

Minutes
Contra Costa County IPM Advisory Committee
Subcommittee on IPM Decision-Making
January 30, 2020
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Members Present: Larry Yost, Andrew Sutherland (Chair), Jim Donnelly, Carlos Agurto

Members Absent: Susan Captain, Kimberly Hazard

Staff Present: Debbie King—Public Works, Des Gebre—Public Works, Wade Finlinson—IPM Coordinator

Members of the public: Shirley Shelangoski (PASE), Susan JunFish (PASE), Dave Shoemaker (PASE)

(Jim Donnelly volunteered to chair the meeting until Andrew Sutherland arrived at 1:20)

The meeting convened at 1:11 PM

1. Introductions

2. Public comment on items not on the agenda

None

3. Approve minutes of October 31

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

Ayes: Donnelly, Yost, Agurto

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Sutherland, Captain, Hazard

Pubic Speakers: None

4. Elect a Subcommittee Chair

Item moved to next meeting

5. Discussion regarding contracting requirements and procedures within the Public Works Department

Des Gebre, Senior Buyer with the Public Works Purchasing Division offered insight into general procurement guidelines of the Department. He indicated that three quotes are required for contract services between \$10,000 and \$25,000, and that a full solicitation is required if the projected amount is above \$25,000.

It was confirmed among the Subcommittee that January through March is generally the best time of year to be applying CO or CO2 control efforts to be most effective. As has previously been discussed, this is the time of year that the Agriculture Department does not have the resources to perform associated tasks since personnel are focused on doing pest control business registrations, headquarter inspections for growers and farmers, issuing permits and resuming the weed control program.

The subcommittee generally agreed that most logical next step would be for the Public Works Maintenance Division to initiate an appropriately timed pilot using CO or CO2 to determine an accurate cost per acre that will inform the Division regarding the long-term feasibility of the methods. Ag input on technical specifications would likely still be needed to ensure the pilot is scoped appropriately

The IPM Coordinator indicated that he was working to synthesize aspects of the ground squirrel decision document, the 2019 annual report of the Decision-Making Subcommittee, and other Subcommittee input on what else could succinctly encourage Public Works Management to move forward with a pilot. There is understandable uncertainty within the Maintenance Division regarding the ground squirrel program since it has primarily been carried out by the Agriculture Department as far back as anyone in either department recalls.

It was said that the Subcommittee spent over a year looking at the decision document, and that should be sufficient motivation for the Division to champion a pilot. That document concluded that there is no one management tactic that is the best. Multiple tactics were evaluated. Some of them will be more appropriate during certain times of the year or at certain sites. Since the Agriculture Department isn't able to provide certain tactics at certain times of the year, we are restricted. This is a major weakness from an IPM standpoint and it seems like a clear argument for reevaluation. It was further observed that the current relationship between the Agriculture Department and the Public Works Maintenance Division is a longstanding, informal arrangement, and that makes it difficult to evaluate the program without a defined scope of work.

There was discussion on potential partnerships with other public agencies who may have more bandwidth to perform fumigation tactics during the first few months of the year, but it was suspected that private industry may be the most logical option.

Other Subcommittee comments included a reminder that an irrigation district in the Central Valley spends around \$5,000 per year on carbon monoxide injection on 250 miles of access roadways. It was theorized that costs would be higher here, but the information as well as the positive feedback from district staff is compelling.

There was also some discussion that once the supervisor of the vegetation management crew is hired, they could champion a more robust ground squirrel strategy.

The IPM Coordinator agreed to draft a memo to the Maintenance Division Manager to clarify the rationale behind the pilot and to invite them to the next meeting in order further the dialog.

Pubic Speakers: Susan JunFish and Shirley Shelengoski

Citizens sought clarification from Subcommittee members about the reasons why January through March was most ideal. It was also mentioned that several years ago, a former Agriculture Commissioner said ground squirrel management using rodenticide costed around \$125,000 per year. The Ventura County Study concluded that it costs twice as much to go from poisoning rodents to trapping. Many in the community are in favor of Carbon Monoxide because it is more humane. It was also proposed to include UC interns to help with the pilot evaluation.

6. Begin discussing the development of decision documentation for vegetation management at West County Detention Facility and review the initial draft.

The committee discussed the initial draft of the decision document for West County Detention Facility (WCDF). The IPM Coordinator agreed to revise the draft and discuss it further at the next meeting

Pubic Speakers: Susan JunFish and Shirley Shelengoski

Citizens spoke in favor of considering solarization methods in some portions of the facility since plastic is inexpensive and it has been proven to be an effective strategy.

7. Plan next meeting agenda

The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 26, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

- Election of Chair and Vice Chair (5 minutes)
- Update on potential ground squirrel pilot (35 minutes)
- Continue discussing draft decision document for WCDF (30 minutes)
- Standing items (20 minutes)

Meeting adjourned at 2:35