

# **California Department of Food & Agriculture**

## **Minutes**

of the Meeting of the Pierce's Disease and Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Board  
and Pierce's Disease Advisory Task Force

Held on Monday, January 22, 2024.

Physical Location:

California Department of Food and Agriculture Auditorium  
1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 and via  
Web-conference and Teleconference.

### **PD/GWSS BOARD**

Members Present: Greg Coleman\*, William Drayton, Bill Hammond\*, Rich Hammond\*, John "JD" Harkey\*, Randy Heinzen, Kendall Hoxsey-Onysko\*, Trey Irwin, Aaron Lange\*, Jim Ledbetter, Domonic Rossini, Seth Schwebs\*, David Teuschler

Members Absent: Jeff Bitter, Rich Hammond, Steve McIntyre

### **PD ADVISORY TASK FORCE**

Members Present: Ruben Arroyo, Tracy Cleveland, Glenn Fankhauser, Kris Lowe, Martin Mochizuki\*, Todd Sanders\*, Beth Stone-Smith\*, Judy Zaninovich\*

Members Absent: Chris Bowland, Casey Creamer

### **OTHER ATTENDEES**

Camilla Ables, Joseph Damiano, Mark Harrington\*, Matthew Kaiser, Giancarlo LaGiusa, Betty Lee\*, Michael Miiller, Mike Miller, Dylan Morris, Warren Nichols\*, Elise Oliver\*, Stacie Oswald, Michelle Pham, Secretary Ross, Nicole Shorter, Tom Turpen, Jay Van Rein\*, Sean Veling, Myrna Villegas

\*Denotes attendance via web conference or teleconference.

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

PD/GWSS Board (Board) Chairperson William Drayton and PD Advisory Task Force (Task Force) Chairperson Judy Zaninovich called the joint meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

### **ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS**

PDCP Statewide Coordinator Joseph Damiano conducted roll call for the Board and the Task Force. Quorums were present for both the Board and Task Force.

### **WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS**

William Drayton reminded everyone that this would be his last meeting as Chairperson of the Board. Secretary Ross thanked Drayton for his service as well as Rueben Arroyo for his tenure on the Task Force. She also took some time to discuss agricultural issues affecting California. Judy Zaninovich also welcomed everyone and congratulated Ruben Arroyo on his pending retirement. Drayton, Zaninovich and other attendees also spoke in honor of former Task Force member Deborah Golino and encouraged those available to attend an upcoming celebration of life.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Michale Miiller from California Wine Grape Growers (CAWG) informed the Board that currently there is a bill being considered that would extend the PDCP for 5 years, Assembly Bill 1861. He also stated that CAWG will be honoring Secretary Ross at the Unified Wine and Grape Symposium for her contributions to the industry at an event occurring the following day.

## **NEXT MEETINGS**

The next Board and Task Force meeting was set for Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at CDFA Headquarters and will begin at 10:00 AM. It was also announced that a joint meeting with a National Academy of Sciences ad hoc committee on grapevine viruses and grape industry stakeholders including Board and Task Force members would be held Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at UC Davis Foundation Plant Services and will begin at 1:00 PM.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

William Drayton asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes from the joint Board and Task Force meeting held on November 14, 2023.

- It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed by the Board to approve the minutes from the joint Board and Task Force meeting held on November 14, 2023.

### Details of Board Vote

Motion: Trey Irwin                      Second: Domonic Rossini  
In Favor: Coleman, Drayton, Harkey, Heinzen, Hoxsey-Onysko, Irwin,  
Lange, Ledbetter, Rossini, Schwebs, Teuschler  
Against: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Bitter, Bill Hammond\*\*, Rich Hammond, McIntyre

\*\* Not present for this action item

Judy Zaninovich asked the Task Force for a motion to approve the minutes from the joint Board and Task Force meeting held on November 14, 2023.

- It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed by the Task Force to approve the minutes from the joint Board and Task Force meeting held on November 14, 2023.

