Overview of Federal Programs and Legislation Affecting Invasive Plants

Lee Van Wychen
Director of Science Policy
The National and Regional Weed Science Societies
WSSA Director of Science Policy Challenge…

- About 35 federal agencies & 24 federal laws have some role/impact in invasive species.

- About 300 federal/state/private programs, 140 groups & 170 organizations have at least some involvement with invasive species.
The “weed” management challenge.....

People “get” the invasive species message.......
Overview

1. WSSA Priorities and Initiatives

2. NIWAW and CEIPSC- What are they?

3. Issues and People in the 110th Congress

4. Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act

5. Other federal issues and policies

6. Take Home Messages
WSSA Priorities and Initiatives

- Publish Invasive Plant Management Journal and rebuild wssa.net website
- Increase weed and invasive plant research budget
- Increase research and conservation budgets in 2007 Farm Bill
- Capitalize on EPA's need for research data on invasive plants in wildland areas
- Coalition building between wildlife and invasive weed management groups
Invasive Weed Research $ in 2007 Budget

- $8.8 million increase in the USDA NRI program
  - Biology of Weedy and Invasive Species- $6.6 million

- 3% increases in the Hatch and McIntire-Stennis Formula fund programs, the first increase for them since FY1999
  - $2.6 million increase for forest and rangeland research

- $108,000 increase for the IR-4 program

- Congress provided no taxpayer dollars for:
  - the Noxious Weed Control and Eradication Act ($15 million)
  - Bush’s new Invasive Species Grant program ($9.9 million)
NIWAW and CEIPSC- What are they?

• National Invasive Weed Awareness Week
  – Organized by the Invasive Weed Awareness Coalition
  – Purpose: Increase national public awareness about the effects of invasive plants on production agriculture and the ecosystem and to promote solutions

• Coalition for Eastern Invasive Plant Species Control
  – Organized by individuals concerned about invasive weed management in the eastern 31 states
  – Purpose: Coordinate efforts to pass invasive weed legislation and funding for the eastern United States
Why Coalitions?

“Excuse me Senator, you have an important call from Lee Van Wychen”

Not Likely…
Why Coalitions?

“Senator, you’ve got to help us with these invasive weeds”
Invasive plants inflict a heavy toll on our economy and environment.

- **Destroy wildlife habitat**
- **Impair native ecosystems**
- **Reduce land values**

- $35$ billion annually in losses to the U.S. economy

- Invasive plants already infest over 100 million acres.

- An area twice the size of Delaware is lost to invasive plants each year.
National Invasive Weed Awareness Week

www.nawma.org/niwaw/niwaw_index.htm

• Keeps growing! 175 attendees from almost 40 states

• Key meetings with USDA, DOI, NISC, FICMNEW, USACE

• NIWAW 8 is FEB 25 to MAR 2, 2007
  • USDA Secretary Johanns will speak on Invasive weeds at USDA session on Feb. 27
It is useless for the sheep to pass resolutions in favor of vegetarianism while the wolf remains of a different opinion.

William R. Inge
Issues in the 110th Congress

1) Senate filibuster and Bush veto will impede the Democrats’ agenda

2) Most action will occur at the Committee level with hearings and oversight

3) Main focus- Renewable fuels and conservation program funding
NCWSS States have Key Committee Chairs- Harkin (IA)
NCWSS States have Key Committee Chairs - Peterson (MN)
NCWSS States have Key Committee Chairs - Kohl (WI)
NCWSS States- Other Key Committee Chairs

- House Appropriations- David Obey (WI)
- House Science- Bart Gordon (TN)
- House Energy and Water Approps Subcommittee- Pete Visclosky (IN)
- Senate Interior Approps Subcommittee- Byron Dorgan (ND)

- Three newly elected Senators on Ag Committee - Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Bob Casey of Pennsylvania and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota
NCWSS States- New Members in the House of Representatives

