will be attending and will probably address the group regarding what role we will play and give any additional information they need. One of the bills they're looking at is invasive species effect on return flow. At 8:00 a.m. on the 21st, six of the senators and maybe one more will be going on a tour being put on by Dennis Stroud from Pathfinder Irrigation District and Tom Haden DNR. One of the stops will be a High Plains project that has been completed near Henry. This tour will be very important for most of the senators who may not have a lot of knowledge on these issues.

Gerald asked how the chemical restrictions may affect treating regrowth of Russian Olive along the water. Jeff said that as long as contractors are very careful and that there's not a lot of overspray or spray in the water, then things should be fine. The helicopter can also spray during the irrigation season as long as they leave a buffer so as to ensure that the chemical isn't going into the water. Dallas wondered if there was any way that an agreement could be made with the Districts to shut down early. Kay was wondering how many of the contractors are from the local area? Dennis reported that all of the contractors all from Nebraska and the local area. She also



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suggested putting these Field Reports on the website in order for landowners or contractors to learn these same things.

b. Field Coordinator Report – Roy has been focusing on coordinating contractors, landowners and other agencies in order to get them to all meet and discuss upcoming projects and how we can all work together to get them accomplished. He has also been making a point of stopping in on job sites unannounced in order to see how things are going. We've really been able to do a lot of piggybacking on with other funding in order to really stretch our dollars. When a project is finished, Roy meets with the landowner, and they do a joint inspection to make sure everything was completed to everyone's satisfaction. Also, if there are any projects along the tributaries or any other areas outside of the North Platte in the outlying counties to be sure to let us know about them. If anyone ever wants to go out on site visits with Roy, he's more than happy to take board members or interested parties along. Gerald reported that he's been hearing really great things about Scott Chase with H&S Habitat and the work they've been doing.

There have been some discussions about the piles and what is going to be done with them, and there are some people interested in bringing in some chippers if we'll give them the byproduct. The landowners all seem to be interested in that. Emily said there was some discussion at previous meeting and one of the subcommittees that was discussed was a committee to find some outlets for the chips. It might be beneficial for the Byproduct Committee to officially form and see if they can put together a package of options for the contractors who are interested. The Byproduct Committee will consist of Georgette Jordening, Curtis Cloud, Jeff Schledewitz, Dennis Beyer and possibly Doak Nickerson.

c. Communications Committee Report - Emily gave a brief update of the committee. They held a conference call on July 18 with everyone that is involved and they discussed the weed watch publication (designated people to write six articles), red cedar and making sure that landowners are aware of the fact that our current funding doesn't cover it, and how we can educate landowners more overall. The committee developed a landowner list of those along the river so we can do targeted mailings. A postcard was sent out to let them know about the in-channel work. High Plains also had a good presence and informational booths at most of the area fairs, in which we had displays and printed materials for people to take. The committee also talked about future activities including newsletters, posters, flyers and a greater effort to engage the local media. The committee plans to have at least monthly meetings.

d. Legislative Committee – Included in the meeting packets was an email to the board from John Berge stating that he is requesting a temporary leave of absence because he has been asked to head up the Barack Obama campaign in Nebraska, so he will be in Omaha for the next



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three months doing that. Jennifer will keep him updated through email on everything that High Plains is doing during his absence. Kay Grote reported that the committee (John, Kay and Dennis) met on July 17. John provided a lot of information to them, and the committee decided that the main focus needed to be modifying LB 701 so that this area's needs and priorities are taken into consideration as well. The committee also discussed pursuing funding for the use of byproducts and the benefits of putting together a local presentation for chambers or local businesses in order to engage them a little better. Kay received a call this morning at the NRD office from a reporter at Star Herald on legislative hearings Dennis discussed; they will be in Chadron on 19th; and in Alliance on the 20th where they will be discussing LR 291 and LR 288. On 20th at the Harms Center LR 366 will be introduced By Senator Christiansen; LR 286 and LR 377 will also be discussed.

