



The Idaho Association of NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL SUPERINTENDENTS

Chair:
Mitch Whitmill
Jefferson County
PO Box 268
Roberts, ID 83444
208-745-9221

Vice Chair:
Michael Ottley
Cassia County
1549 Overland Ave #4
Burley, ID 83318
208-878-4043

Secretary:
Chase Youngdahl
Bonner County
1500 Hwy 2, Ste. 101
Sandpoint, ID 83864
208-255-5681 ext.6

Treasurer:
Alan Martinson
Latah County
200 S. Almon #105
Moscow, ID 83843
208-883-7210

SPRING EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES Lemhi County Extension Office 200 Fulton Street, Room 203 – Salmon, ID 83467 Wednesday, April 10, 2024 – 8:00AM (MDT)

Attendance – Officers & Executive Board:

Chair – Mitch Whitmill
Secretary – Chase Youngdahl
Past Chair – Dave Wenk
Region 1 – Chase Youngdahl, alt
Region 3 – Steve Anderson, rep
Region 5 – Cody Clyde, alt

Vice Chair – Mike Ottley
Treasurer – Alan Martinson
Region 2 – Alan Martinson, rep
Region 4 – Terry Lee, rep
Region 6 – Bryce Fowler, rep

Attendance – Others:

Brett Plummer (Region 6 alternate), Jason Parker (Region 4 alternate),
Sharayh Krantz (Lemhi County)

Chairman Whitmill called the meeting to order at 8:02AM following introductions

Reports

Minutes from Winter Executive Board Meeting: Motion by Dave to approve the minutes of the winter executive board meeting dated January 8, 2024, as written, second by Terry. Motion carries unanimous. No further discussion.

Treasurer's Report: Alan presented the financial report dated April 8, 2024 with a total account balance of 20,977.41, and a regular fund balance of \$13,802.41. Actual FY24 expenses total \$886.19 with total operating expenses at \$3,160.84. Alan noted that the bookkeeper and the office manager for IAC both left their positions earlier this year, so an outside firm is handling the books for IAC in the interim. The current void at IAC has resulted in some discrepancies, including delayed payments, missed payments, as well as a \$150 debit charge that's unaccounted for. Alan said that one of the remaining IAC office staff members is looking into the unexplained \$150 debit. Everything else, Alan will work through with the outside firm until IAC can get a new bookkeeper hired. Mitch had Alan clarify the actual fund balance. No additional

inquiries from board members. Motion by Terry to approve the current financial report as presented, second by Mike. Motion carries unanimous. No further discussion.

INWCA: Dave reported that the INWCA held their annual meeting the week prior, where 3 positions on the board renewed their terms, followed by the spring regular meeting. He summarized the following: low participation levels on the conference evaluations, the budget, possible timeframe & venues for the 2025 conference, and Jeremy Varley's report on additions to the state cost share program. Chase mentioned that he agreed to gather feedback from the IANWCS executive board regarding professional development content, where an hour has been dedicated for the last few conferences. He further mentioned that the few evaluations that were fielded from the conference attendees consistently reflected that the motivational speaker performed poorly, which prompted the INWCA board to discuss whether or not to even continue with an hour of professional development, especially given the increasing difficulty in obtaining recertification credits. Chase shared the previous 3 professional development topics and asked for other topics to pass along at the next INWCA board meeting, if any interest exists in continuing. The following feedback was generated: Bryce suggested a presentation on building professionalism in our specific industry; Steve suggested a professional conduct presentation by ICRMP; Alan suggested that rather than a full hour dedicated to the topic, use the conference opening slot of 20 minutes on it—he then mentioned the Boise State football coach as a potential candidate for that; Terry suggested moving away from the area of professional development and stick to accredited topics.

SNWAC: Bryce reported that the cost share review took place at the end of February, where they saw fewer CWMA's making requests, but the few requests were generally larger, resulting in more cuts than anticipated. With equipment now being eligible for funding, drones were a common equipment request. He mentioned that after going through review of equipment asks for the first time, the committee decided that more line item specifics should be requested in future cost share cycles. Alan chimed in that the Palmer Amaranth petition to list was a point of discussion at the last meeting. They concluded the update with a briefing on ISDA's Turkish Thistle project in Hell's Canyon—the week of April 29 – May 3, including some of the logistics involved. Some discussion followed, highlighted by liability and internal county concerns surrounding Jeremy's plan for the pack mules.

Website: Chase reported having posted Dr. Prather's Noxious Weed Control for Rural Landowners video series, as well as the 2024 Idaho legislative directory. He then passed along a solicitation from Bethany Muffley to contact her with feedback or suggested changes on the ISDA's website. He concluded the update with sharing that he finally established contact with the media manager for IAC, and they agreed to post a recap of our annual meeting next year on the blog portion of their website. Chase pointed out that other IAC affiliates appear to do this, and he thinks it would provide us with some positive, professional exposure to Idaho's elected officials.

