



Western Society of Weed Science Newsletter

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WINTER 2024

IN THIS ISSUE:

- President's Report
- Student Liaison Report
- Program Highlights for the Denver Meeting
- Useful information for the Denver meeting from the Local Arrangements Committee
- Interagency, in-person workshop Announcement
- Operating Procedures Representative Reminder to Committee Chairs and Officers
- Western Invasive Weed Short Course offered Spring 2024
- Biological Control of Yellow Toadflax in Colorado Using the Yellow Toadflax Stem Weevil
- Washington Report
- Membership Renewal Form
- Publication Available

Sidebar highlights:

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Officers & Executive Committees](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)



President's Report

I hope that you are getting excited and making plans to attend the 2024 meeting at the Grand Hyatt Denver March 4-7. The Grand Hyatt is a very nice venue and I anticipate a great meeting. Hopefully the weather will cooperate and there won't be anything as exciting as a record setting

"bomb cyclone" during the meeting.

The Board of Directors will meet Monday, March 4 from 12:00 – 5:00 pm in the Maroon Peak room. The meeting will primarily cover officer and committee reports and is open to all members of WSWS. If you have WSWS business that you would like the board to consider, please reach out to me.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, Tim Prather, Eric Gustafson, or any other member of the WSWS Board of Directors or WSWS Committee Chairs if you have questions related to the 2024 WSWS meeting in Denver, Colorado.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon!

Curtis Rainbolt, WSWS President

WSWS Annual Meeting March 4 – 7, 2024, Denver, Colorado

Student Liaison Report – Aaron Becerra-Alvarez

I had the opportunity to attend the WSSA/SWSS joint annual meeting last week in San Antonio, TX. It was good to see many of you there representing the WSWS. We also had various students from the Western region receive awards. I would like to congratulate the awardees and all participating students for their great work!

Our annual meeting is coming up soon. Please make sure and check out our website for the student contest rules and guidelines.

<https://wsweedscience.org/student-resources/>

Many of you may be aware that the silent auction at the annual meetings supports student scholarships. Therefore, its success benefits the student body of the WSWS. I ask if any member has items to donate for the silent auction, to please bring them with you or a photo of the item and we can work out shipping details later. Item ideas may include gift baskets, representative gifts from your city, state or university, artwork, books, or anything else that might get weed scientists excited. We greatly appreciate the members who continuously donate items every year and who continuously participate to make the silent auction a success.

During our annual meeting in March, students will vote for a new Student Liaison Chair-elect. If you are a student that may be interested, please keep it in mind. We will ask students who want to self-nominate themselves before the annual meeting to reach out to me or Kenzie (contact below) so we can have your names ready during the student luncheon. If you'd like to nominate a peer before the meeting, also reach out to us and we will contact them about accepting the nomination. However, we will also take self- and peer-nominations during the luncheon at the time of the meeting. The position is a two-year term. In the first year you participate and learn from the Student Liaison Chair, while the following year you take on the main role. If you have any questions or want to learn more about the duties of a Student Liaison, please reach out to us, we are happy to answer any questions.

Once again, if you are on that X/Twitter platform give us a follow and/or tag us (@WSWSstudents) on your post that are related to your research, extension events, or other activities that may be of interest to the WSWS students.

Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any ideas or questions. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in Denver!

Thanks,

Aaron Becerra-Alvarez, Student Chair
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McKenzie Barth, Student Chair (elect)
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Program Highlights for the 2024, 77th Annual Meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science

Tim Prather President-Elect/Program Chair

Here we are in a new year and preparing for our annual meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science. The program committee has been working towards our March 4 – 7 meeting in Denver, Colorado. We hope you will find the meeting informative and another opportunity to maintain and foster new relationships among our membership. If you have not registered yet, please do so at <https://wsweedscience.org/annual-meeting-2024/>. Our venue, the Grand Hyatt Hotel, has some rooms left but act soon, you can access the hotel through the same link above.

We have 172 presentations divided among oral and poster presentations. There are two symposia, one on Wednesday afternoon that deals with the EPA addressing herbicide use with respect to the Endangered Species Act. Thursday morning, we will have a symposium addressing Palmer Amaranth and the challenges this species poses for us in the west.