### Details of Task Force Vote

Motion: Todd Sanders    Second: Glenn Fankhauser  
In Favor: Arroyo, Cleveland, Fankhauser, Lowe, Mochizuki, Stone-Smith,  
Zaninovich  
Against: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Bowland, Creamer, Sanders\*\*

\*\* Not present for this action item

## **NOMINATION COMMITTEE REPORT & ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS**

William Drayton opened the topic by asking for the nomination committee's report regarding the appointment of the next slate of officers for the Board. Randy Heinzen stated that the nomination committee had nominated Randy Heinzen as the next chairperson, Trey Irwin as vice-chairperson, and Jeff Bitter as treasurer. Domonic Rossini stated that as usual they aimed to elect officers with Board experience who had not served as officers before.

- It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed by the Board to approve the nomination of officers as proposed.

### **Details of Board Vote**

Motion: Jim Ledbetter Second: William Drayton

In Favor: Coleman, Drayton, Bill Hammond, Harkey Heinzen, Hoxsey-Onysko, Irwin, Lange, Ledbetter, Rossini, Schwebs, Teuschler

Abstain: None

Absent: Bitter, Rich Hammond, McIntyre

## **FISCAL UPDATES**

Beth Stone-Smith of the USDA provided an update regarding the USDA budget for the program. Stone-Smith stated that significant funding from the State of California and federal government has been allotted to fighting the recent fruit fly outbreak. The federal government recently passed another temporary continuing resolution that keeps the program running albeit temporarily and without a permanent funding source in place. Stone-Smith stated that she is hoping that the federal government maintains the \$15.6 million dollar level of funding for the program, though the CDFA requested \$19.1 million for actual projected program costs.

Myrna Villegas of the CDFA provided a brief overview of PDCP budget and expenditures. For FY 22/23, the total expenditures were \$18.39 million which was unlikely to change much in the future as the year was largely closed out. For FY 23/24, the current Budget was about \$21 million and had incurred about \$7.4 million year-to-date expenses.

Matt Kaiser of the CDFA provided an update regarding PD/GWSS Board Funds for FY 22/23 and FY 23/24. Year-to-date, the FY 23/24 assessment had produced \$391,000 in revenue, but a more accurate figure would be known by the April 2024 meeting. The carry-over from the prior year was approximately \$9.8 million and the Board was expecting \$6.6 million in projected expenses for a year-end balance of \$8.24 million. Future fiscal year obligations were \$1.25 million. In regard to line-item expenditure purchases, Kaiser provided an overview of various research related expenses including research projects, the National Academy Sciences Review, RFP Assistance, and the Research Coordinator. The Reserve for New Projects included a new agreement for \$74,923 for an economic study approved at the last meeting that was recently executed. Expenses for Urban Rapid Response Treatments were \$900,000 in FY 22/23 to projected at \$1.5 million for FY 23/24 and included treatments for Solano, Fresno, Madera and Tulare Counties. The Contingency for County Backfill in FY 22/23 included reimbursements to three counties including Sacramento, Solano, and Contra Costa for delimitations, with nothing expended yet in FY 23/24. Recently, there was a GWSS detection in Imperial County that required a delimitation, but no other GWSS had been found. Agricultural Supplies and Task Force Travel remained unchanged from previously reported levels. Administration Costs included pro-rata charges, assessment collection charges paid to the grape crush program, staff time and other costs.

## **NURSERY UPDATES AND TREATMENT FUNDING**

Stacie Oswald of CDFA provided an overview of the Nursery Program for PDCP. Oswald explained that that PDCP monitors the movements of nursery stock from infested areas into non-infested areas within the state and nursery stock is one of the two commodities that is currently regulated by PDCP, the other being bulk citrus. There are three primary types of compliance agreements, specifically Master Permit, Approved Treatment Program (ATP), and Program Regulation and these classifications are largely determined by pest pressure, frequency of shipments, and the type of host material. Currently there are 485 GWSS nursery compliance agreements in effect for PDCP. Furthermore, each receiving county is notified in advance when a host plant is shipped from an infested county into their respective county so that they may inspect the shipments upon arrival. Oswald reiterated that since the start of the ATP, overall shipping rejections had declined drastically. In 2023, there was only one rejection from a GWSS find which was less than a 1% of the total inspection rate. When detections are found, PDCP contacts the origin county and follow-up actions are taken to mitigate the spread of GWSS.

