



# Western Society of Weed Science Newsletter

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## WINTER 2025

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## President's Report



Our Western Society of Weed Science is rapidly approaching and will be at The Westin Seattle, March 10 to 13. We have a chance to visit with each other, so I hope you take advantage of the opportunity. Our board of directors meeting will be on Monday from 10 am until 2 pm in the Elliott Bay Room on the lobby level. The meeting

will include reports from board members and committee, you are welcome to attend and if you have an item you would like covered, please email me at [tprather@uidaho.edu](mailto:tprather@uidaho.edu). I want to thank all who agreed to serve on committees. I had an easy time filling committee openings thanks to member willingness to serve. You will find that a president really likes to be contacted with a request to serve on a specific committee.

Your member at large, Erik Lehnhoff, has been compiling information on how we might work with our agency members to facilitate their involvement with WSWP. I attended the Western Weed Coordinating Committee recently and presented on the types of presentations they may encounter and encouraged using workshop and symposia to further meet their committee goals. In addition, Jane Mangold is introducing WSWP at the annual weed meeting in Montana.

Please read through the other sections of our newsletter so that you are updated on topics related to our meeting and other activities supported through WSWP. I look forward to seeing you in Seattle.

Tim Prather, WSWP President

**WSWP Annual Meeting March 10 – 13, 2025, Seattle, Washington**

# Student Liaison Report – Kenzie Barth

Our annual meeting is coming up soon and I'm looking forward to seeing y'all there! Feel free to check out the website for current information on the meeting location and contest information: <https://wsweedsociety.org/>

At the annual meeting, the silent auction is a fundraiser for student scholarships and so benefits the students of WWS. If you have donations for the silent auction please bring them with you or bring a representation and we can figure out shipping details after the auction's close. Donations often include gift baskets, gifts from your local area, or university, artwork, books, or anything related to weed science! We greatly appreciate the members who donate items year after year and it makes a significant contribution to the success of our students. If you have questions or requests, please feel free to contact me!

At the annual meeting, a new Student Liaison Chair-elect will be chosen by the WWS student body. If you're interested, please come to the student luncheon and nominate yourself or have someone nominate you! If you know now that you'd like to run, please email me so I can be prepared with your name. The position is a two-year term; the first year is a non-voting board position to learn the processes and procedures of the board, and the second year is a voting board position and the main role. Reach out to me if you have any questions.

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

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

Thanks,

Kenzie Barth, Student Liaison  
[mbarth3@uwyo.edu](mailto:mbarth3@uwyo.edu)

Weston Maughan, Student Chair-elect  
[peter.maughan@wsu.edu](mailto:peter.maughan@wsu.edu)

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# Program Highlights for the 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science.

Carl Coburn President-Elect/Program Chair

The 2025 annual meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science is approaching quickly! The program committee has been preparing and we hope you will find this meeting informative and beneficial for maintaining and building new relationships among our members. If you have not registered yet, please do so at <https://wsweedscience.org/annual-meeting-2025/> . Our venue, The Westin Seattle, has rooms available that can be found at the above link, be sure to act soon!

There are a total of 147 presentations with 84 papers and 63 posters. There is one symposium on Wednesday afternoon titled “Innovative Approaches for Weed Science Education and Communication”.

The week will begin on **Monday March 10** with a board of directors meeting from 10:00-2:00pm in the Elliott Bay Room on the lobby level and the WSWs Members Welcome Reception from 6:00-8:00pm.

**Tuesday March 11** the poster session starts at 7:30am with authors of odd numbered posters presenting. **Students with posters entered into the contest are expected to be at their posters on the respective days at 7:30am-9:15am when judges will make rounds.** The General Session will follow at 9:30-11:00am. After the conclusion of the General Session, there will be the first ever Diversity and Inclusion Social Hour from 11:00am-noon. Paper presentations will occur from 1:30-5:00pm and the student reception from 5:00-6:30pm.

**Wednesday March 12** the poster session starts at 7:30am with authors of even numbered posters presenting until 9:15am. The remainder of the morning is filled with paper presentations until the WSWs Awards Luncheon at 11:45am-1:30pm. The afternoon consists of paper presentations until 3:00pm and the symposium on Weed Science Education and Communication will occur from 2:30-5:00pm. What’s New in Industry will take place from 5:00-6:00pm followed by the Student Night Out from 6:30-8:30pm.

**Thursday March 13** will begin with the business breakfast from 6:30-9:00am, which will include announcing winners of the student competitions. Paper presentations and discussions sections will follow. The Board of Directors will meet from 1:00-2:00pm.