We will begin the week with our customary ‘Member and Retirees Welcome Reception’ on Monday evening March 4. Your Board of Directors will also meet on Monday, March 4 from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Tuesday, March 5 our poster session starts at 7:30 with authors of odd numbered posters presenting. ***Students with posters entered in the contest are expected to be at their posters on the respective days at 7:30 AM to 9:15 AM when judges will make rounds.*** The General Session will follow at 9:30 AM. After the conclusion of the General Session we will break for lunch and then reconvene at 1:30 PM with Break-Out sessions for three of the projects. Students, there is a luncheon for you on Tuesday, check your program. The ‘student reception’ will similarly take place on Tuesday, March 5 at 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM.

Wednesday, March 6 will start off with Posters at 7:30 AM and authors of even numbered posters presenting. A full slate of Break-Out sessions will fill the rest of the morning until the ‘Awards Luncheon’ at noon. Wednesday afternoon will continue with Break-Out sessions. Additionally, Wednesday afternoon will feature presentations on “What’s New from Industry” led by Charlie Hicks. Finally, the popular “Student Night Out” will start at 6:00 PM. Look out for the call for student night out sponsors from the WSWs student representative elsewhere in the newsletter.

Thursday we will kick off with the breakfast at which time important business of the society will be conducted from 6:30 AM to 9:15 AM, including announcing winners of the student competitions. Break-Out sessions will follow thereafter as will the symposium on Palmer Amaranth.

Other important dates to remember: Abstract Submission Deadline February 15, 2024 and Slide Presentation Upload Deadline Monday March 1, 2024. Let’s enjoy another meeting of our society in Denver, Colorado.

Local Arrangements Report – Eric P. Westra

The local arrangement committee would like to welcome all to the 2024 Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS) meeting in downtown Denver, Colorado on March 4th through March 7th, 2024.

DENVER RESTAURANT WEEK:

With numerous food and beverage awards to its name, Denver has quickly become a dining destination for foodies. You'll find plenty of fine dining options at chef-owned eateries, along with cuisine from around the globe at our gourmet food halls and markets, and fresh, local ingredients like green chili and Colorado lamb and beef. For the first time, Denver Restaurant Week will include four price points: \$25, \$35, \$45, and \$55 for a multi-course meal. (<https://denverrestaurantweek.com/>)

MEETING LOCATION AND LODGING:

The WSWS venue is the Grand Hyatt in downtown Denver, located at 1750 Welton Street, Denver, CO 80202 and can be contacted at (303) 295-1234 or [Grand Hyatt Denver](#). The WSWS annual meeting website has links to hotel reservations. The Grand Hyatt is in the heart of it all, just steps from the best things to do in Denver. The 16th Street Mall - where a 12-block pedestrian walkway houses the best in shopping, and dining. The Grand Hyatt is minutes from Coors Field (home of the Colorado Rockies) and the Ball Arena (home of the Denver Nuggets and Colorado Avalanche). Denver is also an easy trip to world class skiing!

TRANSPORTATION:

Plan to fly to Denver International Airport. Domestic arrivals are located in the center of the main terminal on Level 5. International arrivals are located at the north end of the main terminal. Baggage claim is also located on Level 5. The A Line train departs from Level 1 of the airport's Transit Center, under the Westin Denver International Airport. To get to Denver Airport A Line Station, follow signs to the "Transit Center" and proceed to the south end of the main terminal on Level 5. Exit the terminal through the sliding glass doors and take the escalator located in the center of the plaza down to Level 1.

Travel to Downtown Denver. To get to Downtown Denver you can take the RTD **A Line Train** from the airport to Union Station. Then you can make your way to the Grand Hyatt using the Free Mall Shuttle, walking, taxi or other ride share service. Shuttle services are also available from the airport, as are taxis and ride share services. Tickets for the A Line may be purchased at the ticket vending machines located on the train platform using cash or credit cards. The A Line is 23 miles from the airport to downtown's Denver Union Station and takes 37 minutes. There are six stops and Union Station is the final stop. The airport fare is \$10.50 per day from any of the stations along the A Line and includes unlimited rides on the A Line as well as the entire RTD Light Rail system during a single business day. Visit the RTD website to learn more [Denver RTD](#).

