



Northeastern Weed Science
Society

NEWSletter

Fall 2023

NEWSS Executive Committee 2023 Officers



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Wes Everman

Comments from the President **Wes Everman**

Hello and Happy Fall NEWSS members!

I hope this NEWSSletter finds everyone doing well and preparing for the holidays. This NEWSSletter is packed with a lot of exciting information about our upcoming meeting in Boston as well as a reminder about changes to our society that I want to highlight. Details for the meeting are in the other reports, but I can say I am excited to visit Boston for the first time as a member of NEWSS! While the registration fee is higher than our membership is accustomed to for a stand-alone meeting, rest assured, you will be

getting your money's worth with a great program. We return to our first in-person standalone NEWSS meeting with some unique activities plus old features of the meeting. Even if you did not submit a title, I highly encourage you to attend this meeting in a great city! Now on to society business. During Jacob Barney's tenure as President he shepherded through Board restructuring and updating the weed contest. He did heavy lifting on changes to our society Bylaws as Past-president, which were approved by the membership at last year's meeting. These changes will go into effect at the 2024 Annual Meeting (during the officer transition).

As a reminder, the new structure is as follows:

The Board shall consist of the following positions:

1. President,
2. President-elect,
3. Vice President,
4. Treasurer,
5. immediate Past President,

6. Membership,
7. Sustaining Membership/Weed Contest Committee Chairperson,
8. Public Relations, and
9. Graduate Student Representative.
10. **When there is a Treasurer-elect, they shall be non-voting members of the Board and the Executive Committee.

Chairs will be appointed by the President to serve two-year terms and are encouraged to attend all Board meetings in a non-voting capacity. Chair duties are often confined to specific times of the year, often surrounding the annual meeting. Chairs will also have a Board liaison to serve both as mentor chosen with duties that most closely align for both. Chairs and their associated liaisons in parentheses are as follows:

1. Editor (President Elect)
2. Research and Education (President Elect)
3. WSSA Representative (Past President)
4. CAST Representative (Past President)
5. Director of Science Policy (President)
6. Media Communications (Public Relations)
7. Graduate Student Representative-Elect (Graduate Student Rep)

This is an exciting time for change in our society, and the Board believes these changes will improve our society as we move forward. If you have interest in serving on the board, in any capacity, I encourage you to get in touch with me. We are always looking for eager volunteers. Enjoy the end of the semester and the holidays.

Regards,
Wes Everman



Jacob Barney

Past President's Report **Jacob Barney**

The Board recently met at the venue of the annual meeting and we are excited about the space and seeing you all for our first NEWSS (only) meeting since before the pandemic – and it's great to be back in New England! A full agenda has been planned with lots of opportunities to see exciting research and connect socially and recognize our award winners. The latter being one of the most fulfilling parts of serving in the presidential cycle is chairing the awards committee to recognize the many outstanding members of our society.

As you'll recall, at the 2023 Business Meeting we approved an updated ByLaws in anticipation of making a range of changes to the MOPs. Since then, I have worked to incorporate the changes proposed by the Futures Committee to the MOPs that have since been approved by the Board. Both the updated ByLaws and MOPs are available in full on the website, but I will highlight a few changes here.

The biggest changes were to the structure and composition of the Board. The five elected Officers remained unchanged: President, Vice President, President Elect, Past President, and Treasurer. The rest of the voting Board comprises the following positions: Membership, Public Relations, Graduate Student Representative, and the updated Sustaining Membership/Weed Contest Committee Chairperson. This smaller Board of nine reflects the smaller size of our membership, but more so the core functions of the society.

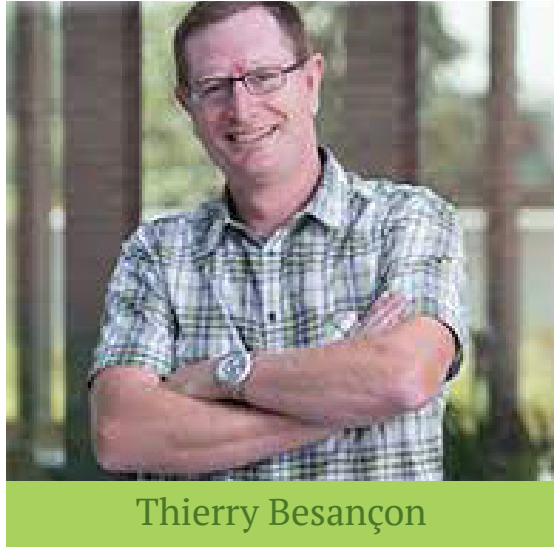
A new group of Chairs will fill out the society duties as Presidential appointees who can attend Board meetings as non-voting members. Serving as Chairs will be an excellent way to get new members leadership experience before serving on the Board. The Chairs and their Board liaisons are as follows: Editor (President Elect);

Research and Education (President Elect); WSSA Representative (Past President); CAST Representative (Past President); Director of Science Policy (President); Media Communications (Public Relations); Graduate Student Representative-Elect (Graduate Student Rep). The Chairs have specific duties spelled out in the MOPs and are relatively little work that often surrounds the annual meeting. Please consider serving if asked – or volunteer!

There is a new Communications Committee that is composed of the Media Communications (Chair), Public Relations, Membership, Research and Education, and Graduate Student-Elect to focus on the website, NEWSSletter, social media, etc. The last major update is to the Weed Contest Committee. This committee is now chaired by the Sustaining Membership/Weed Contest Chairperson with an asynchronous co-chair that will share duties outlined in the MOPs. All participating universities and industry partners will have one voting member serve on the committee as well. Since the Weed Contest has remained a core function of the society it was high time to update the committee.

These changes will go into effect after the Business Meeting in 2024. It has been my great pleasure to serve the society through the Presidential cycle, but I will confess to looking forward to some reduced responsibilities – especially after these massive MOP changes! See you in Boston.

