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High Plains Weed Management Association

Board Meeting Minutes: July 10, 2008

The July 10, 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: Kay Grote, Secretary; Emily Munter, Vice-President; Jeff Schledewitz, President; John Berge; Mike Marker; Verlin Bruns; Owen Walker, Treasurer; and Terry McCord.

Technical Advisors in attendance included: Nick Sanderson, Curtis Cloud, Georgette Jordening, Dallas Johannsen, Brian Hiatt, Justin Shaw, Terry Raymer, and Cris Burks.

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

Guests in attendance included: Doug Haller, Dan Lyle, Carol Lyle, and Ted Bethel.

2. Minutes: The previous meeting's minutes (June 18, 2008) were reviewed. Motion made by Mike Marker to accept the June 18, 2008 minutes as presented; Verlin Bruns seconded. Motion carried - unanimous

3. Treasurer's Report: Everyone went over the Treasurer's Report. Deposits included: \$250.00 from Anthony Parra (landowner cost-share); \$28,388.90 from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. Total deposits were \$28,638.90.

Expenses included: \$269.31 to the Gering Civic Center; \$6,082.34 to Van Diest; \$604.76 to Deuel County Weed Control; \$16.50 to Jennifer Rogers; \$171.35 to The Business Farmer; \$10,000.00 to Panhandle RC&D; \$145.00 to the Prairie Winds Community Center; \$260.00 to the Scottsbluff/Gering Chamber of Commerce; \$131.30 to Cyclone Express Mart; \$16.50 to USPS; and \$8,989.00 to JG Elliott Co. Total expenses were \$26,686.06, and with a balance correction of \$41.10 for a miscalculation on the June Treasurer's Report, the ending balance was \$131,613.52.

Motion to accept the July 10, 2008 Treasurer's Report by Kay Grote; seconded by Emily Munter. Motion carried - unanimous.

Bills for Approval. Everyone went through the bills-to-be-paid. Motion to pay the "Bills for Approval" as presented made by Verlin Bruns; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion carried – unanimous.



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4. Reports:

a. Project Manager Report – Dennis Beyer went through a couple of pictures from projects that have recently started. The pictures were taken on June 23, because salt cedar was found within city limits (approximately 30 acres right next to Judy's photography). He then showed pictures from a couple of days ago when the county went in to spray it. Salt cedar is in full blossom and very easy to see right now. Dennis said that he is always asked what salt cedar looks like, and this is a really great representation of the plant. KDUH came out to film yesterday, as well as Rick Myers from the Star Herald and KNEB. KDUH did a spot on the evening news, and there was an article on the front page of the Star Herald, and a radio broadcast at KNEB. Jeff Schledewitz mentioned how important it is to get your local news media out right now so they get some local media coverage. Kay Grote also said that you can always take the pictures yourself and then send it to the local media, if for instance, it is a weekly paper.

Also, Dennis wanted to say it's been a very hectic month since the last meeting; there's been lots of phone calls, and new applications daily. It looks very like we're going to end up with too many acres and not enough contractors. July 15th is really going to be the jumping point since it is the end of the bird nesting season.

b. Field Coordinator Report – Roy wanted to say thank you to NRCS and Emily with Game and Parks for all of the time they've been putting in to help get the projects going. Roy and Emily spent one day last week talking to landowners and NRCS and Pheasants Forever have also been working well with us. Emily wants to know what the follow-up process on the application is, such as do we call or meet with landowners? Roy and Dennis said that they are doing both in order to make contact with the landowners. Dennis has met with several in the office, and Roy on site, and then there are phone calls afterward with their questions.

5. Old business

a. 07-08 LB 701 Update – Dennis Beyer said that as shown in the Treasurer's Report, we received approximately \$28,000 from our final Dept. of Ag grant request, but we submitted \$38,000, which was the total that was left to be spent. which is what we had left to be spent. Jeff, Roy and Dennis made a trip with Lincoln to meet with Rich Reiman and Mitch Coffin, and things were a lot different than what was understood last fall. Some of the big issues was the lack of work done on mapping within some of the specific counties, which caused us to lose some of the funding; another issue involved the \$2000.00 to Dan Lyle for coming up during the Summit and doing some mapping. There has been a verbal agreement from Mitch that those funds could be spread out to those counties that had spent it, but he didn't honor that verbal agreement, since it wasn't obtained in writing. This situation shows how incredibly important it



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is for all of the counties to document and stay on top of all of the work that needs to be done. In some of the counties particularly in the south half, we designated \$4500 per county, \$2500 for control and \$2000 for mapping, and some things were done, but when it came down to the wire, they said they didn't want to pay for controlling Canada thistle. The grants were specifically written that we would control for Phragmites, SaltCedar and Russian Olive. Hopefully this situation will not affect the relationship with the Department between High Plains in the long run.