The Grand Hyatt Denver is located about one mile from Union Station. From the train at Union Station you can walk across Wewatta Street to the bus stop located at 16th St Mall & Wewatta St. You will ride the bus and get off at 17th St & California St which is 0.1 mile from Grand Hyatt located off 17th St and Welton St. There is currently ongoing construction on 16th St and bus routes may vary based on construction duration and time of day. Both Apple and Google maps will show up-to-date train and bus routes if transit option is selected for map directions. To learn more or get a map please visit [16th Street Free MallRide](#). The Free Mall Shuttle operates from 4:59 am on weekdays, 5:30 am on Saturdays and 6:30 am on Sundays. Service continues throughout the day and ends at 1:00 am.

See you all in March!

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Publications

WSWS ONLINE EDUCATION

WSSA Journals Website Online

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Western Society of Weed
Science Annual Meeting**
Mar. 4 – 7, 2024
Denver, Colorado
www.wsweedscience.org

**Aquatic Plant Management
Society Annual Meeting**
Jul. 14 - 18, 2024
St. Petersburg, Florida
www.apms.org

**Canadian Weed Science
Society Annual Meeting**
November 2024
Virtual Meeting
www.weedscience.ca

**North Central Weed
Science Society Annual
Meeting**
Dec. 9 – 12, 2024
Kansas City, Missouri
www.ncwss.org

**Northeastern Weed
Science Society Annual
Meeting**
Jan. 8 - 11, 2025
Annapolis, Maryland
www.newss.org

**Southern Weed Science
Society Annual Meeting**
Jan. 20 - 23, 2025
Charleston, South Carolina
www.swss.ws

**Weed Science Society of
America
and
Canadian Weed Science
Society Joint Annual
Meeting**
Jan. 22 – 25, 2025
Vancouver BC, Canada
www.wssa.net
www.weedscience.ca

Workshop Announced

A research group at the U.S. Geological Survey Fort Collins Science Center is working on a project with the Bureau of Land Management to [understand and foster the use of habitat models for managing rare plants and invasive plants on public lands](#). As a part of this project, they will be holding a solution-focused workshop in Lakewood, Colorado (Friday, March 8, 2024) to brainstorm creative solutions to challenges that stakeholders face when developing and applying habitat models in public land management decisions.

They are seeking federal employees who develop models, use models to inform their land management work, or support the use of models for invasive plant management and are interested in contributing to this solution-focused workshop. If you're interested in learning more about this work or participating in the workshop focused on invasive plants, please reach out to Ella Samuel (esamuel@usgs.gov) and Emma Dietrich (edietrich@usgs.gov).



**Announcing an interagency,
in-person workshop to...**

*Brainstorm creative solutions to foster greater use of
habitat models for managing invasive plants.*

When: Friday, March 8, 2024 (9:00-4:00)

Where: Denver Federal Center, Lakewood, Colorado

Who: We are seeking **federal employees** who develop, use, or support the use of habitat models for managing invasive plants.

Contact us for more information:
Ella Samuel (esamuel@usgs.gov)
Emma Dietrich (edietrich@usgs.gov)

Reminder to Committee Chairs and WSWS Officers

Please review the section(s) of the Operating Procedures specific to your office/committee and let me know if it is correct, needs edits or is vague and confusing. If the Operating Guide needs edits or is vague and confusing - I will work with you to improve the language. My contact information is sandra@mountainwestpest.com or 970-266-9573.

Thank you,

Sandra McDonald, WSWS Operating Procedures Representative 2023-2028

13th Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course

The 13th Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course will be held April 22-25, 2024 at the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch in Loveland, Colorado.

Registration (\$850.00 by March 25, 2024; \$950.00 on March 26, 2024) includes educational program and daily refreshment breaks, three lunches and three dinners are also included in the registration. Lodging is not included. Visit http://www.mountainwestpest.com/Past_Courses.php to learn more.



The continued partnership with the **Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch** allows us to provide some unique training opportunities. One of the truly unique features of the Short Course is the ability to have a long-term restoration plot. Sylvan Dale has worked with us to establish a fenced site where we have been able to demonstrate weed management combined with native grass establishment. A twilight weed walk on the first night is a great way to see the ranch and start learning some weeds.

