



Columbia Gorge CWMA General Meeting

1:00-3:00 pm 8/29/17

OSU Extension Office

2990 Experiment Station Drive, Hood River 97031

Attendees:

Carolyn Wright, DNR

Chris Schaedel, Hood River SWCD

Christina Mead, Mt. Hood NF

Emily Stevenson, Skamania Noxious Weeds

Jennifer DeShong, Gifford Pinchot NF

Kate Connely, Columbia Land Trust

Leanne Willard, Private Citizen

Marty Hudson, Klickitat Noxious Weeds

Ray Willard, WSDOT

Ryan Bassett, Wasco County SWCD

Sam Leininger, Clackamas SWCD

Sarah Hamilton, Columbia Gorge CWMA

Tova Tillinghast, Underwood Cons. Dist.

Washington State Department of Transportation

Raymond Willard, State Roadside Asset Manager

Ray is here to talk about WSDOT's new Highway Activity Tracking System (HATS). Background:

- WSDOT is developing a new weed management program. They are mapping planned treatments sites. This will be the 1st year of having all of their treatment sites mapped out.
- They cover 7000 miles of roadway. They are working on reducing their mowing and improving pollinator habitat.
- Roadside Vegetation Management: They are working on changing the Washington roadsides from mowed and manicured to 'healthy ecosystems'. They will develop roadside management plans for each of the 24 areas in the state, and the work will be integrated with mowing, spraying, and other management approaches.
- They have been working on these plans for over a decade. The plans include summer and fall treatments and refinements. Plans are updated in the winter.
- Funding is difficult. Most of the road maintenance money goes to pavement and drainage instead of roadside maintenance.
- They are working on creating natural spaces on the wider roadsides. With natural spaces, trimming may need to happen on a 5 year schedule. Landscaping is done by local cities.
- HATS is loaded onto iPads which are taken into the field. The interface includes: pesticide application, mowing, tree and brush control, hazard tree removal, noxious weeds, nuisance plants, and landscape maintenance activities. They have created apps to record the information. The roadside apps include polygons of green mowing or blue spraying. Red points denote Class A weeds, orange points are for planned treatments, and pink points are for general reference.

- This 1st year they are working to get the information mapped. This will help develop the 2018 plan. Records are then tracked against the plan. Local maintenance staff work with Ray to develop the plan. The data collected includes who, when, where, and how much work was done. The system includes pesticide labels and herbicide fact sheets. The field workers seem to approve of the system, depending on the worker. Ray is on the WISC and would like to see a platform with invasive species information available to other organizations. They intend to share this data with partners, weed boards, etc. They can share it via ARCGIS. Potentially they could share the tool as well as the data.
- Once the framework is developed, WSDOT will be using the system for project management, including habitat improvement. The operational zone and pavement edge of the road must be clear, but beyond that is an ecological asset which will be managed for habitat potential. Pollinators are a priority. They are managing those areas for succession and training their managers to do so. The plans include spot spraying and timed mowing, and they will continue to control noxious weeds and hazard trees. Concerns include attracting wildlife to roads and increased fire damage. The 20 foot buffer from roadsides helps to prevent some wildlife issues, and they have not seen an increase in fires, but are keeping an eye out for these and other concerns. Each area will have a plan and the freedom to decide which plants are a priority for treatment.
- In the future the public may be able to report an invasive plant sighting along a roadside. The app includes a weed identification guide by flower color.

Farm Bill Update

Emily Stevenson, Skamania County Noxious Weeds, Program Coordinator

BMPs are on the website!!! They include an online version for easy perusal, and a sharp-looking PDF for easy printing. Be sure to check them out at: <https://columbiagorgecwma.org/weed-listing/best-management-practices/>

Highlighted weeds for 2017:

- Butterfly bush
- English holly
- Houndstongue
- Old man's beard clematis
- Poison hemlock
- Scotch thistle
- Shiny geranium
- Spotted knapweed
- Ventenata grass
- Yellow starthistle

ISEP: Tentative date: March 1st. Please send speakers and topic ideas to Emily or Sarah.

STI: Tentative date: Saturday, May May 19th, in Hood River

Next year we would like to include partners to do outreach at the STI. Partners can set up a table at the event. We have already applied for the grant for the following year. We will find out in the next couple of months if we received it.

Region 6 Forest Service Invasive Species Meeting

The meeting will be held in Hood River this year, from November 7-9. On that Wednesday we are hoping to have a field day. There will be agency staff from across the PNW, so it's a great time to highlight the amazing work this CWMA has been doing. Does anyone know of some excellent locations to visit for this weeds field day? Is anyone interested in presenting at these sites? Thanks for your thoughts!

- It's a tough time of year to see invasive species.
- Condit Dam and Hemlock Dam removal sites could be options.
- The Powerdale Dam is in Hood River and most of the survivors are evergreens.
- Trout Lake could be a possibility, though it could be under water or snow.
- The Balfour –Klickitat sites with Robin Dobson- contact Marty for more information. It is also likely to have milder weather.
- Friends of the Gorge might have some lower-elevation sites.

CWMA 5-Year Plan Discussion

Emily Stevenson and Sam Leininger

- Where do we see the CWMA in 5 years?
- The next meeting is in October. We plan to do partner roundtables and talk about the CWMA plan for the next 5 years.
- We want to make sure the CWMA is serving the needs of the partners.
- Hwy 14 from Goldendale east is highest priority for WSDA Because of butterfly habitat. From a DOT standpoint, that location would be good to priority for the CWMA for restoration. Skeletonweed is moving west around there.
- We could also put together a short survey to ask partners about their needs.

Education & Outreach Update

Sarah Hamilton

The group hasn't met in a long time, but will be planning the field day today. Please join us!

Member Updates and Observations Roundtable

All

There are stacks of the newly printed landowner handbook from Klickitat County available for partners. They are available online here: <http://www.klickitatcounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/3392>

- Carolyn found puncturevine on the Dalles Mountain Rd. Marty treated it last week and It's dead, but they didn't remove the seeds. At the county fair someone informed Emily that they have it in Carson, but they wouldn't divulge a location.
 - Tree of heaven, black locust, and Russian olive trees are really spreading.
 - Butterfly bush is also expanding.
 - OWEB funding for county weed control is available.
 - *Weed of the Month* is finished for the year.
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3:00 End

Next General Meeting

1-3 pm, Halloween, October 31st, 2017

Hood River Extension Service

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Hood River, OR 97031