**Respectfully,
Jacob Barney**



Vice President Report

Thierry Besançon

Greetings from New Jersey! The annual meeting is approaching fast. As Vice-President, one major item on my list relative to the annual meeting is the organization of the General Symposium. Please join us for a dynamic and interactive session titled “Connecting Across Difference: Building Skills for Communicating with the Public” on Tuesday, Jan 9 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. This engaging and hands-on workshop will be led by Patricia Raun, Director of Virginia Tech’s Center for Communicating Science. Raun has worked extensively with scientists, engineers, and medical professionals to enhance their communication skills, and now she’s bringing her expertise

to NEWSS members. In this interactive and participatory session, you will consider how to:

- Communicate with clarity and directness.
- Establish a personal connection with your audience.
- Foster spontaneity in your communication.
- Be responsive and adaptable in your interactions.

In today’s world, addressing complex global issues requires collaboration across diverse disciplines. Don’t miss this opportunity to sharpen your communication skills and become a more effective communicator, both with the public and your collaborators.

Patty Raun is a professor of performance and voice. Her primary goal is to promote positive transformation by developing healthy and varied voices - both literal and figurative - in individuals, institutions, and communities. Currently, her research focuses on the use of the tools of the theatre to develop communication and collaboration skills in science and technology professionals—helping them discover ways to be more direct, personal, spontaneous, responsive, and emotionally vivid. Raun served as director of the School of Performing Arts at

Virginia Tech from 2004 to 2016, and since that time she has served as director of the Virginia Tech Center for Communicating Science.

The **2025 NEWSS meeting** will run from January 6 to 9 in Annapolis, MD, at a venue still awaiting my signature on the proposal. Erin Hitchner and I recently visited a few places over there and both agreed on a hotel that will please our Graduate Student membership for sure! Annapolis is well located in the Northeastern United States for most members to easily join the meeting either driving or flying. The planned hotel is located in downtown Annapolis, ensuring that everyone will get access to prepared comestibles of varying presentation and quality within walking distance or easy-to-use transportation. As mentioned earlier. The waterfront will not be too far away for those who appreciate beautiful and luxurious boats! Additionally, we are thinking about organizing a visit of the US Naval Academy ahead of the start of the meeting. I sincerely hope that this announcement will get you as excited as Erin and I visit the area and the venue for the 2025 meeting!

I look forward to seeing all (most ?) of you In Boston, as well as passing on the responsibility for staying awake through entire board meetings to make up, um, capture the minutes.

Membership Report

Matt Elmore

All NEWSS communication is circulated to the regular, student, and at-large membership (attended a meeting within the last 3 years) of the society. All who submitted a title for the annual meeting should also be receiving these email communications. Please contact me if you would like to be added to the list.

At the annual meeting we will present an update on any member job changes, promotions, graduations, awards (non-NEWSS), fellowships, retirements, etc., that occurred since our last meeting. **If you would like to be included in this report or want to send an update on a fellow member too humble to share it themselves, please email me the information with a photo.** Please also **send me notice of passings** for the annual meeting necrology report: matthew.elmore@rutgers.edu.



Erin Hitchner

President Elect's Report **Erin Hitchner**

I hope everyone has been enjoying fall and I'm looking forward to our January meeting at the Hyatt-Regency in Boston, MA, January 8-11, 2024! I have been working with the Program Committee to develop a meeting program and am excited at the prospect of meeting as a NEWSS only group for the first time, in person since 2019.

We had a total of 92 titles submitted, categorized as follows: Student Poster Contest - 19; Student Oral Presentations - 19; Research Poster - 19; Agronomic Crops - 12; Fruit, Vegetable, and Tree Crops - 6; Turf, Ornamental, and Non-crop - 11; Weed Ecology and Invasive Species - 6.

The meeting will be a condensed program, with one session running at a time to optimize engagement and interaction among our group. The meeting will kick off on Monday evening with the Opening Session and the NEWSS Awards. The program will include a Science Communication Symposium presented by Patty Raun, the Director of the Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech. Patty will also be hosting a graduate student workshop at lunch on Tuesday. Also included in the program, the Dessert Social with opportunities to contribute to the NEWSS Endowment Fund, Roundtable Discussions groups and many other exciting opportunities to socialize with fellow NEWSS members. Just a few reminders regarding important NEWSS deadlines:

- Early bird registration ends December 15, 2023
- Hotel group registration rate ends December 18, 2023
- Abstracts and judged student presentations need to be uploaded to the submission website by January 7, 2024.

Meeting Overview:

Monday, January 8, 2024

12:00 PM to 3:00 PM - NEWSS Board Meeting
3:00 PM to 4:00 PM - Weed Contest Committee
3:00 PM to 3:30 PM - Endowment Committee
3:30 PM to 4:00 PM - Section Chair Committee
3:30 PM to 4:00 PM - Treasurer Audit Committee
4:00 PM to 6:00 PM - Opening Session & Awards
6:00 PM to 7:00 PM - Poster Slam Session

Tuesday, January 9, 2024

7:30 AM to 8:30 AM - Student Posters Session I (Even Authors Present)
8:30 AM to 10:30 AM - Student Oral Presentation
10:45 AM to 11:45 AM - Student Oral Presentation
12:00 PM to 1:30 PM - WORKSHOP – Graduate Student Lunch
1:45 PM to 3:45 PM - Student Oral Presentation
4:00 PM to 6:00 PM - Symposium: Science Communication: Connecting Across Difference
9:00 PM to 11:00 PM - Dessert Social