The WIWSC is an intensive study of current technologies and best management practices associated with noxious and invasive weeds in the western United States. Participants gain up-to-date knowledge specific to invasive weed management with interactive sessions.



The WIWSC will include sessions on:

- Weed Management
- Live weeds
- Herbicides
- Weed Identification
- Other topics to be identified by the participants
- Time for individual interaction with instructors

Our target participants are local, state, federal government, and other land managers throughout the western region desiring a better understanding of weed management. WIWSC is designed to benefit both those new to invasive plant management and experienced professionals seeking a comprehensive update in western invasive weeds and their management.



The WIWSC instructors are members of the **Western Society of Weed Science**.

Please contact Sandra McDonald, WIWSC Coordinator, for additional information at 970-266-9573 or Sandra@MountainWestPest.com

Biological Control of Yellow Toadflax in Colorado using the Yellow Toadflax Stem Weevil

Mike Racette and Dan Bean, Colorado Department of Agriculture, Palisade Insectary

Yellow toadflax, *Linaria vulgaris*, (Fig 1) has a deep penetrating root system with lateral branches that can extend over 3 m from the parent plant. Vegetative buds on the roots produce new stems that form their own roots and eventually become independent plants. A mature yellow toadflax plant, with its showy snap dragon-like flowers, can produce up to 30,000 seeds annually. Once established, it can spread rapidly and dominate native plant communities displacing desirable vegetation and reducing forage for cattle and wildlife.



Fig 1 Yellow toadflax infestation near Meeker, CO

Yellow toadflax is widespread in Colorado, sometimes invading remote locations where it is difficult to control, making it an ideal target for biological control. Two seed and flower feeding beetles, *Brachyterolus pulicarius* and *Rhinusa antirrhini*, are biocontrol agents that reduce seed production and found throughout Colorado but have had minimal impact on yellow toadflax plant density. Another yellow toadflax biocontrol agent, the stem boring weevil *Mecinus janthinus*, was recognized as a separate species from the Dalmatian toadflax stem boring weevil, *Mecinus janthiniformis*,



Fig 2 Overwintering adult *M. janthinus* within yellow toadflax stem. Weevil is 4mm long (Dan Bean)

which had been released for control of both yellow and Dalmatian toadflax populations in Colorado since the 1990s. After realizing that we had most likely been releasing the Dalmatian toadflax weevil on yellow toadflax plants, the Palisade Insectary received adult *M. janthinus* (Fig 2) collected from yellow toadflax in Montana and initiated a successful statewide biocontrol program beginning in 2009. Since then, several thousand *M. janthinus* have been released throughout Colorado to assist in the control of yellow toadflax. The weevils damage toadflax through stem mining by larvae and internal and external adult feeding which impacts plant growth and may top out or deform plants above where larvae are feeding. Larvae complete development within stems where they pupate, emerge as adults, and remain within stems during the winter.

The first two releases of *M. janthinus* in Colorado greatly reduced yellow toadflax densities. One release made in the mountains of central Colorado served as a nursery site for collection of yellow toadflax weevils for further redistribution. At both release sites it took more than three years post release to see impact from biocontrol weevils on yellow toadflax plants. Yellow toadflax stem densities have now declined to almost zero at both release sites.

We monitor *M. janthinus* population levels and impact on yellow toadflax at twelve sites around Colorado. The weevils have had varying impacts depending on site elevation, slope, aspect, and

other factors, yet over the long-term yellow toadflax declines have been recorded at most sites. At three sites where biocontrol weevils have been established for six or more years, we have seen an average decline to less than 20% of the starting yellow toadflax density.

At the Flying W Ranch near Colorado Springs, weevils have eliminated yellow toadflax from the monitoring transect (Fig 3). The Waldo fire of 2012 burned 1700 of the ranch’s 1800 acres, creating a disturbance that favored yellow toadflax. Monitoring began in 2015 following release of 210 *M. janthinus* and three years later 300 additional weevils were released. Initial monitoring showed 122 stems/m² and the stem density increased during the two following years while weevil populations grew. With large weevil populations toadflax numbers began to decrease. In 2018 the stem density was down to 51/m² and in the last two years no toadflax was found along the monitoring transect (Fig 3), although adult weevils were still found on plants outside of the transect. Results from the Flying W site illustrate the long-term trajectory of yellow toadflax biocontrol impact which may require patience for four to five years after weevil release before toadflax decline becomes readily visible.