Regional Updates:

Region 1 – Chase reported that the ISDA will be performing drawdown Flowering Rush treatments on the bed of Lake Pend Oreille soon via drone. He then solicited for anyone in northern Idaho interested in 3 credits, that he will be hosting a Weeds Seminar on April 25 where he will have Dr. Prather and a Wilbur-Ellis rep as speakers. He then reported that Kootenai County will begin their field inspections on May 1, and that Shoshone County is aiming to organize 4 community spray days. Upon Dave having nothing new to report out of Boundary County, Chase concluded by sharing with the board that he discovered Japanese Blood Grass (Cogon Grass) on the shelf at his local Home Depot towards the end of last summer, and expressed concern about infestations in Bonner County that he is unaware of and that could be difficult to find—he urged board members to keep an eye on their retail nurseries.

Region 2 – Alan reported that Joe will be a participant in the upcoming Turkish Thistle project, and that Idaho County has two FEMA projects in the pipeline for this year. He then reported that the Clearwater County position is still vacant with no new information on progress in filling the position. He concluded by announcing 85 Mondays until his retirement from Latah County!

Region 3 – Steve reported that Region 3 met internally last week, and announced the upcoming retirements of Dave Humphreys from Elmore County and Paul Rekow from Boise County. Boise County hired a replacement, of whom the department’s current assistant will train, but Elmore County’s plan is currently in the air. He then reported that Cory Flatt of Canyon County offered to look into securing the Canyon County Admin Building for our annual meeting in 2025 if we wanted it. Steve concluded the report by soliciting his all day Weeds Seminar on May 9 for 7 credits, and that he has hired two employees and is beginning the season with a full crew for the first time in several years.

Region 4 – Terry and Jason had nothing new to report out of their respective counties. Mike reported having started Scotch Thistle projects, then shared his concerns with the Metro Institute testing where his employees were made very uncomfortable by the unreasonable exam proctor, to the point where they could not properly focus on completing the exam(s).

Region 5 – Cody reported having met with the USFS on moving forward with aerial operations projects, and that Oneida County is experiencing recruitment issues that may result in him being short staffed for the season. He then reported that Franklin County, in conjunction with Utah State University, will be putting on a comprehensive drones workshop, which will take 3 days. Some discussion followed.

Region 6 – Bryce announced that the Teton County position is vacant again. He then reported that the Teton Land Trust is hosting a luncheon near the end of the month, where several counties and stakeholders have been invited. Sharayh announced the recent death of former Lemhi County Weeds Superintendent, Mike Overracker.

Chairman Whitmill called a recess at 8:58AM

Chairman Whitmill resumed the meeting at 9:08AM

General Business

Legislative Update: Mitch reported that the pesticide rule changes were approved by the legislature and will be implemented. He explained that they are in the process of updating the exams to reflect the combining of the herbicide, insecticide/fungicide & rodenticide categories, but that current applicators and category holders are grandfathered in and that the newly implemented rules will apply to future applicators only. It was brought up that EPA’s CFR40 is reported to be the main driver behind the combining of categories. Some discussion followed, including discussion on the apprentice category. Mitch then reported that the noxious weed rule changes were also approved by the legislature, which included the addition of Cogon Grass to the noxious weed list and the removal of Buffalobur. Mitch concluded his legislative update by briefing the board on S1372, which pertains to grazing improvement and includes \$500,000 for related projects, including noxious weed control. Some discussion on range allotment conditions took place. Chase briefed the board on the failure of S1245, which related to pesticide labeling uniformity, as well as the passage of S1322, which allows counties to access up to 20% of invasive species sticker revenue for the cost of watercraft inspection operations.

Noxious Weed List, Palmer Amaranth: Mitch stated that Lloyd Knight had requested input from the IANWCS on the petition to list Palmer Amaranth, of which Mitch initiated and found the consensus of the association to be against listing it. Mitch summarized the results in a letter sent to the ISDA to submit to the rulemaking file. He then reported that the noxious weed rule will be open again in 2024, and that June 26 from 1-4PM and July 10 from 1-4PM are penciled in for the negotiated rulemaking meetings on this matter. Discussion followed. The general thoughts from the board seem to indicate that it’s a production Ag issue, and doesn’t really fit in the overall noxious weed realm. University research was stated to have been robust on Palmer Amaranth, but it’s interpreted to back up the thought that it seems to be more of an Ag issue, where it will continue to be controlled whether it’s listed as a noxious weed or not. Mike shared that it was

introduced to Idaho as a contaminant in cotton seed, which is fed to dairy cows in the Magic Valley as a supplement.

**Chairman Whitmill paused the Noxious Weed List-Palmer Amaranth agenda item at 9:45AM in order to accommodate a call from Jeremy Varley for an ISDA Noxious Weeds update:* Jeremy reported that tomorrow morning will be the grant administration training, where attendance is required by the applicant and the recipient of the cost share funding in order to proceed with agreements for funding. He then briefed the board on the Turkish Thistle project in Hell's Canyon, and stated that he's aiming for 3 more individuals on the team. He touched briefly on the Palmer Amaranth petition. He concluded by conveying an expectation that we should hear from our regional specialists regarding program assistance. Dave asked about delayed timelines with the cost share program and what we can do to help. Jeremy replied that he thinks it would be a good topic for Mitch to bring up in one of his upcoming visits with the director.

