WSWS Officer and Committee Report

Office or Committee Name: Member at Large Public
Officer or Chairperson Name: Erik A. Lehnhoff
Date of Preparation (include year): February 27, 2025

Activities during the year: In past years, we noted that annual meeting attendance by federal, state, and county agency personnel has declined. To try to understand this trend, we created a survey to query agency personnel who have weed management responsibilities. I sent the survey to agency personnel in the fall of 2025, with the help of WSWS contacts as well as working groups such as the Western Weeds Coordinating Committee and FICMNEW. The response rate to the survey was very low, with only 12 responses. Nonetheless, I think the responses, summarized below, are valuable.

1. How often do you attend WSWS meetings?

a)	*Never*	*10*
b)	*Very rarely*	*2*
c)	*About half of the time*	*0*
d)	*Almost every year*	*0*

2. If you do not attend WSWS, do you attend a different meeting? If so, which one?

Local weed control assoc., etc.	*11*
NAISMA	*6*
WWCC	*4*
National Plant Board	*1*
Western Plant Board	*1*
W-5185 Biocontrol meeting	*1*

3. Do you see benefit to attending any professional society meeting, and if so, what are the benefits?

Networking	*11*
Updates on Issues, products, policy	*11*
Knowledge (general)	*1*
Morale boost	*1*

4. How would you describe your agency's view of the importance of attending and being involved in a professional society?

a) Not important
b) Neither important or unimportant 4
c) Important 8

5. Which of the following would you find useful to your professional activities? Circle any that apply.

a) Attending a talk on new research. 12
b) Attending a talk on a case study that describes how a particular weed problem was addressed. 12
c) Attending a workshop on methods of control. 12
d) Attending a workshop on biology of specific invasive plant species. 10

6. What are barriers to attending WSWS?

Issues related to money (registration/travel) 10
Do not get info on meetings 3
Too many other meetings 1
Perception that meeting is only research 1
Timing of meeting 1
Topics not directly related 1

7. Do you think regional interaction with others involved in weed management practice and research is important? Describe why or why not.

Yes. Networking/brainstorming 6
Yes. Understand issues 5
Yes. Help with getting funding 2
Yes. Coordinate efforts 1
Yes. But remote/online just as good. 1
No. Regional issues differ. 1

8. How might the Western Society for Weed Science increase relevance for you?

Need more info about society, time/place of meeting, issues covered. 3
There are IT issues. Emails from WSWS do not open. 1
Too focused on research. Need more workshops. 1
More biocontrol. 1

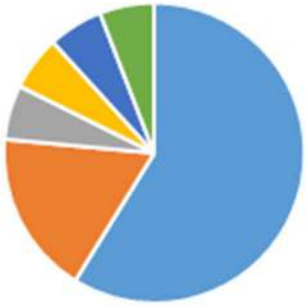
9. Do you have any other feedback about the WSWS annual meeting from your perspective as a Federal, State, or County agency member of WSWS?

Facilitated discussions (such as ESA labelling last year) are great. Have more of those. There are too many other weed meetings and costs are too high. Perhaps combine with WWCC. Get more non-members on email lists.

Meetings attended other the WSWS

Local weed control association | NAISMA | WWCC | Other

Reasons for not attending WSWS



Issues related to money | Do not get info on WSWS
Too many other meetings | Perception that it is only research
Poor timing of meeting | Topics not directly related

Benefits of attending professional meetings

Networking | Issue, product & policy updates | General knowledge | Morale boost

Recommendations for Board Action: The low response rate was potentially because of the format of the survey, which was a Word document delivered via email. It may be beneficial to administer the survey a second time using an online survey platform such as Qualtrics.

Budget Needs: None

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