



Western Society of Weed Science Newsletter

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Winter 2015

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Report from the President by Drew Lyon

With less than a minute left in the game and just a half-yard to go for the winning touchdown, the Seahawks chose to pass rather than run the ball. The instant the ball was intercepted, I put the 2014-2015 NFL season behind me and began to prepare for the 2015 WSWS annual meeting, March 9-12 at the Hilton Portland and Executive Tower in Portland. Unlike the Seahawks, I promise a simple hand-off at the goal line to President-Elect Joe Yenish.

Joe has been working with Ed Davis, Research Section Chair, and Kirk Howatt, Education Section Chair, to put together a great program. There will be an afternoon symposium Monday, March 9 and a general session the morning of Tuesday, March 10 that will include something for everyone. Find more details in Joe's report below.

If you haven't been to Portland before, check the fall 2014 WSWS Newsletter for a list of things to do in and around Portland, put together by Daniel Curtis, the Local Arrangements Committee Chair. Daniel has also been working tirelessly with the hotel to ensure things run smoothly. To ensure that things go smoothly for you, please make your reservation for the Hilton Portland and Executive Tower if you haven't already. This helps us meet our room block quota and maximize efficiency during the meeting.

The Board of Directors meeting will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, March 9 in Broadway I/II. All members are welcome to attend. You are also encouraged to attend the Welcome and Retirees Reception event Monday evening and the Awards Luncheon on Wednesday. Thursday morning is our Business Breakfast where Don Morishita, Student Paper Judging Committee Chair, will recognize our graduate student paper contest winners and where the society seeks your input on important matters such as changes to the Constitution.

Committee chairs should send their reports to their designated Board of Directors contact by March 2nd. In addition, if you have items that you would like on the agenda, please contact me (drew.lyon@wsu.edu) by the end of February.

The WSWS is only as strong as you make it. We are fortunate to have many excellent scientists and strong leaders in the WSWS. It has been my pleasure to be a member of the WSWS for more than 20 years. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to give back to a society that has done so much for me. With your continued involvement, the WSWS will remain a welcoming, vibrant society for many years to come. I look forward to seeing you all in Portland in March.

Begin the WSWs Meeting by Attending the Crop Diagnostics Symposium.

The 2015 Annual Meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science will begin with a symposium on Monday, March 9. Registration for non WSWs members will be open at noon and the session entitled, **“The Use of Available Laboratory Tests to Help Diagnose Suspected Herbicide Problems”** will begin at 1 pm. The symposium is designed to assist field agronomists and other practitioners in diagnosing various biotic and abiotic symptoms in fields. Holding the symposium at the beginning of the meeting will allow non WSWs members attending the symposium to review the agenda of the rest of the meeting and hopefully stay for the rest of the week. We encourage you to invite cooperators and collaborators who might benefit from diagnostics information to attend the symposium or the entire meeting.

Currently, 86 papers and 54 posters are scheduled to be presented at the meeting including 40 presentations participating in the student contests. Highlights of the program include updates from Lee Van Wychen and Michael Barrett on their efforts in Washington D.C. on behalf of the WSWs and other Weed Science entities along with Drew Lyon’s Presidential Address. Additionally, we have scheduled two informative presentations on the development of the Pacific Northwest Wine Industry and the application of robotic aircraft (drones) to weed management and agricultural systems.

The various Project Sections are loaded with presentations containing key information on Weeds of Range and Natural Areas, Horticultural Crops, Agronomic Crops, Teaching and Technology Transfer, or Basic Ecology and Biology. Please look over the program which is now posted on line to make the most of your time at this meeting.

Additionally, consider coming early or stay an extra day or two following the meeting to take in the natural beauty of the Willamette Valley, the Columbia Gorge, the Cascade Mountains, or take the short trip to enjoy the splendor of the Pacific Ocean.

Important deadlines for the upcoming meeting include:

Friday, February 13th

- Last day for preregistration savings for full WSWs members.
- Last day to reserve a room at the Hilton Portland & Executive Tower at the meeting block rate of \$129/night.

