

## **TOWN OF LITCHFIELD**

**Mosquito Control District**

**June 26, 2008**

The Mosquito Control District held a meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Members present: John Latsha, Chairman  
Joan McKibben

Absent: Alfred C. Raccio

Chairman Latsha called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public input.

### **MUNICIPAL PEST MANAGEMENT**

Mr. Michael Morrison, Municipal Pest Management Services, came forward to discuss the work he has been doing in Town in June and what he will be doing in July. He provided a handout of his activities. He also brought a sample of the BTI, corn particles, he sprays into the catch basins and wetlands to destroy the mosquito larvae. The corn particles sink to the bottom, the larvae chew on them and then they die within a day or so.

Mrs. McKibben asked if the particles were placed in a swale, or a drainage ditch, she is especially concerned with the one on Route 3A that drains into Nesenkeag Brook, with the heavy rains would the particles move.

Mr. Morrison: I suppose they could but they would probably be buried in the mud. They sink to the bottom and nestle into the vegetation in the bottom, and stick to the bottom. They do not last long in the environment; the bacterium is not native to here so it gets consumed by other microorganisms.

Mrs. McKibben asked about midge larvae consuming the BTI. Mr. Morrison: If a midge larva did bite it, I suppose it could be affected but I have not found any midge larvae in the habitats where we apply the BTI. Mrs. McKibben then asked about the dragonfly larvae. Mr. Morrison said they are found in more permanent bodies and when you get into a situation like that, there are a lot of other things that will eat the mosquito larvae.

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As to the light trapping, Mr. Morrison said that these are the mosquitoes captured that are sent to Concord. He said reports would be provided every other week on the trappings. If there is a positive result, the media would be notified, he would be notified and the Town. Mrs. McKibben asked if the Melanura and Canadensis are a problem. He said that Melanura is the bad mosquito. Canadensis is a woodland mosquito, a tremendous biter and it is not known how it relates to EEE. There was one Melanura mosquito captured, it was tested and it was negative. Mr. Morrison: Perturberans mosquitoes are cattail mosquitoes and they are harder to control because as larvae they do not come to the surface to breathe air so when we use the dippers, they go to the bottom in the mud and attach to the cattail stem where there is oxygen. They are very common in the Northeast and some years they are the dominant biting mosquito but not this year.

Ms. Liana Eastman, 108 Charles Bancroft, asked about the mosquitoes that carry diseases. She was told that Melanura is the primary mosquito for EEE. Its habitats are unique and once you find their habitats, you can go back each year and do control on them. Perturbans mosquitoes show up later in the year and bite both humans and birds so it is dangerous for West Nile and EEE.

Talk continued regarding the BTI application. Mr. Morrison said that BTI has been around for 25 years; it is a bacterium specific to mosquitoes. The bacterium is stimulated to be active in the gut of the mosquito larvae and does not replicate itself in our environment. It is not native to here; it is from Isreal, Middle East. The bacterium is invisible so they adhere to the corn particles and do not last long and then fall apart. Mrs. McKibben asked if the BTI bothers shore birds and birds feeding in the mud. Mr. Morrison replied there is no documentation that it bothers shore birds feeding in the mud, or sand pipers that dip in the mud because the disease agent is specific to mosquito larvae.

Mr. Pierre Garand, Chase Brook Circle, came forward to ask when do they determine where to apply the larvicide.

Mr. Morrison: We have dippers, a stick with a little label at the end, and we can scoop in the water and see the larvae. The larvae come to the surface to breathe air and then go to the bottom to feed...we know where to look. They are only in shallow, stagnant water. We look at cattail marshes, roadside ditches, catch basins, edge of large swamps, etc. Mr. Garand resides near Chase Brook and there is conservation behind his house. Mrs. McKibben: You have the headwaters of Chase Brook. I would not imagine a problem with moving water; moving water is a good thing to have. There may be some cattail areas along the edge of the water. Mr. Morrison: Mosquito larvae have no arms and legs; they are wiggly creatures...so when they are in the water, they are completely at the mercy of the water. So, they are in stagnant, putrid type water.

