

Weed Department Report

Weed Board Meeting

August 22nd, 2024

- The July 16th commissioners meeting Public Comment session was attended by multiple people who expressed concerns about the weed issues in San Juan County. The following is a summary of the persons who spoke and what they expressed. This text is copied from the posted minutes of that meeting:

Mack presented the Public Comment portion of the meeting to the online and in-person audience which comprised of residents from throughout the county, USDA Farm Agency, Colorado State University (CSU) extension agent, and the Dolores County Weed Board.

Johnathan Wright, county property owner, introduced many of the farmers in attendance. He spoke about weeds and how the weeds are flourishing throughout the county. Johnathan stated the morning glory, Russian nap weeds are causing the most problems. Wants the county to declare a noxious weed emergency for the farming community. The farmers need to maintain their organic wheat farming capabilities.

Gus Summer, CSU Extension employee, gave a history of the miscellaneous weed programs conducted in Dolores County. He encourages landowners to receive mandatory weed education and to develop consistent weed enforcement.

Legend Gines, a local wheat farmer, representing Johnson Farms, asked the commission to consider giving educational resources to the farmers.

Kyle Fullmer, a wheat farmer from Monticello, stated that weed control is a passion for him. He states that enforcement throughout the county has declined in the past few years. He feels the government (BLM, Forest Service, and Sitla) are the 1st entities that need to improve.

Kurt Lewis, farmer from Monticello, states that the farmers are losing the weed battle and feels that if we follow the Dolores County Weed Control Board procedures it would greatly improve the farmers ability to control weeds. He wants more enforcement throughout the county, particularly from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Dennis Gines, wheat farmer from Monticello, states that the weed problem is hurting the local farmers and wants disinterested landowners to be forced to keep the weed control laws. He stated the weed problem is cyclical.

Monty Perkins, Blanding resident and former county weed manager, is concerned about the weeds and their proliferation throughout the county. He believes that the county residents need more education and weed control enforcement. He is supportive of the emergency weed declaration

Will Murray, USDA Natural Resource Local Director, spoke of the different programs offered by the Federal Agency. They have grants, herbicides, and education to extend to the farmers.

Erin Pettit, USDA CRP program manager, expressed her support to the farmers.

Oma Fleming, Director of the Dolores County Weed District, spoke about the program and the strong support she receives from the Dolores County leadership. She recommends using the tax statements to educate the public and to keep the information in front of the public.

Commissioner Adams spoke about the landowners who are working hard at addressing weed control issues. He mentioned that many farmers may not be so inclined to fight the weed control battle. He mentioned that creating a weed district with taxing authority might be a long-term solution to the weeds.

- At the August 6th County Commissioners Work Session Meeting Deputy County Attorney Mitchell Maughan presented 2 draft weed enforcement letters that were created using the guidelines set forth in the Utah Code Annotated 4-17 (Utah Weed Act) and the San Juan County weed ordinance. Copies of these draft letters are submitted for your consideration and review under the “Business/Action” portion of the meeting agenda. He also discussed the counties current weed ordinance and provided an updated draft ordinance. A copy of the current ordinance and the draft ordinance are also included for your review and input as part of the Business/Action portion of the meeting agenda.
- On July 26th I sent six weed control letters to who I believe have some of the worst current weed infestations. The recipients were Redd Investment Corp., Wilson Farm & Ranch, TC Investment Holdings, LLC, Eric Halls, Monticello Development Corporation and David Adams. The only response I have received is from David Adams who indicated he will employ the spraying services of Lewis Farms as soon as the harvest is complete.
- Two of our current seasonal employees will finish their seasons in the next 2 weeks. Kaylin Jones will complete her season on August 15th and Cami Lewis will finish on August 22nd .