Another major issue that is coming up is getting chemical in the water particularly during the irrigation season. There are some alternatives and there shouldn't be an issue spraying during the season as long as the applicator makes sure there are buffer zones and is staying out of the water. There was a conference call with Dr. Burke who is the liason between the EPA and BASF and he is willing to come out and educate the local irrigation districts. BASF can also do application demonstrations in order to ensure compliance with the label. It would probably also be beneficial to do water testing concurrently to make sure that we're not hitting that one part per billion restriction. BASF has been using this product for 18 years now, and there's never been a problem because of proper application techniques.

As far as the Department of Agriculture is concerned, Dennis and Roy are also going to get confirmation in writing of what constitutes the "channel" in order to ensure that the stipulations with this year's grant are being followed. Kay Grote believes this is just lesson learned, and that we need to make sure our representatives know that we need a little less restriction on our funding in this area.

b. Project Applications – There's a list within the packet of around 57-59 landowners, which covers the applications-to-date. Already, we have more than what we can get done in one year with the contractors that are on board. There are a lot more applications between Scotts Bluff, Morrill and Garden county landowners that will be coming in. Emily Munter asked if we need to send out any individual notices to landowners, particularly for the work along the river. We can publicly do an advertisement saying we're going to go through with noxious weed control and then go down and do it at no charge to the landowner without. Dallas Johanssen asked how the ranking system that was set up has been working; it has been working fine, but the application doesn't cover all of the areas on these things, but after meeting with them, then the holes are usually filled in.

c. Bid Process – After talking about the situation numerous times with contractors and other people involved, Dennis has reported that we are going to use the proposal form as a guide to set our own price per acre and assign the projects to the contractors on work done with Environmental Trust funds. The price will be based on heavy, medium and light densities. All



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of the contractors seem to think this is the best idea and will be beneficial for everyone involved. The landowners will also be involved in the assignment of contractors so that nobody is forced to work with a contractor or landowner that they don't want to. After 30 days, we should be able to reevaluate and really know whether things are set right and know if anything needs to be changed.

d. Density Classifications – Covered under previous item.

e. Contractor's Increasing Costs - The Subcommittee met, and it was decided that if High Plains is setting the price themselves, then it shouldn't be an issue.

f. Watershed Tour – At this point, no one else has come forward to attend the Watershed Tour, so Jeff and Dennis will be taking the two spots.

g. Insurance – The insurance is finally in place. The policies are still not in hand, but they have been paid for, and if anyone needs copies of the policies, they should let Jennifer or Dennis know. Jeff and Dennis went with J.G. Elliott, and Janet Frederick had provided quotes from different companies, and this was the cheapest price with comparable coverage.

6. New business

a. Weed Watch Articles – Cris Burks visited about the upcoming edition of the Weed Watch. Everyone received a copy of last spring's weed watch and it's already time to start thinking about this fall's. High Plains will have four pages to utilize for its articles/information. Cris suggested having an update on 701 and ETF funding. The articles need to be to Billy at Upper Niobrara White NRD by August 10th. It would be nice for some of the Southern Counties to contribute an article. It might also be beneficial to include a legislative-focused piece that discusses the Panhandle's needs. This publication has such a wide-reaching venue that we should use it to our benefit. NRCS might have some article possibilities as well. The theme that pride is pushing is persistence. "Habitat Hero" is the catchphrase they are trying to incorporate. Get Billie a list of articles in a day or two. Emily Munter volunteered to pick up the copies in Chadron and will coordinate that when the time comes.

b. Other Committee Needs – At the last meeting Emily brought up other possible committees that might be beneficial to meet on a regular basis outside of the regular board meetings. She was thinking a Legislative Committee and Communications Committee. Other people outside of the board could also be brought in to serve on the Committees. A motion was made by Mike Marker to create the Legislative Committee (John Berge, Dennis Beyer, Kay Grote) and Communications Committee (Emily Munter, Roy Lyles, Cris Burks); seconded by John Berge. Motion carried – unanimous.



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Kay Grote brought up the possibility of having booths at some of the area fairs. The Communications committee will check into the dates and costs and discuss it at their first meeting.

Doug Haller from BASF reported on a possible grant source for High Plains through the company. In the last twelve to eighteen months, BASF has given over \$100,000 in grant money. Information is available at www.vmanswers.com.

7. Next meeting time and date –The next meeting will be held Thursday, August 14 at 1:30 p.m. at the Bluffs Business Center.

8. Adjournment – Motion made by John Berge to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion carried – unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.