



Western Society of Weed Science Newsletter

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SUMMER 2025

IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Report

Student Liaison Report

Tucson Meeting Update

2026 Call for Papers &
Posters

Elena Sanchez Memorial
WSWS Outstanding Student
Scholarship

Calendar of Events

Request for Fellows and
Honorary Member
Nominations

Call for Distinguished
Achievement Awards

Western Invasive Weed Short
Course offered Spring 2026

Roland Schirman Memorial
Travel Grant

Washington Report

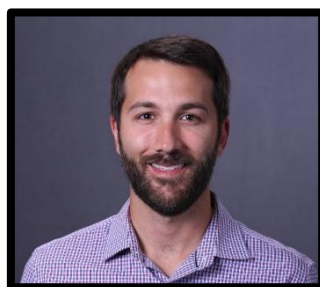
Publication Available

Membership Renewal Form

Sidebar highlights:

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

President's Report



The WSWS Board of Directors met August 6-7 at the Tucson Marriott in Tucson for the summer board meeting. Board members that were unable to attend in person joined via zoom. The meeting was productive, and I want to thank all the board, committee chairs, and other members who took the time to prepare reports and attend. The board was able to view the hotel and nearby amenities, and we are excited to spend time in a warmer environment in March 2026!

I had the wonderful opportunity to participate in the Weed Science President's visit in Washington DC where we joined the National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research members in visiting congressional staff to encourage support investment in food and agriculture research and extension. After the group meetings with NCFAR, the WSSA and regional society presidents met separately with various legislative staff to encourage support of science-based policy and support of the appropriation requests. Most staffers highlighted the need for specific examples of how funding cuts impact people, facilities, research, and extension as well as specific examples of success stories resulting from the appropriations. We also met with Crop Life America and American Soybean Association, who are both delivering important expertise and advocacy around pesticide policy and appropriations. It was great to see Lee VanWychen's leadership and expertise on this trip, and I now more fully appreciate the value he provides to the weed science discipline.

The board voted to approve Fourwaves as a new abstract submission and program development software that will be a significant improvement compared to past options. This approval is in alignment with WSSA and other regional societies as well as the Canadian Weed Science Society. I know our program chair is excited to learn this new system and will work closely with the section chairs to develop the program and transfer the knowledge to future chairs.

Lastly, please consider nominating colleagues for a society award as there are many deserving members. Nominations can be made for Fellow, Honorary Member, and Distinguished Achievement Awards.

Carl Coburn, WSWS President

WSWS Annual Meeting March 2 – 5, 2026, Tucson, Arizona

Student Liaison Report – Weston Maughan

As the summer season field season begins to wind down, the WSWs Summer board meeting took place in Tucson, Arizona, in preparation for the 2026 Annual Meeting. Wes Maughan was able to attend to represent student interests and contribute to board discussions. The venue is close to the University of Arizona campus, and thus is close to plenty of great restaurants, museums, and other things to see.

Many WSWs committees are looking for student members. Working with the committees is a great way to get involved in the WSWs community and network with new people, as well as build your resume. We encourage all students interested to reach out to board members to learn more.

To the students, we wish success in the new semester, and as always, please feel free to reach out with ideas to improve the WSWs student experience!

Sincerely,

Weston Maughan, Student Liaison
peter.maughan@wsu.edu

Ola Adeyemi, Student Chair-elect
olanrewaju.adeyemi@usu.edu

Preliminary Annual Meeting Update

On behalf of the 2026 Program and Local Arrangements Committees, we look forward to seeing all of you at our upcoming annual meeting in Tucson, Arizona. I hope you all look forward to visiting with colleagues, engaging with the latest Weed Science research, supporting our students, and exploring Arizona in your free time. There are great opportunities for hiking, golfing, and other outdoor pursuits. The meeting will commence with the welcome reception on the evening of Monday, March 2nd, 2026 and conclude Thursday, March 5th, 2026. The Board of Directors has approved one symposium for the 2026 meeting, *The Pacific Northwest Herbicide Resistance Initiative: An Invitation to Collaborate*. The hotel is located adjacent to Arizona State University, with a number of restaurants, bars, and shops within a block of the hotel. We will be the only group using the hotel meeting space during our time there, and it will be easy to move from one section to the next. The meeting space is a bit smaller than what we have used in the past few years, but this should be a great opportunity for narrowing down the right size of venue for our future meetings. Faculty, please encourage your students to participate in student oral presentation and/or poster contests as well as in our “Student Night Out” to network with members from academia and industry.

Nevin Lawrence - President-Elect/Program Chair

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Call for Papers and Posters

Nevin Lawrence - President-Elect/Program Chair

The 2026 Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS) will take place March 2nd through 5th, 2026 in Tuscon, Arizona at the Tuscon Marriott University Park.

Title and abstract submission will open October 20th, 2025. Deadline for title submission is **December 1, 2025**, but abstracts may be entered and revised any time through mid-February 2026. After using ConFex Event Management for title and abstract submission last year, the WSSA and all Weed Science regional societies will be moving to Fourwaves to submit titles and abstracts, and for building the program. Fourwaves has been previously used by the CWSS and the process will be different from the previous two years, but we are anticipating a smoother process moving forward.

Please follow the guidelines when entering oral paper and poster titles. Pay particular care to use proper capitalization and punctuation as will be outlined on the forthcoming title and abstract submission site link. Standardizing author and organizational names will help make a smoother program. Your cooperation in this is appreciated!