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Talk ensued regarding protected areas. Mr. Morrison said that the N.H. Natural Heritage Bureau is in charge of endangered species. They won't say the exact location of the species but they circle the areas of concern. Mrs. McKibben said that the Ringed Bog Hunter is found towards the Middle School and the Heritage Bureau does not have it circled. She will contact the Bureau to ask why they do not have it circled on their map (map attached to handout). Mr. Morrison said they would be in contact with the Bureau because they will be working in those circled areas. Mrs. McKibben: I will ask them what their interpretation of mosquito control activities is and what they are talking about that would be affected by these.

Mr. Morrison: We did get permission from the two light trap sites you signed. We negotiated with the homeowner at the other site and they agreed to putting traps.

Mrs. McKibben asked if the representative from CDC went out in the field with him. Mr. Morrison said that CDC (Center for Disease Control) did go out with them, John Paul Robichaud from Colorado, who travels all over the world investigating mosquito borne diseases. Mr. Morrison: I asked him why he came to N.H. He said we have had EEE for five years and no one knows why and it shouldn't be happening. They are familiar with our mosquito history. Mrs. McKibben: What do you mean it shouldn't be happening because of the cold weather? Mr. Morrison: There is no history of it. Twenty-five years ago we had an outbreak and then there was a big gap with nothing. It is a fairly rare disease, too, and nationwide it certainly is very rare. It is not so rare around here. They evaluated my company and another company that does mosquito control and we talked about trapping techniques. They did say that they want us to do more surveillance work and we told them that we are restricted by funding. They want us to do light trapping four to five times a week but that would overwhelm the laboratory for one thing. They did like the idea that we are going after the Melanura habitats and we took them out and showed them the unusual Melanura habitats.

Mrs. McKibben asked where are the Melanura habitats? Mr. Morrison: They definitely are under hemlock and sphagnum type swamps, edge of large swamps, not in the swamps themselves, not in open waters. They are underneath the sphagnum in crypts as they are called; they are underground chambers of water in shallow rooted trees, like hemlocks and red maples. Their habitats are very unique. He was amazed that we could go find them in the Town. Mrs. McKibben: That concerns me because sphagnum is exactly where we go to find the exurbia of the Ring Bog Hunter in the edge of the water...we found it in the area that I said wasn't circled. We actually found one emerging last year.

Mr. Morrison: We do not find Melanura in open water; we only find them under the sphagnum. Mrs. McKibben: This is not open water either; it is sphagnum. Mr. Morrison: If you go through it, you can feel a cavity in the middle and that is where the Melanura larvae are. When we sample them, though, pretty much the only things we find are

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Melanura. I would like to know more about the dragonfly you are talking about.

Mrs. McKibben and Mr. Morrison will get together to look at the sites. Mrs. McKibben: You can tell me if this is the type area you think they would be and this is the type area I do not want BTI in because you are removing the food source of the Ring Bob Hunter.

Mr. Eero Ruuttila, Nesenkeag Organic Farm, asked what the OMRI status (organic standards) is on the BTI. This was discussed. Mr. Morrison did not know but said he will find out what it is but BTI is a living organism.

The organic farm borders Nesenkeag Brook and Parker Park. Mr. Ruuttila said the farm draws water from the brook for irrigation so he is concerned with his certification. Mr. Morrison said usually with organic farms they are very concerned with other types of applications like adulticiding, spraying, that type of thing. The BTI is applied to stagnant, shallow waters and it is not anything that would be absorbed into plants. Mr. Ruuttila said he has a couple of irrigation sites on the brook. They have a 25 acre parcel between the farm and Wilson's farm which is the Nesenkeag Brook watershed from Route 3A going down to the river.

Mr. Ruuttila said that mostly the brook flows but there are stagnant pools. Mr. Latsha suggested that they meet to walk the area. Mrs. McKibben said that there is a drainage swale in the State's right-of-way, which abuts the farm and asked who they would call to get permission to treat. Mr. Morrison said State land falls under a new land policy in which we tell them what we are doing and they say yes or no. Mrs. McKibben said this particular swale was built by D.O.T., enlarged by D.O.T. and it drains into the brook.

