

Bridgewater Township Noxious Weed Meeting
County of Rice, State of Minnesota
August 31, 2016
Official Minutes

Call to order – 7:00 pm

Introduction

- John Holden reviewed the purpose of the meeting and the goal to determine next steps in eradicating wild parsnip and other noxious weeds from the ditches.

Ron Heim from MNDOT

- Reviewed the effects of wild parsnip on humans.
- Mentioned the efforts of Steele County in mowing and spraying. This is an ongoing project.

Melissa Finegan – MN Health Dept.

- Stated that care should be taken when dealing with wild parsnip plants; don't touch if possible, but if you must, then wear gloves and long sleeves and pants.

Dennis Luebbe – Rice County

- Discussed the challenges to roadside management.
- They do not currently have a policy to manage noxious weeds.
- Wild parsnip will need to be prioritized as it cannot be eradicated.

MNDOT

- Addressed the fact that there are 29 noxious weeds.
- Wild parsnip has been present for over 20 years
- Each type of weeds needs to be handled differently.

Scott Bailey

- Discussed what chemicals are used to control weeds and his recommendation is to spray in the spring.

DNR

- The wild parsnip has a two year growth cycle and we should try to kill prior to the plant flowering.
- It does not matter if the plant is sprayed in the spring or fall.
- Mowing should be done prior to flowering so as not to spread seeds.
- Fall and spring burning can be effective also.

U of M Extension office

- Noted that a watch should be kept for new noxious weeds entering the state.

Resident

- Noted a concern regarding the loss of native pollinators to spraying.
- Per the extension office – we can also lose native plants due to noxious weeds crowding them out.
- Comment was made regarding personal responsibility of the landowners to manage noxious weeds.

Mr. Cortilet – MN Dept of Ag

- Reviewed the growing cycle of the wild parsnip.
- Noted that mowing may not help as the plant may bolt after cutting and could reseed at a lower height. Mowing will not kill the plant.
- Suggested using 2 -4 D as a weed killer by private landowners; other options exist, but they are expensive and hard to handle.

Leif Knect

- Advocated spot spraying as it will eliminate weeds but still allow native pollinators to spread.
- Weeds can be hand pulled to control infestations.
- A diverse approach needs to include large land owners to make this successful.

MN Dept of Health

- Private individuals need to use caution with dealing with commercial herbicides to prevent harm to humans and groundwater.

Resident

- What should be done with pulled weeds?
 - If seeds are present – then burn.
 - If no seeds present – then compost

General

- The township/county should look into a Cooperative Weed Management Assistance Program
- Noxious weeds grant money is possible
- MNDot has information on this and could be used as a resource.
- County training is needed for mowers to prevent the spread of seeds.
- If a resident has a “No Spraying” sign up, they need to be held responsible for eradicating all noxious weeds on their property.

Adjourn