

**Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
May 13, 2020
Meeting Transcription**

A regular meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Representative Policy Board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District ("RWA") took place on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 via remote access. Chair Levine presided.

Present: Committee Members: P. Betkoski, B. Eitzer, R. Harvey, M. Horbal, M. Levine, G. Malloy, J. Oslander and J. Mowat Young

RPB: S. Mongillo and M. Ricoszi

Authority: S. Sack

Management: A. Amendola, T. Norris, J. Tracy and J. Triana

RPB Staff: J. Slubowski

Chair Levine called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Mark:

Okay, so guys, we got one minute. Here we go. Here's the first thing on the agenda. Okay guys, I call the meeting to order. May 13th. Let's go over to the safety moment, don't forget to disinfect your clothes. How to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Laundry, consider using detergent that contains bleach. You guys can read it. And let's hope we get back to normal someday, someday. Be very [crosstalk 00:02:43]. Soon, really. Otherwise, I don't know what's going to go on. I mean, it's crazy. All right next. Jennifer, how do I get next? Oh-

Jennifer:

The minutes.

Mark:

... thank you. The minutes. Could you please have a motion to approve the minutes from the-

Brian:

[crosstalk 00:03:01] So moved.

Mark:

Wait a second, there's a March 11th.

Jennifer:

No, it's April 8th [crosstalk 00:03:07].

Mark:

I know that, but why did the committee approve the minutes ... April. Oh, this is the minutes. I got you [crosstalk 00:03:14].

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Brian:

Adhering to the April 8th meeting, our approving-

Mark:

I got you. I thought that was the agenda but I got the agenda in front of me. I'm sorry. Okay. Can I have a motion to approve the minutes?

Brian:

So moved.

Bob:

Second, Bob Harvey.

Mark:

Okay. All those in favor?

Group:

Aye. [crosstalk 00:03:30].

Mark:

Opposed? Thank you very much. Now we're going to have a very interesting discussion from the treatment of Japanese stilt grass.

Jennifer:

Not yet.

Mark:

No? [crosstalk 00:03:40]-

Jennifer:

We have to approve the April 20th minutes.

Mark:

Oh, yeah, yeah. Yeah. I forgot about that. The April 20th meeting that Steve Mongillo chaired and I was assistant chair. Steve was there. Did we have any of our members there? [crosstalk 00:03:54].

Jennifer:

Yes.

Greg:

Yes, I was there.

Mark:

Greg was there.

Greg:

I was there.

Mark:

Okay.

Bob:

It's on the list. It's on the minutes, Mark.

Mark:

Yeah, I know that. I didn't look at them. Oh, I got you. Okay. Can I have a motion to approve these minutes from-

Brian:

So moved.

Mark:

All those in favor?

Group:

Aye. [crosstalk 00:04:17].

Mark:

Okay, the minutes are approved for that meeting. That was a very interesting meeting, too. Okay, now the presentation, the Japanese stilt grass on RWA property by Mr. Amendola and Mr. Tracy.

Josh:

All right. So Jennifer, do we just let you know when we want you to switch the slide?

Jennifer:

Yep, that'd be perfect.

Josh:

Okay. So Alex and I got together and decided to do some experiments on the control of Japanese stilt grass. It's a big problem on a lot of our properties. Invades a lot of our areas that are disturbed either on roadways or timber harvests or natural disasters or what name you. So let's move to the first slide. So we all know it's a huge invasive, it's a big problem for us, because it harms our water quality. It doesn't control erosion very well. It's got really shallow root systems. And it stops our native trees and plants from growing through it, when it dies in the fall, it creates a really dense mat. So we decided to do this multi-year experiment. This being the first year, just about full year of the experiment to find out what the best and most cost effective method is for stilt grass control. So we're going to be analyzing the data

annually. And as more options become available, we're going to try to test them. You can move on to the next slide.

Alex:

Can everybody hear me correct? All right. Is my microphone working? Okay.

Group:

Yeah.

Alex:

So our methodology briefly, we had 16 plots with three different types of treatments. We did each treatment twice just for a little bit greater accuracy. We did 1000 acre plots and the diagram you can see below delineates the different treatments we used. The yellow are three different concentrations of glyphosate, which is round-up as it's commercially known, it's commonly used just about at everyone's house.

Alex:

The green plots are both cleaning vinegar, which is 6% acetic acid, and cleaning vinegar plus salt and soap as a surfactant. So that basically just means it helps it to stick to the leaves and do more damage to the plant. The red, as you can see are the mechanical means, which is the weed wacker and hand pulling. And of course, the dark blue are controls to see how the stilt grass does without any sort of human intervention. We did the treatments in early July so the second round of treatments is coming right up. We're excited to do those and collect some more data. We monitored each plot daily for a week and then once a week for the next four weeks, and we plan to do so again this year.

Alex:

The way we monitored them basically was after administering the whatever method of control we did, we cut each 1000 acre plot into quadrants and measured the mortality and tallied it up as a percentage of control. So you can flip to the next slide and see some of the results. So this is kind of a tough graph to interpret. But again, it's only one year's worth of data. The real big takeaways here are if you look at the left side of the graph, the light green line and the dark blue line are the two different vinegar concentrations or at least the concentration 6% and 6% plus the surfactant. And what you can see here essentially is that although it worked for the first few days. Step back a little bit. On the left side is the percentage of mortality of the plants just so everybody knows.

Alex:

So with the surfactant, which is the green line, you can see that initially, the mortality was very high upwards of 90%. But then it dropped right off after 10 days after the administration of the vinegar. We'll see some pictures on that later. The other big takeaway from this is if you can see the orange and the yellow line, and there's a gray line buried behind them, after a week, all three of the concentrations of glyphosate provided vary. Again, that's roundup, very effective control up to 100% basically, and it's important to note that 2% is the label dosage, which is what all homeowners are recommended to use. And we did half of the label which is 1%, and a quarter of the label and you can see here that even at one quarter strength, which was, well, we'll see later what it did to the natives, but it was very effective in controlling the stilt grass. So move on to the next slide please.

Alex:

This is just the raw numbers. So to go into them, as I said after 10 days after the original administration of the treatments that glyphosate was very effective in all concentrations, the vinegar was effective with the surfactant right off, but after 10 days, really all of the stilt grass refoliated, unfortunately. Weed wacking as you could see, we also tested which, of course, was effective, although after the first two weeks, we did see some stilt grass and other invasives that were bent over or just covered in all clip trimmings that some things did come back and of course, hand pulling was 100% effective so you can move on to the next slide. So this is the native mortality or the last graph of the invasive mortality. So this one, if you cross reference this with the last one, you'll see that the weed wacker, although it, which is the dark blue line on top, although it was able to control the invasive set, almost 100%, it also took out over 50% of the native species, because as you can imagine, it hits the plants indiscriminately.