Talk ensued. Mr. Morrison said a problem they get with strip malls and other areas is that the new strategy is to keep water on your own land and not let it go on someone else's. It makes sense but when you do that, you can run into mosquito issues but highways usually contour the land so they do not have water issues.

Mr. Ruuttila: I cannot have noncompliance pesticides on the perimeter of the farm.

Mr. Morrison: I will be happy to walk the property and I will call Vicky Smith, the inspector (organic certification).

Mrs. McKibben: The other issue with the farm is the school is across the street and if there was an emergency at the school, do not forget that the school fields are directly across from the farm.

Mr. Morrison: That is another reason I need to walk your farm because if there is an emergency and peoples lives are at risk, we need to avoid organic farms and we can do

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that we just need to have a plan ahead of time, know your property and be familiar with it.

Mr. Ruuttila asked what happens if there is an emergency.

Mr. Morrison: I would not see having to spray your organic farm even under an emergency situation. Usually the emergency sprays are geared at protecting people where they live, around roads and things like that.

Mrs. McKibben: What about ball fields? Mr. Morrison: The ball fields would not be an aerial spray with a truck to protect schools.

Mrs. McKibben: What about we had talked about spraying by backpacks? Mr. Morrison: Right, it would be more that type of application where you are spraying the perimeter of the area with a liquid type material not something that is airborne that would protect as a barrier around the place. Any application done aerially would be done by the State. I do not see that happening unless there is an incredible emergency. We do not spray; we control larvae with the bacterium.

The plan for July is more of the same, which is looking at the sites, and they need to go into the wetlands to see what is going on. It was said that the permit from Concord is in.

Mrs. McKibben: Any town lands, you would not be putting BTI until you came back and told us what you had? Mr. Morrison: I will let you know.

Mr. Latsha asked about testing at Darrah Pond. Mr. Morrison: I have not heard from my surveillance people. That was given to them after our last meeting as a place to check out. I did not get a chance to talk to them but that is a priority area to be checked out.

It was asked how long were the light traps in place? Mr. Morrison: They are set during the day. The dry ice is put next to it and then picked up the next morning, and the traps are taken away.

Mrs. McKibben: Are you going to put down BTI in July? Mr. Morrison: I would think so if the rain keeps up. The catch basins are the next thing; they have water in them even during droughts they have water and we sample those on a weekly basis. Mr. Morrison asked what permission would he need to do the catch basins? It was said he needs permission from the Selectmen.

Mr. Morrison had put a notice in the Manchester Union Leader. He was told that in the future to put the notice in The Telegraph and HLN but Mr. Thomas Levesque suggested to advertise in the HLN and that should be sufficient because everybody in Town gets it.

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### PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Eastman asked about what to do if they do not want the farm to be sprayed. She was told to notify the Selectmen in writing. This would not apply if it were an emergency where the State takes over because then Mr. Morrison is out of the picture. It would be the Health Department (State) and they would go to the Governor. Mr. Morrison said that if the State Health Department recommends an aerial application, the State would pay for it.

At this time, Mr. Whitney Carpenter came forward, President of the Monadnock Community Land Trust, Wilton, which owns the land used by Nesenkeag Farm. Mr. Carpenter was not present at the beginning of the meeting so Mr. Morrison repeated the explanation of the applications. Mr. Carpenter asked if this process is being done because there has been a case of West Nile in Litchfield, or is it an experiment. He was told this is a precautionary measure to try to eliminate a specific species that are directly involved with the amplification of the disease in a Town. Litchfield tested positive for EEE in 2006.

Mr. Carpenter: I feel confident that there aren't any sprayable areas on the land that Monadnock owns and Nesenkeag Brook, which it borders, is a flowing stream. There has been fear on our part that the wetlands up above Route 3A that flow into Nesenkeag Brook are swampy areas that must certainly have stagnant pools in them. That water goes down into Nesenkeag Brook. Mrs. McKibben: How far are you talking from the farm? Mr. Carpenter: I do not know. I wonder if the treatment method would result in treated water flowing down the brook?