Finally, it is important to remember the deadline for **Abstract Submission is February 15, 2025 and slide presentation upload deadline is Monday March 6, 2025.** The program committee is looking forward to another meeting of the WSWs!

# Local Arrangement Report – Rui Liu

The local arrangement committee is excited to welcome everyone to the 2025 Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS) meeting from March 10th to March 13th, 2025, in downtown Seattle, Washington.

The venue for the WSWS meeting will be Westin Seattle, located at 1900 5th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101. For inquiries, please contact them at (206) 728-1000 or visit [Westin Seattle](#). The WSWS annual meeting website also provides links to hotel reservations.

## Transportation:

**Plan to fly to Seattle- Tacoma International Airport.** Domestic arrivals are located on the main terminal's Baggage Claim level (Level 1). International arrivals are located at the South Satellite (S Concourse), connected to the rest of the terminal via an underground tunnel.

**Travel to Downtown Seattle.** Rental Car Facility (RCF, 3150 South 160<sup>th</sup> Street) is in a separate building connected to the Main Terminal by a free shuttle bus ride. The shuttle bus zone is outside the terminal doors at Level 1 of the Main Terminal. The buses run 24/7, and the ride to RCF takes about 5-10 mins. The rideshare pick-up (for Uber/Lyft) area is on Level 3 of the Parking Garage (across from the Main Terminal). Link Light Rail station (the fastest and most affordable way) is on Level 3 of the Main Terminal, near the Parking Garage. There are ticket vending machines at the station, and the light rail runs every 6-15 mins. Choose the trains that head north to Downtown Seattle. Here is a tool website to help plan your travel (<https://www.soundtransit.org/>). You can enter “SeaTac/ Airport Station” at the start and “Westin Hotel” at the end. It takes 12 stops from “SeaTac/Airport” to get to “Westlake” stop, ~40 mins train ride. You can exit onto 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and walk about 5-10 mins to the Westin Seattle hotel (1900 5th Ave). The fare cost ranges from \$2.25 to \$3.5.

## Attractions:

- ❖ Pike Place Market- about 0.5 miles (10-15 mins walk). One of Seattle’s most iconic attractions. You can see the famous fishmongers throwing fish, sample local produce, crafts, and artisanal foods, and enjoy the stunning views of Elliot Bay. The Original Starbucks, Gum Wall, and Seattle Aquarium are all there.
- ❖ Space Needle- about 0.7 miles (15 mins walk, or a 2 min monorail ride on the Seattle Center Monorail from the Westlake station). This iconic observation tower offers panoramic views of Seattle, the Puget Sound, and the surrounding mountains. It has a rotating glass floor and a glass observatory for spectacular views. The Chihuly Garden and Glass, and Museum of Pop Culture are located near Seattle Center.
- ❖ Seattle Art Museum- about 0.4 miles (10 mins walk). It houses diverse global art collections, including works from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the Pacific Northwest. The museum also hosts rotating exhibits and installations.

See you all in March!

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Eric Gustafson

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## Publications

WSWS ONLINE

EDUCATION

WSSA Journals Website  
Online

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Weed Science Society of  
America  
and  
Canadian Weed Science  
Society Joint Annual  
Meeting  
Feb. 24 – 27, 2025  
Vancouver BC, Canada  
[www.wssa.net](http://www.wssa.net)  
[www.weedscience.ca](http://www.weedscience.ca)

Western Society of Weed  
Science Annual Meeting  
Mar. 10 – 13, 2025  
Seattle, Washington  
[www.wsweedscience.org](http://www.wsweedscience.org)

Aquatic Plant Management  
Society Annual Meeting  
Jul. 14 - 17, 2025  
Providence, Rhode Island  
[www.apms.org](http://www.apms.org)

North Central Weed  
Science Society Annual  
Meeting  
Dec. 15 – 18, 2025  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
[www.ncwss.org](http://www.ncwss.org)

Northeastern Weed  
Science Society Annual  
Meeting  
Jan. 5 - 9, 2026  
Annapolis, Maryland  
[www.newss.org](http://www.newss.org)

Southern Weed Science  
Society Annual Meeting  
2026

[www.swss.ws](http://www.swss.ws)

## RECENTLY RETIRED?

## PLANNING TO RETIRE?

The Western Society of Weed Science honors our member as they retire. If you, or someone you know, has recently retired or is planning to retire, please let me know so we can recognize them at the WSSW meeting in Seattle. It will be my honor as Immediate Past President to recognize their contributions to WSSW

Curtis Rainbolt  
(559) 430-4418

[Curtis.rainbolt@basf.com](mailto:Curtis.rainbolt@basf.com)

## Reminder to Committee Chairs and WSSW 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](mailto:sandra@mountainwestpest.com) or 970-266-9573.

