

Custer County Weed and Pest Board

Meeting Minutes – July 13, 2021

The July 13, 2021 meeting of the Custer County Weed and Pest Board was called to order at 1:00 PM by Bob White.

In attendance were Bob White, June Johnston, Jim Lintz, Marci O’Connell, Tom Patterson (call-in), and Mike Baldwin.

All motions were approved unanimously unless otherwise noted.

Approve Minutes:

- The meeting minutes from May 11, 2021 were approved after a motion by Lintz and a second by Johnston.

Old Business:

- No old business was discussed.

New Business:

- Spraying progress:
 - County right of ways:
 - Approximately 95% of the county roads have been sprayed. The remaining roads are to be sprayed soon. These include county roads within Buffalo Gap, Fairburn, and Pringle to be spot-sprayed with a side-by-side, leafy spurge spot spray along Pleasant Valley Rd, and a few shorter roads in the eastern part of the county. The second round of county right of way spraying should begin in a couple weeks.
 - US Forest Service contracts:
 - We have received sixteen complaints about weeds on the National Forest adjacent to private property. Spraying in these areas has just begun with three and a half areas completed. Primary weed complaints are for leafy spurge and Canada thistle.
- Chemical reimbursement status:
 - Reimbursement claims from 18 landowners have been received to date. Total amount to be paid so far stands at \$1,995.65. Many additional landowners are expected to turn in receipts in the coming weeks.
 - All landowners are informed of the possibility of a higher than 50% cost-share, dependent upon the availability of extra funds at the end of the season. Each landowner is given the option to receive the 50% cost-share now or wait until the end of October for a potentially larger cost share. It is also possible to run out of funds. However, if this were to occur, anyone that had already turned in their receipts will be given 50% reimbursement regardless if they asked to wait until the end of the season.

- Weed complaints:
 - Eight landowner complaints have been received so far. These were all complaints about a neighbor not spraying weeds on his/her property. Complaints were investigated and notices were mailed to the landowners. Follow up visits are scheduled.
 - Leafy spurge is very abundant this year. Large infestations have been observed in and around Custer, and along Pleasant Valley, Pass Creek, and Hell Canyon roads. Mike has been in contact with the City of Custer about the spurge within city limits. The City has hired a commercial applicator to have City property sprayed. The City also mails notices to landowners with weed issues. Mike has mailed letters to private landowners with spurge outside city limits. Mike also notified the US Forest Service about the spurge along Hell Canyon Rd. They were already aware of the issue and had a contractor lined up to spray.
 - Prairie dogs:
 - Two complaints have been made since the last Board meeting.
 - The first complaint was for a colony east of Custer. It was investigated and the prairie dogs have not moved onto neighboring property; therefore, no enforcement action can be taken. A letter was mailed to the property owner asking for voluntary compliance. The colony will be monitored for encroachment onto adjacent property.
 - The second complaint was filed with the SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and they forwarded the complaint to us. This colony is located east of Hermosa. The person filing the complaint has not been able to reach the landowner, as required, so we were asked to wait until the end of next week to follow up.
 - Follow up visits:
 - Mike will begin follow up visits to properties that were sent a weed notice. If/when enforcement measures are needed, the Board will convene a special meeting. Mike will notify the Board via email as needed.

Other Business:

- Buffalo Gap National Grassland agreement:
 - The new agreement with the USFS Fall River District is now active. The agreement allows us to spray 23 acres on the National Grassland adjacent to private property.

Next meeting:

- The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday September 7, 2021 at 1:00 PM. A special meeting(s) may be convened prior to this date if necessary.

Adjournment:

- Motion by Lintz, seconded by Johnston to adjourn meeting at 1:25 PM; motion carried.