5. Old business

a. Insurance – The full insurance package is now in place and in hand at the office. If anyone is in need of a copy, they can contact Jennifer.

b. Density Classifications – Dennis, Roy and Jeff were able to work in conjunction with the contractors and landowners to have the density classification system and prices in place. They are currently being used on the projects that are underway.

c. Irrigation Districts Meeting – See “Project Manager’s Report.”

d. Weed Watch Articles – See “Communications Committee Report”

6. New business

a. Conflict of Interest Policy – Jennifer presented a draft copy of a Conflict of Interest Policy for the board to consider adopting. The issue came up when she was putting together the organization's IRS 501c3 application. A motion was made by Mike Marker to accept the Conflict of Interest Policy as presented; seconded by Verlin Bruns. Motion carried – unanimous.

b. Authorized Signers – There are currently two signers on the High Plains Weed Management account, one of them being Owen Walker, which makes it inconvenient at times since he lives out of town. It would be nice to have a local signer for the day-to-day items that the Executive Committee handles in between the board meetings. Motion made by Gerald Davis to approve Dennis Beyer as the third signer on the High Plains Weed Management Association account; seconded by Dan Weinreis. Motion carried – unanimous.

c. Petty Cash – It would be beneficial to have a small amount of cash around the office for supplies, stamps, etc in order to not have to waste a check. Motion made by Verlin Bruns to



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approve having \$100 in petty cash for office use; seconded by Gerald Davis. Motion carried – unanimous.

d. HPWMA Dues – Last year, when the group formed, a \$500 membership fee was put in place and set for a two-year time period. At the time there were no other funds in place, so it was used as a bit of a start-up fund. The organization still has its original members of the eight counties and the two local NRDs, but the board needs to decide whether it would be beneficial to continue to have membership fees or to waive them indefinitely. Motion made by Terry McCord to waive any upcoming membership dues by current or future members; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion carried – unanimous.

e. Memberships/Registrations – Dennis reported that there are a few organizations that he believes the board should consider joining in order to be involved with invasive species issues on a regional and national level including: North American Weed Management Association (\$65.00); the Missouri River Coalition (no fee at this time); and the Tamarisk Coalition (\$100.00). NAWMA is also having their next conference in Billings, MT which might be beneficial to attend. The meeting registration is \$170 for a member by the early registration deadline. Mike Marker asked how many people Dennis thinks we should send, and Dennis believes it would be beneficial to send Roy, Jeff and himself. Motion made by Mike Marker to become members of the three previously-mentioned organizations; seconded by Verlin Bruns. Motion carried – unanimous.

Motion made by Terry McCord to send up to four people to the NAWMA Conference in Billings, MT.; seconded by Gerald Davis. Kay Grote questioned whether there would be a lot more benefit in sending and paying for four people to attend as it would for only one or two to go. Kay would also like to make a recommendation that if there are multiple people going, then it's very important for them to come back and not only give presentations to this board but to other local groups as well. Robin Lapaseotes questioned what the total cost might be to send multiple people, and Dennis estimates that since it's in Montana, the three of them could probably go for \$1,000 to \$1,500. Motion carried by majority; two nay votes (Kay Grote and Robin Lapaseotes).

f. Mailings – Jennifer wanted the group to look into whether it might be beneficial to sign up through stamps.com for their mailings. Dallas Johannsen said they use it at the NRCS office and there are some obvious positives and negatives. The group decided to try the free four-week trial and then make a final determination at the next meeting.

g. Video Services – item tabled until the next meeting.



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Robin Lapaseotes had a question on thistles, and she wanted to make sure that it is being addressed. It is the responsibility of all of the local weed superintendents to make sure that the landowner is getting them taken care of since they are a Nebraska noxious weed.

Kay Grote asked if there was a report from the Water Tour that two of the group members were supposed to attend. Dennis reported that unfortunately Dr. Burke was only able to come for the irrigation meeting on the scheduled day of the tour. They would have liked to send someone else, but since it was a last minute change, there wasn't time for security and everything to go through, and the Chamber wasn't able to refund the registration money.

7. Next meeting time and date –The next meeting will be held Thursday, September 11 at 1:30 p.m. at the Bluffs Business Center.

8. Adjournment – Motion made by Terry McCord to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Emily Munter. Motion carried – unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.