



Legislation Text

File #: 2019-1790, **Version:** 1

To: County of Sonoma, Sonoma Water, Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and the Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Department or Agency Name(s): Regional Parks, Transportation and Public Works, General Services, Sonoma Water, Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Permit Sonoma, Sonoma County Community Development Commission, and Agriculture/Weights & Measures

Staff Name and Phone Number: Sue Ostrom 565-2371

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

County Integrated Pest Management Update

Recommended Action:

Approve maps of the designated "No Synthetic Spray" Zones.

Executive Summary:

On June 4, 2019 the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, the Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and the Board of Commissioners of the Community Development Commission, State of California passed Resolution #19-0246 establishing integrated pest management policies and prohibiting the use of synthetic pesticides, including herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides, in sensitive areas. Among the goals of Resolution #19-0246 were the goals to reduce human contact with synthetic herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides through the reduction of application and use in public spaces and to have a publically available list of "no synthetic spray" zones to enhance transparency and accountability.

In Resolution #19-0246 the Boards directed staff to submit their respective "no synthetic spray" zones to the respective boards for approval by the end of 2019. This item is a compilation of work from Regional Parks, Transportation and Public Works, General Services, Sonoma Water, Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Permit Sonoma, Sonoma County Community Development Commission, and Agriculture/Weights & Measures to bring those "no synthetic spray" maps forward for approval.

Discussion:

Regional Parks

In compliance with Resolution #19-0246, Regional Parks identified "no synthetic spray" zones to include agency-maintained campuses, sidewalks, playing fields, plazas, and playgrounds within properties that Regional Parks owns or operates. In addition, in an effort to further reduce human contact with synthetic pesticides, Regional Parks identified additional "no synthetic spray" zones including community and teaching gardens, parking lots, campgrounds, picnic areas, dog parks, and buildings such as restrooms, Visitor's Centers,

and concession stands. All facility types listed above are addressed in Regional Parks' Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM Plan) that was updated in 2019 to reflect Resolution #19-0246.

In addition to identified facilities, some park properties employ grazing management by organic agricultural operations that limit the use of synthetic pesticides for the grazing contractor to maintain organic certification. These organic agricultural operations are also excluded from synthetic pesticide use.

Most of the acreage owned and operated by Regional Parks is not excluded from synthetic pesticide use, however pesticide use is unlikely to occur and may have never occurred.

Regional Parks owns and/or operates a wide range of properties from small, highly developed urban parks to large, wildland preserves. This diversity in parklands and park infrastructure translates into a diversity of the mapped "no synthetic spray" or "synthetic pesticide excluded" zones. Parks can be categorized into three main types:

- Parks where all or the vast majority of property is excluded from synthetic pesticide use. These are typically but not exclusively small parks with a high density of facilities such as playgrounds and playing fields: for example, Kenwood Plaza Park and Shaw Park, but also Taylor Mountain Regional Park and Open Space Preserve due to the organic agricultural operation.
- Parks that are split where areas of more intense human use is excluded from synthetic pesticide use but the less developed areas are not. These are typically mid-sized parks: for example, Ragle Ranch Regional Park, Maxwell Farms Regional Park, Gualala Point Regional Park, and Stillwater Cove Regional Park.
- Parks where all or the vast majority of the property allows for synthetic pesticide use away from the parking lot and/or restroom. These are typically large, wildland parks, open space preserves, and parks that are not currently open to the public. For example, Hood Mountain Regional Park and Soda Springs Reserve.

In most park lands, synthetic pesticide use is rare or may not occur at all. Regional Parks has dramatically reduced synthetic pesticide use with only two applications by staff in the last 6 months across 12,000 acres. In both cases, synthetic pesticides were used to specifically treat invasive weeds.

Details of Regional Parks' use of pesticides will be summarized in an Annual Report and reported to the Board by the first quarter of 2020.

Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space)

Ag + Open Space owns and manages approximately 4,200 acres of land, purchased to protect agricultural, natural resource, scenic, greenbelt, and recreational conservation values. These properties are not currently open to the public, and so Ag + Open Space has not designated "no synthetic spray" zones at this time. The majority of this acreage is planned for transfer to Sonoma County Regional Parks in the next few years, to create several key Regional Park and Open Space Preserves. As each property transfers, it will be incorporated into Regional Park's Integrated Pest Management Plan area.

