

Washington State Commission on Pesticide Registration

May 13th, 2009

**Washington State Potato Commission Offices
Moses Lake, WA**

Chair Byron Phillips presiding.

Commissioners present were Byron Phillips, Art Losey, Chuck Masters, Bob Berger, Ann George, Bryan Sakuma, Kurt Volker, Rick Hamman, Doug Walsh, Erik Johansen, and Andy Jensen.

Guest present was Vince Jones.

Staff present were Erin Gwinn and Alan Schreiber.

Call to Order

Byron Phillips called the meeting to order at 10:02am.

Ralph Cavalieri via Call-In

Alan Schreiber stated that Ralph Cavalieri would be giving an overview of what the legislature had decided in regard to Washington State University's (WSU's) budget and what that would mean for the Commission's budget. Ralph Cavalieri stated that the legislature had cut WSU's budget by 21.5%. This has been offset by some federal stimulus money and tuition increases. Ralph stated that in the past when the legislature cut appropriations to WSU, the Washington State Commission on Pesticide Registration (WSCPR) received the same cut as WSU's base level funding cut. He noted that there would be \$714,000 per year to fund the WSCPR.

Byron Phillips stated that WSCPR's budget was mandated by the legislature at one million per year and that WSU is taking 31% of the funding that was appropriated by the legislature. Ralph Cavalieri stated that when the legislature is approached for funding the first year these funds are proviso. After the first year these funds are placed into the base funding for WSU and when this base is cut, all provisos are cut as well.

Doug Walsh asked about the fact that the three proviso funds were 1% of the College of Ag's funding. Ralph stated that these were 1.4% of the total cut to the College of Ag. Byron Phillips asked about the cuts to administration, Ralph Cavalieri stated that staff had been cut in half at the Ag Research Center and that large cuts had been taken on the University level as well. Byron Phillips asked about vertical cuts within the university. The Department of Community and Rural Sociology, the Impact Center, the Dept of Drama and Theater, Sports Management, German, and several others programs may be cut; at this point the process is still underway. Byron asked about cuts to university extension programs. Ralph Cavalieri stated that extension would be taking a 20.5% cut. Ralph also stated that there was administrative re-structuring in progress. In the future, there will be only three districts and the learning centers will be eliminated. There were many reductions in faculty, staff, educational support, and marketing.

Byron Phillips stated that every time the WSU has taken a cut the WSCPR has taken a cut as well. He questioned whether, if at some point, the college received money back the commission would as well. Ralph Cavalieri stated that this was what was expected, he said it was a bit early to speculate the legislative package for the next biennial request but that hopefully within that legislative request the WSCPR would be able to build its funding back up to previous funding levels. He stated that there was no internal process that would be available to reallocate money to the WSCPR; any increased funding would come from legislative biennial requests.

Byron Phillips stated that the College of Ag was able to use tuition to leverage their cuts; Byron stated that the Commission uses a large amount of its funding to support WSU researchers and graduate students and that we are, in essence, supporting tuition for graduate students.

Doug Walsh stated that when Dan Bernardo explained how he was going to cut the proviso funds he stated that they would be 1% cut. Alan Schreiber stated that Dan Bernardo took one percent of the three proviso funds and then it was pro-rated, which ends up being an 18% cut. Alan Schreiber reviewed the historical funding allocation for the WSCPR by WSU by year since the 1995 fiscal year.

Alan Schreiber stated that he felt the Commission had to make a choice to either accept the cut or to take other action. Alan Schreiber stated that to take other action the Commission would have to get legislators to contact WSU and we would have to have the support of enough commodity groups to produce political clout.

Byron Phillips stated that this issue would be tabled until the end of the meeting at which time we would determine a course of action for the Commission in reference to its decreased funding.

Administrator's Report/Tour Report

Alan Schreiber stated that time had been spent finding out and tracking what has been going on in the legislature, as well as talking to WSU officials in an attempt to try and determine how the legislature's activities would affect the WSCPR.

Ann George asked about the amount of money the tour costs the Commission on an annual basis. Alan Schreiber stated that the tour costs \$7000. Ann asked how sponsorships were holding up, Alan Schreiber stated that on the east side sponsorships were steady, however, on the west side sponsorships were a bit lower beginning about 4 to 6 years ago.

Alan Schreiber reviewed the agenda for this summer's west-side tour. He stated that at this point the tour would have a similar agenda to the tour two years ago. Alan Schreiber stated that there was talk of including a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program stop, this would possibly be in the form of an on-bus speaker and discussion.

Andy Jensen stated that the walking field tour was a bit fast last time, Alan suggested focusing on a fewer number of crops particularly potatoes which are the major crop in that area. Alan will talk to Mike Shelby and request that Mike have fewer presenters.

Alan Schreiber stated that Ray Willard would be doing the Department of Transportation vegetation management discussion. The noxious weed talk will be on gorse, knotweed, and scotch broom this year. Alan Schreiber stated that Wednesday's dinner will be held at Fort Columbia. He stated that we would hopefully be having the crab shaker and oyster shucker at the dinner for an appetizer during the social half hour.