All attendees are invited and encouraged to participate by presenting at least one paper or poster, and multiple submissions are welcome. We will continue to have oral papers and posters divided into projects:

- 1) *Weeds of Agronomic Crops,*
- 2) *Basic Biology, Ecology, and Technology,*
- 3) *Weeds of Horticultural Crops,*
- 4) *Teaching and Outreach,*
- 5) *Regulatory and Policy,*
- 6) *Weeds of Range, Forestry, and Natural Areas.*

Graduate and undergraduate students are strongly encouraged to enter the student paper and/or poster contests.

Oral paper presentations will be scheduled every 15 minutes in concurrent sessions. Maintaining a timely schedule is important for those who need to move between sessions. Therefore, presentations of 12 to 13 minutes are recommended to allow time for questions and transition to the next presenter. WSWS Poster size should not exceed 42-inches by 42-inches.

Elena Sanchez Memorial Outstanding Student Scholarship Program

The Western Society of Weed Science is pleased to offer the WSWs Outstanding Student Scholarship to promote greater student participation at the WSWs annual meeting and encourage new weed science research and future weed science careers. Scholarships will be awarded to three outstanding undergraduate and/or graduate WSWs student members who will attend and present at the WSWs annual meeting.

A total of \$3,000 (three \$1,000 scholarships) will be awarded to outstanding undergraduate and/or graduate WSWs student members currently conducting research relevant to weed science. The scholarship money may be used to defray research costs, as a stipend, and for travel to the WSWs annual meeting. To ensure scholarship money can be used for travel to the annual meeting, the deadline for applications is Friday, October 3, 2025. Selections will be made, and participants notified of the committee's decision by Friday, October 31, 2025.

Go to: [Elena Sanchez Western Society of Weed Science Outstanding Student Scholarship](#) for information and details on qualifications and how to apply. If you have questions, contact Cody Creech, WSWs Awards Chair (ccreech2@unl.edu).

Calendar of Events

International Weed Science Congress
Oct. 19 - 24, 2025, Nanjing, China
www.iwss.info

Canadian Weed Science Society Annual Meeting
Nov. 2 - 7, 2025, Gatineau, Québec
www.weedscience.ca

North Central Weed Science Society Annual Meeting
Dec. 15 - 18, 2025, Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.ncwss.org

Northeastern Weed Science Society Annual Meeting
Jan. 5 - 8, 2026, Hershey, Pennsylvania
www.newss.org

Southern Weed Science Society Annual Meeting
Jan. 26 - 29, 2026, Nashville, Tennessee
www.swss.ws

Weed Science Society of America Annual Meeting
Feb. 9 - 12, 2026, Raleigh, North Carolina
www.wssa.net

Western Society of Weed Science Annual Meeting
Mar. 2 - 5, 2026, Tucson, Arizona
www.wsweedscience.org

Aquatic Plant Management Society Annual Meeting
Jul. 13 - 16, 2026, Phoenix, Arizona
www.apms.org

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Publications

WSWS ONLINE EDUCATION

WSSA Journals Website Online

2025 Proceedings

REQUEST FOR WSWF FELLOW AND HONORARY MEMBER NOMINATIONS

Please take this opportunity to nominate deserving colleagues as a WSWF Fellow or Honorary Member!

WSWF FELLOW

WSWF Guidelines for Nominating Fellows:

Fellows of the society are members who have given meritorious service to the Western Society of Weed Science.

The nominator must contact the member to be nominated and request them to prepare a concise [2-3 page] resume.

- a. The nominee must be involved in the process. The most pertinent information about the nominee can only be obtained from the nominee.
- b. The nominee's resume should be based on the WSWF guidelines as currently posted on the WSWF website.
- c. Information from the resume will be used by the nominator in writing the letter of nomination.
- d. The nominator is also responsible for soliciting two letters of support for the nominee. The letters should be sent to the nominator and included in the nomination package sent to the committee.
- e. The nomination package should include the nominee's vita, the nominator's letter of nomination, and two support letters.

SERVICE TO WSWF – Please address the following points in the resume:

1. Honors, awards and recognitions by professional societies and private institutions.
2. Positions held in professional societies, companies, or institutions.
3. A brief summary of presentations and published books, book chapters, research, extension, and technical publications.
4. Academic and Industry Weed Science Endeavors in research, development, teaching, educational and extension contributions.
5. Other Meritorious Weed Science Service.

WSWF HONORARY MEMBER

WSWF Guidelines for Nominating Honorary Members:

Honorary members are selected from individuals whose activities have been largely from outside the Western Society of Weed Science, but who have significantly contributed to the field of weed science.

The nominator will send a complete single pdf file nomination package to the WSWF Fellow and Honorary Member Committee Chair.

The package should consist of:

1. The nomination letter written by the nominator summarizing the nominee's contribution to the area of weed science with emphasis on how the interests of the WSWF have been served by the non-member.
2. The nominee's resume. It is the nominator's responsibility to coordinate the nomination and to assure that it is complete and submitted before the deadline. The nominator must contact the person to be nominated and request them to prepare a vita.
3. The nominator will then prepare a letter summarizing the nominee's contribution to the area of weed science with emphasis on how the interests of the WSWF have been served by this non-member.
4. Include the vita with the letter of nomination to provide all pertinent information to the Committee.

NOMINATIONS FOR FELLOW AND HONORARY MEMBER PACKAGES ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 1, 2025

Send To:

Electronic submission preferred.

Andrew Kniss

akniss@uwyo.edu

(307) 766-3949

2026 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Everyone knows of some skilled and outstanding weed scientists in the western region who have contributed a great deal over the years and deserve our recognition and appreciation. One way to recognize such persons is to nominate them for a WSWS award. Please take the time and nominate an individual for one of the awards listed below.

