CLARK COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT

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End-of-the-Month Report – June 2025

Administration:

- Nothing to report

Operations:

- On June 13th, the lab detected a positive pool of mosquitoes for West Nile Virus (WNV), using Rapid Analyte Measurement Platform (RAMP) technology. The pool originated from a trap located within the National Wildlife Refuge in Ridgefield. This was the first time that a positive pool of mosquitoes infected with WNV was found in Clark County, WA. RAMP's reading values can go from <10 up to 640. The reading for that positive pool was 640. We ran a second test on the positive vial to confirm if it was a positive result. The second test resulted in a reading of 251. The WA State Department of Health considers a reading >300 as a positive result; readings between 100 and 300 need a PCR confirmation. The PCR results for both the vials we sent came back negative**, meaning there was no detection of West Nile Virus**. Now, we are trying to understand why we had a "false positive" with the RAMP.
- Before receiving confirmation from the WA State WHO lab, our team was proactive and contacted the Ridgefield Refuge and gained access to set up 4 additional traps around the site where the positive pool was detected. We also set up two more traps outside the refuge. All the pools tested from our traps in and around the refuge have been negative.
- The PCR confirmation that the samples were negative was great news welcomed by everyone. However, this made us realize that not all the parties involved in the Public Health response process were at the same level of preparedness. We have to better organize the communication process between the parties (Mosquito District, Clark County Public Health, WA State Department of Health and the Refuge Administrative Team) to ensure a streamlined process in the case of a real positive pool confirmation.
- Two of our employees were involved in a car accident on June 5th. Luckily, no one was hurt. The insurance company received the report from their appraiser. Our vehicle was declared totaled by the insurance. We will receive a check corresponding to the current market value of the vehicle and we are actively looking for another vehicle to replace the totaled one.
- Another employee had an accident with a GO-4 on June 17th. This accident did not involve another vehicle. As of June 23rd, the employee in the accident is back to their regular job duties. We tried to repair the GO-4, but it has not been completely fixed yet and is still out of service. An additional GO-4 broke and has not been repaired yet (and we don't know if we will be able to fix it). We found two GO-4s at a local dealership and gained authorization from the Board President to purchase them. We have to modify them to fit our operations and hopefully they will be

operational soon. We are scheduled to receive the GO-4 which was ordered in 2024, by the end of next month. Meaning that in July we will have 3 new GO-4s added to our fleet.

- Even though we have tried to minimize the impact of the loss of those vehicles on our field operations, we are a bit behind schedule for our catch basin treatments. But our team is hopeful that the three new GO-4s will help us to catch up in July. One of our two student workers, Paige, is conducting a project focused on testing the efficacy of two products used for the control of larvae in head boxes (sediment traps). Paige is doing a great job, and we should have preliminary results on the trial very soon.
- All the new seasonal employees are doing well in the field. Right now, we have them all treating catch basins. During this first round of treatments there is always a learning curve, the new field techs have to get used to their zones and our software. If we can get a break from broken vehicles, the second round of treatments will go much quicker.
- As we discussed at the last Board meeting on June 10th, what we thought could have been a busy spring based on the forecast of the height of the Columbia River, has been quite tame. The river did not get very high, and we did not have to use the helicopter to spray larvicides.
- This month we also calibrated a second fogger just in case we need to spray some areas during the summer.
- The students at Camas High School built us parts that go in our equipment (the mozzies) for catch basing larviciding. These parts are made of stainless steel and will last longer than the ones we currently have. We really appreciate that collaboration with the school. We look forward to partnering with them on future projects.
- The marketing company Celtic Chicago (www.celticchicago.com) has released their monthly newsletter called *MAD Hacks* (MAD for Mosquito Abatement Districts) which features our lab truck (click here to see the post). The featured video can be seen by all our colleagues across the US.

Lab:

- Madeline and Kristen, our two seasonal employees in the lab, are also doing very well. Wade had to provide a lot of training for the new employees who had never worked in mosquito control before (setting up traps, mosquito ID, RAMP testing, etc.).
- Lucas, our second student hired for the summer, will start his summer project on the comparison of different traps on July 2nd. For now, he is being trained on how to set up traps and how to identify mosquitoes under the microscope (which will take a big chunk of his time during the project). The results will help us to use better traps for our needs in the future.
- Our lab team has dedicated a lot of their time learning how to use the new lab software. We are starting to see that time pay off, as the new software has allowed us to compare trap data from week to week and create comprehensive reports on our findings.
- Mosquito counts are fairly low in most of our traps, which is good. A few traps around Vancouver Lake are showing higher counts of mosquitoes. This is not surprising because even if the height of the river is only around six feet, this is enough to trigger some activities around the lake. This is due to the lower elevation level causing increased flooding throughout the area surrounding the lake.

- The new lab is working well. We will buy a small countertop-sized refrigerator and freezer. This will help to keep samples on hand in the lab. This will increase lab technician efficiency by eliminating the need to walk to the main building freezer to retrieve samples.
- We have three BG-Counters installed at different locations in the county. These traps record counts every fifteen minutes. The BG-Counters provide us with vital information on peak mosquito activity timeframes, without leaving the office.