Monday, March 2nd

- Deadline for abstract submission.

Wednesday, March 4th

- Deadline for slide presentation submission.

Joe Yenish, Program Chair

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Student Liaison Report - by Marcelo Moretti and Carl Coburn

The Portland meeting is just a few weeks away and, as usual, there will be a few activities for students that we would like all of you to participate:

| What | When | Where |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>Student Luncheon</u> - sponsored by Bayer CropSciences | | |
| Tuesday March 10 | 12:15 pm – 1:15 pm | Forum Suite |
| <u>Student Reception</u> - sponsored by Syngenta | | |
| Tuesday March 10 | 5:00 – 6:30 pm | Forum Suite |
| <u>Student Night Out</u> | | |
| Wednesday March 11 | 6:30 pm | Make sure you sign up for it!!!! |

It is also time to elect the new student liaison to the WWSWS. This is a 2-year commitment (1st year as Chair Elect and 2nd year as Chair). Students interested in running for the liaison position can contact Carl W. Coburn (ccoburn2@uwyo.edu) or myself (mlmoretti@ucdavis.edu) with any questions. Make sure to send a short bio with your current school program and research interests, and why you would like to serve as a student liaison. The student liaison is an excellent opportunity to contribute to the WWSWS society and foster relationships with other weed science students and professionals. The candidates will be presented during the Student Luncheon, which will be at 12:15 pm on Tuesday March 10th at the Annual Meeting in Portland.

Don't forget to check out our Silent Auction. This year we will have more awesome items for you to bid on, but don't forget that we still have not reached our goal of raising \$3000 this year. Carl and I have worked for the last 12 months soliciting donations and we would appreciate your help!!!! If you have items or services that you think your fellow society members would like to bid on, please consider donating them for the Silent Auction. If your donation travels easily feel free to bring it to Portland and pass it on to myself or Carl during the meeting registration. Otherwise contact me so we can arrange delivery.

Finally, remember that the WWSWS Student Section has a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WWSWSStudentSection>, or search for "Western Society of Weed Science" and a twitter account "@WWSWSstudents". We will post information to this site that will update students with meeting information and events to help you prepare for it.

Marcelo L Moretti, Student Section Chair
mlmoretti@ucdavis.edu

Carl Coburn, Student Section Chair
ccoburn2@uwyo.edu

Immediate Past President Request - by Roger Gast

Attention Retirees (and friends): Please let the Society know if you have recently retired from active employment in the past year or plan to do so in the next few weeks before (or in the next few months after) our annual meeting in Portland. Your active membership and participation in WSWS over the years will be recognized at the upcoming meeting during the Monday evening reception that traditionally honors recent retirees. Colleagues of recent retirees are also encouraged to let us know of any shy members or those who may have forgotten that they should be resting and relaxing.

Please contact Roger Gast before March 1st: (317) 337-3004 or regast@dow.com and please include Phil Banks: wsws@marathonag.com.

Reminder from the Necrology Committee! – Steve Valenti, Chair

If you are aware of past WSWS members who have passed away since the 2014 meeting please forward the obituary immediately to Steve Valenti (stephen.a.valenti@monsanto.com) or to the Business Manager, Phil Banks (wsws@marathonag.com). If you prefer call me at (701) 799-9328. It is very important that we remember deceased members appropriately.

Additionally, we would like to encourage those interested in serving on this committee to let us know. The committee is comprised of 3 members and the second year member will be chair. The necrology committee is basically responsible for obtaining the information on those members who have passed, keep the President notified, obtain the obituary or biography, and prepare a written report to be presented at the Society Business Meeting.

New UC IPM photo repository shows plant damage from herbicides

Identifying nontarget crop and ornamental plant damage from herbicides has become much easier, with the launch of a new [online photo repository](#) by the Statewide IPM Program, University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Dr. Kassim Al-Khatib, weed science professor at UC Davis and director of the UC Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program (UC IPM), has gathered nearly a thousand photos of herbicide-damaged plants, drawn from his own and others' research. The images are cataloged to show damage that can occur from 81 herbicides in more than 14 specific herbicide modes of action, applied in field to demonstrate the symptoms or when known herbicide spray has drifted onto the plant.