The remaining properties are intended for transfer or sale to others primarily for agricultural use. Ag + Open Space will permanently protect the investment of taxpayer funds in these properties by retaining a

conservation easement, to be recorded upon transfer of fee title.

Ag + Open Space is committed to avoiding the use of synthetic pesticides in sensitive areas. Ag + Open Space has compiled all known information regarding sensitive species and habitats, including streams and wetlands, which occur on its properties. Land management staff regularly monitor each property, and use an integrated approach to managing invasive plants and pest species where synthetic pesticides are used conservatively as necessary.

In essence, Ag + Open Space will not use a synthetic pesticide unless:

- There is no other option available to control an extreme infestation,
- The environmental benefit is clear,
- Only licensed professionals are involved in the application,
- There is minimal risk of harmful exposure to humans or to sensitive resources, and
- The application is part of an intentional strategy to transition over time to alternative methods of invasive species control such as mechanical removal, grazing or prescribed burning.

If it is determined that a synthetic pesticide is appropriate to use in a specific situation, all precautions are taken to minimize exposure beyond the intended target organism. Ag + Open Space will include documentation of this approach in an update to its Fee Land Strategy, scheduled for Board consideration in early 2020. Details of use of pesticides by Ag + Open Space will be summarized in an Annual Report and reported to the Board during the first quarter of 2020.

Sonoma Water

Since the initial flood management programs of the 1950s, routine maintenance needs have continued to be assessed and prioritized through seasonal and annual inspections with various sediment removal, bank stabilization, and vegetation management activities prioritized as necessary following inspections. The mandate and requirement for routine annual maintenance to provide adequate flood protection has not wavered since the construction of the stream and channel facilities. However, Sonoma Water's perspective towards stream management has evolved and now includes multiple objectives such as resource protection and environmental sustainability in addition to flood management.

Additionally, local, state, and federal regulations and their requirements have also changed over time. Compliance with federal laws and regulations such as the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act as well as state laws and regulations administered by the Department of Fish and Game and Regional Water Quality Control Board require an extensive authorization process each year for Sonoma Water's planned activities. In addition, Sonoma Water is regulated by the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams. This Division regulates dams to prevent failure, safeguard life, and protect property. Annually our dams, reservoirs and infrastructure are inspected to ensure compliance with applicable requirements.

One of the goals of Sonoma Water Stream Maintenance Program's is the development of a shaded canopy over the flood control channels is to reduce invasive plant species. Generally, Sonoma Water removes

unwanted vegetation by hand and with equipment, but may also employ selective herbicidal application. Sonoma Water uses herbicides to control invasive plant species that are problematic for its water supply, wastewater, and flood control facilities. Sonoma Water seeks to use the minimum amount of herbicide necessary. Sonoma Water has identified “no synthetic spray” zones around its main campuses.

Sonoma Water has developed an Integrated Pest Management Plan. The goals of Sonoma Water’s Plan are to:

- Create and maintain:
 - Suitable visibility of and access to structures and property to allow for inspection, maintenance, and use
 - Adequate flood control
 - Desirable aesthetics
 - Public access and enjoyment
 - Habitat
- Reduce fuel to prevent fire
- Prevent unacceptable risks to employee and public health and safety
- Comply with regulatory requirements
- Reduce herbicide use where feasible

Sonoma Water is committed to reducing herbicide use to the extent feasible. Over-reliance on or misuse of herbicides may result in increased risk of adverse impacts to workers, the public, and the environment. In some cases, it can also lead to the development of herbicide resistance and exacerbate existing vegetation problems. In an effort to reduce herbicide use, Sonoma Water engages in the following practices:

- Properly identify and monitor target vegetation,
- Utilize multiple control and prevention methods to manage nuisance vegetation,
- Identify sites where herbicide use is necessary or can be reduced or eliminated,
- Consider the use of herbicides categorized as alternative or organic, and
- Animal grazing

