

# Oregon State Weed Board (OSWB)

## Minutes

September 26 – 27, 2011

Port of Morrow, Boardman, Oregon

### ATTENDANCE:

#### Weed Board Members Present

Bill Hansell (Chairman)

Jim Harris (Vice-chair)

Patti Milne

Dan Hilburn

Amy Peters

#### Absent

Jerry Erstrom

Mark Krautman

#### Attendees

Tim Butler, ODA

Shawna Bautista, USFS

Janet Greenup, Morrow SWCD

Tom Kaye, Institute of Applied Ecology

Wayne Lei, PGE

Shannon Brubaker, ODA

Vern Holm, NW Weed Mgt Partnership, OISC

Bonnie Rasmussen, ODA

Rick Boatner, ODF&W

Alex Park, ODA

Doug Daoust, USDA FS, OISC

John Cochran, Turf Merchants, Inc., OISC

Jo Davis, ODA

Mark Systema, PSU

Allison Halpern, WSDA

Mark Lewis, U of WA

Layne Womack, Morrow County

Dan Durfey, Umatilla County

Colin Park, USDA APHIS

Rachel Beck, OSU

Don Horneck, OSU

Jaison Mody, PGE

Samantha Cisney, BLM, Baker City

Audie Huber, CTUIR

Phil Hamm, OSU

Vern Frederickson, Boardman

Scott Russell, PGE

John Talbott, OSU

Leslie Nelson, TNC

Andy Hulting, OSU

Arnie Grammon, Baker County

Steve Cherry, ODF&W

Greg Haubrich, WA

Dave Langland, ODA

Glenn Miller, ODA

Mark Porter, Wallowa Resources, OISC

Bob Barrett, ODA

Rian Hooff, DEQ

Glenn Dolphin, Oregon Marine Board

Nancy Willmes, SOLV, OISC

Eric Coombs, ODA

Sam Chan, OSU

Vanelle Peterson, Dow, OISC

Terry Tallman, Morrow County

Cheryl Shippentower, CTUIR

Dave Pranger, Morrow County

Dan Ball, OSU

Carri Pirosko, ODA

Don Wysocki, OSU

Mark Hitchcox, USDA APHIS, OISC

Erin McConnell, BLM, Baker City

Jim Brewer, PGE

Steve Buttrick, TNC

Pete Furseth, PGE

Don Rice, OSU

**September 26, 2011**

**Approval of the February 2011 Meeting Minutes**

Minutes were approved as presented

**Update & Discussion on M76 and OWEB Grant Process and Criteria - Melissa Leoni, OWEB and Shannon Brubaker, ODA**

Melissa Leoni and Shannon Brubaker presented to the Board the partnership between ODA/OSWB and OWEB grant program. Measure 76 retains the same fundamental purpose of M66 except it removes the 2014 sunset of M66 and changes the Natural Resources side of the program. Grant funds now gets 65% and operating funds gets 35% of the 50% allocated to the Natural Resources and Parks subaccount. The Natural Resources and Parks subaccount receives 15% of the Lottery money.

The Natural Resources subaccount has six purposes: To protect and improve water quality through restoration and flow; Protect lands and waters; Restore and maintain habitats, Maintain biodiversity, Involve people; and Remedy limiting factors for fish and wildlife, habitats, and watershed functions. The Grant funds are for conservation easements, fee title or leases, projects for native fish or wildlife, water quality or stream flow, assessment, planning, design, technical assistance, monitoring, and outreach necessary for projects.

Effective July 1, 2011, OWEB Administrative Rules applies to ODA/OSWB grants. ODA weed grants may not be used as a match for OWEB grants (and vice versa). After September 2011, new grantees will be able to access info online using OWEB's OGMS database. Part of OWEB admin rules is that grantees will not enter into new grant agreements or amend existing grant agreements for time extensions and award amounts if the grantee has an overdue final grant reports. Over due reports now affects agreements and amendments in other projects. ODA and OWEB will work closely to smooth out any details as the partnership continues.

**OSWB Grant Program Budget Update – Tim Butler, ODA**

Tim Butler gave a short budget explanation to the Board. There is essentially \$2.5 million available in the OSWB budget to allocate in weed grants.

