

Commissioners hear concerns

By DANA PAXTON

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This week's commissioners meeting was short and sweet. After meeting with landfill employees, three others came to have a word with the commissioners about a variety of topics.

Bill Manning met with the commissioners to report that a ditch near his home was filled with water and washing out his road. He requested that a new tube be put in or the old one cleaned out. The commissioners said that they would contact road manager, Floyd Richard about it and get it taken care of.

Floyd Richard entered the room next to discuss purchasing of tires for county equipment. He priced Good Year tires and Becker Firestone tires and found that if the county mounted them themselves it would save the county about \$1,000 a truck and they would get over-all better tires. Richard reported that currently, two trucks need new tires.

The last one to visit with the commissioners on Monday was Steve Graf of Alma, with a concern about the 911 calling system. He said there had been an accident south of his business, and according to the directions given, the accident

was at his business. He was requesting that the current local 911 addresses be looked at so that those assisting would be able to correctly find where they needed to be. County Clerk Robert Wyatt went and checked it, and said his 911 address was correct but evidently the GPS directions were incorrect. "This is not the first time this has happened and hopefully it is just a Google problem that will get fixed," Wyatt said. Graf also wanted to commend the work efforts of Brad Lebeau for a job well done on the road leading to his business.

Tumbleweed threatens no-till farming

Known by the name tumbleweed, it's been romanticized in story and song. And when it's called summer-cypress, it sounds downright exotic. No matter what you call it, the weed Kochia, cuts into crop yields and farmers' profits. And it's become harder to control.

With roots that grow deep into the soil, as much as 16 feet during drought, the Kochia plant can grow up to seven feet tall, with thousands of small, individual flowers. And it saps much-needed moisture from crop land across the High Plains.

For 25 years, however, Kochia along with other weeds was successfully controlled by glyphosate, a broad-spectrum herbicide, initially sold under the brand name Roundup and now available under a variety of names.

In 2007, however, Kansas State University weed scientists confirmed resistance to glyphosate in four separate Kochia populations in western Kansas, according to Phil Stahlman, a weed scientist, based at K-State's Agricultural Research Center in Hays.

"The problem really blew up and got out of control in 2010," said Stahlman, who noted that testing of several populations by his graduate student, Amar Godar, "determined that resistance had become widespread in western Kan. and colleagues in Colo., Neb., and S.D. had found resistance in those states.

"By 2013, that the problem had developed from the Texas High Plains, all the way into the prairie provinces of Canada."

Stahlman and Godar rated 1,500 wheat stubble fields throughout western Kansas in fall 2010, and found that about 30 percent were tilled in an effort to control the weed.

"That was higher than I expected," he said, adding that there was evidence that the Kochia in several fields had been sprayed first, unsuccessfully. "It was eye opening; they felt that they had to resort to tillage."

The practice is counter to the common practice of no-till or minimum tillage. Leaving the soil mostly undisturbed leaves a layer of residue from previous crops, which boosts soil fertil-

ity, helps conserve soil moisture and makes it less prone to erosion from wind and rain. Many studies have shown that crop yields from no-till fields are higher than when fields are tilled.

In 2010, Stahlman and researchers in other states launched a regional effort to investigate alternatives to glyphosate for Kochia control. They found that if an herbicide with residual properties was applied before the weed emerged in early spring, it cut emergence by at least 70 to 80 percent, often more than 90 percent. Then, the Kochia that did emerge during the growing season was more easily managed.

In fall 2012, Stahlman and Godar asked crop consultants in western Kansas several questions to determine the impact of glyphosate-resistant Kochia, evaluate growers' response to the problem and measure their success in managing it.

52 crop consultants completed the survey, which covered 46 of Kansas' 105 counties.

"Several important points came out," he said. "The percentage of fields infested with Kochia increased from 47 percent in 2007 to 70 percent in 2012. Over the same period of time, the average use rate of glyphosate went up from 0.75 pound per acre to 1.25 pound per acre. That in itself indicates that producers were having trouble controlling Kochia."

Many producers indicated that they had increased applications of glyphosate from two to three.

Stahlman and other scientists have been spreading the word at field days and other ways that applying herbicide prior to Kochia emergence early in the spring can make a difference.

The good news, he said, was, in 2011-2012, the use of pre-emergent herbicide in addition to normal management began to be used effectively. Observations and reports from retailers indicate that many growers are now using a pre-emergent herbicide in early spring prior to Kochia emergence and many more, perhaps a majority, are using a pre-emergent herbicide in addition to glyphosate in Roundup

Comments requested on Statewide Improvement Program amendment

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) requests comments on the amendment of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) FY 14-17.

The Improvement Program is a project specific publication that lists all Department of Transportation administered projects, regardless of funding source, and includes projects for counties and cities as well as projects on the State Highway System.

The list of project(s) being amended to the Improvement Program may be viewed at www.ksdot.org/burProgProjMgmt/stip/stip.asp.

The amendment of the Improvement Program requires a public comment period of 14 days, which concludes July 9. To make comment on this Improvement Program amend-

ment, contact the Department of Transportation's Bureau of Program and Project Management at (785) 296-2252.

This information is available in alternative accessible formats. To obtain an alternative format, contact the Kansas Department of Transportation Office of Public Affairs, (785)296-3585 (Voice/Hearing Impaired - 711).



Working at the car wash!



The Norton Rotary BB Gun Team held a carwash on Saturday at the corner of State and Lincoln streets. (Pictured) Lily David, Coach Marty Harrington and Scott Sansom were among the many team members who were hard at work. The fundraiser will help pay for the BB Gun Team's trip to Rogers, Ark. this weekend for Nationals competition. —Telegram photo by Mike Stephens

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Friday's edition will be distributed on Thursday

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