

Pollinator Health Task Force Meeting Minutes

2/26/2020

Yakima Valley Museum

Chair: Katie Buckley, WSDA

Facilitator: Ray Ledgerwood

Meeting Start at 10:00 am

Introduction

Ray introduced himself and started the meeting. He encouraged people to attend in person. We then introduced ourselves.

Attendees: Ray Ledgerwood, Katie Buckley, Karla Salp, Bradley Farrar, Kevin Jensen, (On WebEx) Aimee,

Katie figured out at this point in the recording that not using the computer audio results in the meeting not recording any audio at all... The rest of the meeting minutes are a recreation from her notes and the sequence of events on video.

We went over the charter that was sent out in January. Katie will update task force members on it and resend it. It was otherwise approved by the group.

Katie then gave an update on Asian Giant Hornet and the Houdini Fly and the ongoing efforts to control those. (See attached presentation.)

Ray asked us for other updates we had. Katie noted that the WSDA's website was up and subcommittees progress. This winter has reportedly been rough for some beekeepers, with a few reporting losses of 90%. The WSU Bee Lab is opening next week in Othello. Dave is looking into more ways to improve managed pollinator diversity.

Pesticides

Kevin Jensen gave a talk about what the WSDA Pesticide Investigations does, and gave examples of bee kills they have investigated. (See attached presentation.)

Bradley Farrar gave an overview of the kinds of training in pesticide safety that the WSDA already does. (See attached presentation.)

We then began to talk about our current Pesticide Recommendations, starting at 2.1. Katie explained that there were a number of recommendations with a 'Research required!' tag, indicating that we were not sure if this recommendation addressed an actual problem that Washington had, whether it was a big enough problem to require the recommendation be implemented, or whether or not the problem addressed actually posed a sizable threat to pollinators. We created a Research Recommendation 5.11 to address these questions, and Katie will reorganize the pesticide recommendations so that they are grouped appropriately. Mary will research seed companies, and Katie will provide her with seed companies already contacted.

Discussion ensued on how and at what level pesticides harmful to pollinators should or could be regulated, and if there was a specific group that should be targeted for regulation. We found no easy clear-cut method, and decided that education and outreach targeted at both pesticide applicators and the general public on using pesticides in a manner safer for pollinators would likely be more effective.

We also determined that posting the meeting minutes from the previous subcommittee meeting reduced the time in discussion as the task force discussions paralleled discussions and views that already occurred in the subcommittee. A condensed list of the recommendations also made figuring out which one we were currently talking about much easier.

List of Pesticides Recommendations: (RR = Research required)

- 2.1 Increase awareness and adoption of the new federal Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) Enhancements and develop a similar state-level program for non-CSP farmers for reduced pesticide use (RR)
- 2.2 Restrict the use and sale of neonicotinoid insecticides to licensed applicators
- 2.3 Create a Treated Seed Program (RR)
- 2.4 Test a Crop Pest Loss Indemnity Fund program for farmers avoiding pollinator-harming pesticides
- 2.5 Recognize importance of current WSDA, WSU, and industry programs that increase adoption of drift-reduction technologies
- 2.6 Adopt in statute a goal to reduce overall use of pesticides harmful to pollinators and designate an agency to create and implement a plan to meet the target
- 2.9 Promote incentives and training for increasing adoption of integrated pest management (IPM) strategies
- 2.10 Increase tools and funding for Washington State Department of Agriculture enforcement of pesticide labels for pollinator protection
- 2.12 Create a Dedicated "Pollinator Protection Account" (RR)
- 2.13 Increase education on integrated pest management practices and proper pesticide application
- 2.14 Enhance existing programs intended to prevent the introduction and establishment of invasive species and encourage the use of integrated pest management (IPM) practices to control the spread of new and existing invasive species in an effort to reduce the need for pesticide applications and their unintended environmental impacts including impacts on pollinators
- 2.16 Significantly reduce use of neonicotinoid insecticide seed treatments in wheat and canola? (RR)
- 2.19 Require seed companies, wholesalers, or retailers to offer non-neonicotinoid treated versions of seed varieties (RR)
- 2.20 Discontinue neonicotinoid insecticide seed treatments in other Washington crops that are highly attractive to pollinators (RR)

- 2.22 Adopt in statute a goal to reduce the use of neonicotinoid seed treatments to only those justified by current or historical pest pressure (RR)
- 2.25 Increase oversight of herbicide misuse
- 2.26 Encourage third party certification of sustainable agriculture
- 2.27 Increase awareness of IPM methods within pest control to protect pollinators (This is an integration of 2.6, 2.9, 2.12, and 2.13. Those may be deleted in favor of this one.)
- 2.28 Placeholder. Work is already underway analyzing the new systemic flupyradifurone (FPF) on honey bees (Moved to Research)
- 2.29 Learn most common compounds in spray tanks to then study effects to pollinators (Moved to Research)

Education and Communication

Before going over the E&C recommendations, Katie brought up something the E&C subcommittee had come up with. We had realized that many of our recommendations were about targeting a specific group, or conveying a specific message, and we realized we had a lot more that we could add. Instead of making a new recommendation for each of those, we decided to make a list of Education Goals, and a list of Outreach Target Audiences. We left 3.10 and 3.11 as examples of the recommendations that prompted this idea, as well as to give an idea of how these may be implemented individually.

Ray shared something he has learned, then taught others about outreach and education. He said you need to know what your audience is, what change in behavior you wish to see, what messaging you should use to change that behavior, and finally what media would work best to deliver that message to your targeted audience. We may wish to consider doing this for both our planned pesticide outreach, and overall pollinator outreach plans. Our list of Education Goals and Outreach Target Audiences should serve as a good starting off point for this.

List of Education & Communication Recommendations:

- 3.1 Include the importance of pollinators and their habitat, as appropriate, in resources developed for teachers within and related to current science standards
- 3.3 Provide funding for an enhanced pollinator extension education and outreach program at Washington State University along with the funding needed to maximize pollinator education across the state of Washington
- 3.5 Increase availability of pollinator-related resources on state agency websites
- 3.6 Continue partnership in the national strategy to improve pollinator health
- 3.7 Change the state Apiary Program within the Washington Department of Agriculture to include education, information sharing, research results, etc. (Deleted, decided Pollinator Program would be a better fit for this)
- 3.8 Education and development of regionally-based partnership panels around land management in respect to pollinator health

3.9 WSDA Pollinator Ecologist should be an advisor for forage design and implementation decisions

3.10 Develop education materials around managed “green spaces” (e.g. golf courses, parks, gardens) for pollinator considerations and benefits, including for professional greens keepers, agronomists, horticulturists, landscape design, foresters, land managers, and maintenance professionals, both in private and public sector

3.11 Educate the public about the necessity for blooming nectaring plants to be available to pollinators during their respective nectaring seasons

3.12 Create an overarching document that has all elements of the various recommendations (Contains our Education Goals and Outreach Targets Audiences)

3.13 Establish pollinator gardens on school grounds as an educational tool for primary, secondary, and post-secondary students

Next Steps

Katie will set up more meetings for the Pesticide and E&C subcommittees to do revisions based on the task force’s comments after the March 16 Habitat meeting. Katie will also be getting in touch with a seed expert who may be able to answer some of our questions about our RR pesticide recommendations. Further discussion may take place in the subcommittees or at our June meeting.