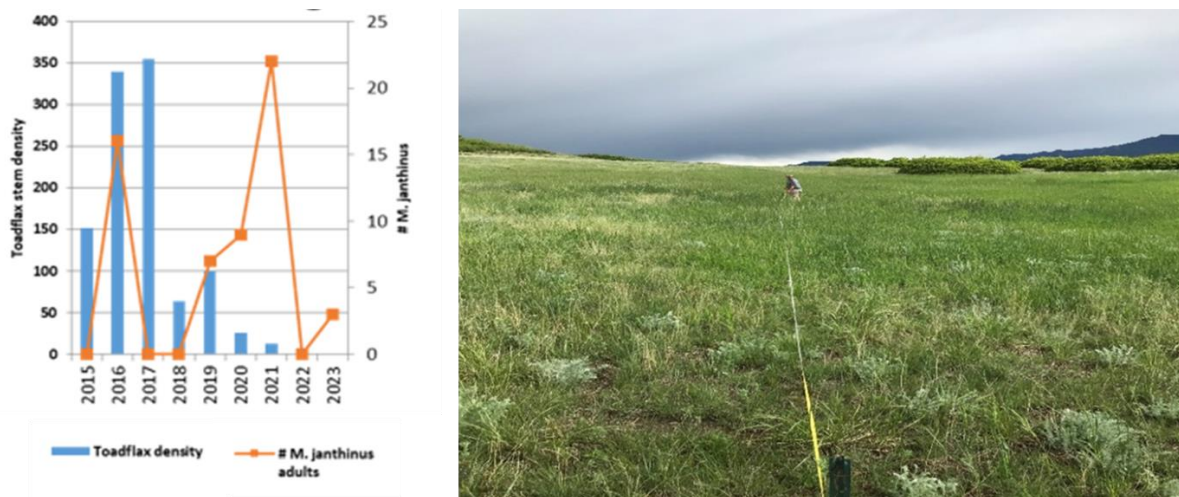


Fig 3 Left: Toadflax stem density and adult *M. janthinus* counts from 2015-2023 at the Flying W Ranch; Right 2023 photo of monitoring transect at the Flying W Ranch following the decline of yellow toadflax and illustrating the presence of desirable vegetation (Mike Racette)

The Flying W site also showed the close relationship between beetle establishment, population increase and toadflax decline. It is important to ensure that weevils have established and are present at a site. Measuring presence of adult weevils is the best way to track populations but we also split open stems to observe feeding activity of weevil larvae, sometimes seen even when adults are difficult to find. For example, in 2022 we found no adult weevils (Fig 3 Left) yet 40% of sampled stems from nearby plants outside of the transect contained either eggs or larvae of *M. janthinus*.

Thanks in major part to the tiny toadflax stem weevils the area has almost completely recovered from the toadflax invasion that followed the devastating Waldo fire. It is now covered mostly in native grasses and forbs (Fig 3 Right).

WASHINGTON REPORT

January 30, 2024

Lee Van Wychen

FY 2024 Appropriations Status

A third Continuing Resolution (CR) was passed by Congress and signed by the president on January 19 that will continue to fund the federal government at FY 2023 levels into March. All 12 appropriations bills must still be passed by both Houses and signed by the President. The third CR has two deadlines: March 1, 2024, for the following four appropriations bills: **Agriculture, Energy & Water**, Military Construction-VA and **Transportation-HUD**; and March 8 for the other eight appropriation bills.

On January 8, the House and Senate agreed to an overall spending cap of \$773 billion for non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs, which is nearly flat compared to FY 2023. Deciding on the NDD spending cap was a critical first step, but after that, discussions broke down. However, late on Friday, January 26, lawmakers reached a deal on totals for the 12 funding bills, but neither the House or the Senate has released the numbers. Either way, now that each of the 12 bills toplines have been set, that task becomes significantly easier.

The process is still far from over, however. Now appropriators need to use the toplines to hash out finer policy debates and craft 12 new appropriations bills that can pass both the House and Senate and ultimately be signed into law by the president.