Oswald then spoke briefly about the Board-funded Nursery Treatments. The Board started funding this program in 2003/04 which included 8-12 nurseries in Ventura County and expanded to Riverside County in 2008/09 to include an additional 1-2 nurseries. These nurseries must be under a GWSS compliance agreement, have an active pest management plan, regularly ship to non-infested areas in California, and be located near commercial citrus or other high pest pressure areas. The total cost of these treatments is \$300,000 for each of FY 24/25 and FY 25/26 which the Board would need to approve.

- It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed by the Board to approve the Board funded Nursery treatments not to exceed \$300,000 for each of FY 24/25 and FY 25/26.

### **Details of Board Vote**

Motion: Domic Rossini      Second: Trey Irwin  
In Favor: Coleman, Drayton, Bill Hammond, Harkey, Heinzen, Irwin, Lange, Ledbetter, Rossini, Schwebs  
Against: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Bitter, Rich Hammond, Hoxsey-Onesko\*\*, McIntyre, Teuschler\*\*

\*\*Not present for this action item

## **PROGRAM OPERATIONS CHANGES TO REDUCE EXPENSES**

Joseph Damiano, Statewide Coordinator of the PDCP, provided a brief update and discussion regarding recent fiscal challenges faced by the program. Even though PDCP typically received approximately \$15.5 million in federal funding per year, this funding level has been flat for many years. The Board has budgeted about \$2.7 million in funds that also cover program operations. Damiano stated that operational costs had increased over recent years with revenue remaining stagnant, and now PDCP management must reduce expenses in effort to balance the budget. Recent cuts included reductions in vehicle purchases, equipment maintenance, travel and employee hiring but despite these reductions, the program was operating at a deficit. It was calculated that \$1.6 million would need to be trimmed off in the future budget in order to balance the budget.

Michelle Pham of CDFA then provided some additional detail of expense reductions being considered moving forward. This list included reducing reimbursements for residential trapping in non-infested counties from six to five months, reducing reimbursements for destination nursery inspections, a reduction to area-wide treatment reimbursements, and a

reduction in high-risk nursery trapping in non-infested counties. Origin nursery inspection activities would not be reduced. Damiano stated that he and staff were careful to choose where specific costs cuts would be incurred based on risk in the already lean program, as opposed to universal across-board reductions.

A discussion ensued of the impacts of these reductions. It was pointed out that the program is primarily federally and industry funded and does not currently receive state funds and has not for several years. Jim Ledbetter asked how counties will respond to these proposed reductions. Ruben Arroyo of Riverside County responded that it depends on the size of the cuts whether any reductions can be absorbed by other programs. Tracy Cleveland of Napa County stated that there are multiple programs being cut at this time and these combined reductions makes absorption of these costs much more difficult. Glenn Fankhauser of Kern County expressed support for the program and encouraged directing available funds to the most critical activities.

Stone-Smith pointed out that the table grape industry has funded some federal positions and initiatives related to GWSS suppression and eradication. Judy Zaninovich and Todd Sanders added that the table grape industry has provided funding for research, monitoring, and control in regions where table grapes are grown and where GWSS pest pressure is high, and was also heavily involved in lobbying efforts in support of the statewide program.

### **RESEARCH PROGRAM UPDATE**

Matt Kaiser provided a brief update regarding the research program. An agreement for the economic study was executed and should have some preliminary results this spring. The annual RFP opened on December 1, 2023, and closes on January 31, 2024. Interim and renewal progress reports, as well as video updates, were coming in and would be available for reviewers and those interested shortly. The Research Coordinator contract for the next three fiscal years was being prepared to be advertised.

### **RESEARCH COORDINATOR AND NAS UPDATE**

Kris Lowe stated she was preparing to review research proposals as the deadline for submission was January 31, 2024, and was also building the scientific review panels. The review panels were scheduled for March 18 and 19 at Foundation Plant Services, and would be in-person as well as virtual meetings. The NAS was reviewing current research regarding grapevine leafroll virus, red blotch virus, and their vectors. A public webinar was held in December 2023 regarding mealybugs with Kent Daane and there was another NAS committee meeting scheduled at Foundation Plant Services on March 4 and 5 with researchers and industry stakeholders that would be open to public and available online.