CRITERIA USED FOR EVALUATING NOMINATIONS: Awards are based on merit and impact on weed science and weed management practices. Applicants **MUST BE** a member of WSWS. Professional achievements and their impacts are the principal criteria for receiving these awards. There is no requirement that an award be given in any or every category. Past winners are not eligible again in the same category. An award may be given each year in both the private and public sectors for Outstanding Weed Scientist and Outstanding Weed Scientist – Early Career. Only one award may be given each year for Weed Manager and Professional Staff. Within the guidelines for each category, there is flexibility to fit the nominee.

I. OUTSTANDING WEED SCIENTIST

This award recognizes outstanding achievements in weed science from individuals in both the public and private sectors. Principle criteria for this award includes innovative or unique approaches that result in learning, ability to clearly communicate ideas, motivation of the intended audience, demonstrate excellence and creativity in research accomplishments, applying results to solve problems in weed science, the impact on weed management practices and principals of weed science, and recognition of accomplishments by peers and intended audiences.

II. OUTSTANDING WEED SCIENTIST – EARLY CAREER

This award is to be given to members in the private and public sectors with no more than 10 years of service after completion of their terminal degree. This award recognizes outstanding achievements in weed science early in the individual career with the same criteria as the outstanding weed scientist above.

III. WEED MANAGER

This award recognizes outstanding and sustained contributions in support of weed science activities. This award is intended for those paid by taxpayers and that are working in the public sector, such as employees of state departments of agriculture, weed boards, public land managers, and vegetation management personnel. The nominee must have been involved in the WSWS and weed science for at least five years at the time of nomination.

IV. PROFESSIONAL STAFF

This award recognizes outstanding and sustained contributions in support of weed science activities. Nominees will be restricted to individuals that work under the direction of university, federal, or industry scientists. These individuals may have titles such as researcher, research

associate, technician, support scientist, or specialist. The nominee must have been involved in the WSWs and weed science research, extension, or resident education for at least five years at the time of nomination.

NOMINATION DEADLINE: Nominations must be received by Sunday, **December 1, 2025**.

NOMINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY: The nominator will submit a nomination package using the following format:

1. **NOMINATION AWARD:** Name of award the Nominee is nominated for.
2. **NOMINEE:** Provide name, title, complete mailing address, telephone number and brief biography that would be acceptable for publishing in the WSWs proceedings.
3. **PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SECTOR NOMINEE:** Indicate the appropriate sector.
4. **SUPPORT STATEMENT BY NOMINATOR:** A concise summary and accomplishments of the nominee.
5. **EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE:** Degrees, institutions, dates, and positions held.
6. **PARTICIPATION IN AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WESTERN SOCIETY OF WEED SCIENCE:** Offices held, committees, papers presented, honors, awards.
7. **PROFESSIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFILIATIONS OTHER THAN IN THE WSWs:** Memberships, offices held, committee activities, papers presented, honors, awards, state, regional and national organizations.
8. **PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS:** Provide pertinent information relative to the award sought. This may include but is not limited to books written or edited, referred journal articles, technical information, research reports, extension material, products developed, patents, agronomic practices researched, innovations, creativity enhancement. List and explain the contributions made to the weed science profession by the nominee.
9. **LETTERS OF SUPPORT:** Obtain three (maximum) supporting letters for the nominee. Preferably these letters should not exceed one page in length. The nominator should obtain supporting letters from the different disciplines, i.e., faculty member or co-worker, individual not employed at same location, industry representative, university, government, or regulatory individual. Members of the Awards Committee are not eligible to write supporting letters.
10. **NOMINATOR:** Provide name, title, complete address, telephone number.

Unsuccessful nominations will remain active for three years; however, an updated nomination packet of holdover candidates is encouraged.

The nomination package, including the supporting letters, should be sent, by email, to the chair of the Awards Committee by Sunday, **December 1, 2025**:

Cody Creech

ccreech2@unl.edu

15th Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course



The 15th Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course will be held April 20-23, 2026, at the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch in Loveland, Colorado.

Registration (\$850.00 by March 9, 2026; \$950.00 on March 9, 2026) includes educational program and daily refreshment breaks. Three lunches and three dinners are also included in the registration.

Registration opens November 3, 2025. Visit

http://www.mountainwestpest.com/Past_Courses.php to learn more.

The continued partnership with [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, Course Coordinator, for additional information at 970-266-9573 or Sandra@MountainWestPEST.com.



ROLAND SCHIRMAN MEMORIAL TRAVEL GRANT

The Western Society of Weed Science is pleased to offer the WSWs Roland Schirman Memorial Travel Grant to promote greater participation by county extension agents and county weed district personnel to attend the WSWs annual meeting and encourage additional weed science education and research efforts.

TRAVEL GRANTS

One \$1,000 travel grant will be awarded annually to an outstanding county extension agent or county weed district supervisor to be used towards travel-related expenses to attend the annual WSWs meeting. To ensure the award can be used for travel to the annual meeting, a recipient will be selected and contacted before the title submission deadline (typically around December 1).

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be employed within the WSWs region as a county extension agent or county weed district supervisor (see <https://wsweedscience.org/aboutus/> and scroll to membership for a list states/provinces included). Applicants must have a portion of their extension or weed district activities focusing on weeds or weed management education or research. Preferred candidates will have demonstrated an interest and involvement in activities promoting education or research on weeds and their management.

Demonstrated activities may include bulletins, fact sheets, videos, social media and internet sites, popular articles, research and demonstration plots, field day presentations, participation with weed districts or noxious weed boards, presentations at grower meetings and conferences, training demonstrations, participation at local, state, or regional weed meetings, and educational efforts with farmers, ranchers, master gardeners, roadside or irrigation district vegetation managers or other groups involved with managing weeds.

Applicants are encouraged to become WSWs members and present at the annual meeting (see <https://wsweedscience.org/future-meetings/> for meeting details). Preference will be given to applicants who intend to present at the annual meeting. Applicants are limited to one award in a 2-year period.