Alan stated that on Thursday morning we would be putting people out in the boat to look at aquatic crops, however, the tides will be unfavorable. Alan Schreiber stated that the forestry stop would be at Port Blakely this year. Alan Schreiber asked how many attendees would be coming from Dept of Ag, Erik stated that there might be 3 or 4 attendees. Erik Johansen asked whether the public sector would be paying a fee. Erin Gwinn clarified that in the invitation it was stated that if they are able to pay we would like to receive some amount of registration fee, however, we do not want this to be an obstacle to attendance.

Compendium of Washington Agriculture

Alan Schreiber stated that all of the crops have been completed. At this point, Ag Development Group, Inc. is reviewing the crops for grammatical errors, inaccuracies, and consistent formatting. Alan explained that summaries have also been written on organics, CSA style farming, and farmers markets.

Erik Johansen commented that WSDA had recently used the spinach seed profile for an SLN sent to the EPA. It was noted that PNN never sent out a bulletin about the Compendium. It was suggested that a press release be sent out to news agencies and commodity commissions in regard to the Compendium of Washington Agriculture.

Vince Jones Presentation

Byron introduced Vince Jones, who is involved with the Decision Aid System (DAS) which is revolutionizing the way in which pest management and decision making occurs in tree fruit.

Currently, the DAS system is only for tree fruit. It gives management recommendations, environmental data, forecasts, and pesticide databases. This system became necessary when the Guthion dominated pest management program was changed to include over 12 chemicals. This differs from AgWeatherNet in that AgWeatherNet provides grape and hops powdery mildew models and weather stations. The DAS focuses on different pest models. Vince Jones gave a guided tour of the DAS system. Recently DAS users were surveyed, users reported that they managed close to 2,900 orchards, there are approximately 3,000 orchards in the industry. The system is valued at around 17 million dollars per year across the industry. Surveys have shown that the database is having a large impact on 77% of the industry with the majority of use being in the timing aspects of sprays. The funding for the system comes strictly from grants, in the future this may come from industry assessments or on a fee-basis.

Rick Hamman asked about the non-functionality of the codling moth model last year. Vince stated that last year codling moth emerged 25% earlier than it had in the past 25 years. He stated that the model predictions were still accurate, due to the fact that few of the initial codling moths did any damage. Andy Jensen asked about the process for the DAS coming into existence. Vince stated that he and Gary Grove created a spreadsheet with Macros and many industry people really appreciated this. The idea to put the system on the internet was then formed and items, such as pest databases, were added from that point.

Meeting Minutes

Byron stated that the meeting minutes needed to be approved through November. He asked for corrections in any of the minutes. Erik Johansen and Byron stated that there were a few minor spelling errors.

<p><i>Bryan Sakuma moved to approve the November, January, and March meeting minutes. Erik Johansen seconded. Motion approved unanimously.</i></p>
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Financial Report

Alan Schreiber stated that the financial report was through the January meeting as the March meeting did not have a quorum to vote on the financials. Alan Schreiber reviewed the Commission Profit & Loss and Budget vs. Actual. Alan Schreiber reviewed the check detail for the Commission. Alan clarified that the Commission was slated to come in slightly under budget for the current fiscal year.

Kurt Volker moved to approve the financials. Chuck Masters seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Pesticide Usage Data

Byron stated that at the March meeting it had been mentioned that National Ag Statistic Service (NASS) would no longer be collecting pesticide usage data. Byron stated that at this point the NASS has stated they will resume the tree fruit surveys. NASS is looking into whether they will be providing usage data for other crops.

Byron asked whether the Commission should collect this data if the NASS discontinued gathering it. Alan Schreiber asked what the objective would be for this. Byron stated that this would help regulatory agencies to make decisions regarding usage. Alan Schreiber stated that there are over 100 active ingredients in chemistries for potatoes. He stated that if you were collecting data for regulatory defense he might collect data for chemistries that do not have secure registrations. He suggested that if the Commission were to collect this data for regulatory defense, he would suggest primarily looking at active ingredients which were trouble and to look at impacts across Washington. Doug Walsh stated to some extent this is what Jane Thomas is funded to do for the WIPM.

Doug Walsh stated that Jay Brunner had asked for funding for a similar project at one point and the Commission did not fund him. Byron stated that at this point this was up for thought and discussion.

Art stated that you would get a far more accurate idea of actual pesticide usage from dealers and field men. He said that when there is a need people will respond with data fairly quickly. Alan stated that one product that data would be useful for would be DiSystem G in clover.

2010 Budget Review/WSCPR-WSU MOA

Byron went over his proposed budget. Ann George asked what would happen if we cut the WSU Fiscal Specialist. Alan Schreiber stated that WSU does have an amount of work involved with the Commission; however, most of the work has to do with tracking grants and accounting for grant expenditures. Doug Walsh stated that WSU has a pre-negotiated indirect charge with other state agencies.

Chuck Masters stated that when you look at the expenditure categories, the Pesticide Notification Network (PNN) is the largest Commission expense.