April 30 is another critical deadline. If lawmakers fail to finalize spending legislation by then, a 1 percent across-the-board cut may be triggered, as stipulated in the debt legislation enacted last year.

2023 Farm Bill Status

The second continuing resolution that extended funding for the federal government at FY 2023 levels, also extended Farm Bill programs to September 30, 2024, providing added time to work on this. House and Senate Ag Committee leaders expressed hope that it can be completed by the end of the first quarter this year or shortly after. However, no draft Farm Bill language has been released, and it does not appear the Speaker of the House has entered into negotiations with the Senate. This means it is likely to be an extended process and with 2024 being an election year, there is a 50-50 chance that a new Farm Bill might not be passed until 2025.

EPA Releases Final Report on the Use of 11 Controversial Atrazine Cosm 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. 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”**. Many thanks to Aaron Hager, Jay Ferrell, John Madsen and Kurt Getsinger for their service and data review for this SAP.

To protect aquatic plant communities from the effects of atrazine, EPA developed an aquatic plant community-based concentration-equivalent level of concern (CE-LOC). The CE-LOC is determined using a combination of single-species aquatic plant toxicity studies and

microcosm/mesocosm (cosm) studies. The cosm studies included in the CE-LOC calculation can be defined as complex experiments used to examine aquatic plant communities under semi-controlled conditions that simulate natural environments. Endpoints for these cosm studies were defined as single determinations of the response of one or more components of the aquatic plant community (e.g., phytoplankton, periphyton, macrophytes) for a defined individual atrazine test concentration as it relates to the controls in the study.

From 2002 to 2016, EPA considered over 70 cosm studies. However, a FIFRA SAP conducted in 2012 identified 11 of those studies as warranting further review because of concerns about study design or performance flaws, as well as EPA's interpretation of the results.

EPA received additional public comments about the 11 controversial atrazine cosm studies in its 2022 Proposed Revisions to the Atrazine Interim Registration Review Decision where they used a CE-LOC of 3.4 ppb. The CE-LOC for atrazine was previously 15 ppb. When the atrazine CE-LOC is exceeded, it triggers additional monitoring and/or mitigation to protect aquatic plant communities.

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 on the use of the 11 controversial atrazine cosm studies in calculating the CE-LOC.

To EPA's credit, they published an excellent [white paper](#) earlier this year that presents EPA's reevaluation of the 11 controversial atrazine cosm studies. The [white paper](#) also provides an overview of atrazine, its history as it relates to the cosm studies, and the "Charge Questions" (pg 16) for the 2023 FIFRA SAP that met in August.

On November 16, the [FIFRA SAP final report on the use of the 11 atrazine cosm studies](#) was released. Based on the SAP's discussions, most of the 11 atrazine cosm studies in question did suffer from various flaws and should not be used to calculate a CE-LOC for atrazine. There are nearly 50 other cosm studies that meet EPA's criteria for inclusion in its cosm database. If EPA follows the 2023 FIFRA SAP's recommendations, they would be using the best available science to calculate the CE-LOC for atrazine, which would likely mean a higher atrazine CE-LOC.

EPA Publishes Update on its Vulnerable Species Pilot (VSP)

On November 21, 2023, EPA published an update on its **VSP** project based on the 10,000 plus comments (200 unique comments) they received during the 45-day comment period. The following summarizes EPA's current thinking on [revisions to the VSP framework](#):

- Narrow the areas within the endangered species range map to only include locations that are important to conserving a species.
- Clarify the scope of the VSP for non-agricultural uses;
- Clarify potential exemptions to the proposed mitigation and whether additional exemptions are needed;
- Revise some of the proposed mitigations and include additional mitigation options specific to non-agricultural uses and specialty crops;
- Revisit how EPA selected the pilot vulnerable species; and
- Develop a consistent approach to reduce pesticide exposure to listed species from spray drift and run-off.

EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs said in an update to state regulators (SFIREG) on Dec. 4, 2023 that its **“current thinking for agricultural uses is that the proposed VSP mitigation would not need to include avoidance, but rather would focus on minimization.”** The full update, along with additional details regarding the **VSP project** and mitigation proposals, are available in the public docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-0327](#). By fall 2024, EPA intends to provide additional updates on its **VSP project**.