APPLICATION PACKAGE

1. Completed Application Form (found at the end of this document)
2. One-page cover letter describing; a) how applicant is involved in weed management extension or research activities, b) how applicant's efforts will contribute to the field of weed science and the WSWs objectives (listed below), and c) what future contributions applicant hopes to make to the field of weed science.
3. One-page CV or resume summary highlighting recent relevant experience through education, work, internships, awards, honors, publications, leadership positions, or community activities.
4. Draft abstract for a paper or poster presentation at WSWs annual meeting (if planning to present)

5. Two letters of support from colleagues (such as a state/province weed extension specialist, University weed scientist, county weed board supervisor, state or federal land managers, state or regional biological weed control coordinators, or industry representative) that are familiar with applicant's efforts and contributions in weed-related extension or research.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants will be evaluated by the WSWs Awards Committee based on the contributions of their weed-related extension or research efforts to the discipline of weed science and to the WSWs objectives (listed below), potential contributions to the future of weed science, and participation in extracurricular pursuits contributing to the advancement of weed science.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are encouraged to present their weed-related extension and/or research activities or programs at the WSWs annual meeting and are invited to share a brief summary (1page maximum) of completed weed-related projects in the WSWs newsletter.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted electronically. All documents [application form, cover letter, CV summary, draft abstract (if presenting) and two letters of support] should be compiled into a single PDF file (preferred) or into a single zip folder and sent to: Cody Creech (ccreech2@unl.edu).

Deadline for applications is October 1. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Grant winner will be contacted prior to the WSWs title submission deadline (usually around December 1) and will be recognized at the annual meeting. For questions please contact: Cody Creech (ccreech2@unl.edu).

WESTERN SOCIETY OF WEED SCIENCE

The Western Society of Weed Science is a professional and scientific society of western weed scientists, weed managers, and others. Membership is open to anyone, including federal, state, and local employees, private company personnel, crop consultants, growers, or others interested in a wide variety of weed science related information.

The objectives of WSWs are:

- 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.

See application form next page.

**Roland Schirman Memorial Western Society of Weed Science Travel Grant
APPLICATION FORM**

INSTRUCTIONS: This application is to be completed by the applicant. Applications must be submitted electronically. All documents [application form, cover letter, CV summary, draft abstract (if presenting) and one letter of support] should be compiled into a single PDF file (preferred) or into a single zip folder and sent to: {current WSWs President}

Full Name:

Address:

City/State or Province:

County:

Zip Code:

Telephone:

Email:

Descriptive Title of Extension/Research Weed Program:

Objective of Weed Program (250 words or less):

WASHINGTON REPORT

August 18, 2025

Lee Van Wychen

Meet the 2025-2026 Science Policy Fellows



Aleah Butler-Jones is a fourth year PhD candidate at Cornell University studying under the supervision of Dr. Lynn Sosnoskie. Aleah's dissertation research focuses on investigating the impact of electrical weed control (EWC) on weed and soil biological communities in addition to EWC's integration into specialty crop production systems. She received her B.S. in Agricultural Sciences at Cornell University. During this time, she worked as an undergraduate research assistant to Dr. Toni DiTommaso, Dr. Thomas Björkman, and the Cornell Small Farms Program. She was first exposed to weed science through competing at the 2017 Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS) Weed Contest as part of Cornell's team. Aleah earned her M.S. in Horticultural Biology from Cornell University. Her thesis focused on the confirmation of glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth populations in NY and their responses to alternative chemistries and elevated temperatures. Through her work, Aleah strives to develop and assess novel integrated weed management tactics and their impact on the agroecosystem. She is thrilled to be a Science Policy Fellow and looks forward to developing a greater understanding of science policy and its relation to agricultural research. Most of all, Aleah is grateful to the WSSA for the opportunity to contribute to the society's endeavor to provide science-based information to policymakers and the broader public and advocate research, education, and outreach.



Matthew "Cole" Woolard is a second-year Ph.D. student at Texas Tech University under the advisement of Dr. Peter Dotray. Cole's dissertation research focuses on the utilization of topramezone and L-glufosinate in the Axant™ Flex Cotton System. He received his B.S. in Crop Science and Agriculture Business from the University of Arkansas. While working on his undergraduate degree, Cole was introduced to weed

science through an internship with Corteva Agriscience under the direction of Dr. Drew Ellis. Upon completing his B.S. degree, Cole joined Dr. Jason Norsworthy's program to pursue a M.S. degree. In May of 2024, Cole successfully defended his thesis titled "Evaluation of a Diflufenican : Metribuzin : Flufenacet Premixture for Soybean Tolerance and Weed Control." Through his work, Cole aims to develop weed management strategies to assist producers who adopt the new Axant Flex Cotton System. He is looking forward to learning about and contributing to issues that concern policy and agriculture. Cole would like to thank the WSSA and the Science Policy Committee for providing students with the opportunity to serve as Science Policy Fellows.

Weed Science Society Presidents Advocate for Ag Research Priorities in Washington DC

During the week of May 5, the National and Regional Weed Science Society Presidents traveled to Washington DC for Congressional and stakeholder visits. We began the week by attending the National Coalition for Food and Agriculture Research (NCFAR) Annual Meeting and fly-in. There were about 40 NCFAR members in attendance representing a broad array of agricultural research stakeholders. We had a good discussion about the many issues facing the USDA Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area. Concerns were raised about splitting up the Farm Bill and how that would impact the smaller titles in the Farm Bill such as the Research Title (7). Could a "skinny" Farm Bill get enough votes to pass Congress without the Commodity Title or Nutrition Title?