Thank you,

Sandra McDonald

WSSW Operating Procedures Representative 2023-2028

# Collaborative Watershed-Level Biocontrol of Leafy Spurge

John Kaltenbach, Biocontrol Specialist, Colorado Department of Agriculture

The infestation of leafy spurge (*Euphorbia virgata*) greatly expanded in northwest Colorado along the Yampa River following extensive spring flooding in 2011, allowing the invasive weed to establish founding populations in Dinosaur National Monument (DNM). This spread of leafy spurge led to the creation of the **Yampa River Leafy Spurge Project** (YRLSP), a watershed-level integrated approach to controlling leafy spurge. The mission of YRLSP was to engage landowners, agencies, educators and organizations to establish effective programs of integrated management for invasive leafy spurge.

One control method, releases of biocontrol agents including leafy spurge flea beetles (*Aphthona* spp.) and longhorn beetles (*Oberea erythrocephala*), had been used sporadically over the years, beginning in 1991. However, little follow-up or monitoring had been done to document the efficacy of this approach, and the local consensus of weed managers was that it was ineffective due to cold weather and frequent flooding along the river.

In 2019, visits to sites with documented release records between 1991 and 2016 revealed that *Aphthona* and *Oberea*, along with the spurge hawkmoth, *Hyles euphorbia*, another leafy spurge biocontrol agent, were found at almost every release site and at many locations far from documented releases.

The persistence of these host-specific biological control agents, even in low numbers, and the moderate to low density of leafy spurge, was validation that biological control established and is potentially reducing the density and spread of leafy spurge. In 2019, the YRLSP began to release additional leafy spurge biological control agents, particularly flea beetles, with the goal of establishing local nursery sites from which to collect and redistribute. Between 2019 and 2021, 40,800 *Aphthona* and 570 *Oberea* were released. In 2022, in addition to the establishment of those sites, beetles were released as part of an inundative approach designed to ensure widespread distribution of biocontrol agents on leafy spurge patches throughout the watershed. Between 2022 and 2024, 187,900 *Aphthona* and 4,890 *Oberea* were released. Collections came both from within Colorado and from sites in Idaho in cooperation with Kim Ragotzkie and Joey Milan of the BLM (Figure 1). Emily Spencer, Natural Resource Specialist at DNM, has secured funds from the National Park Service Invasive Species Initiative for an Inundative Biological Control Strategy Project (IBCS), of which the YRLSP is a key partner, with plans to collect and release even more biological control agents within the Yampa River basin, and monitor the effectiveness of biological control of leafy spurge (Figure 2). The Colorado Department of Agriculture will continue to assist in collection and release of biological control agents to halt the spread and reduce the cover of leafy spurge.

<https://www.yampariverleafyspurgeproject.com/>





## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course will be held April 21-24, 2025 at the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch in Loveland, Colorado.

Registration (\$850.00 by March 10, 2025; \$950.00 on March 10, 2025) includes educational program and daily refreshment breaks. Three lunches and three dinners are also included in the registration. Visit [http://www.mountainwestpest.com/Past\\_Courses.php](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, Course Coordinator, for additional information at 970-266-9573 or [Sandra@MountainWestPest.com](mailto:Sandra@MountainWestPest.com)





## **Rejuvra (indaziflam): come participate in a grass-roots effort to share information on effectiveness and BMPs for controlling exotic annual grasses**

An interactive workshop @ Society for Range Management Annual Meeting,  
Spokane WA, Monday, February 10th 10:20am-Noon, *Pacific time*.

**Annual Meeting 2025 | Rangelands**

Contacts: Matt Germino, [mgermino@usgs.gov](mailto:mgermino@usgs.gov); Harry Quicke, Tim Prather, Brynne Lazarus

For remote call-in, please contact [Blazarus@usgs.gov](mailto:Blazarus@usgs.gov) by February 8<sup>th</sup>.

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**Overview:** The herbicide Rejuvra (indaziflam) presents a focal point for discussion on control of exotic annual grasses. Many application trials of Rejuvra have been made in semiarid rangelands, and can be learned from. As with any land-management tool, sharing of information on Rejuvra effects can improve effectiveness of future applications. The goal of this workshop is to promote discussion and information sharing on Rejuvra effects among extension and weed specialists, researchers, landowners or managers, and etc who have experience with Rejuvra or are considering use of it. Outcomes will include networking among experienced and new users, and groundwork for a new “meta”-syntheses on 1) the location and implementation of existing trials, and 2) possibly, outcomes of trials.