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

7:00 AM to 8:00 AM - Student Posters Session II (Odd Authors Present)
8:00 AM to 9:30 AM - Weed Ecology and Invasive Species
9:45 AM to 12:00 PM - Agronomic Crops I
1:15 PM to 2:00 PM - Agronomic Crops Roundtable
1:15 PM to 2:15 PM - Turf, Ornamental, and Non-Crop Roundtable
2:00 PM to 2:30 PM - Fruit, Vegetable & Tree Crops Roundtable
2:30 PM to 4:00 PM - Turf, Ornamental and Non-Crop I
2:45 PM to 4:15 PM - Fruit, Vegetable & Tree Crops
4:30 PM to 5:30 PM - NEWSS Business Meeting
5:30 PM to 6:30 PM - NEWSS Social & Student Quiz Bowl

Thursday, January 11, 2024

7:00 AM to 8:00 AM - Past President's Breakfast
8:00 AM to 9:00 AM - Agronomic Crops II
9:30 AM to 11:00 AM - Turf, Ornamental and Non-Crop II
11:30 AM to 2:00 PM - NEWSS Board Meeting



Katelyn Venner

Vice Presidential Nominee **Dr. Katelyn Venner**

Katelyn, known to most as Kate, began her career with BASF's Professional & Specialty Solutions (P&SS) group in 2015 just a few short weeks before successfully defending her dissertation. She is currently based in RTP, NC, and is a Global Development Manager tasked with working alongside marketing and R&D colleagues to explore and develop new herbicide, insecticide, fungicide, and biological products for turf, ornamentals, professional vegetation management (forestry, oil palm, and industrial weed control), pastures, mushrooms, and home and garden. Her day can start on a eucalyptus plantation in Brazil, wander through ornamental production in the US, and end on a golf course in Australia – it's always different.

Kate was born and raised in southern New Jersey and always had a strong interest in the outdoors and all things green. After completing an undergraduate degree at Rutgers University, she earned her M.Sc. in Plant Biology in 2011 under the direction of the late Dr. Stephen Hart at Rutgers University, and obtained her Ph.D. in Weed Science in 2015 under the guidance Dr. Shawn Askew at Virginia Tech. Her dissertation research focused primarily on determining herbicide mode of action as well as herbicide optimization in fine turfgrass systems, but she was afforded the opportunity to work directly with private industry on product development trials. It was through doing those trials and interacting with the different companies that she decided that industry was where she wanted to have a career.

The 2010 NEWSS meeting in Boston was the first that Kate attended. From that meeting forward, NEWSS became her “home” society, and despite COVID throwing a wrench into things, she hasn't missed a meeting. She served a term as the Public Relations Representative, and as the chair/co-chair of various other sessions and committees over the years.



Larissa Smith

Mailing Address:

**NEWSS Treasurer
P.O. Box 303
King Ferry, NY 13081**

Treasurer's Report

Larissa Smith

Registration for the 2024 NEWSS Meeting is now live on the NEWSS.org website. If you have any questions about registration, payment, require an invoice or receipt please don't hesitate to contact me.

Donations to the Endowment Fund or to contribute to the Dessert Social (which also supports the Endowment) can be easily added to your registration. I look forward to seeing all of you at this great new venue in Boston.

If you would like to be a NEWSS Member, annual membership dues can be processed at: <https://www.newss.org/membership/sign-up-or-renew-membership/>

Treasurer Contact: larissa.smith@syngenta.com

NEWSS Account Balances as of October 30, 2023

Checking	\$79,690.73
Savings	\$31,878.14
12 Month CD	\$51,061.69
Endowment Fund	\$55,431.52
Total Net Assets	\$218,062.08

CAST Update - November 2023

Anthony Witcher, CAST Representative

Celebrating Changes at CAST

The CAST staff hosted a reception on Thursday, August 3, at the Ames office to celebrate Kent Schescke's retirement from CAST and welcome Chris Boomsma as the incoming EVP/CEO! Chris comes to CAST from the American Society of Agronomy, the Crop Science Society of America, and the Soil Science Society of America (ACSESS), where he served as their director of education. Kent Schescke has served as the CAST/EVP for the past eight years as part of a nearly 50 year-career in agriculture, education, and science communications. More details at <https://www.cast-science.org/celebrating-changes-at-cast/>.

Borlaug CAST Communication Award. Dr. Alison Bentley received the 2023 Borlaug CAST Communication Award at a ceremony on October 25 in Des Moines, Iowa. Dr. Bentley is a plant geneticist, Bayer Visiting Scholar in the Plant Breeding Center at The University of Minnesota, and Director of the Global Wheat Programme at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center. <https://www.cast-science.org/2023-borlaug-cast-communication-award-to-honor-dr-alison-bentley-on-oct-25/>.

Plant Agriculture and Environmental Issues Work Group (PWG) Update. The PWG meets monthly to discuss the status of current writing projects and to consider new proposals. There are approximately 15 active proposals (in varying stages of completion) under consideration by the PWG. Four of the proposals rank as high priority and include: Precision Irrigation Management, Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB), RNAi Technology, and Intensification of Agriculture.

Recent CAST Publications include:

- [Food Traceability: Current Status and Future Opportunities](#)
- [Zoonotic Diseases in Animal Agriculture and Beyond: A One Health Perspective](#)

- [Goals, Strengths and Limitations Governing the Use of Life Cycle Assessment \(LCA\) in Food and Agriculture](#)
- [Gains Foregone by Going GMO Free: Potential Impacts on Consumers, the Environment, and Agricultural Producers](#)
- [Celebrating 50 Years as the Trusted Source for Agricultural Science and Technology](#)
- [The Role of Agricultural Science and Technology in Climate 21 Project Implementation](#)

CAST Launches Webinar Series on FIFRA and ESA. The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) proudly announces the commencement of an insightful series of six webinars focusing on the pivotal roles of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in balancing agricultural practices with environmental preservation. This initiative is part of CAST's commitment to enhance knowledge and foster informed discussions on key agricultural issues. More details at: <https://www.cast-science.org/cast-launches-webinar-series-on-fifra-and-esa-register-now-for-the-first-session/>

What is CAST? Some of you may not be familiar with CAST, the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology. CAST was established in 1972 and is a nonprofit group composed of scientific societies and many scientific/professional societies, universities, nonprofit organizations, companies, and individuals. Its primary purpose is to assemble, interpret, and communicate credible, balanced, science-based information to policymakers, the media, the private sector, and the public. There are three different work groups and we participate in the Plant Agriculture and Environmental Issues Work Group (PWG). NEWSS pays an annual membership to CAST, which enables us to have a representative on the Board of Directors.

