

**VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS (AAFM)  
VERMONT PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL (VPAC)  
APRIL 24, 2019 MEETING MINUTES – “DRAFT -SUBJECT TO APPROVAL”  
VTRANS Dill Building, 2178 Airport Road, Unit A, Barre, VT 05641**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Ballard, Katie  
Bosworth, Sid  
Giguere, Cary  
Hazelrigg, Ann  
Decker, Kathy (FPR designee)  
Shively, Andy  
Vose, Sarah

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Levey, Rick  
Royer, Liz  
Palmer, Eric

**GUESTS**

Boccuzzo, Linda (VAAFMM)  
Cummings, Erica (VAAFMM)  
Bald, Mike (Got Weeds)  
Disorda, Jeff (VELCO)  
Carlson, Scott (VELCO)  
Packer, Sara (VEC)  
Kane, Alysha (VTRANS)  
Puls, Dexter (VTRANS)  
Callahan, Jenn (VTRANS)  
Gemborys, Eric (National Grid)  
Wilcox, Jarod (GMP)  
Heindel, Craig (NECR & SLR)  
Golliot, Dominique (VAAFMM)

**Meeting Called to Order**

10:08 am EST

**Meeting Adjourned**

12:15 pm

**Announcements**

Minutes from March 27, 2019 were reviewed, Rick Levey’s edits included, and approved (Ann Hazelrigg moved, Katie Ballard – seconded), Meeting minutes- Passed. Final Minutes will be posted to VPAC SharePoint.

**Public Comment**

Mike Bald of ‘Got Weeds’ from Royalton, VT -Asked for clarification on how to opt out of ROW spraying around his property. Cary Giguere explained he would need to contact each utility and railroad separately to request.

**Business**

Review of Permit Applications to Conduct Herbicide Treatment within Rights-of-Way (ROW). Green Mountain Power (GMP), Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO), Vermont Electric COOP (VEC), the National Grid, Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTRANS), New England Central Railroad (NECR), and Saint Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (SLR) permit requests were reviewed and subsequently recommended to the Secretary of AAFM for approval.

Jarod Wilcox representing GMP – Transmission ROW permit

- Permit application similar to 2018

- No METHOD 240SL treatments proposed in the 2019 application. Earlier trials had not been effective at lower rate. In 2018 product was trialed in Searsburg, Jarod and Jeff (VELCO) scouted after application and determined ineffective control. Considering for a future application, but not for 2019.
- Overall, reduced amounts on pesticides used, see attached usage submitted. However, as GMP legacy lines being treated in 2019; usage may go up.
- Proposed start date of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Cary Giguere asked how GMP communicates with customers? GMP does required newspaper/radio ads, but also does direct mailings landowners asking them to notify GMP of any wells or springs. GMP encourages open communication with customers which has been beneficial but can take a lot of hours.

Cary Giguere asked if calls about glyphosate have increased? The number of calls has remained about the same, but the tone of the conversation is more confrontational, Jarod has handles about 2,150 calls or emails after public notification.

- Erica will send GMP the factsheet that the Agency developed about glyphosate. (Sent 4/25/19)

Jarod Wilcox commented that in his permit application (page 15) about the cost per acre for ROW management. This information was requested from VPAC last year.

- Herbicide = \$368.00
- Manual = \$802.00

GMP Distribution ROW permit:

- Similar to 2018 permit application
- 7-year trimming cycle
- 2018 initiated permit, but did not use on distribution lines
- Hoping to get back on track in 2019
- Primarily stump and foliar treatments
- Proposed start date of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Sid Bosworth asked if the ROW treatment notices were posted on the GMP website? No. GMP does direct notification mailings.

Ann Hazelrigg- moved to forward both the GMP Transmission and Distribution ROW 2019 permit applications as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Andy Shively- seconded

Council voted unanimously to forward the 2019 permit applications as submitted to the Secretary for permitting.

Jeff Disorda representing VELCO

- Permit application similar to 2018
- 2018-Finished secondary line work
- Usage in 2018 increased (see attached) due to the high number of white pine seedlings – too many to manually remove

- Still within the permit rate
- Proposed start date of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Cary Giguere asked if VELCO has an Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) plan? Yes. Cutting ash preemptively. VELCO is part of a utility EAB task force.

Cary Giguere asked if VELCO was getting more questions about glyphosate? More questions from VELCO workers than the public.

Ann Hazelrigg- moved to forward the VELCO 2019 ROW permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Katie Ballard- seconded

Council voted unanimously to forward the 2019 permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Sara Packer representing VEC:

- Application similar to 2018 application
- 2018 transmission acreage increased (see attached)
  1. Sites traditionally not able to treat, new landowners = permission to treat
  2. Increase in spruce fir seedlings

Cary Giguere asked how ROW treatments going? Do they have many folks that opt-out?

