

SAN JUAN COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

F-I-N-A-L MINUTES

Friday, February 2, 2024

9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Meeting Held Remotely Via Teams

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

PRESENT: Bill Rupp (Chair, Area 4), Todd Goldsmith (Vice-Chair, Area 5), Jessa Madosky (Area 2), Caitie Blethen (WSU Extension, ex officio), Christine Minney (Council Liaison, District No. 1), Susan Eshelman (Environmental Stewardship), Jim Frampton (a member of the public), and staff members Michele Smith, Andrew Munson and Jason Ontjes.

Meeting brought to order at 9:01 AM.

1. Review and approval of the meeting minutes of December 1, 2023. Todd moved to approve the December 2023 draft minutes as written, seconded by Jessa. The minutes were approved by acclamation. Jason will send the approved minutes to the Clerk of the County Council, Sally Rogers.
2. Presentation and discussion of the monthly report (Jason). Jason took questions and comments from the Board about the monthly report.

9:30—10:30 AM. Public hearing on draft 2024 Noxious Weed List and 2024 priorities for enforcement and weed control. A member of the public, San Juan Island resident Jim Frampton, expressed his concern about English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and urged that the Board recommend its addition to the State Noxious Weed List in 2025 (nominations due by April 30). A discussion ensued about control methods for holly as well as disposal recommendations. Jason reviewed the 2024 additions to the list as well as several other noxious weed species from recent years. He is more optimistic that holly will make the list in 2025 after several previous attempts had failed. With the total list at about 160 species and growing, the Board may decide in future if it wants to print an abridged list that only covers noxious weeds likely found in the county.

3. Vote on approval or modification of 2024 SJC Noxious Weed List. Jessa moved to adopt the 2024 list as written, seconded by Todd. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED. Jason will send the approved list to the publisher.

4. Updates from Environmental Stewardship (Susan). Susan described her recent work involving revegetation at Jackson's Beach, more plantings at the Operation Center pond, and her involvement with the county's Climate Action Plan, particularly its "drought plan". A culvert replacement for Fishtrap Creek (Deer Harbor, Orcas) offered another opportunity for native landscaping.
5. News from the field (Michele and Andrew). Andrew ran through a list of recent activities, including collaboration with Michele on Lopez and San Juan field projects. He is beginning to organize and refurbish some of our tools, including power equipment. He continues to get oriented with the County administration. Michele has worked with Dan Root (GIS Program Coordinator) recently on getting Survey 123 up and running and expressed optimism about its usefulness.
6. New vehicle update. Jason has been in contact with ER &R's Greg Lee and Christie Bowman about a possible new truck for the program, requesting a price comparison for two pickup models, the 2024 Nissan Frontier and the 2024 Ford Maverick. The Board wondered why the County fleet wasn't pursuing more hybrid or electric options at this time. Christine urged Jason to work directly with the new Fleet Services director, who started work just recently, to explore "more opportunity coming". Once a vehicle price is discovered, a formal budget amendment request will be made for Council's consideration. Andrew is currently using the Toyota until the new vehicle is acquired.
7. Board vacancies. Laura Rensberry announced her resignation as the Area 3 Board member, which represents West Orcas and Waldron. Jason said one potential replacement for her seat had backed down over the weekend. On San Juan, the Area 1 position remains open. Jim said he may be interested in applying to that seat, which represents South San Juan, although he wasn't sure if he lived in the correct geographical area (regulated by RCW 17.10.050). Jason will try to help Jim navigate the application process.
8. Social media proposal (Andrew). Andrew asked for Board feedback about the possibility of using social media as part of the program's outreach efforts (recruitment of volunteers, news stories). The Board responded positively, although Jessa strongly recommended that if Facebook were used, one would have to monitor sites on a daily basis due to the public's desire for rapid

replies to postings. She and Christine recommended collaborating with Communications Coordinator, Erin Andrews, to look into it further.

9. Volunteer programming possibilities (Andrew). Andrew welcomed the Board's views on the creation and management of volunteer work parties or events sponsored by the program. He said that partner organizations like the Land Bank have a lot of volunteer engagement, and "it could be an important part of our weed control strategy". With plenty of experience with volunteer and outreach opportunities, Jessa offered to chat with him about it. Projects like Scot's broom control would be especially suitable, she said.
10. Budget status. The expenditure status report that Jason shared with the Board came from the end of 2023, so the latest expenditures (2024) were not available in time for the meeting. A new truck (if approved by Council) will require a budget amendment, as will the Ecology grant (\$72,000) for Sportsman's Lake milfoil control. Todd requested greater clarity of budget material in the monthly written report.
11. Other business. The Board discussed the State Weed Board's latest 'Bee-u-Tify' seed mix, which is meant to replace noxious weeds with native wildflowers preferred by pollinators. Todd objected to its inclusion of lupine, which could potentially poison livestock. Jason plans to order some (suggested \$200 for 500 packets) by mid-February. The Conservation District is beginning to settle dates for the Youth Conservation Corps work outings this summer, with the Orcas YCC crew already slated for broom control on Shaw in late June. Michele and Andrew will weigh in on potential projects on their respective islands.
12. Adjournment. Chair Rupp adjourned the meeting at 10:58 AM.

The Board's next scheduled meeting is on Friday, March 2, 2024.