Alex:

The vinegar, both concentrations of vinegar, or again, the light blue and the green lines which did not really affect native vegetation very much, just the static burns. But again, without effective control the stilt grass it didn't really help to learn that. And then if you take a look at the orange line, which is the 2% glyphosate and the yellow and gray lines, which you can see on the bottom right. The 2%, as you can see, killed about 50% of the native vegetation. And of course, that's to be expected. It is an herbicide, the label dose is the recommended doses 2%. So it's not surprising to see that it killed, some of the native broad leaves and wild flowers. But what's really interesting is when you look at the point 5% and 1%, which left natives largely untouched in the point 5% category, basically less than 10% mortality, almost zero of the natives while still totally controlling Japanese stilt grass. So next slide, please.

Alex:

So again, these are the numbers. The raw data glyphosate, the 2% it harmed the native vegetation but the lower concentrations worked fantastically in not harming the native vegetation. Vinegar was again, a moot point. It doesn't really control the stilt grass at a single dosage. So its impact on natives is irrelevant. Weed wacking, as you can see killed right around 50% of the natives. So unfortunately, it's not really a viable control option in all areas and hand pulling, of course as you can imagine, if you know what you're identifying, you don't take out any natives but it's very time consuming. And Josh, will get into that. So you can flip to the next slide.

Josh:

Yeah, so these plots are a lot more telling in person. So when we do a field visit in the future, it'll look a little different. But what you're looking at here is our 2% concentration plots, photos taken this year. If you look really closely, you can see within the boxes, the stilt grass, the dead stilt grass is a different color than the stilt grass on the outside that died naturally. See it appears that the glyphosate, when it killed the stilt grass earlier than it should have been killed, it almost made it decompose faster, the grass is a lot more brittle than it would normally be and it exposed a lot more ground you can see all the slash underneath in the plots, whereas outside the plots, the stilt grass is still that golden color and creating that dense mat that we don't want.

Josh:

So we're hoping now that maybe if we use glyphosate, it will decompose the grass faster and we'll get our native species growing a little faster, you can move to the next slide. So this picture is of the point 5% glyphosate. I neglected to take some photos of before and after. Just because when we did them,

the initial treatment the stilt grass looked all completely healthy and after it killed the grass it essentially, it was just all dead. In the future, I'm going to be taking more before and after photos. But again, when you go out and look at these plots now, the difference in color between the grass that died from the glyphosate is much different than the color of the grass that died naturally in the fall.

Josh:

And even though this looks like much more stilt grass than the previous two plots, it still ended up doing 100% mortality on stilt grass, you can move on to the next slide. So this is what it looks like when the vinegar was used. As Alex was saying the vinegar was more of an aesthetic burn. That's basically what the vinegar does, is it burns whatever plant it is on. Also, indiscriminately will burn any insects or salamanders or anything living that the vinegar touches just because in sunlight vinegar will burn. So that's the idea behind using the vinegar with the salt and the surfactant is trying to burn the plant, rather than using the herbicide which is systemic. And that was reflected in the graphs you've seen earlier, where the vinegar was seemingly effective at the beginning because it had burned the plant. And the systemic herbicide was not effective within the first week until it got into the plant system and was able to kill it.

Josh:

So you can see after six days of the initial treatment, the vinegar looks like it had some effect on the plant. You can see all the leaves are burned, they're brown. There's a few native species in there and they also have wilted leaves, but 14 days out from the initial treatment on the right, the stilt grass looks healthy as ever. And by the end of the season, it looked no different than the rest of the stilt grass surrounding it.

Jamie:

That because it doesn't get in the roots. It just kills the surface stuff.

Alex:

Correct.

Josh:

Yeah, and these plants are fairly tall to begin with. So unless you really douse the area with vinegar, you're not going to get every leaf. And even then it's, like you said, you're not going to burn the roots out, the plant can still regenerate. And the more vinegar you put down, the more likely chance you're going to be burning something that you don't really want to burn. If there's a frog in there. There's plenty of data out there to show that whether or not glyphosate is going to affect certain wildlife if it gets on them.

Josh:

But if you pour vinegar on a creature, it's going to burn it. So that's one other downside with the use of the vinegar. You can go to the next slide please. This is what the vinegar looked like this year when I took a picture of the plot. As you can see the stilt grass inside the plot looks exactly the same as the stilt grass outside the plot which is to be expected. The plant was able to regenerate and grow, like I said, to the same height with the same vigor as the surrounding plants. So you can go to the next slide.

Josh:

These are the hand pulling plots and like we said, if you hand pull, you can get every bit of stilt grass out leaving all the natives behind. But it took each of us 17 minutes to pull all the stilt grass out of a one 1/1,000th of an acre plot, which doing the math out comes out to 283 man hours per acre. So though it's, you're definitely going to get all of the stilt grass out. It's not a good option if you want to save time and save money. The image on the right shows the plot from this year and you can still see a lot of stilt grass just because all the stilt grass surrounding it died and fell into the plot. So you have that to contend with too if any stilt grass is left behind from the previous year, it could seed in and there's nothing stopping it from receding into these plots where hand pulling was done, you can move on to the next slide.

Josh:

So as concluded, in this one year so far of the study, glyphosate proved to be the best control out of the options we used. It largely left the native vegetation untouched while killing the stilt grass. In a single dose, the vinegar wasn't proven effective. The mechanical options worked but were more time consuming and were less discriminant than the herbicide that we used. And with that, and as I mentioned, what was one of the more surprising things is that the stilt grass that died from glyphosate had a different composition almost in the stilt grass that died naturally which could leave us with a new option in the future that we didn't know were available. So you can move on to the next slide, please.

Alex:

And so our plans moving forward, as I said earlier, we'd like to continue our second round of control, but we'd like to add in a few extra things. The first is to test a claim, which is the commercial name for fenoxaprop-p-ethyl. This is a very specific targeted herbicide for grasses. It's right about at the same toxicity level for or as glyphosate. I've already run it past the environmental planning team to see their thoughts on it and they seem to think it was fine. We'd also like to try additional dosages of vinegar. Perhaps even the one administration of acetic acid wasn't enough.

Alex:

Maybe if we did once a day for a week, or once a week for a month, we may be able to get more effective control with the vinegar. We're not quite sure, but I think it's worth pursuing. We'd also like to see how it reacts to fire with the use of our propane torches, it'd be very easy to do the same procedure, although we don't know, it may react positively to fire as many plant species do. But that remains to be seen.

Alex:

It is a plant that has sometimes up to five or more year seed bank, so it may regenerate readily after that, but we'd like to test it. And as Josh mentioned before, we would like to collect samples of the herbicide killed grass in order to determine if it does decompose faster. Because really if it does, if you can step back mentally to what you saw in the hand pulling plots, a lot of the stilt grass that was on the ground there was actually from two years ago.

Alex:

We'd pulled out the live vegetation, but the vegetative mat from previous years was still there. Just to give you an idea, this stuff is so packed full of silica that it will literally create a mat that's, like you can see in this photo, for years, and almost nothing will poke through it.

Alex:

So if glyphosate or herbicide in general proves effective at getting that mat to decompose a little faster, that would be of great benefit to our forests and of course, our water quality. That's pretty much it. And Josh, and I would be happy to answer any other questions you guys have.

