Custer County Weed and Pest Board
Meeting Minutes – June 18, 2024

The June 18, 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 June Johnston, Jim Lintz, Tom Patterson, Klinton Rittberger, and Bob Smith. Also in attendance was Mike Baldwin.

All motions were approved unanimously unless otherwise noted.

Approve Minutes/Agenda:

- Motion made by Johnston to approve today's agenda and meeting minutes from the May 14 board meeting, seconded by Smith, motion carried.

Old Business:

- Enforcement updates:
    - Property owned by Lila Streff (Parcels 001606 and 001608 on Wind Song Valley Rd):
        - Mike mailed Lila a certified letter with notice of June 21 deadline to treat infestation. The letter was received, but Mike has not received a response as of today's meeting. Board will have property treated if June 21 deadline is not met.
    - Property owned by Anna Evans (Parcel 001958 on US Highway 385):
        - Mike met with Anna at property on June 6. Spraying is done on roughly half of area that he observed. Anna said they are still working on it. Mike will continue to monitor the property.
    - Property owned by Lowell Swedlund (Parcel 006004 on Wind Song Valley Rd):
        - Property currently in the foreclosure process. Mike mailed certified letter in April. It was received, but no response was made. A second certified letter was mailed to specify June 21 deadline to treat weed infestation. Letter has not been claimed at this time.
        - Motion by Rittberger that if no action by deadline, weed department will spray property, second by Patterson, motion carried.
    - Property owned by Helga Szameit (Parcels 004199 and 004200 on Hapeka Trail):
        - Mike mailed certified letter in April, but it was returned unclaimed. He mailed a second certified letter with a June 21 deadline to treat weed infestation. Letter has not been claimed at this time. If no response by deadline, weed department will spray property.
    - Property owned by Neal and Sharon Moad (Parcels 005400 and 005401 on Hard Scratch Lane):
        - Property was sprayed by a contractor. Mike confirmed the presence of injured plants. No further action at this time.

    - Property formerly owned by John Dumire (Parcels 015894 and 006142 on Hard Scratch Lane:
        - Property has been subdivided. A new home and driveway have been built over much of the original weed infestation area. The rest of the area is mowed. No action at this time, will continue to monitor.
- Grants available through SD Dept. of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Resource Conservation and Forestry Division (SD DANR-RCF):
    - Both grants that Mike applied for were approved. The first is for $6,000 to support of our chemical cost-share program. The second grant is for $580 for support of the weed and pest newsletter. Both grants are applicable for property owners located adjacent to US Forest Service property.
- Newsletter:
    - Release of the newsletter was delayed while waiting to hear on the status of our grant application with the State. Ultimately, Mike decided that he could not wait any longer and mailed the first batch of newsletters at the end of May. This batch went to landowners that were not located adjacent to USFS property.
    - The 2nd batch of newsletters was mailed last week after receiving notice that our grant was awarded and we were free to begin printing/mailing. This batch was mailed to landowners with property adjacent to USFS property.

New Business:

- Spraying progress:
    - Crew has sprayed approximately 2/3 of the county right-of-ways. We have experienced some weather delays, but continue making progress.
- Chemical cost-share status:
    - Participation is less than previous year. To date only $583.65 in receipts have been received (50% payout = $291.83). By this time in 2023 we had received roughly triple that amount in herbicide receipts. Mike is expecting several receipts to be turned in soon.
- Prairie dog updates:
    - South Fork Rd –
        - After the May Board meeting, Mike confirmed the presence of active burrows in the county right-of-way. He spoke with the adjacent landowner, Travis Bies, who stated that both he and the State have been treating them over the past couple years. The State hired a contractor the past 2 years and they plan to have it treated again this fall. Travis said he has spent thousands treating the prairie dogs and can provide receipts and GPS data if needed.
        - After discussion, motion by Rittberger to set October 31 deadline to have prairie dogs treated, seconded by Smith, motion carried. October 31 deadline allows for multiple control options as some are unavailable until October.
    - Pilger Mountain Rd –
        - Presence of many active burrows in county right-of-way adjacent to Jim and Patty Watkins property. No observed evidence that prairie dogs have

been treated since first observation of encroachment. Certified letter delivered to landowners in March, but no response received.
    - After discussion, motion by Smith to set October 31 deadline to have prairie dogs treated, seconded by Johnston, motion carried.

Other Business –

- Invasive Annual Grasses Field Workshop, July 16-17 in Sheridan
    - Mike is not attending this year, but Board thought he should attend the 2025 workshop.
- DOT right-of-way – leafy spurge on 385 near Bavarian Inn and on Sylvan Lake Rd:
    - Rich Zacher has retired and Bruce Schroeder replaced him. No word yet on whether DOT hired a contractor to spray their right-of-ways in the county. For now, Mike has been asked to let them know if we observe weed issue(s) and they will send someone from the Hot Springs office to treat them.
- Musk thistle infestation on Sidney Park Road:
    - Property owned by Art Petty (five parcels) are infested with musk thistle. After discussion, motion by Smith to assign June 30 deadline to have weeds treated. If no response by deadline, move to enforcement. Second by Johnston, motion carried.

Next meeting:

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

Adjournment:

- Motion by Smith, seconded by Lintz to adjourn meeting at 1:56 PM.