Custer County Weed and Pest Board
Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2024

The February 13, 2024 meeting of the Custer County Weed and Pest Board was called to order at 1:00 PM by Rittberger.

Board members in attendance were Bob Smith, June Johnston, Jim Lintz, Tom Patterson, and Klinton Rittberger. Also in attendance was Mike Baldwin.

All motions were approved unanimously unless otherwise noted.

Approve Minutes/Agenda:

- Meeting minutes from the November 14 meeting was approved with a motion from Lintz and a second by Johnston.
- Today's agenda with the addition of miscellaneous updates under "Other Business" was approved with a motion from Lintz and a second by Patterson.

New Business:

- Election of 2024 officers: Chair and Vice-Chair:
  - Motion by Johnston to nominate the same officers from 2023 to the same role in 2024 – Rittberger as Chair and Smith as Vice-Chair. Motion seconded by Lintz, motion carried.
- State Weed & Pest Conference, Feb. 21-23, Spearfish:
  - Baldwin and Sellevold will attend as two county representatives. Board members are welcome to attend.
- Buffalo Gap National Grassland agreement for 2024:
  - Expecting another $3,000 for weed spraying on the grassland this year. Documentation expected in a few weeks. Baldwin will present modified agreement to County Commission for approval once received.
- Annual and Fiscal Reports:
  - Reports completed and submitted to the State, due date was January 31. Baldwin provided a copy of the reports to the Board.
- Seasonal help:
  - Could potentially receive seasonal support from South Dakota Job Corp. Possibility of 2 employees with their wages paid by the State. Hours available for spraying would be reduced due to their commute from Nemo. Request to Job Corp was made, now waiting to hear if selected.
  - Baldwin will soon advertise for 1 seasonal sprayer. Mike Sellevold will fill the role of the other sprayer.

Old Business:

- Prairie dog complaints:
  - Two written complaints received against property located at 16517 Lower Spring Creek Rd. Complaints made by two neighbors bordering property. Encroachment

was confirmed by Baldwin and voluntary compliance letter sent to landowner. However, complaints were not made until the property was listed for sale, and the property was sold by the time the voluntary compliance letter was mailed. After discussing the issue with both neighbors, they agreed to give the new landowner time to address the issue prior to filing new complaints.

- Hermosa Hills LLC:
  - Contractor treated Hermosa Hills property after two treatments made by landowner.
  - Prairie dogs on Roy's BH Twin Drive-in theater property remain an issue, but they are expected to be treated soon. No written complaints against this property, but borders Hermosa Hills property.

Other Business:

- Upcoming Virtual Workshop that may be of interest to the Board: "Defending and Growing the Core by Breaking the Cycle of Annual Grass Invasion", April 3, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM. Workshop will cover cheatgrass, ventenata, and medusahead. Baldwin will share attendance information with the Board.
- Board discussed Ventenata detections in Harding County in 2022 and 2023, and the control efforts used. The potential spread to new areas of the state remains a serious concern.
- Black Hills Stock Show (Jan. 26 – Feb. 2):
  - Baldwin helped to staff the Weed & Pest booth on Thursday, Feb. 1. Attendance seemed down compared to previous years.
- Baldwin provided a summary of the 2023 Weed & Pest activities to County Commission at their meeting on Jan. 24.
- APHIS summary of 2023 activities (received 2/9/24) – Baldwin reviewed the 2023 update:
  - Spongy moth (formerly called the gypsy moth):
    - 3 male detections in Custer Co in 2023. APHIS will continue to monitor these locations with new traps in 2024.
    - In total, there were positive detections in 5 counties across state in 2023 (Pennington, Lawrence, Meade, Lincoln, Custer).
    - The spongy moth larvae (caterpillars) prefer to feed on leaves from poplar, oak, willow, and basswood, but will also eat other species. The larvae can defoliate trees, making them vulnerable to disease and other pests.
  - Grasshoppers:
    - APHIS will continue early summer nymph surveys and mid-summer adult surveys in 2024. Map of 2023 surveys was shared with the Board.
    - There are some hot spots that they are monitoring, but they do not expect a large-scale outbreak in 2024. In 2023, Meade Co. ranchers treated 600,000 acres aerially.
  - Emerald ash borers (EABs):
    - Now occur in Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties. If have permission, APHIS will release additional bio-control agent (parasitoid insects) this year.

    - EABs are also present in Ft Collins, Boulder, Denver areas of north central CO. So there is a threat of movement from the south as well as the east.
- Board discussed Canada thistle occurrence on the Black Hills National Forest. The weed is not a priority species on the Forest, but is a problem across the area.
- Baldwin reviewed active weed enforcements. He will reach out to all landowners prior to spray season to remind them of their responsibilities.

Next meeting:

- Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM.

Adjournment:

- Motion by Lintz, seconded by Smith to adjourn meeting at 1:47 PM.