Each image is characterized with the name of the plant, mode of action of the herbicide, and notes the specific symptoms of damage. Together these photos provide a comprehensive archive of damage to over 120 different crops and ornamental plants by known herbicides, which users can easily compare with what they see in the field.

Also included in the repository is information about the modes of action of various herbicides and an index of example herbicide trade names and active ingredients. The repository can be found at <http://herbicidesymptoms.ipm.ucanr.edu/>

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WSWS ONLINE EDUCATION
<http://passel.unl.edu/pages/index2col.php?category=weedscience#>

WSSA Journals Website Online
www.WSSAJournals.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Western Society of Weed Science Annual Meeting
March 9-12, 2015
Portland, Oregon
www.wsweedsociety.org

8th International IPM Symposium: IPM – Solutions for a Changing World
March 23-26, 2015
Salt Lake City, Utah
www.ipmcenters.org/ipmsymposium15/

Western Invasive Weed Short Course
April 20-23, 2015
Loveland, Colorado
www.mountainwestpest.com/ShortCourse.html

17th European Weed Research Symposium
June 23-26, 2015
Montpellier, France
<http://ewrs2015.org/>

Weed Science Society of America Annual Meeting Joint Meeting with the Southern Weed Science Society
February 8-11, 2016
San Juan, Puerto Rico
www.wssa.net

Western Society of Weed Science Annual Meeting
March 7-10, 2016
Albuquerque, New Mexico
www.wsweedsociety.org

Second Circular

25th Asian-Pacific Weed Science Society Conference
on
Weed Science for Sustainable Agriculture, Environment and Biodiversity
13-16 October, 2015
Hyderabad, INDIA



Website: <http://isws.org.in/apwss2015.aspx>



Organized by:
Indian Society of Weed Science

In collaboration with:
Indian Council of Agricultural Research
Directorate of Weed Research
PJT State Agricultural University

   

The Indian Society of Weed Science has the honor of organizing the 25th Asian-Pacific Weed Science Society Conference, which is scheduled to be held at The Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University, Hyderabad, India, October 13-16, 2015.

For more information: <http://isws.org.in/apwssorganisers.aspx>

Dr. A.R. Sharma
Organizing Secretary, 25th APWSS Conference

iswsjbp@gmail.com or sharma.ar@rediffmail.com

Western Invasive Weed Short Course



April 20-23, 2015
Loveland, Colorado

An intensive study of current technologies and best management practices associated with noxious and invasive weeds in the western United States. The course includes classroom lecture, hands-on demonstration, field plots, live weed and herbicide symptomology specimens, facilitated discussion, small group projects, educational games, and time for individual interaction with instructors.



What previous participants have said:

- ⇒ "Very enjoyable learning experience. Interaction with excellent trainers was much appreciated."
- ⇒ "Outstanding experience / superb trainers"
- ⇒ "Great training staff. Extremely knowledgeable and great applicable field understanding. Not just theory."
- ⇒ "Best 4 days I've ever spent in a classroom or lecture environment."
- ⇒ "Interaction/Networking opportunity = Great"
- ⇒ "Fun!"

For more information:

www.mountainwestpest.com/ShortCourse.html

To register for the course:

Sandra McDonald
970-266-9573

Sandra@MountainWestPEST.com



The Western Invasive Weed Short Course (WIWSC) is returning to Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch and is scheduled for April 20-23, 2015. 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 that include:

- Classroom lecture
- Hands-on demonstration
- Field plots
- Facilitated discussion
- Live weed and herbicide symptomology specimens
- Small group projects
- Educational games
- Time for individual interaction with instructors

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. The plots were designed in a way that allows the course participants to see the progression of control and restoration over a three-year period. A twilight weed walk is great way to see the ranch and start learning some weeds.

The 2015 WIWSC will be similar to the previous Short Courses, to see agendas please visit http://www.mountainwestpest.com/Current_Course.html.