EPA Pesticide Label Reform is Finally Happening

On November 15, EPA released a white paper titled **“Benefits of the Adoption of Structured Content and Digital Pesticide Labels”** and is requesting feedback on its plan to adopt digital pesticide labels that will make labeling information clearer, more consistent, and more accessible to users.

EPA's plan for digital labels covers the creation of both a structured label—which would provide a framework for consistently placing and ordering label information—and a digital label, which would organize the label information as electronic data. Currently, the pesticide product label registration process is mostly manual, with EPA staff reading through long, detailed label submissions to pull out specific information, like application rate, to enter into the EPA's **Pesticide Product and Label System**. This has led to time-consuming reviews and high cost to registrants and regulators. Further, the increasing complexity of pesticide labels and lack of standardized label format and language can create challenges for pesticide users and the public seeking information about which products to use and how to use them.

Moving from traditional labels to digital labels and providing a database of accepted label language would make submitting label content simpler and more consistent for all pesticide registrants and would improve the Agency's ability to review and access submissions efficiently.

EPA is requesting public comment on all aspects of structured digital labels, including:

- anticipated benefits
- risks and challenges
- key information fields (such as pesticide use site, formulation, and maximum application rate), and
- potential phases of adoption.

The **whitepaper** will be open for comment until **March 14, 2024** on docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-0562](#).

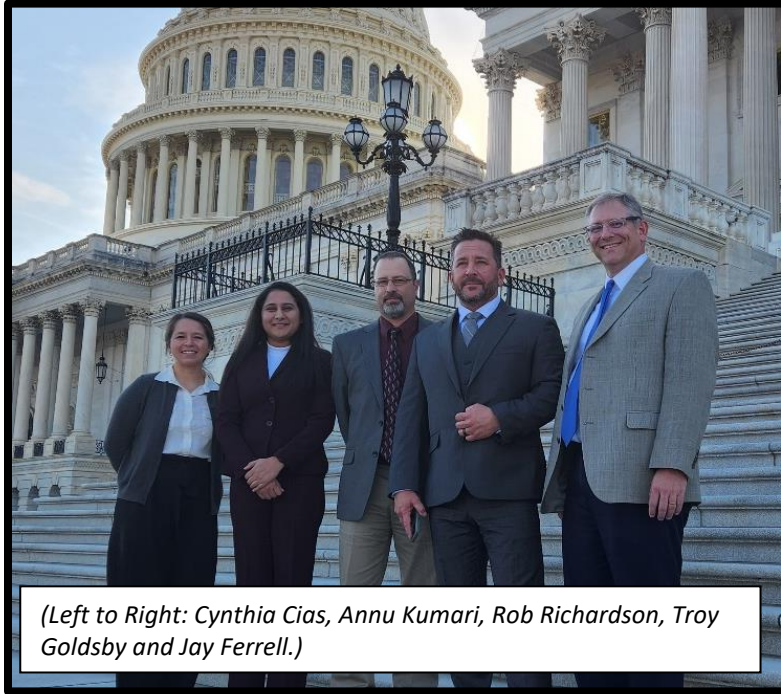
IR-4 Works With Weed Scientists to Expand Glufosinate Label

As a result of research conducted by the IR-4 Project, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved significant label expansions for glufosinate-ammonium. Final rules adding to this herbicide label were published to the federal register on **June 20, 2023** and **September 21, 2022**. As a result of these label expansions, a wide variety of specialty crops can now benefit from the effective weed control provided by this herbicide, including: avocados, figs, melons, hops, squashes, tomatoes, tropical fruits, grasses grown for seed in the Pacific Northwest.