Become a Member. Students can join for FREE. For others, \$100 gets you an individual membership and helps to support the great work that CAST does on behalf of agriculture.

What's in it for me? 1) You'll receive *Friday Notes*—CAST's weekly signature newsletters. 2) With every publication release, you may request one free printed copy of new Issue Papers, Special Publications, and Task Force Reports. You will also have online access to all CAST publications and archived issues of *Friday Notes*. 3) Recognition of your support is listed in the CAST Annual Report. 4) Since CAST is 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, your membership contribution may qualify as a charitable contribution under IRS guidelines. Don't forget, students can join for FREE!

Submit an Idea. If you have a topic/issue of national interest that CAST should address, please forward to me (awitcher@tnstate.edu). I will propose the topic to the PWG and if selected it may become a future CAST paper.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent NEWSS at CAST.



John Kaminski

Public Relations Report **John Kaminski**

As we venture into another year of groundbreaking research and innovative teaching in the world of weed science, it's time to amplify our voices and share our expertise with a wider audience. I am thrilled to announce an exciting opportunity for our members to engage with the broader community: the NEWSS Twitter Takeover for 2024!

Why Participate in the Twitter Takeover?

Twitter, as a platform, offers us a unique space to showcase our work, insights, and the impact of weed science in our daily lives. By participating in the @NE_WeedSci Takeover, you can:

1. **Highlight Your Research:** Share intriguing aspects of your research projects, discoveries, and the impacts they have on the field of weed science and beyond.
2. **Showcase Teaching Methods:** Educators can provide glimpses into innovative teaching methods, classroom experiences, and student engagements that are shaping the future of our field.

3. Engage with a Global Audience: Reach out to fellow scientists, students, and enthusiasts worldwide, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of weed science.

4. Expand Your Professional Network: Connect with other experts, collaborators, and organizations, opening doors to new opportunities and collaborations.

How to Participate?

Participating in the Twitter Takeover is simple yet impactful. If you're interested in showcasing your work, teaching, or any aspect of your professional journey in weed science, I encourage you to reach out. Here's how:

Express Your Interest: Send an email to kaminski@psu.edu with a brief outline of what you would like to share during the takeover. Whether it's a day in the lab, fieldwork, a classroom session, or an innovative research project, we're excited to hear about it!

Collaborate on Content: Once selected, we'll work together to plan your takeover day, ensuring your content is engaging and informative for our audience.

Share and Engage: On your takeover day/week, share your story, interact with followers, and be the voice of NEWSS on Twitter!

This initiative is more than just a chance to tweet – it's an opportunity to inspire, educate, and connect. Let's use this platform to highlight the incredible work being done in our field and to inspire the next generation of weed scientists.

I am excited to see the diverse and insightful content our members will bring to this initiative. Let's make the NEWSS Twitter Takeover a resounding success!



Steve Pyle

WSSA Report

Steve Pyle, WSSA Representative

The 2024 WSSA Annual Meeting will be held jointly with the Southern Weed Science Society at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio, TX January 22–25, 2024. The deadline for submitting Titles and Author Information was November 1, 2023. Those not submitted by this deadline will not be accepted. This deadline applies to student contests, volunteer oral papers, all posters, and symposia. Abstract texts must be submitted by January 9th, 2024. The program will be posted on the WSSA website (<http://www.wssa.net>) and members will be informed when it is available. We look forward to seeing you in 2024 for our full in person event with SWSS.

The 2025 WSSA Annual Meeting will be held jointly with the Canadian Weed Science Society at the Sheraton Wall Centre in Vancouver, BC, February 24-27, 2025.

The WSSA website redesign is well underway and should be ready for launch before the end of the year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Pyle, WSSA Representative

Annu Kumari: 2023 – 2024 Weed Science Policy Fellow



Annu Kumari

Annu is a third-year Ph.D. student at Auburn University, pursuing her doctorate degree with Dr. Andrew Price and co-advised by Dr. Steve Li. Annu's dissertation project is focused on integrating herbicides and cover crops in southeastern production systems to control troublesome weeds. While trained as a weed scientist, Annu is developing skills in cross-functional disciplines as she has a minor in Statistics and Plant Pathology. She received a B.S. in Agriculture, majoring in Agronomy, from CCS Haryana Agricultural University, India. Annu grew up on a small family farm in southern Haryana and engaged in integrated farming practices. She had keenly observed the struggle of small producers to grow a successful crop. Also, while being on a farm, she learned the importance of integrated pest management practices to deliver economically viable yield parameters in a sustainable manner. Her enthusiasm for pest management directed her to pursue her education in the agricultural field with a major in weed science. Annu aims to improve her research and communication abilities to make a meaningful impact in weed science, ultimately working towards sustainable agriculture to tackle the food demands of the growing population.

The Science Policy Fellowship gave her a great opportunity to gain substantial leadership experience in public policy and advocacy on a wide array of weed science policy issues. Recently, Annu had a great opportunity to interact with U.S. representatives from Alabama to discuss the importance of research funding, funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Endangered Species Act, and other science policy topics. Annu is grateful to the WSSA and Science Policy Committee for providing her with this great learning opportunity.