The Organizing Committee builds the final agenda based on a pre-course survey of the registered participants to assess specific areas of participant interest. The pre-course survey will not be sent to participants until they have completed the registration process.

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 from the Western Society of Weed Science.

Early registration has ended, however there are still openings available. Enrollment is limited and is accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please contact Sandra McDonald, Course Coordinator, for additional information at (970) 266-9573 or Sandra@MountainWestPEST.com.

Note from the Business Office

Registration for the Portland meeting has gone smoothly for most part and we look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting. If you missed the preregistration deadline of February 13, you can still register for the meeting at the WSWS website (<http://www.wsweedsociety.org/annual-meeting/>). If you know you are coming to the meeting, please do this instead of registering at the meeting since it still helps us plan for all of the food and beverage events.

As always, if you need to contact the office, please give us a call at (575) 649-7157 or e-mail at wsws@marathonag.com.

Phil Banks, WSWS Business Manager/Treasurer

Notes from the Local Arrangements Committee - by Daniel Curtis

Get ready for Portland! The Hilton – Portland and Executive Tower is located in the heart of downtown Portland. Walk to exquisite restaurants or food carts, world class shopping, or hike Forest Park. And get ready for the WSWS Members Welcome and Retirees Reception which will be held in the spectacular Skyline Room on the 23rd floor. Three hundred and sixty degree view of Portland and surroundings – maybe – weather permitting – Mount Hood!

Getting There:

Hilton Portland & Executive Tower

921 SW 6th Avenue

Portland, OR 97204

(503) 226-1611:

Driving Directions:

From the Airport, take I-205 South and exit onto I-84 West. At the end of I-84 west, you will reach the junction of I-5 North & South. Head South toward Salem (to your left) on I-5. Follow the signs onto I-405. Take the 6th Ave exit off of I-405. Follow 6th Ave for 13 blocks and main building will be on your left. The Hilton Portland (main building) is located on SW 6th Ave between SW Salmon & SW Taylor. Executive Tower's main entrance is located on 545 SW Taylor between 6th Ave and 5th Ave.

From the North, (Southbound) on I-5, take Exit 302A. The exit will say Rose Quarter/City Center. Follow the City Center signs, which take you across the Broadway Bridge & put you directly on Broadway Ave. Take Broadway 19 blocks & turn Left onto SW Salmon Street. Take Salmon 1 block & turn Left onto SW 6th Ave. Our front doors (main building) will be on your left-hand side. Front doors for the Executive Tower are located on 545 SW Taylor.

From the South (Northbound) on I-5. Take I-405, Exit 299B, on the left toward City/Center/US26W. Take Exit 1A on the left toward Naito/Pkwy. Stay straight on SW Harbor Dr. and turn right on SW Naito Pkwy. Turn left onto SW Taylor St. The Hilton Portland (main building) is located on SW 6th Ave between SW Salmon & SW Taylor.

Transportation from the Airport:

Max light rail – cost \$2.50 – runs to Pioneer Square which is about a block from the hotel. Travel time is about 40 minutes. First train of the day arrives at PDX at 4:45 AM and last train leaves PDX at 11:50 PM. <http://www.trimet.org/schedules/maxredline.htm>

Shuttles are available from the airport to the hotel. The **Downtown Airport Express by Blue Star** runs every 30 minutes and costs \$14 one-way and \$24 round-trip to downtown and Lloyd Center/Convention Center hotels and the downtown Hilton.

When leaving the airport, you can find the Downtown Airport Express and other hotel shuttle buses on the terminal's lower roadway (outside of baggage claim) on the far side of Island #2, closer to the parking garage.

The average taxi fare from the airport to downtown is approximately \$40 before gratuity. **Radio Cab** offers a discount with **coupons available on their website**. The one-way trip takes 20-40 minutes. You can find taxis waiting in the center section of the airport terminal's lower roadway outside of baggage claim; to get back to the airport from the city center, you can order a cab through the city's main operators or from a hotel with a dedicated taxi stand.