Mr. Morrison: The mosquito larvae are only found in stagnant water and any movement whatsoever they simply will get washed away and drown. The typical sites we do our work in are catch basins, roads, the Melanura crypts, subterranean habitats are in the deep woods, and then roadside ditches and once in a while we work in flooded fields. Most of the habitats we apply bacterium, the corn particles wash away so to speak. It is not really a liquid application as a rule; it is these granules right here and they decompose fairly rapidly but it is only if we find certain species, too. If there are mosquitoes breeding in those pools and they are not associated with EEE and West Nile, we just leave them alone.

Talk continued. Mrs. McKibben: I do know if you are talking about the wetlands up around the Middle School. Mr. Carpenter: Yes. Mrs. McKibben: And that is the area I am concerned in they are relatively deep water areas which that was another prerequisite they need to be shallow areas for mosquito breeding. Mr. Morrison: Maybe a field trip. Mr. Carpenter: Behind Dorgan's Farm, isn't there a marshy wetland area? Mrs.

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McKibben: Right, between the Griffin School and McElwain Drive. That is another area we have to look at. The stream comes down through there by McElwain Drive, or a branch of it that feeds into Nesenkeag but then there is another swampy area between the two schools.

Talk went on as to applying the corn particles. Mr. Morrison: We never had to take care of larvae on an organic farm before. Usually farms are pretty well cared for and manicured, not normally the type of habitats we are looking for but if there is an emergency situation, then we would like to know where the organic farms are certainly so they can be notified ahead of time. Usually, we are not involved with the real type emergency spraying but we can pass the information on to the State. Mrs. McKibben said she is very concerned about these areas that I know where there are particular species that are sensitive and I am also concerned about the food source of these species.

Mrs. McKibben: So, Mike, if you went in an area where you had 249 of these mosquitoes and all these different mosquitoes, you have one Melanura, you put the BTI, all of these mosquitoes are going to be affected, correct? Mr. Morrison: Any mosquito larvae would be but the actual naiad of the dragonfly though...

Mrs. McKibben: Right, but the mosquitoes are their food source. I have been told by Fish and Game that it won't affect the dragonfly but you are taking away their food source so in three years you won't have dragonflies. Mr. Morrison: Anything that depends on mosquito larvae is in huge trouble because they are so intermittent. We just had an incredible drought this spring so let's say you are an insect that depends only on mosquito larvae for food...Mrs. McKibben: Right, they eat other things. Mr. Morrison: You are gone. If you have a pool of water and there are lots of mosquito larvae, there are no predators because if there was, they have no arms or legs. So, I do not think any real insect specifically is going to be affected...we are not taking every mosquito larvae, only certain species.

Mr. Eero Ruuttila asked what the Board is doing regarding an educational campaign. Mr. Latsha said that they have been giving out flyers all around town, about 300 flyers. The Board will also be putting prevention tips on the Cable and HLN. Mr. Morrison said that if any property owner wants their property checked out, to give him a call. At 8:15 p.m. Mr. Morrison left the meeting.

### CHAIRMAN COMMENTS

At the last meeting there was a problem with the audio. Mr. Latsha said he was told that if the meeting is live, they are more able to get the audio back. It was agreed the meetings would be aired live from now on. Also, in the future, if the recording secretary can't be present, that the meeting will be recorded with cassette tapes.

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### **2009 BUDGET**

This was tabled.

### **EMERGENCY PLANNING DATE**

This was tabled. Mr. Latsha said work will be done with the Health Officer on establishing an emergency plan. The Health Officer may know of towns that have an emergency plan already in place.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The public notice to be distributed is being changed and will be emailed to Mr. Latsha and other members. Mr. Latsha talked about purchasing a video for \$65.00 that he had mentioned a few meetings ago. He could not preview it. He suggested purchasing it and viewing it before putting it out on cable. The computer purchased for the MCD has been installed. Talk ensued about the video that Chairman Latsha was going to produce to put on the cable. He was told that it entails a lot of work. Mrs. McKibben suggested that he still pursue that avenue before purchasing the video. Mrs. McKibben will ask Mr. Morrison if he has viewed the video.

Mr. Latsha **MOTIONED** to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. McKibben seconded. Motion carried 2-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Lorraine Dogopoulos  
Recording Secretary