

SAN JUAN COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

F-I-N-A-L MINUTES

Friday, April 3, 2026

9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Meeting held in person at 55 Second Street North, Friday Harbor, WA
at the Large Legislative Conference Room

PRESENT: Adam Martin (Chair), Area 5; Todd Goldsmith (Vice-Chair) Area 3; Jim Frampton (Secretary), Area 4; Caitie Blethen (WSU Extension Director) ex officio; Jane Fuller, (Council Liaison) District 3; Susan Eshelman (Environmental Stewardship); and staff members Andrew Munson and Jason Ontjes.

ABSENT: Bill Rupp, Area 2; and staff member Michele Smith (on vacation).

The Chair brought the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

1. Review and approval of the meeting minutes of March 6, 2026 (9-9:05 AM). Todd moved to approve the minutes from the March meeting as written, seconded by Adam. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED. The approved minutes will be posted on the Board's County website.
2. Updates from WSU Extension: Caitie (9:05-9:10). Caitie said that the Master Gardeners have 10 new recruits this year, some of whom attended the noxious weed workshop with Jason in Eastsound. Totalling about 80 members, the Master Gardeners provide information to the public about noxious weeds and pesticide use and also offer 'plant diagnostics' for what ails your plants, among other services they provide. The 4-H youths will be participating in the Great Islands Clean Up on April 8th. WSU Extension's Forestry class, led by Kevin Zobrist, will be on San Juan this year and has 12 students registered (Jason will be teaching the noxious weed component).
3. Updates from Environmental Stewardship: Susan (9:10-9:15). Susan said the Great Islands Clean Up will be taking place on multiple islands this April, and Hazardous Waste Disposal would be offered in May (San Juan) and June (Orcas, Lopez). Climate Sustainability is now funded through next year, she said. Weeding maintenance continues at Orcas Landing and Lopez Village on restoration sites there.

4. News from the field: Andrew (9:15-9:20). Andrew said his noxious weed disposal talk on Lopez “went okay”, with about a dozen attendees including OPALCO’s Ed Lago, Kwiaht’s Madrona Murphy, Lopez Solid Waste’s Sarah Reeves, and contractor Trevor Steinbrueck. Board member, Todd Goldsmith, was also on hand. Andrew would like to provide a recording of the presentation to make available to the community, including Master Gardener members (they would receive credit for viewing it, according to Caitie). Lopez resident, Cyndi Smith, suggested the County get more involved with replacing weeds with natives, which sparked a conversation on that topic at the Board meeting (Adam suggested a species list could be put together). As the native plantings at Lopez Village are leafing out, Andrew is keeping the site weeded on behalf of Environmental Stewardship.
5. Presentation and discussion of the monthly report: Jason (9:20-9:30). The Board discussed the recent proposal of deer hunting on Land Bank properties on Orcas, including Turtleback Mountain Preserve, in order to reduce overbrowsing on native plant communities there.

9:30—10:00 AM. Public Comment Period. No members of the public attended the meeting.

6. 2026 Annual Work Plan Discussion: Adam (10:00-10:30). Adam commented on the draft annual work plan, establishing weed control priorities (High, Medium-High), and “cutting up the pie” based on those priorities. He wanted to know how many days are spent responding to the public’s requests for weed control assistance as compared to our partnerships (OPALCO, Land Bank, Public Works, etc.). Based on these numbers, he commented that the Board could ask for “resources” in efforts to meet those demands, with more effort to communicate the department’s accomplishments. Jim believed that Patos Island’s common holly deserved attention for control in 2026, and Adam added that the Land Bank’s new trail at Beaverton Valley Marsh Preserve passed through an acre of holly.
7. Budget update: Jason (10:30--10:35). Jane gave the Board an overview of the County’s budget situation for 2027 and warned of the dire consequences if the upcoming levy lid lift proposal does not get passed by the voters (50% in

favor plus one). With a \$3.5 million to \$7 million deficit, she said even the Noxious Weed Department, which is not funded through Current Expense, was exposed to potential cuts. The Board talked about Fleet Services' annual charge to Noxious Weeds of \$28,000, and Information Services' \$19,000 (in addition to \$6,000 from GIS). Jane said that the Board's staff should have a conversation with John Roach (Fleet Services) and Colin Huntemer (Public Works) about the possibility of opting out of the fleet, and what the burdens or costs would be if Noxious Weeds pulled out (the same would be true for other departments like the Land Bank). Adam suggested the savings could potentially be used to employ an additional staff member (perhaps seasonal). The Expenditure Status Report from March 30th showed that 16.01 percent of the department's budget had been spent thus far in 2026. Jane suggested that the Board consider which of its department's services were mandated by law, versus those that were merely "nice to have" as a cost-cutting exercise.

8. Other business. Jim said the State Weed Board had not given county weed board members sufficient time to nominate a candidate to replace outgoing Northwest area representative, Alaine Sommargren, who is now the head of the King County Noxious Weed Control Board.
9. Adjournment. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:47 AM.