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

The August 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 Klinton Rittberger, Jim Lintz, Marci O'Connell, and Bob Smith. Also in attendance were Thomasa Leenknecht, Dale Leenknecht, Norma Johnson, and Mike Baldwin.

All motions were approved unanimously unless otherwise noted.

Approve Minutes/Agenda:

- Motion made by Lintz to approve meeting minutes from the July 9 board meeting, seconded by O'Connell, motion carried.
- Request by Smith for addition to agenda – add "Drones" to "Other Business". Motion made by Smith to approve modified agenda, seconded by Lintz, motion carried.

Old Business:

- Enforcement updates:
  - Property owned by Helga Szameit (Parcels 004199 and 004200 on Hapeka Trail):
    - Private contractor sprayed property on July 30, fee was $1,276.45.
  - Property owned by Lowell Swedlund (Parcel 006004 on Wind Song Valley Rd):
    - Neighboring landowner said he would spray the property. Mike will follow up to see that it is sprayed.
  - Property owned by Art Petty (Parcels 001620, 001624, 001625, 001626):
    - Property was sprayed by landowner.
  - Property owned by Lila Streff (Parcels 001606 and 001608 on Wind Song Valley Rd):
    - Mike needs to do a follow up visit to check on cleanup areas that were missed during treatment.
  - Property owned by Anna Evans (Parcel 001958 on US Highway 385):
    - Property still has areas needing treatment. Motion by Smith to hire a sprayer to clean up untreated weeds, seconded by Lintz, motion carried.
  - Property owned by Neal and Sharon Moad (Parcels 005400 and 005401 on Hard Scratch Lane):
    - June contacted Mike prior to today's meeting to say she observed a few thistles coming back on the property. Mike has not been back to investigate.
- Weeds within DOT right-of-way and city limits of Custer:
  - DOT:
    - Mike commented that he observed few signs of spraying on DOT roads by their hired contractor. Problem areas remain untreated. Consequently, we

sprayed spotted knapweed along Sylvan Lake Rd, Washington St, and US Highway 16/385 adjacent to Muehl Trail.
        - Mike will schedule meeting with DOT prior to 2025 season to discuss plans for next year and inquire about their expectations for their contractor.
    - City of Custer:
        - Mike met with Liliana Puente-Chavoyo and Laurie Woodward on July 16. Liliana and Laurie provided an overview on how the city deals with weeds on private property within the city limits, and clarified who is responsible for treating weeds in areas where responsibility is unclear (e.g., weeds adjacent to highway and private property, weeds adjacent to creek and private property).

New Business:

- Spraying progress:
    - Second round of spraying county roads completed, except for Fairburn and Buffalo Gap; however, many cleanup areas left to do. Crew will work on those areas over the coming weeks. One of the seasonal employees is leaving for college and his last day is the 22nd.
    - Other spraying completed:
        - Airport spot spray and bareground spraying
        - County properties: west of airport (10.3 ac), north of Argyle Loop Rd (9.1 ac), east of Hwy 385 across from airport (1.3 ac), County Housing Commission property east of hospital in Custer (15 ac), Hazelrodt picnic area sprayed by USFS.
        - Bareground spraying of County Highway Dept. properties (Custer, Hermosa, Buffalo Gap)
- Chemical cost-share status:
    - Receipts received to date total $16,701.21. At 50% cost-share the payout will be $8,350.61. This value is up compared to this time last year.
    - Twelve requested payments now ($2,866.03), rest waiting until end of season.
- Weed-watch properties and properties under consideration for enforcement:
    - Property located at 24830 Sylvan Lake Rd, owned by Lucas Kretschmar, Canada thistle infestation:
        - Property was sprayed on July 30 by TruGreen. Dale Leenknecht, Thomasa Leenknecht, and Norma Johnson spoke about their frustrations with weeds on the property and that it was not sprayed until the thistle had started to flower. Dale expressed concerns about herbicide effects on the bees and impact on water quality in the area. Dale also had photos of areas missed by the contractor. Board asked Mike to contact landowner and ask him to contact the contractor about coming back to spray the missed areas.
    - Properties adjacent to Hall Drive just outside of Custer city limits, leafy spurge infestation:

        - Three of the landowners had the leafy spurge sprayed, one did not. No action taken on property owned by Matthew Hespen and no response to certified letter that was received and signed for. Motion by Smith to issue a Declaration of Infestation and give the landowner five days to treat, otherwise county will have it sprayed. Second by O'Connell, motion carried.
    - Property located at 25086 Shamrock Road, owned by Dakota Greens Nursery, Canada thistle infestation:
        - No treatment has been observed and no response received from certified letter that was received and signed for. Motion by Smith to issue a Declaration of Infestation and give the landowner five days to treat, otherwise county will have it sprayed. Second by Lintz, motion carried.
    - Property located adjacent to US IIighway 16A and next to Dakota Greens Nursery, owned by Loyce May (Parcel 015407), Canada thistle infestation:
        - No treatment observed and no response received from certified letter that was received and signed for. Motion by Smith to issue a Declaration of Infestation and give the landowner five days to treat, otherwise county will have it sprayed. Second by Lintz, motion carried.
    - Property located at 12646 US Highway 16A, owned by Stockadia, LLC, Canada thistle infestation:
        - Property was sprayed. No action taken by Board at this time.
    - Property located adjacent to US Highway 16 just west of Custer (Parcel 010868), owned by Black Family / Todd Utecht, leafy spurge and Canada thistle infestation:
        - Property was sprayed. No action taken by Board at this time.
    - Property located adjacent to Beaver Creek Road (parcels 014610 & 014609), owned by Jody Landgrebe, Canada thistle infestation:
        - No treatment has been observed and no response received from certified letter that was received and signed for. Motion by Smith to issue a Declaration of Infestation and give the landowner five days to treat, otherwise county will have it sprayed. Second by Lintz, motion carried.
    - Other properties watching:
        - Handful of properties along Beaver Creek Rd have issues with Canada thistle. Mike is reaching out to these landowners and will call a special meeting if necessary.
        - Report of St Johnswort infestation on private property near Custer State Park. Mike will do an inspection today.
- US Forest Service agreements:
    - Black Hills NF:
        - Approximately 1/2 of acreage completed after today.
    - Buffalo Gap NG:
        - No complaints received so no spraying completed. USFS stated that we can spray along French Creek on the Grassland if we do not receive any landowner complaints.
- Elk Mountain cheatgrass project:

- Meeting in Newcastle on August 8 with various agencies to discuss cheatgrass control. Project is moving forward and appears that they will probably have several hundred thousand dollars in funding available to cover most of the USFS ground and some private land in Wyoming. Funds will not cover any private property in South Dakota. Those landowners will be limited to seeking EQIP dollars through NRCS. The SD Weed and Pest Commission will not provide grant dollars for cheatgrass control.

Other Business:

- Drone for Weed Department:
  - Smith suggested that Mike should consider purchasing a drone for the department to aid with detection of weed infestations on properties not viewable from public roads. Concerns were raised about public perception of "spying" on private land for weeds. Board took no further action.
- New prairie dog complaint to inspect. By Darrell Peterson against Erin & Ervin Morse. Property recently listed for sale. Mike will inspect the property. Motion was made by Smith, that if prairie dog encroachment from the Morse property is occurring, send a certified letter to the Morse's and give them a October 31, 2024 deadline to treat prairie dogs, seconded by O'Connell, motion carried.
- Release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Record of Decision for the Nebraska's Undesirable Plant Management Project - Nebraska National Forests and Grasslands. Objections to document must be filed by September 23.

Next meeting:

- Motion by O'Connell to schedule next meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM, seconded by Smith, motion carried.

Adjournment:

- Motion by Lintz, seconded by Smith to adjourn meeting at 2:30 PM.