### **Format for 90-minute all-inclusive discussion with approximate times (110 min available):**

- 1) 10 min. Introduce workshop objective, process, and participants
  - a. Networking and working group communications have been critical for assessing prior control options for annual grasses; examples and outcomes described.
- 2) 20 min. Examples of existing syntheses, landscapes or groups using or testing Rejuvra, very short introductions with maps and pictures. Current invitees include-
  - a. Julie Kraft, Sublette Co, Wyoming
  - b. Matt Wenick, Grant Co, Oregon
  - c. Jaycie Arndt, Univ Wyoming IMAGINE
  - d. Matt Germino, US Geological Survey, trials in Southern Idaho
  - e. Derek Sebastian, ENVU, Colorado
- 3) 40 min. Open mic. A spreadsheet will be designed on-screen for all to see as participants share background information, i.e. metadata on the where/when/what of their trials with Rejuvra.
- 4) 10 min. Open discussion about prospects for further development of the database/spreadsheet including sharing among participants.
- 5) 10 min. Open discussion of formation of a network of Rejuvra users to share information; e.g., this could be a temporary and informal email group with periodic teleconferences and a website.

**Workshop description, as posted in SRM program:** Tools for controlling exotic annual grasses such as cheatgrass are a priority need for semiarid shrub steppe and related habitats, but the large amount of variability in factors such as site management and disturbance history, climate, soils, and time-based factors such as weather can cause considerable variability in effectiveness of trials. Rejuvra, product brand name for indaziflam, is a relatively new herbicide that appears to provide more years of preemergent inhibition of seedling establishment than other herbicides. Rejuvra is increasingly common and has new clearances to allow its application in many rangelands. A synthesis of its effectiveness is needed. This workshop will follow a structured format in which users can share their experiences with its application and participate in the founding of a network of application specialists and a meta- analysis study of Rejuvra effects. The session organizers will organize the input into a spreadsheet that contains location, habitat type, and many contextual variables, and will guide the development of a summary report and a platform for Rejuvra users to share advice, results, and other communications on its application.



# WASHINGTON REPORT

January 16, 2025

Lee Van Wychen

## **USFWS Proposes Listing Monarch Butterfly as Threatened Under ESA**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) published a 12-month finding on the endangered species listing status of the monarch butterfly as “threatened” in December 2024. The USFWS is seeking public input on a proposal under **section 4(d) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA)**. A 4(d) rule is one of many tools in the ESA for protecting threatened species. These rules get their name from section 4(d) of the ESA, which directs the Secretary of the Interior to issue protective regulations deemed “necessary and advisable to provide for the conservation of” threatened species.

Public comments will be accepted on the proposal until **March 12, 2025**. The Service will then evaluate the comments and any additional information on the species and determine whether to list the monarch butterfly.

With monarchs being listed as “threatened” (as compared to “endangered”), the USFWS 4(d) rule offers more flexible regulations, including special rules to tailor protections to the specific needs of the threatened species. A 4(d) rule can modify or exempt certain species protections to balance conservation efforts with economic impacts. It allows flexibility to incentivize positive conservation actions. Public comment is critical to shape the 4(d) rule.

With the monarch butterfly being proposed as a threatened species under the ESA by USFWS, the EPA must include it within its standard process for pesticide label registrations under its **Herbicide Strategy**, treating it with the same consideration as other protected species. If the USFWS proposal to list the monarch as a threatened species becomes final, impacts to pesticide labels will likely be seen starting in **2026** as new and previously registered active ingredients undergo registration review.

The monarch has two U.S. populations, a western one that overwinters in coastal California and an eastern one that migrates to central Mexico. The USFWS is proposing critical habitat for the **western monarch** at a portion of its overwintering sites in coastal California, but not for the eastern monarch. In total, the USFWS is proposing 4,395 acres of **critical habitat** for the western monarch population across Alameda, Marin, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and Ventura counties in **California**. A critical habitat designation does not impose additional requirements on the state or private land owners, unless the action involves federal funding, permits or approvals.

## **INFORMATION THE USFWS IS LOOKING FOR ON MONARCHS**

The USFWS intends that any final action resulting from their proposed rule will be based on the best scientific and commercial data available and be as accurate and as effective as possible. Therefore, they request comments or information from governmental agencies, Native American Tribes, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested parties concerning this proposed rule. In particular, they are seeking comments concerning:

### **(1) The species’ biology, range, and population trends, including:**

- a) Biological or ecological requirements of the monarch species, including habitat requirements for feeding, breeding, and sheltering;
- b) Genetics and taxonomy;
- c) Historical and current range, including distribution patterns, alternative migratory pathways, and the locations of any additional populations of this species;
- d) Population dynamics and contributions from the nonmigratory populations, specifically resident monarchs in southern Florida, the Gulf Coast, the southern Atlantic Coast, and the southern Pacific Coast;

- e) Historical and current population levels, and current and projected trends; and
- f) Past and ongoing conservation measures for the species, its habitat, or both.