Department of Transportation and Public Works

The Department is responsible for safely maintaining County roads equating to approximately 2,700 lane miles, over 300 bridges, 6 road yards, 7 closed landfills, airport grounds, transit facilities and related infrastructure. In June 2019 the Department updated its Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM) to comply with Board Resolution #19-0246, and subsequently has identified “no synthetic spray” zones. The goals of the IPM are to:

- Reduce risks to the public, staff, and the environment
- Promote the combined responsible and sustainable management of vegetation
- Maintain visibility and clear sightlines along roadways and airport infrastructure including but not limited to airfields, runways, taxiways, and related structures
- Support fuel reduction efforts to assist in the prevention of fire
- Maintain road and pavement surface integrity and drainage

- Comply with local, state and federal regulatory requirements
- Comply with TPW Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) and Spraying Policies
- Create public awareness of the Department IPM
- Prevent the spread of noxious invasive weeds
- Reduce adverse environmental effects due to the use of pesticides

Setting County Wide Standards and Maps:

With the large geographic extent of County infrastructure, it would take hundreds of maps and be impractical to adequately define and identify all “no synthetic spray” zones within the Department’s operational boundaries, noting further, that these zones are likely to change based upon the installation or removal of infrastructure. Given this, the Department elected to create a hybrid model of County and District standards that would be applicable everywhere, and supplementing these with site-specific maps where the public is most likely to frequent or be present. Applicable Standards and example plates have been established for:

- Sidewalks
- Guardrails
- Bus Stops / Park and Rides
- Drainage and Water Ways

Site specific maps have been developed for County road yards, airport grounds, District 5 and the closed landfills. District 5 historically has limited the use of spray zones, which in turn utilizes the most resources of all the districts relative to vegetative management and requires additional maps to clearly identify where spraying is allowed.

No spray synthetic spray zone database:

In order to be responsive and sensitive to citizens who may not wish to have the application of synthetic herbicides along approved corridors, affected property owners may request and be added to a Departmental database / no spray list, and therefore assume responsibility for maintaining their own stretch of right of way to be free of vegetation consistent with road safety and visibility standards.

Commitment to Minimizing the use of synthetic pesticides and Annual Report:

TPW will continue its commitment to minimize the use of synthetics when viable less toxic alternatives are available. Details of pesticide use and these efforts will be included within annual reports to the Board, where the Department’s IPM establishes methods for evaluating new controls. Specifically, TPW may evaluate such methods by using field trials to compare factors, such as effectiveness and feasibility, with the effectiveness and feasibility of methods currently being used. TPW has one such trial underway using an organic herbicide “weed killer”.

Sonoma County Community Development Commission

The Community Development Commission (CDC) owns, leases, and maintains single and multi-unit properties, vacant lots, and commercial properties, including the Roseland Village Community Center, home of the Sonoma County Library's Roseland Branch and the Boys & Girls Club Roseland Teen Center. The CDC's current portfolio consists of seven properties; four of these properties contain affordable single-family and multi-family rental housing totaling just under 40 units. Two properties contain active commercial space; the remaining property is currently vacant, but will be under construction shortly.

| Property | Location | Status | Size |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|------------|
| Roseland Village | 665 Sebastopol Rd, Santa Rosa | Commercial space, occupied | 7.56 acres |
| College Creek | 2150 W College Ave, Santa Rosa | Commercial space, vacant | 7.46 acres |
| Altamira Apartments | 20269 Broadway, Sonoma | Vacant land | 1.98 acres |
| Village Green II Apartments | 650 4 th Street West, Sonoma | 34 apartment units, occupied | 2.79 acres |
| Covert Scattered Site | 7991 Covert Ln, Sebastopol | 1 single-family unit, occupied | .25 acres |
| Walker Scattered Site | 6855 Walker Ave, Sebastopol | 1 single-family unit, occupied | .3 acres |
| Russel Street Scattered Site | 695 Russell Ave, Santa Rosa | 3 single-family units, occupied | 1.2 acres |

All agency-owned and managed properties are within the City limits of Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, and Sonoma; all are under contract with outside vendors for property management and related services. The CDC contracts with landscaping services and property managers for the properties that it owns, leases, and maintains, and those providers traditionally have used synthetic pesticides. The CDC has not adopted "No Spray Zones," but has identified them in accordance with their Draft IPM. The CDC anticipates implementation in the first quarter of 2020 and is working with its vendor partners to mitigate the use of synthetic insecticides and herbicides to the greatest extent possible through both education and modifications of contract terms.