Mark:

Where is this located? I'm sorry, I missed where you said it was located.

Alex:

Prospect.

Mark:

Right, is that the only place we have this kind of stilt grass growing?

Alex:

Oh, no. I would guess the majority of just about every town we have property, I would think we have stilt grass. It's not just about every one of our forest roads. Another good example, Downs Road, Dogburn Road in Orange, the stuff is present just about everywhere.

Mark:

Are we doing anything this year besides the stilt grass to take care of other invasive species in any kind of form, other than experimental?

Josh:

Oh, well, I mean, this year so far I've been cutting a lot of ailanthus, that's a low hanging fruit just because the trees are so large, you can really clear a lot of them out of an area quickly. And it leaves behind a lot of open space for our natives to grow.

Mark:

Are they giving you any help ... like summer people, to give you some help, to do larger plots so we can start trying to eradicate the situation?

Josh:

Well, I don't know how that's going to work with how budgets are working this year. We've had summer interns in the past that were high schoolers who couldn't use hand tools or do things of that nature. And I know we were talking about getting a college intern to help out but with the way budgets are working, I'm not sure how that sort of-

Mark:

If we don't do something about these invasive species, well, it's just like capital budget of not doing the pipe and not doing this and not doing the pump stations, and not changing the generator. What do you see five, 10 years down the pike with these invasive plants if we don't take a more aggressive stance to try to eradicate this situation? What concerns me is that where are our forests going to be if we don't

really ... I mean, I love what you're doing, don't get me wrong. But when are we going to be able to take a more aggressive stand in bigger areas to take care of this kind of situation?

Josh:

Yeah, I mean, that all depends on the species you're talking about. It depends on the approved methods. You can obviously kill, as we just proved, stilt grass with an herbicide. But do we want to broadcast spray herbicide on hundreds of acres. That's [crosstalk 00:23:59] probably not what we want to do.

Brian:

One of my questions was going to be in terms of the herbicide. I mean, yes, herbicide gives effective of control. But given the acreage that you have surrounding the reservoirs, are we going to actually be able use that as a control method on a company property on a regular basis?

Josh:

Well, the way we're looking at it now is that herbicide will be a tool that we can use if you know we decided to do a timber harvest. And there's small patches of it, and we can nip it in the bud before a machine drives over and spreads it throughout 40 acres, I'd rather use a little bit of herbicide in the small area, then cover 40 acres of it. Areas that are already infected now, it's going to be much more challenging and that we don't want to, spray 100 acres of herbicide, but what this could open up is we could use it to open up areas for native regeneration to grow. And maybe the stilt grass is going to be something that we have to deal with on a very long term basis.

Josh:

But if we can get native trees and native plants to grow through it to the point where the deer can't inhibit its growth, then at least we're establishing a native forest in, coexisting with the grass as it sits, now the grass is not letting the plants grow at all, okay, if we can help get the native regeneration going, then at least that's a step forward, rather than trying to kill everything at once and trying to eradicate it, once we can get some native species through, then we can take our time and really, systematically get rid of the plants as we find new ways of doing it, better options. There's a lot of scientists doing research on biological controls. And those take decades before they can be approved and released. But if in the future, say 30 years down the road, we have, biological control for a lot of these invasives and we were able to get them native populations to grow through them, then we'll be a step ahead. And then slowly the biological controls can take care of those invasive species without using a lot-

Mark:

Have you been in touch with other forest management? I mean, I guess would be more water companies. Have they taken any aggressive stance to eliminate invasive species on their property?

Josh:

I mean, when you talk to other water companies about herbicides, it's kind of a taboo.

Mark:

Yeah. I've seen that. But is there any other ways of coming down the pike do you see?

Josh:

Well, I mean, aside from the kind of stuff we're doing, where we're introducing native species, we're putting out ... Alex and I just took time to plant pitch pine in certain areas that had stilt grass or that had no native regeneration coming back, just to try to speed along the process. And that's just something that other people are doing as well, planting natives, but planting native seeds, trying to get the native populations to reestablish.

Mark:

Is there any conferences or any seminars going on about what they're doing for invasive species in force?

Josh:

Yeah, I'm part of the Connecticut Invasive Working Group team that, we put on a seminar every two years. And that's catered to professionals who deal with getting rid of invasive species, whether it's on an acre or in our case, 27,000 acres. There's all different scientists, there's arborists, there are foresters that are all doing experimentation on state land and private land, and they're all, every two years they share their findings and try to, and I'm sure other states are doing similar things.

Mark:

I guess what I'm trying to say, are we ever going to see where you guys are going to come with a plan that in the next five years, this is our plan for controlling or eradicating this invasive species, that invasive species and this is what we need to do it. And present it to Mr. Norris here and he's going to say, "Oh, this is a great idea for \$100,000 now we're going to do it." No, I'm just saying, are we ever going to see a plan coming down to do a more aggressive thing to solve this invasive species? I mean, you guys are doing a great job. Don't get me wrong.

Josh:

Yeah, I mean, like I had said earlier, I guess it all depends on what you consider aggressive, herbicides, probably the most aggressive thing you can do. And right now, if I went to Ted and said we want to spray 100 acres of herbicides, he would probably, wonder where my head went? So, I mean, that would be the most aggressive thing to do. But like I said, are there other means to do it? There might be but we-

Mark:

Haven't found them yet. You know-

Ted:

Question was about a plan so I think that it was a good idea to, now you guys at matter of fact, we talked about this about three years ago Mark, is that let these guys get going a little bit Josh get going, now Alex is helping them out now because forestry is dead and let them get going for a little bit and then see what they need to do develop in terms of inventory assessment, which they've been doing, what Josh's been doing and then control. So it's probably about time to develop a plan to take it to another level.

Mark:

That's what I want to hear. Hey Joe, you want to say something Joe?

Joe:

Yeah. What is the most effective time to be doing the spraying to have the results that you're looking for?

Josh:

Well, for stilt grass, like we, it all depends on the treatment herbicide is as long as the plant is alive, and can uptake an herbicide at least in stilt grass, that wasn't really a concern of ours. Vinegar needs high intensity sunlight to burn the plant. So you don't want to be doing that in March when the plants are nonexistent. Because it's not going to work and you don't want to be doing it in the fall when the plants are very vigorous, and they're about ready to seed, and that sort of thing, because they're already ready to seed. So right in the middle of summer, we decided it was the best time to use the vinegar.

Josh:

And so since we could do the vinegar, then and we could do the herbicide then, and the other treatments as well. That's why we decided on July is the best, best time to do those treatments. But in terms of other invasives, if you want to use certain herbicides, they only work in the fall like glyphosate is beneficial to use in the fall on woody plants, because in the fall, they take a lot of their nutrients back into their roots. So if you use glyphosate on a woody plant in the spring, it's going to be ejecting that herbicide from its roots and it's not really going to kill the plant. So in terms of stilt grass this was the reason why we chose July as our treatment time.