This information is summarized well at <http://www.travelportland.com/article/portland-international-airport-pdx/>

Parking options for those driving:

Parking is predominately available only in parking garages. Most have size restrictions – especially for height (such as a 6' 8" max) and length so be sure to check first if you have a large vehicle. The information the Hilton provided is below.

HILTON PORTLAND VALET ONLY PARKING (503) 226-1611 x2172: *Hotel front door, on SW 6th Avenue between Salmon and Taylor* \$15.00 first 3 hours, \$5.00 per additional hour / \$35.00 daily maximum. \$35.00 for registered overnight guests. There will be a **15% discount** for conference attendees at this location only.

HILTON EXECUTIVE TOWER VALET (503) 226-1611 X 2549: *Executive Tower front door, on SW Taylor between 5th and 6th Avenues* \$15.00 first 3 hours, \$5.00 per additional hour / \$35.00 daily maximum \$35.00 for registered overnight guests.

HILTON EXECUTIVE TOWER GARAGE (503) 223-4128: *On 5th and Taylor Street* \$3.00 first hour; \$5.00 each additional hour \$11.00 daily maximum (6:00 am – 6:00 pm) \$5.00 evenings (after 6:00 pm – 3:00 am) \$27.00 for registered overnight guests. WEEKENDS: \$5.00 daily maximum, \$27.00 overnight.

1000 BROADWAY – PMC (503) 294-3268: *1000 SW Broadway (entrances on SW Salmon and SW Main) / Open 24 hours* \$5.00 per hour / \$16.00 daily maximum (Mon-Fri, 5:00 am-5:00 pm) \$5.00 -\$7.00 evenings (after 5:00 pm) and weekends (max \$5.00) \$24.00 for overnight parking.

METROPOLITAN GARAGE (503) 294-3264: *515 SW Salmon Street / Closes at midnight; Sundays at 9:00 pm* \$5.00 per hour / \$9.95 daily maximum \$3.95 evenings after 4:00 pm and all day weekends \$16.00 overnight Monday through Friday \$8.00 Saturday through Sunday.

FOX TOWER PARKING GARAGE (503) 221-1666 *805 SW Broadway (enter on SW Taylor between Broadway and Park) / Open 24 Hrs Mon – Fri: \$5.00 per hour / \$11.00 per day if in before 9:30 am \$ 12.00 daily maximum, \$24.00 for overnight parking, Sat – Sun: \$4.00 per day if in before 10:30 am \$8.50 daily maximum, \$24.00 for overnight parking. Evening rate (5:00 pm – 6:00 am); Sun – Thurs: \$6.00, Fri – Sat: \$7.00.*

THINGS TO DO IN PORTLAND:

<http://www.travelportland.com/> is an excellent place to start your plans. Some of my favorite things to do are:

Visit the Columbia Gorge. This would probably require a car – but tours are available. Gorge hiking favorites are Eagle Creek trail near Bonneville Dam, Multnomah Falls, and Twin Tunnels at Mosier are some great ones. Other gorge trips include visiting waterfalls, researching Lewis and Clark's trip down the Columbia, checking out the old Columbia River Highway including Vista Point are some great ideas. Bonneville Dam is also an interesting place to visit. Oregon's wine country is just to the south and west of Portland Touring area wineries is very popular. Many wineries are in the area both in the Willamette Valley and in the Columbia Gorge.

Great hiking is available close to downtown Portland in Forest Park. Also there is the Japanese Gardens, Hoyt Arboretum, and the International Rose Test Garden. Links can be found at <http://www.travelportland.com/>.

SHOPPING:

Downtown Pioneer Courthouse Square, Lloyd Center Mall, Northwest 23rd Street (Nob Hill), Rejuvenations Hardware, to name a few fun places.

FOOD:

Everywhere! Many great restaurants and food carts.