APMS Congressional Visits in November

In November, I organized and conducted 14 Congressional meetings on aquatic plant management issues. These meetings included House and Senate staff from FL, TN, AL and NC

and majority and minority committee staff for Energy and Water Appropriations in both the House and Senate. Many thanks to Jay Ferrell, APMS President, Troy Goldsby APMS Director and Rob Richardson, APMS Science Policy Committee representative. My Science Policy Fellows, Cynthia Sias and Annu Kumari also attended meetings during the week. In addition to the Congressional visits, we also attended an EPA Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee (PPDC) meeting at EPA headquarters and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Charles Valentine Riley Memorial Lecture that featured Dr. Joe Cornelius, Chief



Executive Officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations (Gates Ag One). Main issues we discussed on Capitol Hill included seeking appropriations for the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Aquatic Plant Control line item in the ACOE Construction account that funds both the aquatic plant control research program and the watercraft inspection and decontamination program. We also discussed the importance of continuing funding for the hydrilla research and demonstration work in the Connecticut River basin and

supporting funding of invasive species provisions in the 2020 and 2022 Water Resources Development Acts (WRDA). Most Congressional staff don't realize that aquatic plant managers have a limited set of aquatic plant management tools including only 17 aquatic herbicides!

The House proposed \$16.5 million for the APC program in FY 2024, which is less than half of the \$33.5 million received in FY 2023. In addition, the House has proposed zeroing out funding for the Connecticut river basin hydrilla research and control in FY 2024. On the other side of the Hill, the Senate has proposed \$27 million for the APC in FY 2024, which includes \$6.3 million for CT river hydrilla. We obviously supported the Senate budget vs. the House budget and made good progress on these funding issues during our Congressional visits. We hope to see FY 2024 funding levels for the APC in line with FY 2023.

BLM Receives Approval for Use of Seven Herbicides in 2024

The National and Regional Weed Science Societies have been working with the Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) over the past several years to get approval on final programmatic environmental impact statements (PEIS) for the use of the following seven herbicides on BLM land:

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1) aminocyclopyrachlor | 4) flumioxazin | 7) oryzalin |
| 2) clethodim | 5) imazamox | |
| 3) fluazifop-p-butyl | 6) indaziflam | |

These herbicides have already been approved by EPA (some for a long time!), in adjoining nonfederal land. In order to for them to be considered as a management option on BLM lands, they had to be in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976.

These additional herbicide active ingredients will diversify BLM's weed management plan and help meet the purposes that were first identified in BLM's 2007 and 2016 PEISs related to vegetation treatments. A **final record of decision** is expected in February 2024.

NISAW is February 26 – March 3, 2024.

The 25th anniversary of **National Invasive Species Awareness Week** (NISAW) will occur from Feb. 26 – Mar. 3, 2024. The 2024 NISAW webinar series is listed below. Get more information and **NISAW events page**.

This year we are spotlighting the urgent need to protect North American Biodiversity. With webinars from our partners during NISAW that include the following topics:

- February 26, 2024 – **Annual USGS Invasive Species Research Forum**
- February 27, 2024 – **The Invasive Species Language Workshop in partnership with the National Sea Grant Law Center**
- February 28, 2024 – **The Federal Interagency Committee on the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds (FICMNEW)**
- February 29, 2024 – **Opportunities and Challenges for Preventing the Next Plant Invasion** (NOTE: this is a Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) white paper that was developed by the following representatives from WSSA and NIASMA: Jacob Barney, David Coyle, Erik Lehnhoff, Daniel Tekiela, and Paul Tseng.)
- March 1, 2024 – **Protecting North American Biodiversity from Invasive Species**

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2024 Membership Renewal Form

To pay by credit card, please login to your account at www.wsweedscience.org

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING BUT WANT TO REMAIN A MEMBER, FILL IN THE INFORMATION BELOW AND SEND \$30.00 FOR DUES TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED.

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Publications Available from the WSWS

The following books or DVDs can be purchased from the WSWS:

- Aquatic and Riparian Weeds of the West
- Weeds of California and Other Western States
- Interactive Encyclopedia of North American Weeds DVD
- Weed Bingo

All publications can be ordered online at <https://wsweedscience.org/store/#!for m/Store>. Contact the Business Manager (Eric Gustafson) at (303) 327-8016 for bulk order prices.

WSWS Objectives

- ❖ To foster and encourage education and research in weed science.
- ❖ To foster cooperation among state, federal and private agencies in matters of weed science.
- ❖ To aid and support commercial, private and public agencies in the solution of weed problems.
- ❖ To support legislation governing weed control programs and weed research and education programs.
- ❖ To support the Weed Science Society of America and foster state and regional organizations and agencies interested in weed control.