Cynthia Sias

Cynthia Sias: 2023 – 2024 Weed Science Policy Fellow

Cynthia is a third year Ph.D. student at Virginia Tech studying under the direction of Dr. Michael Flessner. Her dissertation research is focused primarily on using cover crops for weed management in soybeans and corn production systems. Prior to her Ph.D. work, she received a B.S. in Agriculture from Cornell University and an M.S. in Agronomy from Texas A&M University. Cynthia is passionate about educating the public about agriculture, and helping farmers overcome challenges year to year. She is grateful for the opportunity to learn how decisions are made in our government, and to understand how that directly impacts farmers. Cynthia is eager to apply what she has learned during this time with the Science Policy Fellowship in hopes of creating more opportunities for farmers to be heard and be a part of the decisions being made.

WSSA Comments on EPA's Vulnerable Species Pilot Project

The EPA has identified 27 pilot species that are classified as either endangered or threatened based on documentation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). EPA did not consult with FWS or NMFS to develop the list, but considers these species have a medium or high overall vulnerability to pesticides. Many thanks to Bill Chism, WSSA Endangered Species committee chair, for his extensive work on [WSSA's comments for the vulnerable species pilot project](#).

EPA's initial set of priority species includes:

- Group of plant species in Lake Wales Ridge area of Florida (including [Avon park harebells](#) (*Crotalaria avonensis*), [Garrett's mint](#) (*Dicerandra christmanii*), [wireweed](#) (*Polygonella basiramea*), [scrub blazingstar](#) (*Liatris ohlingerae*), [short-leaved rosemary](#) (*Conradina brevifolia*), [scrub mint](#) (*Dicerandra frutescens*), [Florida ziziphus](#) (*Ziziphus celata*), and several other species that occur in this area)

- [Leedy's roseroot](#) (*Rhodiola integrifolia* ssp. *leedyi*)
- [Mead's milkweed](#) (*Asclepias meadii*)
- [Okeechobee gourd](#) (*Cucurbita okeechobeensis* ssp. *okeechobeensis*)
- [Palmate-bracted bird's beak](#) (*Cordylanthus palmatus*)
- [White bluffs bladderpod](#) (*Physaria douglasii* ssp. *tuplashensis*)
- [Madison cave isopod](#) (*Antrolana lira*)
- [Ouachita rock pocketbook](#) (*Arkansia wheeleri*)
- [Rayed bean](#) (*Villosa fabalis*; freshwater mussel)
- [Scaleshell mussel](#) (*Leptodea leptodon*)
- [Winged mapleleaf](#) (*Quadrula fragosa*)
- [Riverside fairy shrimp](#) (*Streptocephalus woottoni*) and [San diego fairy shrimp](#) (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*)
- [American burying beetle](#) (*Nicrophorus americanus*)
- [Poweshiek skipperling](#) (*Oarisma poweshiek*)
- [Rusty patched bumble bee](#) (*Bombus affinis*)
- [Taylor's checkerspot](#) (*Euphydryas editha taylori*)
- [Ozark cavefish](#) (*Amblyopsis rosae*)

- [Attwater's prairie chicken](#) (*Tympanuchus cupido attwateri*)
- [Buena vista lake ornate shrew](#) (*Sorex ornatus relictus*)
- [Wyoming toad](#) (*Bufo hemiophrys baxteri*)

In 2022, Enlist was banned in 11 Arkansas counties because of the American Burying Beetle. A similar “prevention” tactic will be tested next year in Washington and Oregon, but **with a major difference**. In Arkansas, **no critical habitat** had been designated, but it will be in Oregon and Washington for Taylor’s Checkerspot butterfly. EPA has determined that the appropriate mitigation measure for **Taylor’s Checkerspot butterfly** is to **prohibit all broadcast and aerial spraying of pesticides** in the areas where the butterfly is found. These will be referred to as “Pesticide Use Limitation Areas” or **PULA’s**. This will essentially create large areas of Oregon and Washington where pesticides cannot be sprayed. The plan is slated to go into effect next year. Without any changes, it will have a massive impact on pest management in places like Oregon’s Willamette Valley.

EPA Proposes New Ag Herbicide Rules: Q&A Six-Pack: EPA Draft Herbicide Strategy

By Jason Jenkins, DTN Crops Editor. 9/19/2023. Copyright 2023 DTN, LLC. (reprinted with permission)

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (DTN) --- Use whatever idiom you want to describe it -- jump through hoops, clear the bar, check the boxes -- the cost of keeping tools in the herbicide toolbox is about to increase for U.S. farmers.

For nearly two years, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has said it will no longer turn a blind eye toward the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and its legal obligation to ensure that pesticides don’t jeopardize the continued existence of nearly 1,700 federally threatened or endangered species.

In July, EPA took what it believes is another step toward ESA compliance, releasing the “**Draft Herbicide Strategy Framework**.” The 96-page proposal outlines how the agency intends to protect more than 900 listed species and their designated critical habitats (CH) from agricultural uses of conventional herbicides in the lower 48 states. The document is available for public comment until Oct. 22. (Weed Science Society comments are below)

The draft herbicide strategy presents substantial change, requiring herbicide users to implement mitigation measures for potential impacts much earlier -- even before EPA or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) determines definitely that a herbicide poses a risk.

Here are answers to six questions about EPA's Draft Herbicide Strategy Framework.

1. Why is EPA doing this?

In recent years, EPA has faced many lawsuits by not adequately meeting its ESA obligations. While the agency settled longstanding litigation known as the “megasuit” on Sept. 12, this ongoing legal vulnerability has created uncertainty for farmers and other pesticide users about their continued ability to use many pesticides.

