

SAN JUAN COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

F-I-N-A-L MINUTES

Friday, December 1, 2023

9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Meeting Held Remotely Via Zoom

and at the Orcas Senior Center, 62 Henry Road, Eastsound, WA 98245

ATTENDING: Todd Goldsmith (Chair, Area 5), Bill Rupp (Secretary, Area 4), Laura Rensberry (Area 3), Jessa Madosky (Area 2), Caitie Blethen (WSU Extension Interim Director, ex officio), Susan Eshelman (SJC Environmental Stewardship), and staff members Michele Smith and Jason Ontjes.

Meeting brought to order at 9: 06 AM.

1. Review and approval of the meeting minutes of November 3, 2023. Bill moved to approve the November minutes as submitted, seconded by Laura. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED. Jason will send the approved minutes to SJC County Council Clerk, Sally Rogers, via email.
2. Presentation and discussion of the monthly report (Jason). The Board asked Jason a few questions about the monthly report.
3. 9:30—9:45 AM. Public comment time for visitors. No visitors attended the meeting.
4. Updates from Environmental Stewardship (Susan). Susan recounted some of the recent restoration work occurring on county lands or easements in the past month, such as the Orcas Landing “Interpretive Center”, Operations Center pond, and Lopez Road and Weeks Road stormwater maintenance projects. The Island Conservation Corps has been engaged in some of these activities. Several weeks ago, Michele treated the Operations Center pond area for Himalayan blackberry (“still a little bit alive”) and Canada thistle, with a plan to spray the blackberry again in the next season. Susan’s crew planted directly into those thickets and weed-whacked them a bit. Susan has also worked at Peace Health Medical Center in Friday Harbor and has tried to get their staff interested in Scot’s broom control. They are “super overwhelmed with it”, she said. At Orcas Landing, Susan said that a delivery of topsoil was

planned soon, which prompted a discussion about the timing due to the rainy season, and whether mulch was planned to help suppress weeds and potential erosion.

5. News from the field (Michele). Michele said she enjoyed her trip to the Washington Weed Conference held in Wenatchee Nov. 1-3, receiving good information from State Weed Board Executive Secretary, Mary Fee. While networking at the event, she spoke to King County staff about knotweed control. On San Juan, Michele has done recent work on shiny geranium on Cady Mountain and has loaned a new weed wrench to a resident there. On Lopez, she has continued her Scot's broom control work along the roadsides and has surveyed Norman Road broom for future control.
6. Selection and Election of Board Officers for 2024. With the coming of 2024, a new group of Board officers was proposed: Bill Rupp as Chair, Todd Goldsmith as Vice-Chair, and Laura Rensberry as Secretary. Bill moved to approve the proposed slate of candidates, seconded by Laura. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED. Jason will share the news with Aiden Haines, assistant to Council Clerk, Sally Rogers. The Board requested that Jason set up the meetings in future, either with Microsoft Teams or Zoom. The new officers' roles will be effective in January 2024.
7. State Parks proposed contract agreement (IA 325-104). Fulfilling the Board's requested change to the period of performance, Jason recommended approval of the revised state parks contract for 2024-2025. Bill moved to approve the revised contract, seconded by Jessa. ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED. SJC Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Jon Cain, Sr., approved the revised contract as to form earlier in the week. Jason will also seek approval from SJC Manager, Mike Thomas.
8. Second Field Specialist update/Interview Schedule Plans. The Board discussed how the hiring process is proceeding thus far, with a proposed interview with the finalists suggested in the coming week. Human Resources' Nadine Varsovia (HR Specialist) has coordinated the initial interviews and helped to narrow down the list of candidates. The Board agreed to interview the two finalists for the Field Specialist opening on Thursday, December 7th, with prearranged questions. [Under RCW 17.10.060, the Board is responsible

for hiring the Coordinator and any supporting employees needed for the program, following the county's personnel rules and procedures.] Todd requested that Jason check the finalists' references before the final interview.

9. Sportsman's Lake Treatment Project Status/Plan for Egg Lake. Jason said that the owners of half of Egg Lake, which lies adjacent to Sportsman's Lake, were not in favor of chemical control to combat Eurasian watermilfoil found there. Todd expressed his concern that any money spent on controlling milfoil in Sportsman's Lake would be wasted if Egg Lake was not addressed at the same time, since there may be a hydrological connection between the two water bodies. According to Jason, Dave Heimer of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (which is also a part-owner of each lake) recommended treating Egg Lake as a "Phase 2" project in the grant application from Ecology, since Egg Lake had not been formally surveyed and the owners were not on board. Todd suggested a physical barrier or device to prevent milfoil contamination of Sportsman's Lake from its smaller neighbor, if feasible. He offered to review the application prior to submission to Ecology (due December 16).
10. Budget status. The Expenditure Status Report provided on November 27th indicated that 33.59% of the budget had been consumed. Expenditures on weed disposal stand at about \$8,100, he said, leaving ample room for the remainder of 2023.
11. Other business. Jason said that the nonprofit group that owns 51% of the Orcas Senior Center was moving ahead with its plan to purchase the county's 49% stake in the building, which means county employees may be asked to find other accommodations in the coming year. The county currently has no budget for a new county office building on Orcas as a result of this buyout. Jason said he and HR Specialist, Nadine Varsovia, had planned another job interview for the Field Specialist position at 11 AM today.
12. Adjournment. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:55 AM.

The Board's next scheduled meeting is on Friday, January 5, 2024.