Brian:

Question, you were talking about this being like three year plan is it planned to go to the same plots and reapply the pesticide, herbicide or you're going to have herbicide applied on fresh plots, the entire set of fresh plots. And if you go in with the entire set of fresh plots, having seen efficacy for glyphosate at a quarter of the label dose, so you can try any lower doses.

Josh:

Yeah, we do want to try, even at an eighth percent, or eighth strength or something along those lines, but we are going to reapply at least to the glyphosate plots, the same glyphosate because glyphosate acts as a pre-emergent as well. So we're going to see, initially, we could-

Brian:

We came back to the same plot.

Josh:

Yeah, we could come to July and see a significant decrease in new growth and that will be important for us to know and to see if, two years in the same spot we'll get 100% control, but we are going to be opening up new plots to try these other, the Acclaim, the burning the vinegar, and that sort of thing.

Brian:

Are you going to try the Acclaim at various doses as well? Of the-

Josh:

We'll have it so we might as well try if we can get a quarter label strength on that as well. From the label, it looks like it only treats, five or six different grasses. Like a crabgrass, Japanese stilt grasses specifically mentioned. So that's why we're looking into that one rather than glyphosate that's more indiscriminate when it comes to-

Jamie:

Joshua and Alex, thank you so much. You guys are doing an awesome job. Excellent research and impact. So I'm excited to see how this works out. I do have a question about the residual impact on soils and future plants with the both the potential for Acclaim that the glyphosate. Because vinegar will wash away over time I assume but the other but the chemicals, is there testing that you're going to be doing on the soil to see, does it break down? How does it? What happens?

Alex:

Well, fortunately, both Acclaim fenoxaprop and glyphosate, there's a lot of literature out there already that surrounds the half-life of them in the soil, mobility in the soil. And they're both very similar. I believe within a few days of half-life. In terms of mobility in the soil, there, it's almost non-existent. And when you're talking about spraying them at a concentration that's a quarter or an eighth of the label strength, you may talk a couple of weeks and it's undetectable on the soil so.

Jamie:

And safety for you two, in spreading it?

Alex:

In spraying the chemicals? Oh yeah, we wear a respirator and boots, rubber boots when we spray them. And PPE, of course. So,

Josh:

I mean again these are-

Brian:

When I say it's pretty low the main toxicity on glyphosate.

Jamie:

Okay, thank you.

Brian:

So these are very small props.

Mark:

Jamie, you mean they don't go-

Alex:

Still don't want to breathe it.

Mark:

They don't go out with a bathing suit on and camp.

Mike:

Well that was back in your day Mark.

Mark:

Yeah. I used to be an exterminator, I used to kill termites. Used to swim in that stuff.

Brian:

Well that was Chlordane.

Mark:

Chlordane, used to swim in chlordane.

Jamie:

Scary stuff.

Brian:

That stuff stuck around a lot longer.

Mark:

Yeah. A lot long yes. Okay. Yeah, you got that right. Okay. Hey, you guys. Any other question for Josh or Alex?

Stephen:

Yeah, this is Steve Mongillo for Josh or Alex. I think that's a great discovery about the dosage. Really has practical applications. So a couple of questions related to that, the manufacturer must know that information as well as the application for home use. And the 2% suggested because it's differently applied? And the other thing is, which is partially been answered, if you use it on RWA land, can you use it near the water? And what is the toxicity and concerns about getting into the water?

Alex:

Well, to answer the second part of your question, first, well we don't really want to spray any chemicals close to the water or, immediately [inaudible] the water only because ... there are a lot more mobile if they're that close to the water from what I'm thinking. Even if they're incredibly low toxicity, even spraying salt next to the reservoir table salt wouldn't be a good idea. We just don't want to introduce that. Yeah, in terms of the concentration, that 2% is what the manufacturer recommends for a foliar spray, which is what we were doing it just for general brush control, we suspected from some other literature and the fact that stilt grass is a weak annual grass. The root system is nothing more than a few thread like roots, that a very low concentration would be able to kill it without affecting our the native plants. And fortunately, we were proven right.

Stephen:

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Good job. Thank you.

Mark:

Thank you. Anybody have any more questions? You did a great job. Now listen, you guys can either stay for the rest of our meeting or you can split.

Josh:

I think I'm going to split. Thank you very much.

Mark:

Hey, thanks a lot guys.

Alex:

Thank you.

Mark:

We're going to go on field trip if we ever get out again.

Alex:

Sounds good.

Mark:

We look forward to seeing you out there.

Alex:

Okay.

Alex:

Mark I, the article I submitted did they get that?

Mark:

I don't know Jennifer, did you send them the article?

Josh:

Yeah, yes. I haven't had a chance to look at it yet, but we-

Jennifer:

We did include it.

Stephen:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Mark:

Yeah, it was interesting that not only was it invasive species, but it really amplified a natural disease vector that we have because more mites developing grow under, ticks rather grow and develop under those Japanese barberry plants. So if you brush against those, with their established thickets, there's a much higher concentration of the ticks.

Josh:

Absolutely.

Alex:

We see it every day.

Mark:

Okay, you guys protect yourself from ticks. You spray yourself before you go out or?

Alex:

Yeah, and the most important thing really is just checking yourself when you get home every day. The best way to avoid Lyme disease or any other sort of-

Mark:

They're going to be the bad this year the tick because it wasn't really cold.

Brian:

Yeah, that's what the word is in the station. It was a bad winter. It was a very mild winter, which means a bad tick season.

Alex:

And if it stays moist and cool, they'll be abundant. That's for sure.

Mark:

Alright guys, be careful out there. Stay safe.

Josh:

Will do. Thank you guys for having us.

Alex:

You as well.

Mark:

Okay bye.

Alex:

Bye-bye.

Mark:

Okay, I thought you had a question. Okay. Right here. The next thing you're up there, John. Okay, yeah.

John:

Okay. So I'm going to unmute. So the monthly update is before you. Jennifer's got control of the screen. What you're looking at is the reservoir levels for the month of April. At the end of the month, we're at 99%. We're also that point last year, long term averages 94 or so Gaillard got up to about half a foot from the slow way right now it's a little bit lower than a foot from the spillway and we'll be opening more of the diversions to get it back even above minus one as conditions call for that.

Mark:

We're done with the one we had reduced it by 10 feet then, right?

John:

Oh yeah, that was years ago at this point.

Mark:

Well, I thought it was a year ago. Okay, sorry.

John:

Rainfall for last April, we had 5.7 inches, a wetter in April in 2019. And both of them are above the long term average of about 4.3. And we are above the long term average also, when you just look at the current year by a little bit. It's definitely been cooler and wetter, as we've seen this spring, including today. That's a wet not so much wet, definitely cooler. For Atlanta, we need for the water we use program we have corresponded with property owners in Cheshire, Durham and Killingworth, the DePodesta and Hendrickson properties which we have Oslo grant front of, for both of those properties, who've been submitting to DEP, several of the materials that they need in order to follow through on those grants.