We also had a good dialogue with the USDA REE Chief of Staff Ricki Schroeder, followed by Congressional Visits in the afternoon and then an evening reception in the House Ag Committee Hearing room and balcony. Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) joined us at the reception and provided remarks on how to move forward in this political environment. Rep. Lucas is currently Chair of the House Science Committee and is the longest serving member of the

House Ag Committee where he served as Chair from 2011 to 2015 and oversaw the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill.



Above: from Left to Right: Ian Burke - WSSA President-Elect; Dawn Refsell - WSSA Vice President; Hilary Sandler – WSSA President; Thierry Besancon – NEWSS President; Lee Van Wychen – Executive Director of Science Policy; Eric Palmer – SWSS President; and Carl Coburn – WSWS President

Over the next two days, the Weed Science Society Presidents visited their local Senators and Representatives to discuss funding priorities such as the Crop Protection and Pest Management (CPPM) program, the IR-4 Program and capacity programs such as Hatch and Smith-Lever.

This year, we also delivered a [WSSA Policy Priorities one-pager](#) to offices that the President's developed in preparation for the fly-in. A special thanks to Dawn Refsell, Ian Burke and Hilary Sandler for their time and effort in developing this. The Policy Priorities one-pager focuses on four main areas: 1) Extension and Research funding; 2) Enhancing Integrated Weed Management; 3) Ensuring Crop Productivity & American Resources for Generations; and 4) Workforce Competency. In addition, select Congressional offices received a free Weed Bingo! Game (available at the [WSSA Bookstore](#)). Between the NCFAR Congressional Visits where the Presidents divided up and attended visits with other ag research stakeholders and the more focused weed science visits to our local Congressional offices during the next couple of days, our group **visited over 30 offices**.

The Weed Science Society Presidents also met with the American Soybean Association, the American

Farm Bureau Federation, the Entomological Society of America and CropLife America for in-depth discussions on their policy priorities and how our organizations can work together for the common good of ensuring a safe, secure, and reliable food and fiber supply.



Above: from Left to Right: Ian Burke - WSSA President-Elect; Thierry Besancon – NEWSS President; Hilary Sandler – WSSA President; Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA), Senate Agriculture Committee; Dawn Refsell - WSSA Vice President; Carl Coburn – WSWS President; and Eric Palmer – SWSS President.



Above: from Left to Right: Ian Burke - WSSA President-Elect; Dawn Refsell - WSSA Vice President; Hilary Sandler – WSSA President; Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) Sen. Agriculture Committee Ranking Member; Lee Van Wychen – WSSA Executive Director of Science Policy; Thierry Besancon – NEWSS President; and Rebecca Haynie – Director of Science Policy, CropLife America.



Above: From Left to Right: Hilary Sandler – WSSA President; Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) Chair of the House Science Committee; Eric Palmer – SWSS President; Thierry Besancon – NEWSS President; Carl Coburn – WSWS President; and Lee Van Wychen – WSSA Executive Director of Science Policy



Above: From Left to Right: Eric Palmer – SWSS President; Lee Van Wychen – WSSA Executive Director of Science Policy; Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), Chair of the powerful House Rules Committee; and Thierry Besancon – NEWSS President.

Our meeting with Rep. Foxx would not have happened without Eric’s local connection to the Congresswoman! In addition, we came to realize that she and her husband Tom established and ran a successful nursery and landscaping business in the High Country for more than three decades, which is now operated by their daughter. Rep. Foxx let us know that she was very familiar with glyphosate and how to use it!

Both House and Senate Ag Appropriators Reject President’s “Skinny” Budget

The House Appropriations Committee passed their agriculture spending bill on June 30 by a vote of 35 to 27 and the Senate passed their ag spending bill on July 10 by a 27 to 0 vote. Thankfully, both spending

bills rejected most of the Administration's proposed deep cuts to agricultural research.

The biggest area of concern in the **President’s Budget Request (PBR)** for FY 2026 was for USDA NIFA. The FY2025 estimated funding for NIFA is \$1.686 billion, while the PBR was \$1.044 billion, a 38% cut. The House Ag Appropriators marked up their bill at \$1.654 billion, which is a 1.9% cut, but the Senate marked up their bill at \$1.69 billion, a 0.3% increase.

Within the NIFA “Research and Education” account, the FY26 PBR had eliminated \$265 million in funding for the **Hatch Act**, which funds our agricultural experiment stations. However, thankfully, both the House and Senate Ag Appropriators restored the \$265 million in full.

The **Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)** was proposed to be cut by \$50 million in the PBR for FY 2026, but the House Ag Appropriators kept the funding at FY 2025 levels at \$445 million, while the Senate bumped it up by \$200 K. The same can be said for the **IR-4 Program** being held level at \$15 million for FY 2026. The sentiment on the Hill this year is that flat funding is considered a victory.

Within the NIFA “Extension” account, the FY 2026 PBR would have cut **Smith Lever 3(b) & 3(c)**

	FY 23 Final	FY 24 Final	FY 25 Estimate	FY 26 President	FY 26 House	FY 26 Senate
USDA Research Program	----- \$ Millions -----					
USDA- ARS	1,744	1,788	1,788	1,700	1,791	1,827
USDA- NIFA	1,701	1,679	1,687	1,044	1,654	1,692
Hatch Act: Ag Exp. Stations	259	259	265	0	265	265
Smith-Lever 3(b) and 3(c): Extension	325	325	325	175	325	325
AFRI: Ag & Food Research Initiative	455	445	445	405	445	445.2
IR-4 Program: Minor crop use	15	15	15	15	15	15
CPPM: Crop Prot. & Pest Mang't	21	21	21	0	21	21

Ag research funding for FY 23, FY 24, and FY 25 for select programs. The proposed funding for FY 2026 by the President, House and Senate are in the three columns on the right. The colored numbers indicate *increases (green)* or *decreases (red)* compared to the FY 2025 appropriation.

extension funding from \$325 million to \$175 million, a 46% cut. However, both the House and the Senate Ag Appropriators rejected that cut and kept funding at FY 2025 levels at \$325 million.