**Potential Conflict of Interest Statement – Bill Hansell**

As Chairman of the Oregon State Weed Board, I make the following statement on behalf of the entire Board. All members of the Board agree, if there is an item the Board is taking action on which is a potential conflict of interest to that member, such member will abstain from voting on such action. When a member believes there is a potential conflict of interest, said member shall indicate to the Chairman and will be officially recorded in the minutes. State Law defines potential conflict of interest as:

"Any means of action or any decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which could be to the private pecuniary benefit or detriment of the person or the person's relative, or a business with which the person or person's relative is associated."

In addition, to ensure that there is equal opportunity to all grant applicants, the Oregon State Weed Board has adopted the following guidelines:

- During grant award discussion, the public present at the meeting shall not address the Board unless specifically asked for input, comment, or clarification on a particular item.
- ODA staff is present to provide input to the Board on information that was used in making a particular grant recommendation. The discussion between staff and the Board is intended to assist the Board in making an informed decision to fund or not fund a particular grant.

- The Board expects that the applicants present will refrain from lobbying for grants during breaks and other interactions with the members of the Board.

The intent of these guidelines is to help ensure that one applicant does not have an advantage over another because they are present at the meeting to lobby for their grant(s). This statement is read and entered into the minutes of the Oregon State Weed Board on September 26, 2011.

The following are grant projects that were proposed, discussed, and funded during the 241st Grant Cycle:

<b>Number</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Requested</b>	<b>Awarded</b>
2011-241-01	Weyerhaeuser Springfield False Brome EDRR/Treatment/Containment Program	\$8,000	
2011-241-02	Rogue Basic Garlic Mustard Treatment	\$25,000	\$25,000
2011-241-03	Wallowa County Rush Skeletonweed Project	\$29,748	\$29,748
2011-241-04	Imnaha River Common Bugloss Control	\$22,220	\$22,220
2011-241-05	Warner Valley Cooperative Weed Control Project	\$14,080	\$14,080
2011-241-06	North Lake County EDRR Project	\$6,160	
2011-241-07	Buford Park False Brome Spot Control	\$16,500	\$16,500
2011-241-08	Union County Yellow Starthistle Survey & Control	\$15,950	\$15,950
2011-241-09	Hells Canyon Yellow Flag Iris	\$11,330	\$11,330
2011-241-10	Hells Canyon Area Rush Skeletonweed Control	\$43,000	\$43,000
2011-241-11	Malheur Rush Skeletonweed Containment Project	\$25,000	\$25,000
2011-241-12	Umatilla County Garlic Mustard Control	\$29,172	\$29,172
2011-241-13	Lincoln County Clematis Control	\$2,460	\$2,460
2011-241-14	Lincoln County Gorse Control	\$12,701	\$12,701
2011-241-15	Flying G Russian Knapweed	\$8,250	\$8,250
2011-241-16	Russian Knapweed Knockout	\$18,590	\$18,590
2011-241-17	Early Emergent Weed Control	\$2,500	\$2,500
2011-241-18	Curry Gorse I	\$16,434	\$16,434
2011-241-19	Curry Kids and Weeds I	\$16,537	
2011-241-20	Portuguese Broom Control – 2012	\$28,680	\$28,680
2011-241-21	North Wheeler County Yellow Starthistle Prevention Project	\$6,266	\$6,266
2011-241-22	Aquatic Plant Survey, Outreach & Management Planning	\$86,509	\$86,509
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$445,089</b>	<b>\$430,929</b>

Bill Hansell moved the total amount allocated on funded projects for the 241<sup>h</sup> cycle is \$430,929. The Motion was carried unanimously.

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**September 27, 2011**

**Joint OSWB & OISC Meeting**

**Welcome and Introductions – Bill Hansell, OSWB Chair, Rian Hooff, OISC Chair**

**PGE Arundo Update – Wayne Lei, PGE**

PGE obtained six truckloads of Arundo donax rhizomes from Riverside County in California. PGE's compliance to shipment of Arundo included phytosanitary certificate, rhizomes were power washed, placed in plastic-lined boxes with lids, and enclosed and sealed in trailers. The first shipment arrived in Boardman in early April. Whole or cut rhizomes were planted in May with 5,000 rhizomes per acre. Eighty-five acres were planted in three separate fields. In addition, three separate vendors in Washington, Indiana, and Georgia provided tissue-cultured plantlets. Water delivery to the three farms is comparable to corn. No fertilizer was applied in the first year. Arundo has good to excellent emergence with growth habit consistent with previous testing in Prosser, Washington. PGE estimated three flushes of growth with rhizome occurring between growth spurts.

