

# **DRAFT - San Luis Obispo Weed Management Area Meeting Minutes**

**Date of Meeting:** September 28, 2021

**Meeting start and ending times:** 2:30 PM to 3:40 PM

**Location:** via Microsoft Teams

**Attendees:** Andrew Johnson, Rusty Hall, Karen Lowerison, Hillary Phillips, Craig Duprey, Royce Larsen, Amy Smart, Pete Sarafan, John Sayers, Mike Anderson, Patrick Wall, J. Carl, Stephanie Stark

**Guests:** Jutta Burger, Cal-IPC, presenter

## **Announcements:**

The agenda provided notices for:

- Upcoming Cal-IPC Symposium for October 26-29 online.
- Statewide WMA Meeting on October 26, 8:00-10:30 AM (included as part of the Cal-IPC symposium).
- Cal-IPC Photo Contest, accepting submissions.
- New online weed management resource "*WeedCUT*" (to be discussed). All the above had links.

## **Agenda Item #1: Roundtable Introductions and Organizational Updates**

Discussion: Attendees introduced themselves and provided any quick organizational updates.

Karen Lowerison, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner reported on the Commissioner's current CDFA grants and how they are progressing. She shared a photograph of a new ATV quad runner herbicide applicator that had been purchased. The Los Osos Jubata grant is wrapping up and is on track to expend all the hours and funding. The County Parks survey and collaboration grant has started and will continue until 2023 with opportunities for public outreach. She asked if anyone was familiar with a local Pest Control Operator that uses drone applicators. She was hoping to find a way to treat some very remote and inaccessible Jubata that was discovered with the Los Osos Jubata grant. It may be necessary to use a helicopter instead.

John Sayers, California Parks, let us know that California Department of Fish and Wildlife contributions by PG&E had provided local grants to help remove iceplant. These grants also provided for native plant species plantings and fire fuel load reductions. Some grant monies may still be available. Sayers also wanted to alert everyone that the herbicide products "*WOW – Wack Out Weeds*" and "*EcoMight Pro*" herbicides which were both labeled and promoted the herbicide as "organic" had in fact glyphosate added to the ingredients. California Department of Pesticide Regulations had discovered the herbicide's "enhancement" through routine checks and have since pulled the products from sale. They have also done a press release and will be acting on the company to gain compliance.

Mike Anderson, California Conservation Corps wanted to remind everyone the Corps is available to help with any of our projects and they also have some new equipment available.

# **DRAFT - San Luis Obispo Weed Management Area Meeting Minutes**

## **Agenda Item #2: SLO County Ag Commissioner Update**

Discussion: Rusty Hall and Karen Lowerison reported finding new noxious weed locations. The first was Yellow Flag Iris Hwy near highway 1 and highway 46. This is one of the CDFA regional target weeds. The patch was small and located in the Caltrans right of way. It was treated with glyphosate and imazapyr. Another location of leafy spurge was found on California Men's Colony (State) property near highway one. This patch has been treated twice and it appears to be working. There will be follow up on both locations.

Progress is moving forward to remove some isolated patches of Arundo from the Salinas River. The City of Paso Robles has applied for and obtained a Section 404 Clean Water Act (CWA) Individual Waste Discharge Requirement (IWDR) with the water board to remove vegetation (and some sediment) to improve drainage and reduce fire fuel loads. Paso Roble's IWDR includes removal of invasive weed species – Tree of Heaven, Black Locust and Arundo. The Ag Commissioner as contacted the city to partner with the city to help remove the Arundo. As part of this process, the Agricultural Commissioner is attempting to apply for a Section 401 (federal Clean Water Act) "General Waste Discharge Requirement" (different from Paso Roble's "Individual" WDR). Because of the small size, few locations, small acreage (< 0.2 acres), linear feet (<400) and no dredged material, the commissioner would be exempt from a section 404 (CWA). This is because very small projects do not generally fall under the Army Corp of Engineers federal jurisdiction. We would also qualify under the CWA section 404(f) because removal of invasive noxious weeds from riparian areas is a water conservation practice. We are still required to submit the Notice of Intent, Mitigation plan and any CEQA Notice of Exemptions.

The Agricultural Commissioner is also partnering with County Public Works in helping remove noxious weeds from the Arroyo Grande Creek (restoration) Project and the Nacimiento Lake Pipeline Project.

Back in May/June our department worked with the Coastal San Luis RCD to help control the Artichoke thistle on the Mianini Ranch. This was a very large project of mature Artichoke thistle over several acres. After contacting the property owners and getting all the paperwork completed, we ended up treating over 6.5 acres, making 9 trips. Seven staff ended up applying 4.8 gallons of Garlon, taking about 74 staff hours to accomplish the deed. It was good to use all our different equipment on a single project. Karen Lowerison shared photographs of the project.

## **Agenda Item #3: LCSLO Update**

Discussion: WCB Grant funding for LIDU treatment is nearly completed. Project will be passed on to NEP upon completion. Coastal Commission -Cal Fire/Treatments-may fit into fire removal project.

## **Agenda Item #4: Weed Cut (Jutta Burger guest presenter)**

Discussion: Guest presenter, Jutta Burger, Cal-IPC. Spoke to us about WeedCUT, a free online weed control user tool that became available back in February 2021. It was created with 3-year grant with University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources IPM program. It is a support tool giving guidance to find alternatives to an herbicide application. It allows you to choose which non-herbicide tool to use when entering multiple variables. This is for those situations where an herbicide is not wanted, or it is totally restricted. You can filter the information by the plant and site characteristics, or

## **DRAFT - San Luis Obispo Weed Management Area Meeting Minutes**

you can view the management practices and then select the weed species. The options offered is very comprehensive. Also included is biocontrol by weed species. The program was based on the manual *Best*

*Management Practices for Non-Chemical Weed Control* which is a free download from the same Cal-IPC website.

Phase two of this program is coming which will include herbicides as well as expanding the program by adding more invasive weed species. If wanted, you can download the PDF version, but it is a large amount of data covering over 300 pages.

### **Agenda Item #5: South Central Coast Eradication Plan**

Discussion: Andrew Johnson reported the South-Central Coast Eradication Plan grant is wrapping up various projects and surveys for such weeds as Japanese Dodder (none found), Canada Thistle (none found).

### **Agenda Item #6: General Discussion**

Discussion: Jackie Crabb, reported Russian Wheat Grass surveys and treatments are ongoing and there are still some spots, but it is mostly gone. Treatments and surveys are ongoing.

John Sayers reported that the weed Limonium is still being surveyed for and treated in spots and it is appearing to be successful in in Santa Barbara.

**Date of Next Meeting:** To be determined.

**Submitted by:** Rusty Hall, Agricultural Inspector/Biologist, SLO WMA Secretary