**With no further questions for Jeremy, Chairman Whitmill resumed the Noxious Weed List-Palmer Amaranth agenda item:* Mitch let the board know that anyone can provide comment during negotiated rulemaking, by either providing oral testimony or submitting written comment. Alan suggested that Mitch reach out to Patxi to get on the same page with INWCA, regarding comment on behalf of our association. Mike requested a copy of Mitch's letter to Lloyd be sent out so that other superintendents can use it as an example for letters of their own, being that some counties may desire to comment on behalf of their individual county. Alan suggested a letter from commissioners if this potential listing would adversely affect your county.

Chairman Whitmill called a recess at 10:02AM

Chairman Whitmill resumed the meeting at 10:19AM

Weed Superintendent Handbook Update: Mitch reported having begun updates to our handbook, and stated there's a lot of updated language, content and acronyms to be done, as well as an overhaul of the NPDES section. Names of players have changed, and related content. He hopes to have a draft update completed by our fall meeting for adoption consideration.

IANWCS Policies Edits/Updates: Chase & Alan presented a draft update of the policies document. A summary of the edits/updates presented were as follows: building in more flexibility to the executive board meeting locations (regions), striking the item pertaining to superintendent's staff needing to pay for their own meal at the annual meeting, striking the item pertaining to executive board support of regulatory actions against a county, and adding a sub-item pertaining to association letters of support for an individual to a position of employment. Some brief discussion on the proposed changes followed. Motion by Chase to approve the updated IANWCS policies as presented, second by Terry. Motion carries unanimous. No further discussion.

NWFF Certifications: Alan queried the board, via Bethany Muffley, on NWFF straw inspection procedures. During the recent annual forage training in Region 2, there seemed to be varying preferences on inspecting before or after harvest. Alan said that his preference is to inspect before harvest in order to more accurately pick out specimens like Jointed Goat Grass and Wild Oat, but pointed out that Joe Slichter prefers to inspect after harvest for ease of navigating and picking out the contents of the rows. Since NAISMA does not have a policy on whether straw needs to be inspected prior to or following harvest, Bethany decided to gather preference data from inspectors, and if necessary, approach NAISMA about Idaho's stance. Not much input was provided by the board following the query passed along by Alan. General feeling seemed to be 'leave good enough alone'. Mitch then queried the board, via Bethany, if NWFF gravel inspections through NAISMA would be worth pursuing to adopt into Idaho's program. Currently, individual counties wishing to utilize this particular weed free service from NAISMA need to be a standalone MOU holder. We could have it under the Idaho MOU if added to the state's program in administrative rule. Discussion

followed—some think there’s not enough demand for that service to make it worth it, while others feel it would be nice if the option was there. The discussions led to a consensus to report back to Bethany to recommend further researching gravel certifications and what would be involved; costs, training, etc. This will be a future agenda item for discussion or action once Bethany has compiled this info.

New Business

2025 Annual Meeting Discussion: It was reported that when the INWCA went to reserve the Riverside for the 2025 conference, it was found to already be fully booked for the months of January & February, as far as two consecutive week days with all of the breakout room options. Currently, the INWCA has the first week of March reserved as a placeholder at the Riverside for 2025, but is actively seeking other options in Nampa and Meridian areas for January instead, as that is the consensus for the being the most preferred time. The board discussed options for our annual meeting. The consensus was to keep it in conjunction with the conference, and to look at venues in the Nampa/Meridian/Caldwell area if the conference is successfully booked in that area for January. Developments on this matter will be communicated with members as they take place. Chase volunteered to look into venues in the west Treasure Valley area for our annual meeting.

IAC Summer Meeting: It was announced that the IAC summer conference will take place June 4-6 in Idaho Falls, and Mitch confirmed our association’s spot on the agenda. He informed the board that he and Bryce will co-present.

Summer & Fall Executive Board Meetings: Chase reminded the board that the summer meeting will held on July 18 via Zoom, and the fall meeting will be held on October 2 in Moscow. Chase will send a Zoom link with the agenda for the summer meeting, and Alan will work out the meeting location in Moscow for the fall and report further details at the summer meeting.

Miscellaneous Business:

*Dave gave a brief update on ATV registration fee research process. It’s doable, and allowable by statute, just sounds to be a matter of developing a solid plan and finding legislators that are willing to sponsor a bill. Mitch plans on furthering research, more specifically, working towards a distribution formula for such funding. Other possible parameters for this proposal were discussed briefly. Mitch & Dave will continue gathering info, including from neighboring states.

*Terry queried the board on revegetation practices following fiber optic installation in state rights-of-way. Mike responded that it’s up to local ITD units to follow through on that, and they usually need external pressure to actually do it.

*Bryce thinks we need to have more of a presence with the ISDA in order to maintain noxious weed cost share funding. It was brought up that the structure within the department has moved the noxious weeds section down the org chart, and the priority is continually favoring invasive species over noxious weeds. Collaboration with other state agencies was discussed for possible coalescence.

Chairman Whitmill adjourned the meeting at 12:28PM upon no further business or discussion