Currently, PGE is arranging for torrefaction at the Electric Power Research Institute in the Idaho National Laboratory to determine compatibility with coal-fire plant. PGE will locate a small torrefier on site in the future and is working on a test-burn at the Boardman Power Plant by 2013 and 2014. Harvest and storage of Arundo is also being tested. Farmers will swath and bale rectangular and round, canes will be chopped dry and stacked or chapped wet and ensiled. While Arundo canes are being cut, node points are being shattered by the machine, making it non-viable for growth.

The controlled growth of Arundo donax as a crop in eastern Oregon demonstrated that the plant indeed has a "clumping grass" growth habit, no flowering was observed but in the event there is, the seeds are sterile. Arundo demonstrated susceptibility of stems and rhizomes to desiccation and strength of stems against wind breakage. Sites in Prosser, WA and Milton-Freewater, OR shows no signs of dispersion.

Administrative measures on Arundo are active and underway. PGE is complying with Morrow County growing conditions and the State of Oregon six-month temporary rule for control area plan requirements will be ending this month. Morrow County also formed an Arundo Donax Stakeholder Advisory Committee in which PGE is actively participating. PGE have talked to SOLV and NRCS about doing monitoring on riparian zones. PSU will work with PGE on control methods and determine emissions of above average volatile compounds. OSU will ensure label requirements are adequate for this region. PGE posted a \$1 million bond

PGE wants Arundo plantings within 50-mile radius of the power plant. The plan is to put charred biomass outside right next to the power plant where the mounds of coal are sitting right now. It will be densified so it will not be subject to wind dispersal. The residue after burning the Arundo will be about the same as coal but has a higher silica level than coal. PGE is currently selling their existing ash for cement additives and is hoping to do the same for Arundo ashes. If not, there is a landfill on site.

### **OSU Experiment Station Arundo Update – Don Horneck and Don Wysocki, OSU HAREC**

The first planting of Arundo donax in HAREC was in February 2011. The Harvested canes came from Touchet, WA. Some cuttings were planted in pots and some in water. Arundo in pots had 100% emergence but those in water did not emerge. Canes were stored over winter in variety of ways. Whole canes were stored in dry paper bags, wet canes in soil and plastic bags. Plants rooted at various times, depths, and densities. Chips of arundo were also planted in pots in the green house and in cold frame. There were seeds bought from the Internet and planted and still waiting for emergence at this time. Don Horneck was in Greece last summer and has seen Arundo donax everywhere. It flowers in Greece but has not yet flowered here.

There was a discussion about varieties of Arundo and what are being planted here. The Arundo planted in Prosser, WA did not flower but the ones in Alabama did. A study done in Iraq demonstrated sterile seed for decades then one year, they lapsed to being non sterile. Studies done in California showed 5% or so of seeds were viable. Don noted that Arundo will not likely produce any flowers, but if it does, they will test the seeds for viability. The Arundo in Prosser has been there for six years and it never flowered.

The general observations on the test plantings were not impressive. There are roots that have yet to emerge. The plant is not difficult to knock back with herbicide the first year. Competing weeds have been more of a problem than the Arundo. More research are needed to be done like cutting, fertility, elimination and planting density studies.

There were questions about the viability of Arundo in riparian zones. Someone mentioned that the conclusions of field trials would fall short if they are drawn from agricultural field test trials and not riparian habitat. Tests on riparian habitat cannot be done because Arundo has to be introduced to a riparian zone in Oregon.

OSU HERAC will continue to look for the best chemical options for control of Arundo.

### **Morrow County Arundo Update – Terry Tallman, Morrow County Judge and Dave Pranger, Morrow County Weed Supervisor**

When Morrow County Weed Department was first approached with the Arundo donax project, the County wasn't quite sure how to handle it. The County supported the economy perspective for the area and the possibility of Arundo as biofuel but on the other hand, it does not want to see Arundo as an invasive weed infesting Oregon's natural resources. The County then requested a lot of scientific advise on the growing conditions of Arundo and physically looked at any prospected field to see if it fits the criteria. The County coordinated with OSU, HERAC to test the plant for control measure. Along with all the other information gathered by OSU and University of WA, the County is pleased on how the testing of Arundo is being handled. Everything is documented and transparent. Machinery that goes into the field is inspected and brushed off when it comes out of the field. An economist is studying the economy of Arundo as a crop including the effect to other crops like potatoes whose jobs could be displaced by Arundo.