Sara indicated that it depends on where they're treating. There are certain areas where more people opt-out of ROW treatments and a need for public outreach.

Sid Bosworth- What's your approach to education the public? Sara explains why the company is using chemical controls methods and VEC has developed Q & A on their website of commonly asked questions.

Cary Giguere- Do you have an EAB plan? VEC is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan, however they're looking for funding. They're part of the utility EAB task force and preemptively removing ash in ROWs.

Cary Giguere- What worked in the 2018 permit? Allowing foliar applications of 15 feet from transient standing water applied with a backpack sprayer.

Linda Boccuzzo confirmed a formulation check and use inspection were conducted and passed by VEC

Ann Hazelrigg- moved to forward the VEC 2019 ROW permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Sid Bosworth- seconded

Council voted unanimously to forward the 2019 permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Eric Gemborys representing the National Grid

- 2019 permit application similar to 2018
- 248 acres to be treated by contractor, New England Tree Experts, Inc.

- Uses a premix formulation

Andy Shively- Usage spikes in different years? (See attached)

- Cycle of treatment area
- 2010 – Used different contractor
- 2016 - Control of buckthorn

Cary Giguere- EAB plan? It is a concern. They use Lidar to determine ash tree health.

Ann Hazelrigg- moved to forward the National Grid 2019 ROW permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Andy Shively- seconded

Council voted unanimously to forward the 2019 permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Linda Boccuzzo- The Agency will be sending out new weekly reporting guidelines for applicators with the permits to try and resolve some reporting issues.

In 2018, the Agency performed 16 permit inspections of ROW permittees and 2 formulation checks.

Jenn Callahan, Dexter Puls, and Alysha Kane representing VTRANS:

Jenn Callahan- VTRANS has been using contractors to treat ROWs – there have been some issues with contractors. This year due to financial constraints VTRANS will be making the applications.

Linda Boccuzzo- The Agency did 6 inspections in 2018 of VTRANS permit

- VTRANS contractor failed a formulation sample check – too low. Enforcement was taken.

VTRANS applicators referred 2 incidences of pesticide treatments by towns.

VTRANS is responsible for maintaining State roads and airports

Linda Boccuzzo- Described the drift check field experiment the Agency conducted in 2018 which confirmed that a 15ft buffer strip parallel to surface water indicated that the buffer was sufficient (most deposition directly under boom, a droplet or two seen out 3 feet from end of boom)

Jenn Callahan explained due to budget shortfalls VTRANS will be doing ROW treatments this year.

- Usage will be down from past years
- Focus will be on guardrails.
- Using converted brine truck unit and backpack sprayers

Dexter Puls- VTRANS pesticide usage has decreased over time (see attached)

Alysha Kane- Went through the mapping software for VTRANS ROW spraying

- Red lines = no spray
- Green line = spray
- Translucent red = spray depending on water levels
- Applicators can add information such as wells

- Public needs to request no-spray yearly however, software keeps a history of public request for no-spray
- VTRANS adds an additional 50feet on to required well buffers. (150 and 250 feet)

There was overall discussion about how the mapping worked. VTRANS indicated that the applicators really liked the software. Roads are still marked.

Cary Giguere- EAB plan? Not as of yet, although at the VTRANS spring training there was a presentation on EAB which was well received.

VTRANS – Public ROW treatment notices will be going out and radio announcements will begin in the next couple weeks.

Cary Giguere- commented that VTRANS has come a long way in the last few years.

Ann Hazelrigg- moved to forward the VTRANS 2019 ROW permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Sid Bosworth- seconded

Andy Shively-Abstained

The remainder of the Council voted to forward the 2019 permit application as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Craig Heindel representing NECR and SLR:

- Permit application similar to 2018
- Same chemistries and application rates
- Contractor- Asplundh Tree Experts, LLC-Railroad Division

Kathy Decker- Is there still a 500ft no-spray zone in Norton, VT. Yes, the contractor has increased no spray area to 1,000ft.

Craig Heindel- State atlas mapping system incomplete and inaccurate for wells, he has been working to improve accuracy.

Andy Shively asked for feedback from the railroads on the increased treatment area around crossings.

Ann Hazelrigg- moved to forward the NECR and SLR 2019 ROW permit applications as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Sid Bosworth- seconded

Council voted unanimously to forward the 2019 permit applications as submitted to the Secretary for permitting

Cary Giguere- asked if there was any other VPAC business? No

Ann Hazelrigg - moved to adjourn

Sid Bosworth- seconded

Council voted unanimously to adjourn.