

James DeMasi  
City of Lander Weed and Pest: Supervisor  
March 12, 2012



## 2012 Season Report

City Council:

My name is James DeMasi, and I am (as of December, 2012) the new supervisor for the City of Lander Weed and Pest Department. I am excited to be here and look forward to working with the citizens of Lander to promote a healthy and efficient Weed and Pest program.

For the last twenty-one years Sollie Cadman has worked diligently and intelligently as the head and author of this program to establish a working weed and pest control system. Through his hard work, Lander's Weed and Pest program has been successful in improving the quality of life here in Lander. Thus, a program was developed that provided an invaluable service to the citizens of Lander.

The report for this season's gains and losses has been put together using Sollie Cadman's notes and records for the season, as well as his own personal testimony. As I was not a member of the Lander Weed and Pest for the entirety of the 2012 season, I am unable to give my opinion concerning the benefits of changes, or suggest any improvements to the program at this time. What I can say with definitive accuracy is that I will work constantly in the upcoming year to improve the program that has been entrusted to me by the City and its officials.

The 2012 season had its successes and its failures. The mosquito program was yet another year of success. In the entirety of Fremont County there were only two reported cases of West Nile Virus in Humans (as reported to the Wyoming Department of Health). Although the Malathion that has been used in the program for management of mosquitos is working, through research and discussion with City and County professionals, it has been determined that for the upcoming year a new pesticide will be utilized for the effective control of mosquitos in town. This product is a synthetic chemical that has a higher toxicity rating for mosquitos, but a lower risk factor as determined by certain scientists and professionals. This chemical is an established adulticide in the world of Integrated Pest Management, but will be used experimentally by the City Weed and Pest. As I said before, I am not in a position to give a very accurate account or prediction concerning this decision, but I can say that the decision was arrived at with the concerns of certain citizens and the welfare of the City of Lander as a whole in mind. An added benefit to the use of this new chemical is a severe reduction in the acute presence of an unpleasant odor during the exposition of the chemical.

As far as the presence of noxious weeds are concerned, there was a certain degree of success and failure. The noxious weed "Leafy Spurge" is still a predominant threat to the local ecosystem. The experimental use of the herbicide "Perspective" has had ineffective results, which has caused a return to the drawing board. It was not a total loss to "Leafy Spurge" as some ground was gained on the North side of town, but overall the level at which "Leafy Spurge" should be controlled has not been reached. Concerning other noxious weeds, "Russian Knapp Weed" continues to be suppressed at a level below

the threshold of concern. The same may be said for "Yellow Toadflax." This coming year should see a renewed effort in the containment of "Leafy Spurge" and a continuance in the suppression of other noxious weeds that threaten the local ecosystem.

The budget breakdown for the season of 2012 is positive, as revenue was generated yet again by this department. The valuation of the city in 2011 was \$63,627,062.00 and this is the amount that the 2012 reimbursement is based on. This was an increase over last year's valuation. We spent a total of \$68,510.65 on mosquitos and noxious weed control. We will be reimbursed \$54,083.00 for general weed and pest. The Leafy Spurge spraying costs were \$14,999.20 we will get reimbursed \$11,999.36 from this program. The Russian Knapp Weed control cost us \$6,103.28 of which we will get \$4,882.62 of this back.

I would like to end by petitioning the city council to raise the wages for my seasonal employees. Currently the seasonal wage starts employees at 9 dollars an hour. This figure severely limits the potential employee pool. One mistake in the department of Weed and Pest can result in a minimum of 35,000 dollars in fines, not to mention restorative monies. The nature of integrated Pest management demands a level of work ethic, maturity, and over all intelligence to necessitate a larger and more efficient employee pool. My suggestion is that I start my seasonal employees at 9 dollars and 50 cents an hour, with a 50 cent raise when they have completed their pesticide training. This increase would cost the city roughly \$1,400 a year in wage increase. This number is under what the Department currently deposits in the city coffers every year on average.

#### PROPOSED REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS

|   |               |                  |
|---|---------------|------------------|
| General Weed and Pest Co.               | REIMBURSEMENT | 54,083.00        |
| Leafy Spurge Co.                        | REIMBURSEMENT | 11,999.36        |
| Russian Knapp Weed Co.                  | REIMBURSEMENT | 4882.62          |
| Other Incomes                           |               |                  |
| Mowing                                  |               | 300.00           |
| <u>Mosquito Grant, State of Wyoming</u> |               | <u>19,849.01</u> |
| Total income                            |               | 91,113.99        |
| <u>Cost of weed and pest year 2012</u>  |               | <u>89,613.13</u> |
| Total revenue for the city              |               | \$1500.87        |

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