

Minutes
Contra Costa Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee
March 15, 2018

Members Present: Carlos Agurto, Pestec; Jim Cartan (Chair), Save Mt. Diablo; Jerry Casey, Public Works Facilities; Larry Yost, Agriculture Department; Susan Heckly, County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Gretchen Logue, County Sustainability Commission; Cece Sellgren, County Clean Water Program; Andrew Sutherland, Public Member at Large; Allison Knapp, Public Works Maintenance; Wayne Lanier, Public Member Alternate (10 members present, 6 voting members)

Members Absent: Susan Captain, Public Member At Large; Jim Donnelly, Public Member At Large; Michael Kent, Health Services

Staff Present: Chris Lau and Mike Giles, Public Works Maintenance; Jill Ray, Supervisor Andersen's office; Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator

Members of the Public: Sheila Barry, UC Cooperative Extension; Shirley Shelangoski, Priscilla Witt, Dave Shoemaker, and Susan JunFish, Parents for a Safer Environment

1. Introductions

2. Public comment on items not on the agenda

Susan JunFish handed out the agenda for the 36th National Pesticide Forum to be held in Irvine April 13 through 14 (see attached).

Priscilla Witt read a comment (see attached).

3. Announcements

Susan JunFish read a comment (see attached).

4. Approve minutes from November 16, 2017

A motion was made and seconded (SH/LY) to approve the minutes as written.

The motion carried:

AYES: Cartan, Heckly, Logue, Sellgren, Sutherland, Lanier

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Captain, Donnelly, Kent,

5. Hear presentation entitled Ground Squirrel Control—History, biology and Implementing IPM from Sheila Barry, U.C. Cooperative Extension Director, Santa Clara County

See attached.

Some of the comments and questions from the Committee were as follows:

Andrew Sutherland asked when ground squirrel control started in Martial Cottle Park in San Jose.

Sheila Barry replied that when Santa Clara County acquired the property, nothing had been done with the ground squirrels for a long time. An organic farm was established in the park, and at first they thought they could share their produce with the squirrels. They subsequently found they could not share the amount of produce the squirrels were taking. Ground squirrel control has only been going on in the park for about a year.

Jim Cartan noted that some ranchers on the east side of Mt. Diablo have recognized ground squirrels as a keystone species and have stopped controlling them. He asked about the attitudes in Santa Clara.

Sheila Barry said there is a range of attitudes in Santa Clara. She said there needs to be some thought given to whether never doing anything about ground squirrels is the best plan.

Cece Sellgren asked about options, including CO₂, for controlling ground squirrels along roads and dams.

Sheila Barry said there is zero tolerance for ground squirrels on dams, and CO₂ is not legal yet. Trapping is really expensive, and you must either spend a lot of time or a lot of money. She agreed that it wouldn't be feasible along many miles of road. The road edge is such prime habitat for ground squirrels, even better than the adjoining fields.

Andrew Sutherland mentioned that fumigants kill anything that might be in the ground squirrel burrow.

Sheila Barry agreed and said that fumigation is not used on rangeland because of the possibility of endangered species living inside of ground squirrel burrows.

Public Comment

Dave Shoemaker asked if CO₂ fumigation has been tried on a large scale and Sheila Barry said not to her knowledge.

Susan JunFish mentioned the County Agriculture Department study of ground squirrel trapping along a road in East County. She does not agree with the conclusions of the study. She asked the Committee to look at the Ventura County study that she says translates into only \$60K to \$80K extra per year to use trapping along the roadsides in Contra Costa County.

6. Discuss developing a Committee policy on how speakers are chosen

The chair, Jim Cartan, and the IPM Coordinator proposed the following for choosing topics and speakers for the Committee:

- The Committee welcomes the participation of the public in suggesting topics for presentations. At either the November or January meeting, the Committee will discuss possible topics and solicit ideas from the public.
- The Committee prefers topics that further the work of the Committee or its subcommittees, but this does not preclude other topics of interest to the Committee.
- The Committee chair and the IPM Coordinator will work together to choose the appropriate number of presentations for the year taking into consideration the Committee's work schedule.
- The Committee chair and the IPM Coordinator will work together to choose suitable topics from among the suggestions from the Committee and the public, keeping in mind the mission statement in the Committee's bylaws. They will also choose speakers for each topic endeavoring to find the most professional people with the appropriate level of expertise.
- The ultimate decisions about topics and speakers will rest with the Committee Chair and the IPM Coordinator.