**(2) Threats and conservation actions affecting the species, including:**

- a) Factors that may be affecting the continued existence of the species, which may include habitat modification or destruction, overutilization, disease, predation, the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms, or other natural or manmade factors;
- b) Biological, commercial trade, or other relevant data concerning any threats (or lack thereof) to this species;
- c) Existing regulations or conservation actions that may be addressing threats to this species; and
- d) Other potential threats that were not identified as key threats to the species.

**(3) Additional information concerning the historical and current status of this species.**

**(4) Information to assist us with applying or issuing protective regulations under section 4(d) of the Act that may be necessary and advisable to provide for the conservation of the monarch butterfly.** In particular, we seek information concerning:

- a) The extent to which we should include any of the Act's section 9 prohibitions in the 4(d) rule;
- b) Whether we should consider any modifications or additional exceptions from the prohibitions in the 4(d) rule;
- c) **Whether the provisions related to the maintenance, enhancement, removal, or establishment of milkweed should be revised to include spatial or temporal restrictions or deferments;**
- d) **Whether we should include an exception for the use of pesticides and, if so, what measures are reasonable, feasible, and**

**adequate to reduce or offset pesticide exposure to monarchs from agricultural and non-agricultural uses (e.g., rangeland, rights-of-way, forestry, commercial areas, and mosquito control), including measures for specific classes of pesticides (e.g., herbicides, insecticides), pesticide uses, and application methods;**

- e) Whether we should include an exception for direct impacts from transportation and energy infrastructure, including mortality from collisions with wind turbines; and
- f) Whether we could improve or modify our approach to the 4(d) rule in any way to provide for greater public participation and understanding, or to better accommodate public concerns and comments.

**(5) Specific information related to critical habitat, such as the following:**

- a) The amount and distribution of monarch butterfly habitat (i.e. *Asclepias spp.*)
- b) Any additional areas occurring within the range of the species in the United States, especially in breeding, migratory, or overwintering areas, that should be included in the critical habitat designation because they (i) are occupied at the time of listing and contain the physical or biological features that are essential to the conservation of the species and that may require special management considerations, or (ii) are unoccupied at the time of listing and are essential for the conservation of the species; and
- c) Special management considerations or protection that may be needed in critical habitat areas we are proposing, including managing for the potential effects of climate change.

**(6) Land use designations and current or planned activities in the subject areas and their possible impacts on proposed critical habitat.**

**(7) Any probable economic, national security, or other relevant impacts of designating any area that may be included in the final designation, and the related benefits of including or excluding specific areas.**

**(8) Information on the extent to which the description of probable economic impacts in the economic analysis is a reasonable estimate of the likely economic impacts and any additional information regarding probable economic impacts that we should consider.**

**(9) Whether any specific areas we are proposing for critical habitat designation should be considered for exclusion under section 4(b)(2) of the Act, and whether the benefits of potentially excluding any specific area outweigh the benefits of including that area. If you think we should exclude any additional areas, please provide information supporting a benefit of exclusion.**

**(10) Whether we could improve or modify our approach to designating critical habitat in any way to provide for greater public participation and understanding, or to better accommodate public concerns and comments.**

To review the proposed rule and submit comments by **March 12, 2025**, please go to:

<https://www.regulations.gov/search?filter=FWS-R3-ES-2024-0137&withinCommentPeriod=true>

### **Congress Punts Farm Bill and Government Funding Decisions into 2025.**

- The House Ag Committee passed their Farm Bill draft on May 24, 2024. The Senate Ag Committee did not release their draft of the Farm Bill until November 19, 2024, almost two weeks after the elections.
- The 2023 Farm Bill extension expired on Sep. 30, 2024.
- On December 21, 2024, the U.S. Senate passed a continuing resolution by a vote of 85 to 11, extending FY 2024 funding levels for

three months, authorizing a one-year farm bill extension, and securing farm and disaster aid. The legislation, which extends FY 2024 appropriations levels to March 14, 2025 passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 366 to 34.

- The next session of Congress, the 119<sup>th</sup>, began on Jan. 3, 2025 with a Republican House, Senate and Administration.

### **House Agriculture Committee Members for the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress**

On December 17, the House Republican Steering Committee selected the Republican members who will serve on the House Committee on Agriculture for the 119th Congress.