“EPA is not going to dig itself out of this dilemma using a traditional pesticide-by-pesticide, species-by-species approach to complying with the ESA,” said Jake Li, deputy assistant administrator for pesticide programs within EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, during a webinar held last month. “Instead, EPA needs to work a lot, lot faster and more efficiently. That means we need to get early mitigations in place to protect endangered species so that even if we haven't fully met our ESA obligations yet, we still have some protections in place in the meantime.

“That's the main reason we created the draft herbicide strategy,” he continued. “It's really our first attempt to identify protections for hundreds of endangered species at once and to do so much earlier in the pesticide regulatory process using an approach that's much more efficient for EPA to implement. By doing all of those things, we think we can provide more certainty to growers about what mitigations they should expect in the future and how we intend to bring herbicides that they use into full compliance with the law.”

2. How would it work?

EPA proposes a three-step process.

STEP 1: Conduct an analysis to determine which groups of plant species are expected to have the potential for population-level impacts from direct exposure to herbicides, and which groups of animals could be affected be-

cause they rely on listed plants for their diet or habitat. If at least one group of listed species is potentially affected, proceed to STEP 2.

STEP 2: Identify the type and level of mitigation measures needed to reduce herbicide exposure via spray drift and/or runoff or soil erosion. Mitigation measures would be identified specific to a herbicide's active ingredient, formulations, use site, application parameters and maximum use rates.

STEP 3: Determine where mitigation measures would be applied. Spray drift and runoff/erosion mitigation measures could be included on the general product label if the mitigations would apply everywhere the product is used. In some situations, mitigations would target only areas where groups of listed species occur. In those situations, EPA expects to use the Bulletins Live! Two (BLT) website to post geographically specific mitigations for listed species.

3. How many mitigation measures will I need to implement to comply with the product label?

Instead of requiring a certain number of mitigation measures, the EPA herbicide strategy outlines a system where herbicide users need to achieve a minimum number of “efficacy points.” EPA assigned one to three points to each option in its menu of mitigation measures. The number of points required will vary based on the herbicide and the field location. As many as nine points may be required of some products if the use occurs within a pesticide use limitation area (PULA).

4. Will there be any exemptions from the runoff/erosion mitigation requirements?

EPA is considering potential exemptions to the mitigation menu requirements. If a field is more than 1,000 feet away from a terrestrial or aquatic habitat for listed species, it may be exempt from mitigation. Fields with sub-surface drainage or tile drains may be exempt, but runoff from the entire field would need to be controlled and directed into a retention pond or saturation zone.

Fields may also be exempt if they are managed with a site-specific runoff and/or erosion plan that has been implemented according to the recommendations of a recognized conservation program or appropriate conservation

expert. EPA is still developing criteria for experts and conservation programs that would meet this exemption. With the draft herbicide strategy, the agency specifically requests feedback on the types of experts and programs that could be relied upon to ensure this exemption could be effective.

5. When will the EPA Herbicide Strategy go into effect?

In the “megasuit” legal settlement approved in federal court in California on Sept. 12, EPA committed to issuing a final Herbicide Strategy no later than May 30, 2024. Presently, the draft framework is available for public comment until Oct. 22.

Implementation of the final strategy would occur as existing herbicides come up for registration review, at which time mitigation would be applied. EPA revised its registration review schedule to account for the timing of the final strategy. At present, herbicides including atrazine, dicamba and 2,4-D are all scheduled for Proposed Interim Decisions in 2024. New herbicide active ingredients would incorporate the herbicide strategy from the outset of the registration process.

It should be noted the agency extended the comment period by 30 days after receiving more than two dozen comments requesting 60- to 90-day extensions from various national and state commodity organizations, product registrants and other agriculture-related groups. This includes the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the American Soybean Association, the National Corn Growers Association, the Agricultural Retailers Association, CropLife America, BASF, Bayer and Syngenta.

6. What about other pesticide categories beyond herbicides?

The same Sept. 12 court-approved agreement also outlined deadlines for rodenticides and insecticides.

EPA expects to issue a draft Rodenticide Biological Evaluation, which will assess the effects on all listed species, in November 2023. The final evaluation is expected no later than Nov. 12, 2024. At that time, should it be determined rodenticides do affect listed species or their critical habitats, EPA will initiate consultation with the USFWS and the rodenticide registrants to discuss possible mitigation options.

While a specific date was not given for issuing a draft Insecticide Strategy, EPA agreed to use its best efforts to issue a final Insecticide Strategy by no later than March 31, 2025.

No deadlines were set for the completion of a final Fungicide Strategy, but the determination of such a deadline is expected to take place no later than Aug. 31, 2024.

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Weed Science Societies Provide Comments to Improve EPA's "Herbicide Strategy" for Endangered Species Mitigations

Executive Summary- The Weed Science Societies suggest nine additional ways to mitigate the impact of herbicides on listed species due to spray drift, which includes decreased buffers for ultra-coarse droplets, additional types of vegetation to intercept spray droplets and grower education.

We also suggest six additional ways to mitigate herbicide runoff and erosion, which also includes grower education, more specific terminology for agricultural vs specialty crops as well as assigning more compensatory mitigation points for fields with subsurface drainage or cover crop practices.

Most importantly, the Weed Science Societies want to stress that grower education will be the most effective way to implement EPA's Herbicide Strategy. We recommend a minimum of a 3-5 year phase-in period for the herbicide strategy ESA mitigation practices, which corresponds to the 3-5 year interval that pesticide applicators must be recertified.

The Weed Science Societies also present the results of a survey of weed scientists from across the country that looked at the 13 crop scenarios for pesticide runoff and erosion mitigation points that the EPA provided, plus 2 additional crop scenarios. Alarming, only 2 of the 15 crop production scenarios, or 13%, could obtain the nine runoff/erosion mitigation points considered necessary to maintain existing weed control practices.

We provide additional information on conservation specialists and programs in different states as well as a rationale for why EPA should create a database of the mitigation points needed by crop, pesticide use limitation area (PULA), and herbicide. We also provide suggestions to enhance “Bulletins Live Two!” as well as a list of topics in dire need of research funding so we can best help protect T&E species and their critical habitat.

