

SAN JUAN COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

F-I-N-A-L MINUTES

Friday, May 2, 2025

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: William Rupp, Chair (Area 2); Todd Goldsmith, Vice-Chair (Area 3); James Frampton, Secretary (Area 4); Susan Eshelman, Environmental Stewardship; member of the public, Kiara McLaughlin; and staff members Michele Smith, Andrew Munson and Jason Ontjes.

ABSENT: Caitie Blethen, Interim WSU Extension Director (ex officio); Kari McVeigh, Council Liaison (District One).

The meeting was brought to order at 9:04 AM.

1. Review and approval of the meeting minutes of April 4, 2025. Todd moved to approve the April minutes as written, seconded by Jim. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED. An electronic copy of the approved minutes will be posted on the County website.
2. Updates from Environmental Stewardship (Susan). Susan updated the Board on a gamut of Environmental Stewardship activities, including Clean Water, Marine Resources, Derelict Vessel, Climate and Sustainability, Solid Waste, and more. The Jackson Beach restoration project has been challenging, she said, with Public Works' landing for transport in the mix. There have been several years of effort on this endeavor.

9:30—9:45 AM. Public comment time for visitors. Kiara McLaughlin, a member of the public, declined to comment during the meeting.

3. News from the field (Michele and Andrew). Michele described her recent shiny geranium work on Mount Dallas, where the property owner first noticed it perhaps a couple of years ago. Her effort there will hopefully keep it from spreading elsewhere in the neighborhood (Jim asked for specific locations of shiny geranium on San Juan and will receive a map from staff). She described

a “very field-heavy month, working with different landowners”. Scot’s broom received attention at Raven Ridge Road and at the Beaverton Valley Operations Center, she said, with Susan’s efforts there appreciated. Of late, there has been a lot of engagement from a “very proactive public” that cares “about the way weeds are managed”, expressing support as they pass by. Andrew recounted his recent meeting with a landowner and DNR staff on a Lopez site with spurge laurel, using it as an example of how landowners may be incentivized to control their weeds if given some financial support (DNR subsidizes “brush” management on DFL parcels). Citing Broom Busters’ recommendation to cut Scot’s broom to the ground when in flower, he felt this approach has “mobilized a lot of community members” on Vancouver Island. Andrew continues weed control at various “industrial sites”, wondering how their owners can be encouraged to take on more of the work themselves (Susan suggested that he get in touch with Erin Andrews regarding communications and outreach). A ‘weed-free’ certification program in some counties has encouraged buy-in from owners of similar operations, he said, owing to the desire to win U.S. Forest Service contracts.

Todd led a discussion on the flame weeding tool and urged staff to refine a procedural document outlining its proper use and execution while seeking approval from the Fire Marshal and other relevant public officials. The tool has been used recently on sites where herbicides are prohibited. Staff will work with Todd on a draft update.

4. Presentation and discussion of the monthly report (Jason). Jason gave a brief review of the monthly report and took questions from the Board. The proposed amendment to the Youth Conservation Corps budget was discussed, with Todd believing the temporary increase would generate goodwill in the community. The Motor Pool’s announcement that it would be raising its rates on vehicles and charging separately for fuel also led to a conversation about whether it made sense to hang on to the Nissan pickup, given that its quarterly rate would rise dramatically in 2025. Todd proposed an annual award to a community volunteer if it could get through the County’s budget review process.
5. Sportsman’s Lake update (Jason). Jason related his struggles with the Department of Community Development’s Shoreline Exemption Application,

given the many items on its checklist and the fact that Sportsman's Lake is divided into about 12 different parcels. By contrast, he said, Eurasian milfoil control in Cascade Lake, which is owned by State Parks, has not had to go through the same DCD process, since the project was initiated by State Parks rather than the County. Todd expressed concern that the continued delay in the Sportsman's Lake project would jeopardize grant funding by Ecology.

6. Property classifications update (Jason). After a meeting with County Manager, Jessica Hudson, and Council Chair, Kari McVeigh, Jason said it was not the right time to approach Council about a change to the property classifications for the Noxious Weed Board. There is concern about the fiscal impact such a change would have on schools and the Town of Friday Harbor in particular, given the current budget uncertainty at the state and federal levels. A charge on state parcels is still a possibility, however.
7. Budget status. The Expenditure Status Report for May 1st indicated that 17.41% of the department's budget had been spent thus far in 2025. The noxious weed disposal budget, according to Jason, was at about 12% consumed for the year. Todd mentioned the proposal to increase the Board's YCC contribution this year to \$10,000 due to the Conservation District's grant funding situation. Jason has to get the budget amendment request written and change the Inter-Local Agreement to reflect the request. The Fleet Services notice of higher quarterly payments for the Nissan will have to be discussed with John Roach (ER&R Director), Jason said.
8. Other business. Michele is planning to work with Peace Island-Peace Health volunteers this weekend to remove Scot's broom. Todd asked about the use of drone technology for surveillance of noxious weeds in the County. Michele said that the San Juan County GIS program has one.
9. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 10:44 AM.

The Board's next scheduled meeting is on Friday, June 6, 2025 (Jim plans to call in).