#### **Republican House Agriculture Members:**

Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson (PA-15), **Chairman**

Rep. Frank Lucas (OK-03)

Rep. Austin Scott (GA-08)

Rep. Rick Crawford (AR-01)

Rep. Michael Bost (IL-12)

Rep. Scott DesJarlais (TN-04)

Rep. Doug LaMalfa (CA-01)

Rep. David Rouzer (NC-07)

Rep. Trent Kelly (MS-01)

Rep. Don Bacon (NE-02)

Rep. Dusty Johnson (SD-AL)

Rep. Jim Baird (IN-04)

Rep. Tracey Mann (KS-01)

Rep. Randy Feenstra (IA-04)

Rep. Mary Miller (IL-15)

Rep. Barry Moore (AL-02)

Rep. Kat Cammack (FL-03)

Rep. Brad Finstad (MN-01)

Rep. Monica De La Cruz (TX-15)

Rep. Ronny Jackson (TX-13)

Rep. John Rose (TN-06)

Rep. Zach Nunn (IA-03)

Rep. Derrick Van Orden (WI-03)

#### **New Republican House Agriculture Members:**

Rep. Dan Newhouse (WA-04)

Rep. Tony Wied (WI-08)

Rep. Rob Bresnahan (PA-08)

Rep. Mark Harris (NC-08)  
Rep. Mark Messmer (IN-08)  
Rep. David Taylor (OH-02)

### **Angie Craig Wins Vote to Lead House Agriculture Democrats**

Representative Angie Craig (D-Minn.) will lead Democrats on the House Agriculture Committee in the 119th Congress after winning a caucus vote on December 17, 2024. Craig, 52, beat out Rep. Jim Costa (D-Calif.), 72, for the role by a vote of 121 to 91.

She will become the first woman ranking member of the House Agriculture panel and is part of a larger generational shift among House Democrats, who have forced out a number of aging committee leaders in the wake of their November election losses.

An interesting side note is that Rep. Craig's fellow Minnesotan, Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), is set to take over as the top Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Committee in 2025.

#### **Democratic House Agriculture Members:**

Rep. Angie Craig, Minnesota, **Ranking Member**  
Rep. David Scott, Georgia  
Rep. Jim Costa, California  
Rep. Jim McGovern, Massachusetts  
Rep. Alma Adams, North Carolina  
Rep. Jahana Hayes, Connecticut  
Rep. Shontel Brown, Ohio  
Rep. Sharice Davids, Kansas  
Rep. Andrea Salinas, Oregon  
Rep. Don Davis, North Carolina  
Rep. Jill Tokuda, Hawai'i  
Rep. Nikki Budzinski, Illinois  
Rep. Eric Sorensen, Illinois  
Rep. Gabe Vasquez, New Mexico  
Rep. Jonathan Jackson, Illinois  
Rep. Shri Thanedar, Michigan

#### **New Democratic House Agriculture Members:**

Rep. Adam Gray, California  
Rep. Kristen McDonald Rivet, Michigan  
Rep. Shomari Figures, Alabama

Rep. Eugene Vindman, Virginia  
Rep. Josh Riley, New York  
Rep. John Mannion, New York  
Rep. April McClain Delaney, Maryland  
\*Two open seats remain to be filled at a later date.

#### **Republican Senate Agriculture Committee Members**

Sen. John Boozman, Arkansas, **Chairman**  
Sen. Mitch McConnell, Kentucky  
Sen. John Hoeven, North Dakota  
Sen. Joni Ernst, Iowa  
Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mississippi,  
Sen. Roger Marshall, Kansas  
Sen. Tommy Tuberville, Alabama  
Sen. Jim Justice, West Virginia  
Sen. Charles Grassley, Iowa  
Sen. John Thune, South Dakota  
Sen. Deb Fischer, Nebraska  
Sen. Jerry Moran, Kansas

#### **Democratic Senate Agriculture Committee Members**

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Minnesota- **Ranking Member**  
Sen. Michael Bennet, Colorado  
Sen. Tina Smith, Minnesota  
Sen. Richard Durbin, Illinois  
Sen. Cory Booker, New Jersey  
Sen. Ben Ray Lujan, New Mexico  
Sen. Raphael Warnock, Georgia  
Sen. Peter Welch, Vermont  
Sen. John Fetterman, Pennsylvania  
Sen. Adam Schiff, California  
Sen. Elissa Slotkin, Michigan

#### **WSSA and NAICC Host EPA and FWS on Endangered Species Issues Tour in Wisconsin**

During the first week of September, WSSA and the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC) hosted staff from the U.S. EPA Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the USDA NRCS to examine the challenges and opportunities for implementing and improving

