Custer County Weed and Pest Board
Meeting Minutes – December 10, 2024

The December 10, 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, June Johnston, Tom Patterson, Jim Lintz, Marci O'Connell, and Bob Smith. Also in attendance was Mike Baldwin.

All motions were approved unanimously unless otherwise noted.

Approve Minutes/Agenda:

- Motion made by Lintz to approve meeting minutes from the November 12 board meeting and today's agenda, seconded by O'Connell, motion carried.

Old Business:

- Prairie dog complaints:
    - Right-of-way complaint on South Fork Road:
        - Count conducted on December 3 with an average of 6.2 prairie dogs detected. This was down significantly from previous counts of 128 and 114. Board chose no further action at this time. Mike will continue to monitor the area.
    - Right-of-way complaint on Pilger Mountain Road:
        - Count was attempted on December 4, but interrupted by landowner who was out on a side x side shooting prairie dogs. Landowner stated he has been shooting between one and a dozen prairie dogs each time he is out. He had not poisoned yet, but said he plans to once they have some snow on the ground.
        - Prior to landowner's arrival, Mike counted 8 prairie dogs, less than the 26.3 and 30.0 counted on the previous two occasions.
        - No further action from the Board at this time. Mike will continue to monitor property.
    - Prairie View Road area complaints:
        - Complaint filed against Morse property:
            - Contractor completed treating property. Mike conducted a count on December 3 with an average count of 0.5 observed. This compares to 22.5 observed on the last visit. No further action from the Board at this time.
            - Mike contacted adjacent neighbor who also has prairie dogs. Landowner has since hired a contractor to treat property. Mike confirmed this with the contractor.
        - Complaint filed against Melius property:

- Landowner treated with fumitoxin. Count conducted on December 3 with an average of 4.3 prairie dogs detected. Neighboring property that originally filed the complaint did not have any prairie dogs. No further action from the Board at this time.

  - Enforcement property owned by Gregerson:
    - Mike conducted a count on November 18 with an average of 18.2 prairie dogs observed. The adjacent neighbor did not have any prairie dogs. Previous high count was 215.6 on 10/26/22, prior to enforcement. Landowner has treated the previous two winters.
    - Board asked Mike to contact landowner and encourage treatment again this winter while numbers are manageable.
  - Verbal complaint about prairie dogs near town of Buffalo Gap:
    - Prairie dogs are residing adjacent to Buffalo Gap Junction Road between Hwy 79 and Buffalo Gap. Landowner who made the complaint does not own land adjacent to property with prairie dogs; therefore, an official written complaint cannot be made. Landowner will visit with neighbors to determine if they are experiencing encroachment. Board asked Mike to send a letter to landowners with prairie dogs and encourage them to treat prairie dogs.

New Business:

- USDA APHIS report:
  - 2024 grasshopper surveys:
    - Early summer nymphal survey and mid-summer adult surveys conducted throughout majority of western SD.
    - Landowners in northwest organized large control program this year. They treated over a million acres of private rangeland.
    - Adult surveys showed moderate numbers, and APHIS does not foresee any large-scale grasshopper outbreaks for 2025.
    - APHIS is aware of localized areas with high grasshopper densities. They are working with affected private landowners and public land managers on monitoring populations as well as offering technical assistance with management strategies.
  - Spongy moths continue to be monitored in the state. 635 traps installed in 2024, only 2 captures were made with both in the Black Hills.
  - Emerald ash borer: agency is continuing biocontrol efforts in southeastern SD. EABs are now confirmed in 3 SD counties, as well as in Nebraska, North Dakota, and northern Colorado.
- State Weed & Pest Conference:
  - The 2025 conference is scheduled February 19-21, 2025 in Huron. Mike plans on attending and will ask Mike Sellevold to attend as the second county representative.

Other Business –

- None.

Next meeting:

- Next meeting scheduled as needed or on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 1:00 PM.

Adjournment:

- Motion by Lintz to adjourn meeting at 1:30 PM, seconded by Smith, motion carried.