Within the NIFA “Integrated” account, the FY 2026 PBR eliminated every program in the account. The NIFA Integrated account requires funded projects to incorporate a 1) research component, 2) an education component, and 3) extension activities to address critical issues in agriculture. However, the House and Senate Ag Appropriators restored funding at FY 2025 levels. This includes the **Crop Protection and Pest Management (CPPM)** program at \$21 million and the Organic Transitions Program at \$7.5 million. The Methyl Bromide Transitions program was reduced from \$2 million to \$1 million in the House, but Senate kept it level at \$2 million.

Appropriations for EPA – Mixed News

The EPA's enacted budget for FY 2025 budget was \$9.14 billion, but the proposed FY26 budget from the President requested only \$4.16 billion, a 54.5% reduction. This cut would significantly impact programs like state grants, water infrastructure funding, and enforcement. The EPA is funded under the Interior & Environment Appropriations Subcommittee in both the House and Senate. The House passed their version of the bill on July 22 by a partisan vote of 33 to 28. The Senate passed their version of the Interior & Environment appropriations bill on July 24 by a vote of 26 to 2. The House version proposes \$7.01 billion for EPA in FY 2026, a 23% reduction. The Senate version proposed a less drastic cut to \$8.64 billion, or a 5% reduction compared to FY 2025.

On the bright side, both the House and Senate bills maintained pesticide licensing, which was one of the few EPA programs spared. The Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) funding was held level at \$134 million, which is a definite win in this budget environment. Report language in the bill also calls for reducing the backlog and timely completion of a third-party audit as required in PRIA 5.

Some Ag Research Funding included in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)

Following approval by the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, OBBBA moved through congressional consideration, where the agriculture

provisions originally introduced by those committees remained largely intact. On July 1, the Senate voted 51-50, with Vice President J.D. Vance casting the tie-breaking vote, to approve an amended OBBBA. On July 3, the House took up the Senate-amended version of OBBBA, voting 218-214 to approve the bill. On July 4, 2025, the president signed the OBBBA ([P.L. 119-21](#)) into law. Here are some details of ag research provisions in the OBBBA:

Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research

(FFAR): The OBBBA allocates \$37 million for FY 2026 to FFAR to promote public-private innovation partnerships that fund research addressing big food and agriculture challenges.

Specialty Crops Research Initiative (SCRI) The OBBBA significantly increases mandatory funding for the SCRI, scaling up funding from \$80 million in FY25 to \$175 million in FY26. This increase in funding for SCRI is only for FY26, and would revert to \$80 million in FY27 without a new farm bill or a second reconciliation package. The SCRI enhances research on pest control, crop breeding and mechanization for high-value crops.

Research Facilities Act. To modernize aging research infrastructure at the 1862, 1890 and 1994 land grant universities, the bill provides \$125 million in mandatory annual funding starting in 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter for grants under the Research Facilities Act. (7 U.S.C. 390d). This program has only been getting about \$1 million per year in discretionary funding, so this is a major win for land grant universities.

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). The OBBBA increases funding for the SCBGP from \$85 million to \$100 million in FY 2026. The SCBGP is a federal program that provides funding to states and territories to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. These crops receive support through locally-led projects. The program aims to boost the industry by funding projects that focus on research, marketing, and education.

Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention (PPDMDP).

The OBBBA increases the funding for APHIS's PPDMDP from \$75 million in FY 2025 to \$90 million in FY 2026. APHIS administers this program with a focus on strengthening prevention, detection, and mitigation efforts on

invasive plant pests and diseases. Projects are categorized under six goal areas, including enhancing pest/disease analysis and survey, targeting domestic inspections, strengthening pest identification, safeguarding nursery production, conducting outreach, and enhancing mitigation and rapid response.

Urban, Indoor, and Other Emerging Agricultural Production Research, Education, and Extension Initiative. The OBBBA provides \$2 million in mandatory funding for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2031. This program provides competitive grants to support research, education, and extension activities for the purposes of facilitating the development of urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural production, harvesting, transportation, aggregation, packaging, distribution, and markets, including determining and developing the best production management and integrated pest management practices.

Scholarships for Students at 1890 Institutions: The OBBBA will increase mandatory funding from \$40 million to \$60 million to remain available until expended. This program is considered a “stranded” program in the farm bill and has not been issued any new funding since September 2024.

What’s Next

The policy changes included in the OBBBA are some of the most significant in Farm Bill history because of what’s included *and* what’s left out. For the first time in 50 years (and 10 Farm Bills) the OBBBA separates nutrition assistance from commodity subsidies and risk management insurance. There are questions of how, or even whether, future farm bills might pass Congress.

While a handful of ag research programs were authorized in OBBBA, the vast majority of ag research programs in Title VII still need to be reauthorized before the Sep. 30, 2025 deadline. It remains to be seen whether Congress can pass a “skinny” Farm Bill or Farm Bill 2.0 before then. Otherwise, Congress will have to pass a third extension of the 2018 Farm Bill to get us through 2026.

Congress Pushes Back on Presidents Deep Cuts to Interior

For the Department of the Interior FY 2026 funding, both the House and Senate proposed smaller cuts--

and in some cases, increases--compared to the President's budget request.