Finally, we have provided a list of suggested education and training activities to successfully launch the ESA mitigation practices for pesticides.

The Weed Science Societies comments and suggestions to improve **EPA’s draft herbicide strategy** for endangered species are at: https://wssa.net/wp-content/uploads/Weed-Science-Society-comments-on-EPA-Herbicide-Strategy_Final.pdf

This was truly a national and regional effort! I’d like to especially acknowledge the members of WSSA’s Endangered Species Act Committee for their tireless work on these issues:

Bill Chism, Chair, WSSA ESA Committee

Stanley Culpepper, University of Georgia

Taylor Randell-Singleton, University of Georgia

Mark VanGessel, University of Delaware

Sarah Lancaster, Kansas State University

Aaron Hager, University of Illinois

Brad Hanson, University of California - Davis

Cameron Douglass, USDA Office of Pest Management Policy

Lee Van Wychen, Executive Director of Science Policy, WSSA

Leah Duzy, Compliance Services International

Emily Unglesbee, Getting Rid of Weeds (GROW)

Sarah Chu, Graduate Student Representative, Texas A&M

Daewon Koo, Graduate Student Representative, Virginia Tech

FIFRA SAP Meets Again on EPA's Use of 11 Atrazine Microcosm/Mesocosm Studies

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) provides independent scientific advice to the EPA on health and safety issues related to pesticides. There are seven permanent positions on the SAP, which is augmented by additional experts who assist in reviews. The FIFRA SAP conducted on August 22-24, 2023 was titled: **“Examination of Microcosm/Mesocosm Studies for Evaluating the Effects of Atrazine on Aquatic Plant Communities.”**

Four of the nine ad hoc members selected for this SAP included the following WSSA and/or APMS members: 1) Aaron Hagar, University of Illinois; 2) Jay Ferrell, University of Florida; 3) John Madsen, retired USDA-ARS, and 4) Kurt Getsinger, US Army Corps of Engineers. They provided excellent review of the 11 atrazine studies in questions.

There is an excellent [white paper](#) by EPA that presents EPA's reevaluation of 11 atrazine microcosm and mesocosm studies identified by the 2012 FIFRA SAP as warranting further review. These studies are part of EPA's Ecological Risk Assessment of atrazine and are specifically used in assessing the effects to aquatic plant communities. The use of cosm studies in the ecological assessment of atrazine has a long, 20-year history involving multiple SAPs and EPA reviews.

At issue is EPA's use of a 3.4 ppb concentration-equivalent level of concern (CE-LOC) that EPA issued in an inter-

im atrazine registration decision last year. The CE-LOC for atrazine was previously 15 ppb. After EPA issued the 3.4 ppb CE-LOC last year, many stakeholder groups, including WSSA, asked the EPA to conduct this independent FIFRA SAP because they felt the science was not justified to have a CE-LOC that low. The CE-LOC is the atrazine concentration level that triggers required monitoring and/or mitigation to protect aquatic plant communities.

The atrazine SAP is currently deliberating and writing their final recommendations for EPA. Based on the SAP's discussions, most of the 11 atrazine studies did suffer from various flaws and should not be used to calculate a CE-LOC for atrazine. This would likely lead EPA to establishing a higher CE-LOC, thus leading to less atrazine restrictions for corn, sorghum and sugarcane growers and other atrazine users. More info at: <https://www.regulations.gov/search?filter=EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-0154>

NIFA Listens FY 2023-FY 2024 Report

The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) conducts a biennial stakeholder listening opportunity to collect input to understand key challenges, promising opportunities and recommended top priorities related to advancing agricultural research, education, and extension. You can read more about it on the [NIFA Listens webpage](#).

Over 700 registered participants joined two 2.5-hour virtual Zoom sessions, where 49 preregistered speakers offered oral statements in five-minute slots. Written input from 59 stakeholders was also received via email. A total of 108 stakeholders from 87 distinct organizations, located in 36 US states and Washington, DC, provided input during NIFA Listens FY 2023 - FY 2024.

Dr. Jim Kells, our WSSA-NIFA Fellow, provided oral and written comments on behalf of WSSA based on the weed research priorities survey responses that was recently published in *Weed Science*. Also, Dr. Hilary Sandler, University of Massachusetts and Dr. Steve Fennimore, University of California – Davis, also provided oral comments supporting weed science research and precision weed management technologies.

The final report captures findings from this year's session. NIFA implemented text analytics workflows leveraging the USDA EDAPT Data Science Workbench. New natural language processing (NLP) algorithms supported sentiment analysis and unbiased identification of top topics clusters and semantic relationships. New Tableau

dashboards were designed to support further insight discovery. As reference, this report includes a qualitative analysis RRDC Stakeholder report, including a qualitative analysis comparing priorities identified. [Click here](#) to find the full report.

Why Grass Is a Culprit in Some of the World's Worst Wildfires

In Maui, abandoned pineapple and sugar-cane fields filled up with flammable invasive grasses. *By Daniela Hernandez, Wall Street Journal, Aug 22, 2023. 4 min, 7 sec. (best on Chrome)*

<https://www.wsj.com/video/series/daniela-hernandez/why-grass-is-a-culprit-in-some-of-the-worlds-worst-wildfires/0AF272ED-97BA-472C-8559-24171F997763>

49 Stakeholders Seek Funding for U.S. DOT Invasive Plant Elimination Program

The six national and regional weed science societies joined 43 other signatories on a [letter to Congress](#) requesting \$10 million to start a pilot program for the [Invasive Plant Elimination Program](#) authorized by the 2021 Infrastructure Law. The letter is addressed to the chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees for Transportation. The Invasive Plant Elimination Program was authorized in the 2021 Infrastructure Law (P.L. 117-58) at \$50 million annually from FY 2022 – 2026, but no money has been appropriated to date. If you are aware of organizations or groups that might support this effort, please email me. We will repeat this effort again next year.