WASHINGTON REPORT

January 31, 2015

Lee Van Wychen

New Chairs for House and Senate Committees

With the November elections in the rear view mirror, members of Congress have been jockeying for committee leadership assignments on Capitol Hill. Due to a self-imposed GOP rule that limits its committee chairs to three terms, nearly half of the current chairs in the House will have to step aside, including Ag Committee Chair Frank Lucas of Oklahoma. **Michael Conaway (TX)** will take over as House Ag Committee chairman. He grew up in Odessa, TX and was a member of Odessa Permian High School football team that won a state championship in 1966 (which eventually led to the movie "Friday Night Lights"). He has a B.A. in accounting from Texas A & M. He worked at Price Waterhouse after serving in the army, and then was the chief financial officer for Bush Exploration. Rep. **Collin Peterson (MN)** will remain as the Ranking Member of the House Ag Committee.

The new chair of the House Natural Resources Committee will be **Rob Bishop (UT)** who will take over for the retiring Doc Hastings from Washington. Bishop grew up in Kaysville, UT, just north of Salt Lake City and has been a lifelong resident of the district that he will be representing for the 7th term in Congress. Bishop will seek to extend the expiring Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools (SRS), two programs that provide critical funding to rural counties across the West, which includes funding for invasive weed management. Support for those programs is broad and bipartisan, but finding funding and agreeing how the money is spent will be a challenge. Rep. **Raul Grijalva (AZ)**, a strong proponent for invasive species management, will be the new ranking member of the House Natural Resources Committee.

For the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. **Harold Rogers (KY)** will remain the chair and Rep. **Nita Lowey (NY)** will remain the ranking member of the full committee. The "cardinals" or subcommittee chairs for Agriculture and Rural Development, Energy and Water Development, and Interior and Environment will remain the same. They are **Robert Aderholt (AL)**, **Mike Simpson (ID)**, and **Ken Calvert (CA)**, respectively.

In the Senate, **Thad Cochran (MS)**, the current Ranking Member of the Senate Ag Committee, will be named as the new Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, a position he occupied from 2005-2007. Sen. **Pat Roberts (KS)** will be named as the new Chair of the Senate Ag Committee. As House Ag Committee Chair in the 1990's, Roberts was a driving force behind the "freedom to farm" commodity policy in the 1996 Farm Bill. He is a fourth generation Kansan from Topeka, has a journalism degree from Kansas State, and served four years in the Marine Corps. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1980 and then to the Senate in 1996 where he has served since. Senator Roberts has been a proponent of research and technology and had led efforts in promoting food safety and biosecurity. Sen. **Deb Stabenow (MI)**, the current Sen. Ag Committee Chair will now slide down to the Ranking Member slot. Another **Kansas Senator, Jim Moran**, will chair the Senate Ag Appropriations committee. It was anticipated that Sen. Roy Blunt from Missouri would move up to that spot after having served as the ranking member, but he chose to take the helm of the Labor, HHS, and Education appropriations subcommittee instead. The new ranking member of the Senate Ag Appropriations Subcommittee is Sen. **Jeff Merkley (OR)**.

Senator Lisa Murkowski (AK) will take over as chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. She is a 3rd generation Alaskan and the first Alaskan-born Senator to serve the state, where she has served as Senator since 2002. It's no secret that Sen. Murkowski's top priority will be energy development. She unveiled her plan almost two years ago: [Energy 2020: a Vision for America's Energy Future](#), which calls for opening up federal lands for energy exploration among other initiatives. However, Sen. **Maria Cantwell (WA)**, expected to be the committee's ranking member, will run strong opposition to the chair's proposals. Murkowski's committee also has jurisdiction over most of the federal land management agencies, but don't expect much camaraderie between her and Interior Secretary Sally Jewell as they have already disagreed on a proposed road through a remote Alaskan wildlife refuge that the Senator considers a life-and-death issue for local residents. Either way, Sen. Murkowski will play a huge role in shaping Energy and Natural Resource policy in the next session of Congress because not only will she be the top authorizer, she will also be the top appropriator for land management issues as chair of Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for Interior-Environment.