2018 Use of Insecticides and Rodenticides

The CDC has a legal obligation to provide safe and sanitary housing for the tenants of agency-owned and leased properties. CDC works closely with property managers to ensure that all tenants are following good housekeeping practices, which helps to minimize pest related issues. In response to specific tenant complaints at multi-family and single-family rental properties, third-party managers have employed professional services to help control specific occurrences of pest infestation.

During 2018, the CDC reports the limited use of the following insecticide products by third-party contractors:

- Optimate CS (*gamma-cyhalothrin*) used to control ants, mosquitoes, etc.
- Termidor SC (*Fipronil*) used to control termites
- Premise 2 (*Imidacloprid*) used to control termites
- Suspend Polyzone-LV (*Deltamethrin*) used to control ants and roaches
- Essentria IC3 (*Fifra 25/Rosemary Oil/NOP*) used to control flying and crawling insects

2018 Use of Herbicides

In addition to measures that ensure safe and sanitary housing, the CDC is responsible for weed abatement. When practical, weed abatement in larger areas is primarily achieved using manual controls such as mowing. In certain, limited areas not conducive to manual removal, herbicides are employed. In 2018, herbicides use was limited to small, contained areas around the Russell Avenue property in Santa Rosa; Roseland Village in Santa Rosa; Village Green II Apartments in Sonoma; 2150 West College Avenue in Santa Rosa; and the future site of Altamira Apartments on Broadway in the City of Sonoma.

During 2018, the CDC reports the limited use of the following herbicide products by third-party contractors:

- Roundup (*Glyphosate*) non-selective, systemic herbicide

Future Use and Safety

CDC has a responsibility to remain responsive to the obligations for safe and sanitary housing, commercial tenancy, and weed abatement. Staff is working closely with contractors and third-party vendors to ensure that all pest mitigation activities comply with the resolution of the Board. CDC will continue to scrutinize property management and vendor contracts to mitigate the use of synthetic pesticides by prioritizing alternative, environmentally friendly pest management methods and suitable organic alternatives.

Budget and Labor

The CDC anticipates, that as staff works to implement stricter standards and controls across the portfolio of real estate, maintenance costs will see a modest increase due to additional labor and supervision required to implement safe pest management practices, along with the deployment of more costly, environmentally friendly products.

General Services Department

General Services Department (GSD) is committed to upholding the County's policies regarding employee safety, public safety, and protecting the environment. GSD maintains the County's assets and assists front line Departments in contracting for goods and services essential to fulfilling their respective missions. While GSD does not directly perform grounds maintenance work, specifications and performance criteria involving herbicide or pesticide use have been revised to reflect the Boards Resolution, and are strictly enforced through management and oversight of contracts. GSD will continue to ensure that the County's "No Synthetic Spray" zone policies are reflected and adhered to in its various contracting programs, such as job order contracting (JOC), competitive bidding, and requests for proposals (RFP).

Prior Board Actions:

June 4, 2019 Resolution establishing integrated pest management policies and prohibiting the use of synthetic pesticides, including herbicides, insecticides and fungicides, in sensitive areas.

FISCAL SUMMARY

| Expenditures | FY 19-20 Adopted | FY20-21 Projected | FY 21-22 Projected |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Budgeted Expenses | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Additional Appropriation Requested | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Total Expenditures | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Funding Sources | | | |
| General Fund/WA GF | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| State/Federal | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Fees/Other | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Use of Fund Balance | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Contingencies | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Total Sources | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Costs are accounted for in the Departments' budgets.

| Staffing Impacts: | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Position Title (Payroll Classification) | Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step) | Additions (Number) | Deletions (Number) |
| N/A | | | |

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Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

There are no anticipated staffing impacts.

Attachments:

Regional Parks No Spray Zone Map

Sonoma Water No Spray Zone Maps:

- 204 Concourse Blvd., Santa Rosa
- 404 Aviation Blvd., Santa Rosa
- 800 Aviation Blvd., Santa Rosa

Department of Transportation and Public Works No Spray Zone Map

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A