The following were some of the comments from the Committee:

- Professionalism and expertise should be better described. (AS)
- Has the Committee written down the purpose of having speakers? (WL)
 - The Committee decided last year that speakers should further the work of the subcommittees. (JC)
 - Historically there were two objectives. One was to expose the Committee to issues related to pest management and new research being conducted, and the other was to explore a topic more deeply. (CS)
- Could the Committee have two speakers with different perspectives at one meeting? Could the whole Committee vote on the speakers? (GL)
 - Jill Ray noted that the Sustainability Commission chooses speakers the same way the IPM Committee does: members have a brainstorming session on topics and staff finds the speakers.
- Last year in November the Committee discussed a spectrum of topics and speakers that came from both Committee members and the public. The Committee agreed on a number of topics and speakers, and to streamline the process, decided that the chair and the IPM Coordinator would choose and schedule the speakers. (JC)
- If there is a speaker or topic that someone wants, tell the IPM Coordinator so she can collect ideas for the November meeting where they will be discussed. (CS)
- Having a panel on glyphosate would have been interesting but hard to coordinate. (JC)

- The subcommittees could come up with specific objectives to help guide the speakers for the big committee. Panels are logistically difficult. (AS)

Public Comment

Shirley Shelangoski and Priscilla Witt read statements (see attached) that in part questioned the integrity of Dr. Brad Hanson who spoke to the Committee about glyphosate last year and raised the issue of a conflict of interest on his part because he has received funding from Monsanto. Priscilla Witt had obtained Brad Hanson's sources of funding for his work at U.C. Davis via a public records request (see attached).

Susan JunFish said that it is a very corrupt world, and there is a lot of pressure for scientists to look the other way when negative findings about pesticides come to light. She wants the Committee to vote on speakers after looking at their biographies and their funding sources.

Priscilla Witt disagreed with the draft policy for choosing topics and speakers and said it is the same two people—the chair and the IPM Coordinator—making the decisions. There is no transparency.

Andrew Sutherland mentioned that it is difficult to ask speakers to give this sort of information beforehand and that he has never been asked to provide funding sources to the sponsors of any of the 100s of talks he's given. He said that speaking as the Decision Making subcommittee chair, he knows the committee does consider all information and members are thinking critically about the issues.

Jill Ray noted that it is always an option for the subcommittees to have speakers on more specific topics.

The Committee agreed to continue the discussion about choosing topics and speakers at the next meeting.

7. Hear reports from the Agriculture and Public Works Departments

Carlos Agurto reported for the Facilities Division

- There has been an increase in mouse and rat activity in the Martinez Detention Facility. Pestec is using snap traps inside the walls. It's been a puzzle to figure out how they're getting into the building.
- Ant populations are increasing and Pestec is deploying a new, larger ant bait station. The device is a rodent bait station with 16 oz of liquid bait inside.
- There have been bats in the Employment Department building on Cavallo in Antioch, and Pestec is trying to find how they are getting in.
- There are reports of ground squirrels at the Byron Boys Ranch. Carlos will be going out there to do a survey and treat where necessary with fumigation.

Larry Yost reported for the Agriculture Department.

- The Department is just beginning its noxious weed program, which involves artichoke thistle and purple starthistle. Staff will be working on Mt. Diablo the first week of April.
- The Department treated Mulholland Ridge last year and will treat it again if asked. This is strictly spot treatments with a backpack.

8. Hear reports from the Decision Making, Outreach, and Posting subcommittees

Decision Making subcommittee, Andrew Sutherland, chair

- The committee is working through a very complicated decision making document on weed management in flood control channels.
- The committee may be able to approve the document at the next meeting.
- Then the committee will move on to the decision document for managing ground squirrels.
- The information in Sheila's presentation today was very valuable.

IPM Outreach subcommittee, Michael Kent, chair

Michael Kent being absent, the report was made by the IPM Coordinator.

- To date the committee has trained 143 County in-home visitors with the outreach presentation the committee developed last year. There are a number of other presentations in the works.
- After all the in-home visitors in the County are trained, the committee may try to work with similar staff in the local hospitals and clinics.

- The committee's new project is writing articles about IPM to be published in various local, online, and social media. The ideas for topics are the IPM program in the County, managing various structural pests, managing weeds, and perhaps bed bugs.

IPM Posting Task Force, Jim Donnelly, chair

Jim Donnelly being absent, the report was made by the IPM Coordinator.

- The Task Force has met once.
- The members are working on the posting sign first.
- At the next meeting members will bring ideas for changes/additions to the sign.

9. Hear report from the IPM Coordinator

This item was skipped because of lack of time.

10. Plan agenda for next meeting

- Presentation
- Discuss policy for choosing topics and speakers
- Hear subcommittee reports
- Hear reports from the Departments

Next Meetings: May 17, July 19, September 20, November 15

Respectfully submitted, Tanya Drlik, IPM Coordinator