Glyphosate Warning Label in CA Unconstitutional

Nov 7 (Reuters) - A federal appeals court upheld an injunction barring California from requiring businesses to warn consumers that glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup weedkiller, causes cancer.

In a 2-1 decision, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said it was unconstitutional for California to require Bayer AG's Monsanto unit, which makes Roundup, and some agricultural producers to provide the warning under a state law known as Proposition 65.

The court said the warning conveyed the “at best, disputed” message that glyphosate is unsafe, and that requiring objectors to convey a “controversial, fiercely contested message that they fundamentally disagree with” violated the First Amendment.

Weed Science at the National Roadside Vegetation Management Association (NRVMA)



Left to right: Lee Van Wychen, Executive Director of Science Policy, WSSA; Taylor Randell Singleton, Assistant Professor, University of Georgia; and John Byrd, President, National Roadside Vegetation Management Association (NRVMA) and Professor, Mississippi State University. They gave presentations at NRVMA’s annual meeting in Knoxville, TN on September 12-14, 2023 on a number of topics including EPA’s proposed mitigation strategies for complying with the Endangered Species Act and a thorough discussion of the Invasive Plant Elimination Program authorized in the 2021 Infrastructure law.

Annual Cost of Invasive Species Put at Half-A-Trillion Dollars

Invasive species cause more than \$423 billion per year in damage to agriculture, fisheries, water supplies, and other ecosystem-dependent benefits worldwide, according to the summary of a [comprehensive review by dozens of scientists, released Sep. 4, 2023](#). The monetary losses, adjusted for inflation, have quadrupled every decade since 1970, the study's baseline, the summary says. The report is the first on the topic from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, which has 143 member nations. The estimated financial loss is "a huge, huge underestimate," Helen Roy of the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, who co-chaired the group that wrote the report, said in a media briefing; many costs such as weeding invasive plants have not been quantified, she said. More than 3500 species are known to have become invasive after people moved them, intentionally or unintentionally, to new locations where they have crowded out native plants and animals, some of which supported local economies. The number of invasive species is rising faster than ever because increases in global trade and travel help spread them, the summary says. But only 17% of countries have laws or regulations to prevent or manage invasions of these species.

Federal Agency Funding Opportunities

By Steve Young, Jim Kells and Vijay Nandula

Federal departments and agencies with expertise in weed and invasive plant science were brought together at a symposium held during the Weed Science Society of America 63rd Annual Meeting. Individuals from Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), US Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Geological Survey (USGS), National Park Service (NPS), Department of Defense (DOD), Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and National Science Foundation (NSF) shared current research and management efforts and participated in a discussion focused on the identification of funding opportunities and other issues pertaining to research gaps and management needs among this society's membership.

Table 1. Funding opportunities for select federal agencies that focus on weeds and invasive plants.

Agency	Program	Notes
ARS	Areawide Pest Management Program	This is an internally funded program at ARS
APHIS	Plant Protection Act Section 7721	Search website
DOD	Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program	Link to funding
	Environmental Security Technology Certification Program	Link to funding
EPA	EPA Grants	Search for weeds and/or invasive plants
NASA	Applied Sciences Program – Agriculture, Ecological Conservation	Browse practitioner resources, including opportunities that links to NSPIRES (NASA Solicitation and Proposal Integrated Review and Evaluation System)
NIFA	Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)	Several programs, including inter-disciplinary, in plant health and production categories
	Crop Protection and Pest Management	Link to RFA
	Methyl Bromide Transition	Link to RFA
	IR-4	Link to RFA
	Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative	Search program information
	Organic Transitions	Search program information
	Specialty Crop Research Initiative	Link to RFA
DOI	Funding Guide for Invasive Species Management	Search program information
NRCS	Conservation Innovation Grants	This program has funded projects on weeds and invasive plants
NSF	Plant Biotic Interactions	A joint program with NIFA that focuses on agricultural species
USFS	Invasive Forest Plants	Requests for applications through the Working with Us link

Each federal department and agency gathered at the symposium support weed and invasive plant science research and/or management through grant funding, technical assistance, and scientific studies. They represent a diversity of stakeholders who may be separated geographically yet have a common focus on weeds and invasive plants in crop, terrestrial, and aquatic ecosystems.

NISAW 2024 is February 26 – March 3, 2024 in Washington DC. (But May Change)

Planning for the 25th anniversary of [National Invasive Species Awareness Week](#) (NISAW) is ongoing. Please note that the date may change due to Congress just changing their work schedule. The House and Senate are always in session the week after President's day when NISAW is held, but that will not occur in 2024 due the House being in session for 10 weeks straight after Labor Day. Please stay tuned. My hope is that all the invasive species stakeholder groups traveling to Washington DC will make establishing an invasive species management fund their #1 priority.

Lee Van Wychen, Ph.D.
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National and Regional Weed Science Society Meetings

Dec. 11 - 14, 2023 North Central Weed Science Society (NCWSS), Minneapolis, MN www.ncwss.org
Jan. 8 - 11, 2024 Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS), Boston, MA www.newss.org
Jan. 22 - 25, 2024 Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS), San Antonio, TX www.swss.ws
Jan. 22 - 25, 2024 Weed Science Society of America (WSSA), San Antonio, TX www.wssa.net
Feb. 26–Mar. 3, 2024, 25th National Invasive Species Awareness Week, Washington DC www.nisaw.org
Mar 4 - 7, 2024 Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS), Denver, CO www.wsweedscience.org
Jul. 14 - 18, 2024 Aquatic Plant Management Society (APMS), St. Petersburg, FL www.apms.org

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