EPA's "**Herbicide Strategy**" for protecting endangered and threatened species and their critical habitat as specified in the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The first herbicides that are going through the new "Herbicide Strategy" process this fall includes Liberty Ultra (a new herbicide registration) as well as herbicide re-registration decisions for oxyfluorfen, metribuzin, and possibly atrazine. The tour covered multiple cropping systems and production scenarios across Wisconsin, including corn, soybean, alfalfa, potato and cranberry cropping systems. We discussed habitat requirements for two ESA species: the eastern massasauga rattlesnake and the rusty patched bumble bee and focused on how to improve ESA mitigation measures. We also saw the abundance of non-crop habitat available next to crop production fields and discussed how "habitat offsets" could be a very viable option for protecting ESA species, as compared to Pesticide Use Limitation Areas (PULAs) and spray drift and runoff/erosion reduction measures.

*Wisconsin ESA Tour Participants (L to R, first row): Dawn Wyse-Pester, Director of Innovation, Research & Development at WinField United with*



*Land O' Lakes; Hilary Sandler, WSSA President-Elect; Lori Nordstrom, Assistant Regional Director for Wisconsin and Minnesota, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS); Jan Matusko, Director EPA Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) Environmental Fate & Effects Division (EFED); (second row): Lee Van Wychen, WSSA Executive Director of Science*

*Policy; Matt Eich, NAICC Independent Crop Consultant, South Dakota; Kris Garber, Senior Science Advisor, EPA OPP EFED; Sarah Chu, WSSA Science Policy Fellow; Josh Miranda, WSSA Science Policy Fellow; Kaitlin Picone, Senior Advisor for Stakeholder Engagement, EPA OPP; Ian Olson, NAICC Independent Crop Consultant, South Dakota; Steven Hoffman, NAICC Independent Crop Consultant, Wisconsin; (back row): Kevin Pontel, NAICC Independent Crop Consultant, Wisconsin; Neil Anderson, Acting Director, EPA OPP Biological and Economic Division (BEAD); Mark VanGessel, WSSA-EPA Liaison; Charles "Billy" Smith, Director, EPA OPP Registration Division (RD); Bill Chism, WSSA ESA Committee Chair; Greg Dahl, WSSA President; Ed Messina, Director, EPA OPP; James Todd, NAICC Independent Crop Consultant, Texas; Tim Kiely, Deputy Director, EPA OPP Pesticide Re-Evaluation Division (PRD). The photo was taken at the last stop of tour at the WinField United Innovation Center in River Falls, WI.*

### **EPA Updates Process for Developing Maps to Protect Endangered Species**

On December 19, 2024, the EPA took another step to reduce potential impacts to farmers from implementing endangered species protections while continuing to protect endangered species by publishing a process

<https://www.epa.gov/endangered-species/process-epa-uses-develop-core-maps-pesticide-use-limitation-areas>) that it will use to develop maps for protecting species designated as threatened or endangered (listed) by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and their designated critical habitats. These maps allow EPA to protect listed species from the use of pesticides through **geographically specific** mitigations. The process identifies areas where listed species are likely to be located and areas where they are not, which ensures that additional measures to protect listed species are only required in these areas.

A huge amount of credit for this improvement goes to **Dr. Stanley Culpepper and Dr. Taylor Randell-Singleton** at the University of Georgia for their work on refining habitat maps for two endangered salamander species in their state. When the Enlist Duo label was published in 2022 for ESA mitigations, almost one million acres in 11 Georgia counties were restricted due to the endangered salamander's habitat. They worked through a process that defined actual salamander habitat. After refining the maps and identifying actual salamander habitat, they found that only 0.37% of the area should be restricted due to salamander habitat.

As EPA assesses pesticide impacts on listed species, the agency may find that some mitigations are only needed to protect listed species. In those cases, EPA will only apply those mitigations where appropriate and necessary in geographically specific areas (referred to as Pesticide Use Limitation Areas or PULAs). PULAs are areas where pesticide exposures are likely to impact the continued existence of a listed species, which may include a reduction in survival or recovery of the species.

When developing a PULA for a specific species, EPA starts by developing a "core map." A core map identifies areas that are important to a species, which could be a refined range map. In cases where range maps are broad and include areas where a species is no longer thought to live, then core maps would only include areas within the species range where the species likely currently lives. The process released today is intended to identify such areas and exclude areas from EPA's core map where the species is not likely to live. After developing a core map for a species, EPA develops a PULA that accounts for pesticide movement from a use site (e.g., spray drift and run-off) by adding adjacent areas to the core map. Developing a core map or PULA does not alter FWS' range map.