Byron Phillips stated that a large portion of the travel expenses can be attributed to the Portland meeting. He stated that this meeting could be changed to a different location or that we could have one funding meeting per year. Ann George stated that if we went toward one funding meeting per year, this would enable the Commission to fund proposals in such a way that there would be no worries about what proposals would be coming in the next funding session. Ann George suggested having the meeting go later

into the night and to have the meeting in Ellensburg or Moses Lake, where some Commissioners would be able go home at the end of the evening.

Alan Schreiber stated that although the Commission budget has been cut he expects to see the same number of proposals and the same amount of work for the Commission. There may even be increased requests due to technical support being reduced by the universities. Byron suggested putting a pre-screening mechanism in place for the proposals prior to them being presented to the board. Alan stated that after an all day session the board's decision making ability might be compromised. He stated that he felt all the work could be done at a single two and a half day meeting. Ann George stated that there was initially benefit to having 6 meetings per year but that at this point she would support the Commission switching to four quarterly meetings per year plus one funding meeting. Byron Phillips, Art Losey, and Erik Johansen supported this idea. Kurt Volker agreed that quarterly meetings were a good idea with a centrally located meeting outside of Portland for proposal funding. Mid-December was suggested as timing for a funding meeting; Kurt Volker and Doug Walsh suggested that dates be set to insure that we are not in conflict with the Horticulture meeting or the National Entomological Society meeting.

Byron stated that part of the Commission mandate says that the Commission has to provide a tracking program for minor and emergency uses within this state. Byron stated that this was a task that he was suggesting be added to the current administrative tasks. Byron would have the administration give notifications for minor use 24 (c)'s, Section 18's, and cancellations for Washington only. Alan Schreiber stated that the budget cut should allow the Commission to cut 31% of their legislative duties, this could include the minor and emergency use tracking. Ann George stated that she felt it wasn't useful to post tolerances issued by EPA. Andy Jensen and Kurt Volker supported this proposal. Doug Walsh clarified that PNN was currently funded through June 30th, 2009. Chuck Masters stated that notifications may seem easy, but that this may be more involved. Alan Schreiber stated that even if the Commission moves toward four meetings per year, the administrative work will not change. Alan Schreiber suggested that as an additional administrative task, the administration would provide continual updates of the Compendium of Washington Agriculture.

Chuck Masters moved to accept Byron's budget proposal, which would incorporate quarterly meetings and one annual funding meeting, for a remaining balance of \$575,077 to fund research projects. Andy Jensen seconded.

Kurt Volker questioned whether the Commission would have to accept the WSU budget cuts or whether they should turn to their local legislators. He stated that he did not feel that our legislators would like to think that the one million dollars the slated for WSCPR should turn into only \$500k funding for research proposals. Byron stated that this budget would not preclude any funding that we may get back from the WSU. This budget would be used as a planning tool for the next fiscal year.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ann George moved that we approve the administrative contract with the additional duties transcribed as discussed at this meeting. Erik Johansen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Art Losey moved to direct the chair to sign the WSU-WSCPR MOA. Rick Hamman seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Byron stated that we were getting pressure from the Governor's staff on term limits for Commission members. Alan Schreiber stated that all four of the current commissioners whose terms have expired would like to stay on. The term limitation clause has been very un-uniformly implied. Byron stated that it is difficult enough to get people who are willing to donate their time and expertise. He feels that if the Commodity Commissions feel strongly enough that they want to keep their current representatives there's no reason they should be taken off.

Byron asked what the process should be with the WSU budget cut. Byron stated that Ben suggested that we find a sympathetic/supportive legislator to write a letter to WSU stating that we should be funded at our full amount. Byron stated that a good candidate would be Mark Schoesler. Heather stated that we would have to be prepared to answer where the funding should come from, Byron suggested that these funds should come from administration. Art Losey suggested more than one letter be written. Heather stated that Brian Blake might also write a letter, Art Losey also suggested Mike Armstrong.

Even with the support of legislators we might hesitate going down this path without the support of the commodity commissions. Andy Jensen asked what our alternative justification might be. Alan Schreiber stated that previously the WSCPR has been cut the same as the ARC, however this time we are getting a cut in line with the base funding. Chuck suggested that we should think for the future and not anger WSU in hopes that we receive more funds in the future. Alan Schreiber stated that the least we could do would be to send out a letter and then follow it up with at least a phone call. Doug stated that Provost Bailey stated that the mission of the university is teaching and research and that our program has been cut un-proportionately, and should have been protected as one of the core foundations of the university.

Alan Schreiber commented that if we wrote a letter this could go to Dan Bernardo or Ralph Cavalieri. Chuck suggested cc'ing legislators and agricultural commodities. Doug Walsh suggested sending this to Provost Bailey. Byron summarized that we should politely express our discontent by sending a letter to Provost Bailey, while cc'ing commodity commission and legislators. Andy Jensen voiced that it felt like a gamble and felt that Dan Bernardo needed more interaction with the Commission. He suggested writing the letter straight to Dan Bernardo. It should be added that money spent for the Commission is pennies on the dollar.

Andy Jensen moved to adjourn. Rick Hamman seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.