- IL: Peter Roskam, Phil Hare
- IN: Joe Donnelly, Brad Ellsworth, Baron Hill
- IA: Bruce Braley, Dave Loebsack
- MI: Tim Walberg
- MN: Tim Walz, Keith Ellison, Michelle Bachman
- OH: Jim Jordan, Charles Wilson, Betty Sutton, Zach Space
- WI: Steven Kagen
Main Issues for 2007 Farm Bill

• Renewable Fuels
  – Peterson likely to create 6th Subcommittee on House Ag for renewable fuels
  – It may be time for weed scientists to take a serious look at the feasibility of using weed biomass for energy production

• Conservation programs
  – Harkin is the creator of the Conservation Security Program (CSP) in the 2002 Farm Bill which pays farmers for following specific land and water conservation practices.
  – The weed science societies will push for more stringent standards regarding noxious weed control requirements on acres receiving program payments
When solving problems, dig at the roots instead of hacking at the leaves.

Anthony J. D’Angelo
Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act (SCROCDDA)

- Public Law 109-320 on October 11, 2006

- Administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Reclamation and the USGS
  - in cooperation with the Secretary’s of Ag and Defense

- $20 million for fiscal year 2006 and $15 million for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2010
  - 75% maximum cost share for NON-Federal lands

- Sen. Domenici (NM)- Chairs Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee and Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.
SCROCDA- What it does…

1. Assess the **extent of the infestation** by salt cedar and Russian olive trees in the western United States

2. Demonstrate **strategic solutions for the long-term management** of salt cedar and Russian olive trees and the reestablishment of native vegetation

3. Assess economic means to **dispose of biomass** created as a result of removal of salt cedar and Russian olive trees
In addition to describing the acreage of and severity of infestation by salt cedar and Russian olive trees

(A) consider existing research on methods to control salt cedar and Russian olive trees

(B) consider the feasibility of reducing water consumption by salt cedar and Russian olive trees

(C) consider methods of and challenges associated with the revegetation or restoration of infested land
SCROCDAD Demonstration Projects
$7 million

1. Use appropriate **time scale** to assess long-term management strategies

2. Using 1 or more of the following **control methods**
   (i) airborne application of herbicides
   (ii) mechanical removal
   (iii) biocontrol methods

3. Assess **soil conditions** and means to revitalize soils

4. Monitor any **water savings** including impacts to both groundwater and surface water

5. Assess **wildfire & wildlife** activity and management
SCROCDA- Biomass Disposition
$3 million

1. Determine conditions under which removal of biomass is *economically viable*

2. Build upon existing USDA and other research on **beneficial uses** of salt cedar and Russian olive tree fiber

3. Consider economic development opportunities, including manufacture of wood products using biomass
Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act (TESRA)

- Passed the House by 229-193 vote on Sept. 29, 2005
- Referred to Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
- Two of the most controversial sections of TESRA included:
  - Reimbursing land owners for losses suffered from reintroductions
  - Bringing ESA into compliance with FIFRA
- New Congressional chairs will not touch ESA or NEPA reform bills
EPA Endangered Species Protection Program (ESPP)

• Formalizes a lengthy review process about how EPA addresses concerns about endangered species when it reviews pesticide registrations

• EPA will implement the ESPP through pesticide label statements that refer users to Endangered Species Protection Bulletins.  
  – The bulletins will be issued when specific pesticide use limitations are necessary to protect federally listed species

• 19,000 formulated products registered under FIFRA with multiple uses in multiple sites with different potentials to affect 1300 endangered species in 2000 US counties
Natural Resource Protection Cooperative Agreement Act (S.1288/HR.4294)

- Senate- passed on September 29, 2006
- House- sent to Interior for Executive comment
- Gives the National Park Service (NPS) the authority to enter into cooperative agreements with other public and private landowners
- 2005 GAO report documented that NPS is the only Federal land management agency that lacks this authority
Take Home Messages.....

• Collect economic impact data

• Determine what is the most damaging weed(s) in your area and SELL IT!

• Join the NCWSS and WSSA.... The best source of information out there!

• Attend NIWAW and get involved!