John:

Excuse me, the rental houses, Seymour, 59 Rimmon Road, we've completed, I completed the bid and submitted it to purchasing to issue once the end the appeal period expires. And that was actually, what's today is the 13th. I think that expired on Monday. So the plan is for that bid to hit the street on Friday. And then we will have our two pre-bid meetings at the end of this month, and the bid opening will then be on the 15th of June. So fingers crossed, everything goes well. We're going to institute additional procedures during the pre-bid meetings to cover our problems, in turn, ensuring that it's going to be safer for folks even though, we're going to be probably we will be past the May 20 deadline or maybe-

Mark:

Oh, remind me the minimum bid on that again, what was the minimum?

John:

Minimum bid is \$45,000.

Mark:

Okay, thank you.

John:

So we look forward to the two pre-bid meetings there and we have already seen additional interest in this now that the price has come down considerably. The two Hamden properties, we called the P&Z office, it wasn't until last week that I was actually able to bring in the zone change application to P&Z, drop it off at the dropbox, and they have confirmed that they have it. So we will be looking forward to a public hearing before P&Z for the zone change in Skiff Street in June, I think it's at night or something like that.

John:

Guilford, 115 Great Hill Road, I corresponded with the new owner about progress on the house there. All three updates, there was nothing new that happened in the last month as Alex mentioned, or briefly and Ted and Alex both, briefly touched on during their presentation there that forestry is basically at a standstill. In the last two to three years, the market was softening already. It then got softer even more as we got into trade wars and tariff wars with different countries. And then with COVID everything is at a complete standstill, so nothing is moving. Nobody's buying wood for any purpose at this point.

John:

Other forestry stuff, we found damage to a vernal pool up in Seymour at the Pine Hill location where the trails are there, and we revoked his permit. He was going through the vernal pool and also up and down a steep slope area where he was not authorized to do. So he is out. We planted approximately 1000 Christmas trees up at Lake Gaillard and about 100 pitch pine that were at Maltby Lakes and also the where the Gaillard tunnel project was cleared the area going up the mountain there. Jeff, I'm sorry, Alex and Josh also met with Jeff Worth to talk about various deer enclosures or exclosures managing brush in such a way that it keeps deer out to allow areas to regenerate. Next page.

Mark:

So glad, excuse me. I'm so glad with the Christmas trees. I used to do that on my property, and Bethany before I sold it. That's a great idea. Do you plan on putting another 1000 trees next year or?

John:

Probably something on that order.

Mark:

We got to do-

John:

Is either we have room for, but yeah something on that order.

Mark:

How far apart did you plant them?

John:

Six feet.

Mark:

Wow. That's a lot.

John:

Yeah.

Mark:

Okay. You said you can get it down to four.

John:

Yeah, we're just going with the six feet at this point. Recreation update- It's been quite busy out there on the trails. As you can imagine, the recreation permit holder numbers are now up to 40 or at the end of April, are up to 4,479. We saw record amounts of permits sold and revenue received in the month of April. My data doesn't go back all the way to the beginning as of the recreation program, I only have stuff that goes back to 2016 at my fingertips, and it blew away the amount of permits that we sold. This April blew away the amounts of permits that we sold in any particular month in the last four years. The billboard campaign with the 20% coupon continued, that was part of the benefit that we've seen. We had people redeem the coupons on every single day of April. Varying from five people per day to 20 people per day.

Mark:

Wow, that's great.

John:

But most of this, as you could imagine, is all driven by the COVID restrictions, giving less options for things to do, such as going to ballgames, going out for restaurants and bars. They're forced to go outside and that led to some incredible numbers for recreation permit holders, revenue, and for the number of people that we've seen out in the trails. We discussed the free permit program, we put it on hold, because we were somewhat concerned that offering the free permits at the same time while all this was happening could overwhelm some of our areas. So we put that on the back burner for the time being.

John:

Recreation staff had been stationed at Maltby Lakes and Saltonstall every day since April 13. That was the day after Easter, when the original fishing season should have started. And we've kept that going to the present day. We have seen as things have calmed down a little bit, but we all have also been dealing with very cool temperatures. Not exactly and some rainy days as well mixed in with the cool temperatures. So, this past weekend, there wasn't a whole lot of people out there because it wasn't that warm. We replaced and cleared the trails at Maltby and Saltonstall.

John:

So that was the entire trail system at each one of those locations. Trout were stocked at Maltby Lakes and Saltonstall. We received GPH renewals for the hiking at Lake Bethany and also for the Genesee MMM trail. However, there were typos in the Genesee MMM trail, so they need to reissue that. They actually had the wrong location in that, that was the typo and they need to correct it and we'll get that back probably in the next month or so. Special activity permits, we usually see double or triple of what

you are looking at, at the screen here, but again, because of all the COVID stuff, this is all new territory. We did not have that many requests for special permits in the last month. Other items down below, encroachments we had six inquiries from different people about using their agricultural fields. One looked like he was going to take use of a couple of fields and prospect in Bethany but I haven't heard from him for a week and he was really going back and forth but we'll have to see what happens with that one.

Mark:

[inaudible 00:47:26]What was he going to grow?

John:

He was just going to do hay.

Mark:

Okay.

John:

For Bethany Horsemen, I sent them the updated annual agreement and they've sent in the check but we have not gotten the executed agreement yet but the staff or the officers for the Bethany Horsemen said that is in route so for getting that and then I'll get Ted's signature on it so that we have a completed agreement for 2020. Invasive plants, Josh mentioned a lot about what he's been doing, what he was treating and map populations East Haven, West Haven in North Branford, a lot of that, especially in the last month has been as he mentioned, during his presentation cutting Ailanthus primarily on top of the Saltonstall ridge.

John:

Durham, the Vasel driveway, the attorney for Vasel noted that his client would not sign a license agreement where the license or could revoke the agreement at any time. Now this is a standard provision that we put in all our license agreements, so basically, everything is on hold at the present time and they are going to pursue the adverse possession claim against the abutter to the north. This is where his most used driveway allows him access to and from his property with the courts being closed and will be backlogged, who knows when this may get moving again, but that's where it's at, at the present time. We were contacted by somebody in Bethany, if he could put up these swarm boxes on our property. And we said no, these are boxes that were put in, 15 to 20 feet up in a tree that would basically capture, a bee-

Brian:

It's a trap.

John:

A bee will be moving out of their hive and then looking for this new place to go. And so it's kind of for beekeepers, a way to get a hive or a bee swarm without paying for it. And we told them no. He wanted to do that at Chamberlain. Well, we saw that two of these boxes were on our property, Porter Hill Road and on Downs Road, so I sent them a letter saying that, "hey, are these yours? And if so, take them

down." He never replied to us, but they have mysteriously disappeared. So I think they were his and they are now gone.

Brian:

He got swarms in and then the guy got hives and took them away.

John:

Possibly, but I mean, I don't know if you know a lot more details on this, but I don't think. Did the swarms happen this early in the year? I thought they happen in the summer.