Finally, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will have a 180 degree shift in its agenda when Sen. **Jim Inhofe (OK)** takes over the gavel from **Barbara Boxer (CA)**, who will slide down to the ranking member spot. However, Sen. Inhofe will only be chair for 2 years under GOP rules since he chaired the committee from 2003 – 2007. You can

expect an array of oversight hearings on Obama administration environmental policies such as expanding the scope of the Clean Water Act and the science underpinning federal environmental rules. Senators Inhofe and Boxer are about as far apart as you can get on the ideological spectrum and there will be no shortage of polarizing drama within this committee over the next two years.

FY 2015 USDA Appropriations

The last act of the 113th Congress before leaving town for the year was to pass the “Cromnibus”, which funds the federal government for FY 2015. Things look pretty good for USDA budget items overall with NIFA, ARS, APHIS, NRCS, the Economic Research Service (ERS), and National Ag Statistics Service (NASS) all receiving higher budgets compared to FY 2014. The ERS received the largest increase among the aforementioned agencies with a 9.4 percent increase over last year to \$85.37 million. Within NIFA, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) grants program increased 2.8% from \$316 million to \$325 million. Meanwhile, FY 2015 funding for the Hatch Act (\$244 million), Smith Lever 3b and 3c (\$300 million), and the IR-4 program (\$11.9 million) remain the same as last year. The Crop Protection and Pest Management line item, which includes funding for Extension IPM and the Regional IPM Centers among other things, received a small increase from \$17.14 million to \$17.2 million.

Congress Ditches WOTUS Interpretive Rule, But Administrative Rule Still Moving Forward

EPA and Army Corp of Engineers jointly published an “**administrative rule**” meant to clarify what are “Waters Of The United States” (WOTUS) and an “**interpretive rule**” meant to clarify which NRCS practices are exempt from Clean Water Act (CWA) permits for dredge and fill material under CWA 404(f)(1)(A). The proposed administrative rule would greatly expand the “waters” covered under the Clean Water Act to almost all waters in the United States. This would subject thousands of streams, ditches, and other “small” waters to federal permitting and citizen lawsuits, including those on agricultural property. When Congress passed the CWA in 1972, their intent was for the CWA to cover “navigable waters of the United States”. The expanded jurisdiction and the imprecision of the terms used by EPA and the Army Corp will result in significant added legal and regulatory costs. To try to minimize the potential effect on agriculture, EPA issued the “interpretive rule” at the same time as the “administrative rule” on WOTUS, which specifies 56 NRCS conservation practices that farmers must do to qualify for the CWA exemptions for dredge and fill permits. However, this “interpretive rule” only added confusion since agricultural storm water runoff and irrigation return flows are already exempt from CWA permitting. NRCS has more than a 160 approved conservation practices. Would the remaining 104 NRCS conservation practices still be considered normal farming practices? Or would they be subject to CWA citizen lawsuits under the administration’s new WOTUS rule? Thankfully Congress “ditched” EPA’s interpretive rule of NRCS approved conservation practices with a rider in the “Cromnibus” that was passed on Dec. 12. However, the “administrative rule” that greatly expands EPA’s authority under the CWA is still moving forward. EPA Administrator McCarthy has said that the CWA exemptions for ag storm water runoff and irrigation return flow will be upheld. We’ll see. The bottom line is that EPA and the Army Corp of Engineers will very likely move forward to finalize their “administrative rule” this spring. However, the new 114th Congress will certainly have something to say about this, as well as the President’s veto pen. Stay tuned.

Has Milkweed Declined 90 Percent in the Past 20 Years?

On December 31, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) said it’s considering increasing protections for the monarch butterfly under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). FWS was petitioned by three environmental groups last August that claim that extensive use of glyphosate on glyphosate resistant corn and soybeans in the Midwest has devastated native populations of milkweed, the sole source of food for monarch butterfly larvae. The petitioners claim that monarch butterfly populations have decreased 90 percent over the past 20 years. FWS will be accepting comments and data submissions on the state of the monarch butterfly until March 2, 2015. You can find the petition information and submit comments at www.Regulations.gov under Docket No. FWS-R3-ES-2014-0056.

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- ❖ To support the Weed Science Society of America and foster state and regional organizations and agencies interested in weed control.



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