In the House, considerably less severe funding cuts are proposed for the Bureau of Land Management (-8% vs. -32%), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (-6.5% vs. -32%), the U.S. Geological Survey (-5.6% vs. 39%), and the National Park Service (-6% vs. -37%) compared to the President's request. The USGS Ecosystems Mission Area, slated for termination in the President's proposal, would shrink by only 3% to \$290 million in the House bill.

The Senate has adopted a more generous approach: USGS is looking at a 2.4% increase, with its Ecosystems Mission Area slated for a nearly 3% boost to \$308 million, compared to the President's proposed elimination of the program. The National Park Service is looking at a 2% cut, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is facing a 1% cut, and the Bureau of Land Management is slated for a nearly 3% cut.

The U.S. Forest Service, targeted for a 75% reduction in the President's proposal, would see nearly level funding in the House (-0.2%) and a 1% increase in the Senate.

Letter to USDA, EPA and HHS Regarding Science and Transparency in Initial MAHA Report

On June 16, the six National and Regional Weed Societies joined over 250 other agricultural organizations in a letter to the heads of USDA, EPA and HHS after the release of the draft Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) report. Our concerns were that many of the studies referenced to support erroneous claims significantly misrepresented their findings or in some cases are entirely nonexistent. In other instances, the report relies on a few select pieces of poor evidence and opinion articles to justify false claims, ignoring vast volumes of scientific evidence to the contrary. Since its inception, the MAHA Commission has operated without meaningful input from food and agricultural stakeholders. [The letter can be read here.](#)

WSSA Urges Public Comment Period After Release of the August 12 MAHA Report

On August 1, 2025, the WSSA joined 31 other national organizations in a letter to HHS Sec. Kennedy, USDA Sec. Rollins and EPA Administrator Zeldin urging them to seek public comment after the MAHA report, which was set to be released on

August 12. However, as I write this on August 19, the official report has yet to be released. The letter and signatories are available [HERE](#).

A Review of the Role Played by Herbicides in the Success of Agriculture's Foundational Conservation and Environmental Objectives

In a [55 page report](#) released by the [Agricultural Nutrient Policy Council](#), they call on policymakers to fully recognize the indispensable role of diverse herbicide chemistries and modes of action in advancing national environmental goals. Limiting access to these tools risks reversing hard-won gains in conservation agriculture. Herbicides are essential to maintaining farm productivity and driving agriculture's environmental progress. Sound policy must reflect the full value of herbicides as a cornerstone of modern, responsible farming.

Adam Telle is new Assistant Secretary of Army (ASA) - Civil Works (CW)



On May 13, 2025, Mr. Adam Telle was nominated to be the new Assistant Secretary of Army- Civil Works or ASA (CW). He has strong support from Sen. Bill Haggerty (R-TN), where he has served as his Chief of Staff for the past 4 years.

On Saturday night, August 2, Telle was confirmed by the Senate to be the new ASA(CW) on a 72-22 vote. Telle is a native of Northport, AL and a graduate of Mississippi State University. He has spent the last 20 years in DC, including 10 of those years working for Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS) who was a strong supporter of the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) in Vicksburg, MS.

As ASA(CW) Telle will carry out the administration's priorities relating to ports, waterways, and flood control infrastructure. Specifically, the ASA(CW) establishes policy direction and provides supervision of the Department of the Army for authorized civil functions pertaining to river and harbor, flood and storm damage reduction, shore protection, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and related efforts.

Army Corps' Aquatic Plant Control Program at Risk Without Research Funding

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Aquatic Plant Control (APC) program — the only federally

authorized initiative dedicated to the research and development of science-based strategies to manage invasive aquatic plants — is facing a critical funding shortfall for the second consecutive year.

Established in 1958 under Section 104 of the River and Harbor Act, the APC program plays a vital role in protecting U.S. waterways from noxious aquatic plants that threaten navigation, flood control, agriculture, fish and wildlife habitat, and public health. For more than six decades, it has led the charge in developing and sharing new technologies to manage aquatic invasive species, such as hydrilla and Eurasian watermilfoil, which now threaten to spread across an additional 5 to 7 million acres if left unchecked.

Despite its proven return on investment and its small footprint in the Corps' \$10 billion budget, the program received no dedicated funding in FY 2025, jeopardizing ongoing research and development critical to ecosystem health and waterway management. From FY 2018 to FY 2024, funding for APC research has hovered between \$5 and \$7 million annually.

The outlook for FY 2026 remains uncertain. While the House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee included \$3 million for APC research in its July 17 markup, the USACE FY 2026 Work Plan still includes \$0 for the program. Aquatic plant management leaders remain hopeful that the Senate will prioritize APC funding when it reconvenes after the August recess.

Leaders from the Aquatic Plant Management Society (APMS) and its affiliate societies, as well as the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA), Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Foundation (AERF), and North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) have urged appropriators and USACE leadership to recognize the importance of continued investment in APC research. Their joint letter underscores the program's national significance and calls for restored funding to ensure effective, science-driven aquatic invasive species management continues.

Read the full letter to USACE leadership and congressional appropriators [HERE](#).

Senate Confirms WY Native Brian Nesvik as New Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



On August 1, 2025, the U.S. Senate confirmed Brian Nesvik on a 54-43 vote to be the next Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Nesvik is a native of Caspar, WY and spent 30 years with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and served as the agency's director from 2019 until his retirement in 2024. He also served in the Army National Guard for 35 years.

Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), on behalf of the nominee, said "I look forward to working with Brian to restore science to conservation policies." Some organizations, like the Sierra Club, have opposed Nesvik's nomination to the position, citing his support for removing Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections for grizzly bears. Others, like the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, welcomed his confirmation, citing their longstanding collaboration and expressing optimism about working together to conserve fish and wildlife habitats while enhancing hunting and fishing opportunities.