Brian:

It depends on how well the hives are building. What happens is, if the hive is very healthy, the current queen moves out, then leaves it over to a new queen, and stuff like that. So beekeepers actually, they don't want swarms, they'll split hives to prevent their swarms, because then they lose their bees. So they want to prevent the swarms or capture a swarm. But if you don't want to pay to get a new hive, if you can capture a swarm and that's a way of starting a new hive for free.

John:

Yeah, I mean, and when he discussed this with us, it sounded like he's going to use a step ladder to put it in a tree. We were just a little leery about the-

Brian:

Safety.

John:

Safety, the risk about it. Well, when we found these two things, they were 20 feet up in a tree. They weren't done by a stepladder. They were done by an extension ladder in order for them to get as high and get both of them as high as they were in two trees where they were situated. So, even more dangerous, but they're gone now. So I think we're done. But there may be more lurking in places we just haven't traversed recently. We were contacted by members of the Guilford Land Trust about ATVs and dirt bikes on our property up in Guilford near Bluff head. So I've been up there doing boundaries ever since then, and haven't seen anyone actively doing it. But there's definitely evidence that they do it regularly because the trails and the roads up there pretty well rutted because of them.

John:

They actually took videos with trail cams, and posted them on their website to try to get people to snitch on whoever was doing it. I don't know if they were successful, but I know they got a lot of responses. Some negative responses about that they should be leaving the kids alone, that the kids aren't doing drugs, that kind of thing. But nevertheless, they're not authorized to be using motorized vehicles on our property or Guilford Land Trust property. And some of it was on both of ours were. In fact, some of the property that we sold to the Guilford Land Trust is the areas in question.

John:

Excuse me. Durham former Sullivan property, so we bought a couple of small parcels from this woman named Gayle Sullivan in Durham. We also, at the same time, bought a 11 acre easement between the

two fee simple properties. I think it was in 2003, or a shift says in the notes, and she wanted to know whether or not we'd be willing to sell back to her, her properties to keep them to re-combine them. And we told her that was not possible. Apparently, she sold them at a time where she was going through a divorce and needed the money now she's back on firmer ground. I said when we cannot convey any interest in real property, once we own it and it's on the watershed, just can't happen.

John:

So she was disappointed but that was the first type of that call that I've ever received. East Haven, Barberry Road drainage ditch the town, talk to Chris Roach to try to improve the drainage out there. So they've been working in a ditch that goes through the property, seems like everything's going well out there. I talked to Olen Paige who is the farmer that we have using that field for hay and he says everything's been going well. Deer Hunt, we received our GPH recreation activity permit for North Branford, Seymour and Ansonia areas and Jen, can you move it up? Thanks. A few attachments for you to read this month. And then I had not updated the May part there. That should say June 2020. But if you have any requests for next month's meeting, just let me know. And I'll make it happen. And I'm open to any questions that you may have on anything.

Brian:

I got a couple of questions and comments. One comment that I'll make is that I was at Lake Chamberlain this weekend, and some more recreational hikers there than we've ever seen in our standard height there. So I mean, not only the permits off though you actually seeing the people up even in the last populated places. The other one I had a question about, you said on the Pine Hill, was that right on the trail with a vernal pool was because-

John:

Yes.

Brian:

After we went to the house there a couple months ago, my wife and I went for a hike on one of those trails. And we saw that area of total damage, it was like what is going on here, deep in the woods, on the slope, so I'm very happy that's not being done because we actually did see that spot.

John:

Yeah. So further background that what happened, this is a guy who actually does commercial firewood on our property or did commercial firewood on our property, has been with us for many years and he had been doing firewood cutting down on the lower part of that area where the Woods Road is and where the trail is. And then as you know, Brian, the trail then comes up a very kind of a steep slope-

Brian:

Okay.

John:

And wraps around where this vernal pool is up on kind of a plateau above where-

Brian:

And it was cut right into the vernal pools. Right through the trail.

John:

The further background is that it was a year or two ago, where we got a report from a hiker saying that there were trees down by the trail, blocking the trail and it's by a vernal pool. Now the vernal pool, also just in case people don't know what a vernal pool is, there's actually a label on a tree that says vernal pool there.

John:

So one of his employees went up there and cut these trees where he wasn't supposed to and just dropped them willy-nilly into the wetland and over the trail.

John:

So the hiker let us know all this and we go up there and was like, "Wow, what the heck happened here?" So we talked to him. We said, "Remove these here. But don't touch anything else. Do not go into the wetland with any machinery, just get the trees down that are over the trail that are dangerous, get them down to the ground and then be done with it."

John:

Well, that's not what he did. He went back up there and he cut the trees down and removed them. So his machinery was in the wetland.

Brian:

Yes, I saw it.

John:

And then he dragged them down a steep slope to get down to his landing, which was even worse. So I talked to Alex, Alex talked to him and said, "You're out." So that was that.

Brian:

Good. I'm glad, that makes a lot of sense. I saw that and I was wondering about it, I couldn't figure out what was going on.

John:

He had his warning when we told him what the prescriptive measure was to correct the situation. And he didn't follow it. So he had to go.

Brian:

Okay.

Mark:

Is he not going in? Is he staying off the property?

John:

He's off the property. He's out of the firewood program now.

Mark:

I know that part. But has anybody seen him on our property? Is he disobeying us?

John:

No, not that I know of.

Mark:

Okay, just wondering.

Bob:

John.

John:

Yes.

Bob:

I know with the water company right across the street from me. I'm seeing a lot of young people going fishing and I'm letting the police know, is it happening quite a bit? Are we starting to have real problems?

John:

We've definitely had increases of people trespassing, as what Brian just said is true, for all the locations where we've seen higher volumes of legitimate people out there using permits properly fishing, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking in the right places.

John:

We've also seen people not with permits and going in places where we do not allow access. This has happened in many places. But, we try to educate people when we can, if we see them on one of the recreation areas and they don't have a permit, we give them the brochures, actually, we ... part of the reason why our permits have increased is that people can buy the permit right on their phone, we can get a point-of-sale right there in the woods.

John:

We have done that dozens of times in the last two months, where either someone like Jeff or one of the recreation workers said, "You need a permit here. Here's how to get it." Oh, and then they pick up their smartphone and they go right to the website and they pay with their bill and then they are legal right there, five seconds later, so we love that.

John:

But then there's other people who bring in dogs, I encountered one of those at Chamberlain, when I was reblazing one of the trails last week. We try to educate them try to get them off where they are not

doing things that they shouldn't be doing in places. So fishing at Prospect is new, I had not heard that one. Did you talk to Paul already?

Bob:

I've called him I think three times in the last week, week and a half.

John:

Okay.

Bob:

It appears that the word got out to some of the Cheshire high school kids that, "Oh, yeah, you just go up into Prospect and go to the reservoir and fish."

John:

Yeah. Where are they parking? In front of your house?

Bob:

Down in the corner. Some of it is when I get home from work. Others, when I'm leaving to go to work at 6:30 in the morning, there's cars here.

John:

Wow, okay.

