**VEGETATION MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE**

**LANE COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS**

**September 15th 2015 Minutes**

Members: Lisa Arkin, George Grier, Jim Lakehomer, William Lackey, Glenn Miller, Joel Miller, Ellen Mooney, James Mough, Bitty Roy

Absent: William Lackey, Bitty Roy

Guest:

Staff: Orin Schumacher

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6:03 p.m. – Chairperson Mooney called the meeting to order

1. **OPENING REMARKS**
	1. Meeting Discussion Items and Review

1. Glenn Miller presented information on aquatic protection buffers, looking for more defined buffers based on species and their importance. Such as “A” rated weeds. The buffer list reflects what ODA and others use based on target species and application methods. This was provided for information purposes only, not suggesting buffers on the list are employed. George Grier suggested that we avoid policy language at this level and not get too caught up in the details at this level. Avoid prescriptive language in the policy document; add the specifics to the management prescription plan

2. Schumacher went on to cover what Lane County has discussed regarding the use of herbicides for road management. Schumacher emphasized the past prescriptions that had been suggested to the Board, including uses for guardrail management, weed control and stump painting. Everybody on the committee suggested an agreement regarding this limited use approach for potential herbicide use.

3. Buffers were also discussed for school zones and bus stop areas and other areas that would have protection for human health and environmental health. Everybody agreed that buffers are important in order to protect human and environmental health from exposure risks.

4. Language was changed in the policy document to change Road Maintenances roll in research to say Lane County would review documents and outside research instead of being the agency to conduct the research. Committee agree on this update

5. Glenn Miller and other Committee members had issue with the herbicide use reduction language in the Last Resort Policy regarding the 5% annual reduction goal. All in attendance agreed with removing this section from the past language.

6. Ellen Mooney suggested that we find a way to place the language regarding the permitted products list criteria into the management prescription plan. The committee felt like it needed to stay in the last resort policy, no matter the difficulty in working through it.

7. The Committee reviewed agencies, rules or policies that would be included as the guide for setting the standards of permitted herbicides. Cal Prop 65 was mentioned along with other documents as the possible policy to follow as guiding the selection of products that would meet specific requirements. IARC was another one that the committee agreed was current and nationally accepted.

8. Application methodology was reviewed. Parameters for use and how to define these was discussed, deciding what products would be used would affect this final decision. The idea of a matrix was the general consensus, where products, target, goal and application methods would be run through a matrix to guide a decision for management.

9. James Mough brought up the rating for toxicity levels 1 & 2. He supported the language as it exists in the current last resort policy; allowing and higher ratings would not be supported.

10. Lisa Arkin mentioned that everybody has mentioned the desire not to put carcinogens or other toxicants into the environment, and we don’t want to expose workers to these possible risks. Maybe we need to write a value statement that reflects this consensus

11. Jim Lakehomer reminded the Task Force that the original Last Resort Policy was drafted based upon what Thurston County, WA. had developed.

12. Orin Schumacher voiced that is any herbicides would be used that maybe it would be best to have a public body make the final decision on the products to be selected in working with County staff. This might avoid having to detail out criteria in the policy, instead reflect that any use would be vetted through a third party.

13. We talked about the Puncture Vine site in Lane County that has been detected on Tofdahl road. Orin Schumacher asked direction from the Task Force how they would recommend handling a new weed infestation, what could be written into the policy to face these new sites when found.

14. George Grier wanted to remind everybody that the level of exposure and risks needs to be considered. One can smoke a cigarette and likely not get cancer, but a lifetime of smoking could develop issues and increased risk. This was an analogy to compare exposure levels of herbicide use.

15. Jim Lakehomer brought up the idea that instead of possibly establishing a permitted products list, maybe we could look at a process list that would be vetted through a public body, possibly the Roads Advisory Committee. That way we could find the most effective, least use approach to face maintenance challenges. Most voiced support of this concept.

16. allowing this type of process allows for review and discussion about varied scientific views and allow for the best management tool selection to solve the maintenance issue.

17. Jim Lakehomer had to leave after this point because of a previously noted time conflict.

18. Lisa Arkin wanted to hear more about how Lane County would describe their proposed methods of use, such as stump painting, injection and backpack sprayers. To make this part of the process for maintenance method; Jim Mough thought this could all be added into a scoring matrix.

19. Orin reminded the Task Force of the primary issues that he had proposed in the past for herbicides, guardrails, stump sprouts and noxious weed issues. Wanted to remind everybody of the issues we face and what we can do to solve these conflicts.

20. Lisa Arkin wanted to insure we use products that have low persistence in the environment. Everybody agreed with this goal.

21. Joel Miller spoke to how things change and this policy needs to remaining flexible and adaptable to change and scientific findings. Many products people have used in the past have now been proven either ineffective or harmful that once was thought to not be.

22. Public notification was discussed. Technology has allowed for postings and notices to be done on websites and other digital media. The idea of posting in the field is involved and costly, and does it really make the information more readily accessible. It was Orin’s recommendation to setup a phone line and posting on the website to allow people to access the information by those two means.

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
	1. No members of the public were in attendance
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
	1. Motion: Move to approve the August minutes without amendments, James Mough made the motion to approve, Jim Lakehomer seconded the motion, all in favor
3. **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**
	* 1. There were no adjustments to the agenda.
4. **DISCUSSION ITEMS / PRESENTATIONS**
	1. Review the “Roadside Vegetation Management and Last Resort Herbicide Use Policy (Lane Code 15.500 – .530)”
		1. Discussed updating the policy title, as “Last Resort” considered not to be an accurate description
			1. Policy title change discussion postponed until after content reviewed

Text revised

1. **NEXT MEETING AGENDA**
	1. Continue review and update to the “Roadside Vegetation Management and Last Resort Herbicide Use Policy (Lane Code 15.500 – 15.530)”
2. **ADJOURNMENT**
	1. Chair Mooney adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Orin Schumacher, Minutes Recorder