USDA to Relocate 2,600 DC Jobs from DC

On July 24, 2025, USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins announced a multi-year agency reorganization plan that will relocate more than half of its Washington, DC-based workforce to five regional hubs—Raleigh NC, Kansas City MO, Indianapolis IN, Fort Collins CO, and Salt Lake City UT. On August 1, Secretary Rollins announced a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum (PDF, 2.6 MB) Please see below for more details.

The plan includes the phased closure of three or four of the 94 USDA ARS research facilities, including the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and the George Washington Carver Center in Maryland-- which houses the Agricultural Research Service ARS. The U.S. Forest Service conducts research currently in 5 regional stations. Those labs will be consolidated at a single station in Fort Collins, risking the loss of regional expertise and long-term forest experiments.

Of the approximately 4,600 USDA employees currently based in the Washington region, no more

than 2,000 will remain after the reorganization is complete. The rest will be transferred to regional offices in an effort "to better serve rural communities and reduce operational costs". While no layoffs are planned, significant staff attrition is expected.

All stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, were encouraged to provide feedback by August 26, 2025. The National and Regional Weed Science Societies provided the following comments [HERE](#).

Congress Must Reaffirm EPA Authority Over Pesticide Labeling Laws

The six National and Regional Weed Science Societies, along with 350 plus other agricultural and pesticide stakeholders [sent a letter to House and Senate leaders](#) expressing our growing concerns that some states have begun to regulate pesticides in a manner contradicting decades of scientific guidance from EPA.

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) establishes EPA as the authority for making decisions on how pesticides should be labeled and used. While states are permitted to regulate the sale and use of pesticides under FIFRA (sections 24(a) and 24(c)), they are preempted from creating additional labeling requirements or requiring different labels and packaging (FIFRA 24(b)).

A lot of this goes back to California and the decision in 2017 to require warning labels for glyphosate. California listed glyphosate as a known carcinogen despite the EPA (and the rest of major regulatory bodies in the world conclusions that it was not. To that end, we strongly urge Congress to enact the [Agricultural Labeling Uniformity Act](#) (note- this was introduced in the last session of Congress as HR 4288. It has not been re-introduced yet in this Congress).

Regulatory Overhaul Needed to Advance Ag Technology, Lawmakers Told

On July 22, 2025, four panelists representing ag technology interests called on Congress to overhaul federal regulations to speed the approval of new ag technologies. Speaking before the House Agriculture Committee in a hearing titled "[Past Breakthroughs and Future Innovations in Crop Production](#)", they pointed to long delays at the EPA that are stalling innovation in crop protection tools.

Don Cameron, vice president and general manager of Terranova Ranch in California's Central Valley, said EPA staffing shortages are a major factor slowing the registration process. There simply aren't enough EPA staff to keep up with the workload.

Terry Abbott, chairman of the Council of Producers and Distributors of Agrotechnology (CPDA), noted that more than \$500 million worth of member-developed products are currently stuck in the EPA's regulatory backlog. He urged Congress to fully fund the agency's Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) and to update the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act (PRIA) to strengthen transparency and predictability in the review process.

You can view the hearing, the witness list and their opening statements [HERE](#).

Comment Period Opens for Proposed New Rule on Drone Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS)

On August 5, 2025, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) released a [new proposed rule](#) that would eliminate the requirement for operators to view drones in their visual line of sight. By eliminating these requirements, the Department of Transportation (DOT) believes the proposal will significantly expand the use of drones in farming. For more information about the proposed rule, see the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAAs) Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) [fact sheet](#). The comment period for the [new proposed rule](#) closes on **October 6, 2025**.

PERC Releases Unmanned Aerial System Task Force Recommendations for Pesticide Applicator Training Materials

On August 6, 2025, the [Pesticide Educational Resources Collaborative \(PERC\)](#) announced the release of the [Unmanned Aerial Systems \(UAS\) Task Force Recommendations Report](#), a comprehensive set of training content considerations designed to support states, tribes, and territories in the certification of pesticide applicators using UAS.

As drone use in agriculture expands, applicators and regulators face an important challenge: there are currently no standardized training materials to guide the safe and legal application of pesticides via UAS. Recognizing this urgent need, PERC convened a National Task Force of experts to review existing training resources, identify gaps, and then provide

actionable insights and content recommendations that can inform the development of future training materials and certification exams.

Website that Lists Noxious Weeds in each US State and Canadian Province Now Available

Mohsen B. Mesgaran and his team at UC-Davis have launched a website that provides lists of noxious weeds for each U.S. state, as well as provinces and states in Canada and Australia:

<https://regulatedplants.unu.edu/>

They are planning to expand the database to include other countries and add ecological information, management guidelines, and photos for each weed species in future releases. For the U.S. list, they have also conducted a quantitative analysis of noxious weed sales on Amazon and eBay, which will be out soon. Based on their analysis, over one-third of these noxious weeds are available for sale on Amazon and eBay!

Lee Van Wychen, Ph.D.
Executive Director of Science Policy
Weed Science Society of America
5720 Glenmullen Pl,
Alexandria, VA 22303
Cell: 202-746-4686

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://wsweedsociety.org/store/#!form/Store>. Contact the Business Manager (Eric Gustafson) at (303) 327-8016 for bulk order prices.

2025 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.

Last name	First name	Affiliation	
Mailing address		City	State Zip code
Phone # w/area code		e-mail address	

Classification: Student ___ University ___ Federal Agency ___ State Agency ___
Private Industry (manufacturing and sales) ___ Private Industry (consulting) ___
Unemployed ___ Retired ___ other (specify) _____

Send to: WSWS/IMI,
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Questions? info@wsweedscience.org or (303) 327-8016

Western Society of Weed Science 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.