EPA's goal is to develop core maps for all FWS listed species that may require protections with respect to pesticide exposures. The agency is focusing first on creating core maps for listed species identified in its **Vulnerable Species Action Plan (VSAP)**, released in September 2024. This provides a framework for EPA to adopt early, meaningful protections to address potential impacts for listed species that the Agency identifies as particularly "vulnerable" to pesticides. EPA has developed core maps for several VSAP species, which can be found on the agency's website, and will be developing core maps for the remaining VSAP and other listed species and making them publicly available as they are completed. EPA has also prioritized a subset of listed species for core map development.

Additional information can be found in the core map development process document. Visit EPA's website to learn more about how **EPA's pesticide program** is protecting endangered species.

### **Federal Court Judge Vacates APHIS Rule on Genetically Engineered Organisms**

On December 2, the federal district court for the northern district of California threw out streamlined regulations of bioengineered crops, creating uncertainty in ag biotech laboratories across the country. In 2020, USDA APHIS finalized a rule that simplified reviews of genetically engineered plants such as herbicide tolerant soybeans and Bt-cotton.

The rule also exempted from regulation crops made by editing the species own genes, on condition the gene-editing produces a trait that conventional cross-breeding could have created. In a lawsuit filed in 2023 by the National Family Farm Coalition, Friends of the Earth, Pesticide Action Network, Center for Environmental Health, Center for Biological Diversity, and Center for Food Safety, they argued that USDA had not followed procedures required when agencies create new regulations. The court agreed with

plaintiffs that it was arbitrary and capricious for APHIS not to incorporate its noxious weed authority in its final rule, and to exempt from regulatory review GE plants with changes that could have been achieved through conventional breeding techniques without adequate substantiation for these positions in the final rule record. The court vacated the rule as of December 2 and ordered the parties to meet on outstanding issues in the case. USDA may revert to its prior rules until the case is fully resolved, which could take years.

### **Bonanno Honored with the IR-4 Project SOAR Award**



The **SOAR Award** honors external partners of the USDA IR-4 Project who exemplify the areas of Service, Outreach, Altruism and Research (SOAR), while supporting specialty crop growers and the mission of The IR-4 Project.

**Rich Bonanno**, is currently the Executive Director of the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors (ASRED). He has also served in the roles of former Associate Dean of NC State CALS, Director of NC State Cooperative Extension, and Vice Provost for Outreach and Engagement at NC State. Dr. Bonanno has been a long time member of the weed science societies and served as chair of WSSA’s Science Policy Committee for many years.

Dr. Bonanno’s legendary career and dedication to the land-grant mission has benefited countless growers and research units, including IR-4. As a specialty crop grower himself, Bonanno has a deep understanding of fellow growers’ needs. Bonanno also has a long history of collaboration with IR-4; he was a charter member of IR-4’s Commodity Liaison Committee (CLC) beginning in 1992, and chaired this committee from 2014-2016 (until he began his influential time at NC State). More recently, Bonanno played a pivotal

role in advocating for and supporting IR-4’s move from Rutgers University to NC State. As Dr. Bonanno **transitions from NC State** to an influential new role with ASRED, the IR Project celebrates his commitment to the growers and researchers of our region and thank him for being an exceptional ally to IR-4.

### **Brooke Rollins Nominated to Lead USDA**



Rollins, 52, is a lawyer with agriculture ties who grew up in Glen Rose, TX where she was involved in 4-H and FFA. She graduated from Texas A&M University with an undergraduate degree in agricultural development in 1994 before completing law school at the University of Texas. While at Texas A&M, Rollins was the first woman to be elected student body president.

After graduating from law school, Rollins worked for several years at Hughes & Luce, LLP in Dallas and clerked under U.S. Federal District Court judge Barbara M. Lynn. Rollins previously served as deputy general counsel, ethics advisor, and policy director to Texas governor Rick Perry.

Rollins was the president and CEO of the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) from 2003 through 2018. During her tenure at TPPF, the think tank grew from having a staff of three to a staff of 100. In 2011, Texas Monthly named Rollins one of the 25 most powerful Texans.

She served as domestic policy chief during Trump’s first term, a portfolio that included agricultural policy. After leaving the White House, she became president and CEO of the America First Policy Institute. This is one of the earliest nominations for a USDA Secretary that I can remember following a presidential election.

## 2025 Membership Renewal Form

To pay by credit card, please login to your account at [www.wsweedscience.org](http://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,  
12110 Pecos St., Ste 220,  
Westminster, CO 80234



Questions? [info@wsweedscience.org](mailto:info@wsweedscience.org) or (303) 327-8016

### 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.

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