### **OUTREACH AND EDUCATION UPDATE**

Nicole Shorter of Brown-Miller Communications provided a brief update regarding recent public outreach. The latest PD/GWSS newsletter would be posted online and an accompanying postcard would be mailed to growers and stakeholders, and monthly e-newsletters were also being distributed to a list of 1,200 stakeholders. Additional regular postings were being made on Facebook, YouTube, and more recently LinkedIn. Brown-Miller also attended the WIN Expo in early December and would also be attending the WiVi tradeshow along the Central Coast in mid-March. The spotted lantern fly (SLF) advertising campaign left close to 2.3 million impressions and received over 9,000 clicks to the Board's webpage. Kris Lowe stated that there SLF summit is in Pennsylvania at the end January 2024 and will also be held virtually for those that can't attend it person.

### **AREA-WIDE PROGRAM UPDATE**

Beth Stone-Smith of USDA provided a brief update regarding the status of the area-wide program. Beth started by saying that funding does not exist to treat all GWSS finds located throughout the state and has been advised by the scientific community to deprioritize

organic citrus except near grapes. Treatment priorities remain around finds near grapes, finds outside the infested area boundaries, and areas with high populations. In January, the field crews were reporting that they were not finding any fresh egg masses which was promising but was likely because the longer and wetter winter conditions. Overall GWSS finds were lower this year than prior year which may also be due reduced flight activity by adult GWSS because of the cooler temperatures. For Madera County, although the overall GWSS detections were low, the finds were more spread out which could make future treatments potentially more difficult. For Fresno County, finds were more widespread especially in the North-East. The prevalence of organic citrus near grapes had made treatments somewhat difficult, as had urban-residential finds. Regarding Tulare County, GWSS finds were largely widespread and challenging due to the large increase of organic citrus. Stone-Smith stated that treatments in organic citrus are quite expensive and reminded that treatments are voluntary, though the geographic separation of most citrus from grapes in the county has been helpful. Judy Zaninovich echoed that existing funding was not enough to respond to finds outside the infested area, but did point out that weather likely helped in 2023. For Kern County, overall numbers for GWSS finds were down but unfortunately, the finds were becoming higher in areas of the county that had not been an issue before which was cause for concern. GWSS finds in organic citrus were increasing and new treatments were unlikely due to funding availability.

### **PDCP TRAPPING AND SEASONAL TRENDS RECAP**

Sean Veiling of CDFA provided an overview of GWSS urban trapping. In 2023, three virtual training sessions on GWSS trapping were hosted by the CDFA that explained proper identification, trap placement and servicing, and record keeping. Over 11,000 seasonal traps were deployed in 43 non-infested or partially infested counties, with no finds in non-infested counties in 2023. During the trapping season, quality control inspections are made to ensure that the traps are being set correctly and that trappers could accurately identify GWSS. For the 2024 year, trainings will continue with additional emphasis placed on additional quality control visits and updated protocols.

### **PDCP RAPID RESPONSE AND DELIMITATION UPDATE**

Michelle Pham of the CDFA provided a brief update regarding ongoing delimitation and rapid response activities. In 2023, there was one Delimitation in Imperial County which started on November 27, which was caused by one viable egg mass found on a citrus tree by staff inspecting for Asian citrus psyllid. Additional surveys were conducted, and no additional finds were detected. Treatments were conducted at approximately 1,650 properties in Fresno, 580 in Madera, and 1,890 in Tulare for a total of about 4,100 treatments. In Solano County, they found 13 adults, 6 nymphs, treated 872 properties, were maintaining over 200 traps through the winter and released over 5,000 biocontrol agents in locations throughout the eradication area. Additional outreach efforts were underway to maintain and increase public cooperation. Overall, there were substantially fewer detections than the year before.

### **OTHER ITEMS**

None.

### **CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT**

Incoming Board Chairperson Randy Heinzen stated he looked forward to serving as chair and Task Force Chairperson Judy Zaninovich thanked staff for facilitating the meeting before adjourning the meeting at 4:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 by  
Giancarlo LaGiusa, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
Pierce's Disease Control Program  
California Department of Food and Agriculture