Bob:

So I don't know, maybe the fishing is real good.

John:

Maybe. The only thing that's related to that, it's only related because it's in the same neighborhood there, is I got an email from a kid, I think he just graduated from Woodland. I don't know if it was this year or a couple years ago. I mean, I know he's a runner and he asked me, "Is it okay to run on Cornwall Avenue as it goes down to Cheshire?" And I said, "I don't know for sure, I believe the road is discontinued, but if you want to run in the woods in a legitimate place, just run on the Quinnipiac trail. It's all blazed, and you're all legal on the trail." And then he came back and he asked, "Can I run over, basically by your house where the Woods roads are?" And I said, "No, that is not a legal area to go running. But you go on the Quinnipiac trail and there's no problem there.

Bob:

Yeah, there is a kid that is doing some cross country running up there.

John:

It might be him.

Bob:

Yeah.

Mark:

Okay any other questions for John?

Stephen:

Yeah, this is Steve Mongillo. John, with the increased use ... I've been out hiking a lot. I see a lot more people out. You anticipate the need for more policing of the RWA lands?

John:

Well, we have been doing that. We have, as I mentioned, every day somebody from rec staff goes to all the locations, that's the trail inspections when that is required. So in addition to what we've done besides that is that we've had these people stationed at Saltonstall and Maltby every single day since April 13th and that has caught many of these issues.

John:

So when I talk about our recreation areas, there's really a spectrum of how much they get used. At the top is Saltonstall and Maltby they get the most usage. Then below that, we talked about places like Chamberlain that gets a lot of usage but not as much as Saltonstall and Maltby. And then beyond that now we're talking about places that get a lot less usage like Lake Bethany, Sugarloaf.

John:

Hammonasset actually is one of the ones that we've seen a lot more usage of and is closer to what Chamberlain has been experiencing. As an example, I think this is related to Chatfield Hollow, which is right down the street, is that we got reports from our recreation staff who are doing the trail inspections that they drove up North Chestnut Hill Road, which is in for if you think about, Lake Hammonasset half of it's in Madison and half of it's in Killingworth. On the Killingworth side is North Chestnut Hill Road.

John:

That's the road that parallels the lake and the town line which is in the lake. And they drove on that and they saw, I think he said between 10 and 12 cars parked on the side of the road. And this is a road actually, Brian would know, this is essentially Sperry Road. This is an improved for gravel road. Only the first half or quarter mile of North Chestnut Hill road is asphalt. The rest is just gravel. People were parked there that some of them had then just hopped onto our trail and gone around because their trailer again is right next to the road at a couple points and one group from the report that I got set up a picnic table that was partially in the road and partially on the road's shoulder and just started having picnic right there. Now this was a weekend day, so my guess and what his guess I believe him that his was probably a day where Chatfield Hollow got overflowing.

Stephen:

Right.

John:

Closed, and then people just look for whatever the closest thing was, where it look what it in, there wasn't a lot traffic. Now that's what I'd guess what happened with the picnic table people, but I guess that some of the hiking people were doing that as well. So to answer your question, Steve, we haven't

done extra stuff at the places with lower attendance, with lower usage, but we have that at Saltonstall and Maltby.

Stephen:

Thanks.

John:

Yeah.

Brian:

A question along those lines.

John:

Yeah.

Brian:

Right by me here, there's where the Birmingham utilities and a couple of abandoned roads and stuff from when the Birmingham dropped off. And I know Josh Tracy was in there one point looking at invasives. I mean, I can walk in there to look at things if you want on a regular basis or it's not one of our actual hiking trails. I know there's one spot right off of where I take down. One of our normal [inaudible] walks right by the Bethany Hinman station, where if you go in just a tiny bit, there's an old dam. And I don't know if people go in there and fish or anything. I was just wondering, do you want me going in there to look at things on an occasional basis or not?

John:

You don't have to. I mean, we don't see a whole lot of activity up there. I mean, there's some as you can see that there used to be a lot more ATV activity.

Brian:

That was one of the things I'm wondering about, check, if I see something there.

John:

Yeah, if you see something, you can definitely report it to the police, just so that they have an idea of what the activity is. Maybe they, I don't know ... anything at the moment when something's happened, but if there's a pattern that can be set out from these things, that would definitely help them in the long run.

Brian:

Yeah, I see them on the road. So I don't know if they're going in there or not. But I can take a little walk down.

John:

Yeah, there was one I don't know, whatever happened about it, but I know, this was I want to say six or seven years ago, where there was a few ATV people in there and one of them was a guy and a girl on an

ATV, boyfriend, girlfriend, and they were going up a steep slope and the thing went over backwards. The guy went, I think it was the guy who fell to the side, but she went backwards and then the ATV fell on her. So she was in the emergency room, she was in intensive care for some period, but I don't know what the outcome of her injuries were. Bad injuries, though.

Stephen:

Okay, Mark, you're on mute.

Mark:

So how far into the woods was she from the road? Did she-

John:

A couple hundred feet.

Mark:

On that bump? Okay. I

John:

I mean, where Schaefer Road is there, it's pretty flat. And that's where they were coming in. But then where the river is, where Hop Brook is it takes a steep dive down. They were coming up that, coming from the West to the East toward Schaefer. And that's when they went to, ass over teakettle there and there and it was pretty bad.

Mark:

Okay does anybody else have anything to say or ask a question?

Brian:

No. That's why I was wondering, and walking in there and seeing what the story was. Yeah, I mean, I have a permit. I know it's not a good thing, I'm on Land Use committee. So I think yes.

John:

I probably have no real authority to say this but as a board member, I'm okay with you poking in there once in a while.

Brian:

Okay.

Bob:

That doesn't mean you can bring 20 friends with you though.

Brian:

I would not bring 20 friends in there. But, that's as far as he's talking about our literally, my normal walking tours.

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Greg:

And don't go fishing by Bob's house.

Mark:

Don't start an argument with somebody in there.

Brian:

No, I won't start an argument.

Stephen:

No firearms.

Joe:

Mark.

Mark:

Yes.

Joe:

I noticed that I haven't gotten a new permit to walk probably on the trails in a long time-

Mark:

I haven't either. Jennifer, have we gotten the permits? We used to get them every year. I didn't get them this year.

Jennifer:

I can order them for you if you want.

Mark:

What?

Jennifer:

I can order them. Contact the woman at the Regional Water Authority and get them for you.

Mark:

All right, Joe.

Joe:

Yeah.

Mark:

Does anybody else need a permit?

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Brian:

I do.

Jennifer:

When are the permits for?

Mark:

To walk on the property.

Bob:

Recreation permits.

Mark:

Recreation permits.

Suzanne:

So as members of the Authority you get the permits.

Jennifer:

You should have them.

Mark:

One of the fringe benefits Suzanne.

Suzanne:

Well, if it's a legitimate fringe benefit

Mark:

Don't have to pay for them anymore, Brian.

Brian:

Okay.

Mark:

Okay, just call Jennifer, I think I just give you a fist quick count Suzanne, me, Brian

Brian:

I'll have to double check with mine because I think I'm through 2021 that's my current permit.