### **Arundo Advisory Committee, Purpose & Members – Phil Hamm, OSU Experimental Station**

This committee represents a wide group of people. It includes OR Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, Confederate Tribes, TNC, OSU, Morrow County, and SWCD. Exoficio members who attend the meeting and advise the Committee are the County Commissioners, Don Horneck, Don Wysocki, and PGE. They are not voting but they're to give insight. The purpose of this committee is to advise Morrow and Umatilla Counties with regards to Arundo as a crop in Boardman. This committee will provide information directly to the Commissioners about questions asks by the people and what the county will decide regarding regulations.

Dan Hilburn of ODA engaged the group to look at current rules and provide information for state's future rules. He wanted to make sure that committee is connecting with the State Weed Board and the Invasive Species Council.

### **ODA Arundo Update (OAR and Bond) – Dan Hilburn, ODA**

ODA is asking everyone to help with the regulation of Arundo for the state. Over-regulation does not serve a purpose or out-of-date, on the other hand ODA does not want to allow more invasive weed problem in the state. The Arundo Advisory Committee will be a big part of ODA's rulemaking, as well OSWB, OISC. Dan also asked for public comments when ODA starts working on the rule. There will be a lot of chances for input. ODA can ban Arundo or not regulate it at all. Dan likes the idea of green energy but does not want to see more weeds. Trials of Arundo are very important. The State's temporary rule expires in September. There are four parts in the current rule: Acreages is limited to 400; cannot be planted within a quarter mile of water; there is a \$1 million bond that covers 3 years; and the field has to be monitored. Arundo has been in the nursery trade for many years. Does Oregon want statewide regulation? Should it be banned at the nursery trade? Should the state let the county continue to regulate Arundo? Dan requests for feedback when the group returns from the field tour.

### **Field Tour**

The OSWB, OISC, and meeting attendees toured the Arundo field, OSU Experimental Station, and PGE power plant in Boardman.

### **Closeout Discussion on Arundo, Bill Hansell, OSWB Chair and Rian Hooff, OISC Chair**

Rian Hooff opened the dialogue. Dan Hilburn commented that there is only one coal-powered plant that exists in Oregon and the likelihood of another farmer planting Arundo, as a crop for green energy in any part of the state is very small. This special situation only applies to this area in northeastern Oregon and not to other part of the state. Wayne Lei says that it does not preclude others to grow Arundo anywhere else but this project has very selective needs, special circumstances and facility.

Jim Harris asked PGE if they have looked at other biomass plants and the possibility of it being torrefied on-site and transported into Boardman. Wayne Lei answered that PGE has looked at other biomass in place of Arundo that can be torrefied clean and with the right chemical contents and will continue to look at other biomass in the future. The possibility of damaged wood as a biomass was discussed. Doug Doaust said that the USFS would not allow wood from the forest to be used as biomass.

Vern Holm asked what would happen if Arundo were listed as a noxious weed in Oregon. Dan Hilburn explained that plants that are listed as noxious weed are prohibited from sale and propagation and will be taken out of the nursery trade, however ODA has the ability to give a Director's exemption to PGE.

Bill Hansell said that there are a couple of unique factors in the room; there are experts from agricultural sectors of Umatilla, Morrow, and Marion Counties and the two OSU Extension Stations in the area. Scientists are working on these projects, answering questions that are still out there for the group. Combining the agricultural and research bases, it will be a big mistake to adopt any policy right now that will hinder the collecting of scientific data that will be needed to make informed decision later.

Vanelle Peterson wanted clarification from the comment Dan Hilburn made earlier that there is no need for a statewide regulation for Arundo. What if people plant Arundo in other areas and bring them in Oregon and the state does not have a statewide regulation? Dan Hilburn answered that he doesn't want to see is that the state adopts a regulation on every single plant but he is not opposed to regulating Arundo either. Dan Sharratt pointed out that nobody is stopping anyone from growing Arundo since it is in the nursery trade.

Patti Milne says to remember that the state is requiring No-Coal in 2020. It will take a lot more research that relates to green energy. She does not want to curtail efforts that lead to green energy. Clearly people are keeping close tabs on this Arundo plantings. If problems arise somebody somewhere will jump in pretty quickly to address the issue.

Tim Butler commented that if the OSWB list Arundo as a B Weed then it would be taken out of the nursery trade across the state and any research will need a Director's exemption. Amy Peters mentioned that many of the weed problems come from the nursery trade so if Arundo is indeed going to be invasive in Oregon, she does not want it to be readily available in the nursery trade.

Shawna Bautista commented that from the USFS standpoint, they are less concerned with the industrial part of Arundo and is pleased with the research and control methods that are being done but is concern of the scale that it is being planted the possibility of Arundo getting into the Columbia River and its threat to the national forest lands. USFS wants the OSWB to consider listing Arundo to remove it to the nursery trade and give PGE and OSU the Director's exemption with continued research and strict control methods.

Vern Holm is concern about plants like Arundo not being listed and would like to see it listed sooner. He gave an example of *Daphne laureola* that was listed too late and there are more plants that are not listed yet that are showing invasive qualities. Vern recommends that OSWB list Arundo as a noxious weed as soon as possible. Arnie Grammon commented that Baker County spent about \$400 million on riparian restoration and does not want to see Arundo in the riparian areas. Erin McConnel commented on behalf of BLM that she is supportive of green energy but also does not want to see Arundo moving out of the agricultural plantings and escaping to public lands and would like to see the research continue.

Bill Hansell wanted to know how much Arundo is being sold in the nursery trade and how long. Tim Butler said if he can recall correctly, it has been in the nursery industry for over two decades. It is not a high seller in the trade. Bill Hansell said that it has been available to the public for 20 years and it hasn't been seen in the wild yet. Amy Peters said that there are some stands in the Medford area. Tim Butler said that that it has been eradicated there are some questions if it was intentionally planted. Someone commented that Medford has the same climate as northern California where Arundo is invasive.

Dan Hilburn said that what if the state requires that nursery industry only sells that variegated kind so it is obvious where the plant came from if it surfaces in the wild. Shawna Bautista said it still would need to be controlled. Shawna Bautista is concerned that invasive plants might infest the forests for several years before the USFS can detect it and it will take several years before they can finish NEPA and treat the infestation by then the plant will be out of control.

Sam Chan and Mark Systma commented on Arundo's dispersal method especially in riparian areas like knotweed where flood events can move plant particles downstream. Vanelle Paterson said she wants to see some genetic research done on Arundo.

Mark Porter commented on the value of Arundo as green energy, the group knows it can be invasive, and there are rules and regulations in place to make sure it does not escape in the wild. The group should focus on more research and gathering information. Dan Hilburn said that PGE is not bringing in anymore Arundo. They are just filling in some gaps in the field. There is still some time before a new state rule should be written if needed.

Bill Hansell wanted to know if the state of Washington has some infestations of Arundo. Mark Lewis answered that there are two stands in Proser, WA that has been eradicated and continued to be monitored. There is a site in Washington University Extension in Pullayup that has been there for 17 years and is showing no signs of escaping. The site in Touchet, WA has been moved. There are other areas that are looking into planting it for fiber and chemical crop.

Bill Hansell commented that he was told that in California plots of Arundo had been treated for 19 consecutive years and still continues to thrive. Mark Lewis said that the methodology used in Orange County was different than what was used in Proser, WA. California did the cut-and-daub method while Washington left the rhizome mass in the ground, and when the new flush comes out they were sprayed and nothing came out. Shawna Bautista commented that the infestation she was dealing with in northern California was in a stream system, perfect growing conditions for Arundo, a very well established, solid 8-acre patch. It is not surprising that it is easier to kill-off in an agricultural setting but once Arundo is established in a riparian area and that the conditions that the USFS and other land managers will be facing if Arundo escapes from agricultural plantings and ends up in the riparian zones.

Vanelle Peterson commented that it is well known that if plants have their roots in water, they tend to be much more difficult to control compared when to terrestrial plants. That is probably why it is easier to control Arundo in an agricultural setting but not when it is established in a riparian area like Shawna Bautista was saying. Vanelle would like to see the Arundo Advisory Committee sit down and discuss the priorities and figure out how to answer these questions.

Rian Hoof thanks the OSWB for hosting the meeting.

**Action Items:** No action items

**Public Comment:** No public comment

**Next Meeting and Location:** February 2012 in Salem, Oregon. Exact dates will be announced later.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**