Mark:

Joe needs one, Jamie.

Jamie:

I have one, I have a set.

Mark:

Bob Barker.

Jennifer:

Peter, you need one. Does Peter need one?

Mark:

Anybody else? Mario, you need one?

Greg:

I need one.

Jennifer:

Okay.

Mark:

You're on mute.

Jennifer:

Mario, you're on mute.

Mario:

I think mine's still good, but I will double check.

Jennifer:

Okay.

Mark:

Michael you want one?

Michael:

Mine is good.

Mark:

Okay. Greg, do you need one?

Greg:

Yeah, I need one.

Mark:

Greg needs one.

Jennifer:

Okay.

Mark:

My wife does not, it's because-

Jamie:

So incidentally, weed wackers. Oh, sorry. Go ahead Mark.

Mark:

The police knew my wife at the time. I don't know. So every time she was in there, she knew that I was-

Bob:

Well that's probably because you didn't tell her she was married to you otherwise, they would've thrown the book at her.

Mario:

Absolutely.

Mark:

Back on Mario. All right. Jamie, do you have something to say?

Jamie:

Oh yeah, I didn't want to embarrass Josh. And maybe I'm wrong but weed wackers, I think wackers are spelled W-A, no H so if they're going to use that report, somebody should probably just double check the spelling. I don't know. If it's a term of art.

Mark:

Weed wackers is spelled wrong.

Jamie:

It might be, have them double check. I didn't want to embarrass him, but just.

Jennifer:

Such a lawyer.

Mark:

Yes, she asks those lawyer questions all the time.

Ted:

Oh, thanks, Jamie. We got it.

Mark:

Okay. Thanks a lot.

Ted:

Thanks Jamie.

Bob:

Well just change it to string trimmer.

Ted:

Right.

Mark:

There you go. You're right, so-

Jamie:

They did ... John and Ted, they did an excellent job. They really did do an excellent job. I was really impressed with what their projects their undertaking is and the work. I was curious how hard those things are to pull out. And I forgot to ask afterwards. What do you do when you pull them out? How do you dispose of them without them receding?

John:

Yeah, well, I can answer some of that, is that they are not hard to pull out. Josh mentioned they have a very weak, shallow root system. So they come out readily. To properly dispose them, you should put them in a plastic bag, a trash bag, and throw it away. That's the proper way to get rid of it so that nothing spreads anywhere. Yeah.

Jamie:

Okay. Thank you.

Mark:

Again, they did an excellent job, it's just glad, it's how long it took us to get this invasive species on the front burner. It's almost on the front burner we should say. It's the middle of top.

Ted:

I'll let them know your good words for them.

Mark:

Thank you.

Jamie:

Please do. And you've got good young energy. They seem to be really creative and focused. So you got a good team there.

Mark:

You've got to get them more money Jamie.

Brian:

The research closing looks great. Unfortunately, the best controller with the herbicide which I'm just not sure we're going to be able to use on the number of acres that we have of this stuff.

Mark:

That's for sure. While they're trying to do, now they have ... What do you call the thing that flies?

Jamie:

Drone.

Brian:

Drone.

Mark:

Drone. They have a drone now.

Joe:

Well drone's not pulling the grass.

Mark:

No, but they can better identify spots. That's what the whole thing is. So maybe the drone can then pull them out.

Brian:

Maybe, I guess if you can do spot control so that it doesn't spread.

Mark:

Yeah. Okay.

Brian:

Isn't that hilarious?

Mark:

Thank you very much.

Jamie:

Goodnight guys. Thank you.

Brian:

Okay, guys. Thank you.

Mark:

So our next regular meeting is Wednesday, June 10th. You're going to get back to us something we still. We don't know if we're ever going to be able to go anyplace yet right, John, you don't think-

John:

I mean, that all depends on-

Mark:

What happens.

John:

What our philosophy is, what our rules are at that point. So you right now, Larry has and I don't know if you're aware of this but sent out the email earlier this week saying that we are still going to continue the remote working policy into the 20th or not no 19th of June, right. So that would definitely encompass the next LUC meeting. So I'm guessing that the next LUC meeting will also be through Zoom, Jennifer do you agree?

Jennifer:

Yeah, that's correct. I checked with Larry and he said all the June meetings should be Zoom.

John:

Okay.

Mark:

Okay. So see what we can come up with.

Bob:

I have to say, it's nice attending these Zoom meetings, because some of the backgrounds I know, John, you have a good one now.

John:

Oh yeah. I've been working on my painting skills.

Bob:

Okay. Some people are getting very creative.

Mark:

Hey, John, any chance of maybe having a report about how busy the recreation program is? And whether we need extra security or people out there to watch what's going on, [crosstalk 01:13:37] like just-

John:

By this time next month that we know, we will then have all the figures from May so we'll additionally see how things are going through the COVID period. I think that things are going to level off a little bit, but it'll still be very high. And sure I'll do that.

Mark:

[crosstalk 01:13:57] What was it? 400 people more [inaudible 01:13:59]?

John:

I think it's something on that order. [crosstalk 01:14:05]. I'll have that next month, I'll show you-

Brian:

Did you say-

John:

Go ahead.

Brian:

Did you say that once a day that someone's out there, checking permits, all of our sites?

Mark:

No, not all of our sites.

John:

Well, no. Every day, there's somebody who does trail inspections. And what that it is, is that they drive about 100-mile loop that goes to every one of the nine areas. If they encounter people, they do check permits, but they're not sitting there for very long. They're mainly looking to [crosstalk 01:14:38].

Brian:

No, I'm just curious. Because as often I walk there, we've never encountered somebody.

John:

Yeah, that happens every day. That's part of our DPH permitting. The other ones for Saltonstall and Maltby that have been there daily since April 13th, they are checking permits as people drive in, everybody's ... they're checking with. There has been only one, I think, instance where the person actually had to put up a parking a lot full sign and that was one of those really nice days that we had early in April.

John:

Everything else has been very packed but not packed so much that we had to close the area. And those people who are staffing Saltonstall or Maltby are regularly encountering everybody who comes in, making sure everybody has a permit. And again, a lot of it is point-of-sale right there. They've actually not seen that many dog issues which I was surprised, but that's a good thing. And we've sold a lot permits just by introducing people driving the gate.

Mark:

Maybe we should think about, and this is just throwing this out, is getting a volunteer crew, people who volunteer to help police, or whatever you want to call it, our areas. In other words, they hike a lot and maybe they could check people's permits or whatever, and say just, "You can get a permit," just be very nice, "Get a permit on your phone." Just like that and we could have a volunteer staff of say 15 or 20 people, maybe give them a free permit or something like ski patrol. Something to think about. Right, Ted?

Ted:

That's right.

Mark:

Okay.

Ted:

Thank you, Mark.

Mark:

Thank you. Okay, guys. Next month. I have a motion to adjourn?

Greg:

[crosstalk 01:16:30] So moved.

Mark:

Thank you very much.