

# ODA NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL PROGRAM LISTENING SESSIONS



Oregon  
Department  
of Agriculture

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# ODA Noxious Weed Control Program Listening Sessions

## PURPOSE

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Noxious Weed Program Noxious Weed Control Program provides a statewide leadership role for coordination and management of state listed noxious weeds by implementing early detection rapid response (EDRR) projects for new invasive noxious weeds, implementing biological control, implementing statewide inventories and surveys, assisting the public and cooperators through technology transfer and noxious weed education, maintaining noxious weed data and maps for priority listed noxious weeds, and providing assistance to land managers and cooperators with integrated weed management projects. The Noxious Weed Control Program also supports the Oregon State Weed Board (OSWB) with administration of the OSWB Grant Program, developing statewide management objectives, maintaining the State Noxious Weed List, and developing weed risk assessments.

ODA's Noxious Weed Control Program leadership sought input from key partner organizations via four listening sessions from December 11–14, 2012 via online webinars. Partners were asked to provide input regarding:

- Their role and responsibility relative to managing noxious weeds in Oregon.
- A description of their structure and how their programs are funded.
- Their programmatic priorities.
- Their capacity to address their existing priorities.
- A description of their partners and customers.
- Duplication of effort that might exist among entities with weed responsibilities in Oregon.
- Gaps that might exist in Oregon's ability to manage weeds.
- Their understanding of the role of ODA's Noxious Weed Control Program and how it both complements and supports their programs.
- Elements that distinguish ODA from other entities addressing noxious weeds in Oregon.
- Perceived strengths and weaknesses of ODA's Noxious Weed Control Program.
- Actions ODA could implement to improve the ability of other entities in the state to manage weeds.
- The most effective ways ODA could demonstrate success with its Noxious Weed Control Program.
- Changes that have taken place over the last decade that might affect the ability of ODA and its partners to address noxious weeds in Oregon.
- Advice to ODA's Noxious Weed Control Program managers to improve the ability of noxious weed management in Oregon.

This document summarizes themes/responses from listening sessions involving the following participants:

Agalzoff, Wendi	Astoria—Clatsop SWCD
Barnes, Jesse	Burns—Harney County Weed Control Supervisor
Bautista, Shawna	Portland—US Forest Service Invasive Plant Program Manager
Beard, Tanya	Salem—Marion County Environmental Specialist
Bohnsack, Tara	Baker City—Tri-County CWMA Director
Brown, Gary	Portland—USDA APHIS PPQ Officer
Buttrick, Steve	Portland—The Nature Conservancy, Director of Conservation Science and Planning
Cornwell, Chris	Newport—Lincoln County Public Works County Noxious Weed Coordinator
DeMaggio, Paul	Medford—JSWCD Natural Resource Engineer
Desser, Rochelle	Portland —US Forest Service Invasive Plant NEPA and Monitoring Coordinator

Dezso, Jenny	Gladstone—Clackamas River Basin Council Project Manager
DiLeone, Julie	Portland—East Multnomah SWCD Program Manager
Fraze, Joan	Pendleton—USFS Umatilla National Forest Botanist
Haskins, Grace	Lakeview—Lake County CWMA Coordinator
Holm, Vern	McMinnville—Western Invasives Network Coordinator
Leining, Samuel	Oregon City—Clackamas County SWCD WeedWise Program Manager
Logalbo, Mary	Portland—West Multnomah SWCD Urban Conservationist
Mafera, Debra	Deschutes/Ochoco National Forests—Invasive Plant Program Manager
Magruder, Margaret	Clatskanie—Lower Columbia River Watershed Council
Maze, Dominic	City of Portland—Bureau of Environmental Services Invasive Species Coordinator
McConnell, Erin	Baker City—Bureau of Land Management District Weed/Invasive Plant Coordinator
Morgan, Chrissy	Roseburg—Douglas Soil and Water conservation District Project Manager
Pendergrass, Kathy	Portland—USDA-NRCS Plant Material Specialist
Pranger, Dave	Lexington—Morrow County Weed Supervisor
Porter, Mark	Enterprise—Wallowa Canyonlands CWMA
Showalter, Paul	Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District NR Conservationist
Siemens, Tania	Eugene—Oregon Sea Grant Invasive Species Research Assistant
Sytsma, Mark	Portland—Portland State University Associate Vice President for Research
Tella, Lori	Medford—Jackson SWCD
Wynands, Mike	Tillamook—Tillamook County Public Works Vegetation Management Coordinator

An additional seven individuals registered for one of the four webinars, but did not participate in any of the events.

In all cases, comments listed are bulleted, and are direct quotes, with very minor editorial changes to enhance readability.

Lisa DeBruyckere, President of Creative Resource Strategies, LLC, facilitated the listening sessions and summarized the listening session comments.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Listening session participants represented the diverse geography of Oregon, and included federal, county, and local government entities, nonprofit organizations, weed control districts, soil and water conservation districts, academic extension, cooperative weed management areas, and watershed councils. They described coordination, facilitation, outreach and education, early detection rapid response, stewardship, communication, enforcement, control, management, engineering, providing technical assistance, offering incentives, conducting surveys and assessments, and working with private landowners and partners as key roles and responsibilities.

The diversity of organizational structures and methods of funding for noxious weed control in Oregon is as diverse as the organizations involved in program implementation. How programs are funded affect the ability to implement long-term sustainable programs and set priorities. Projected reductions in federal and state funding for invasive species will have a negative cascading effect among organizations throughout the state of Oregon, especially since the majority receive either state or federal funding as part of their funding portfolio.

Most indicated staff time and financial resources are devoted primarily to on-the-ground work, but all recognize the importance of a diverse program that consists of outreach and education, early detection, rapid response, recordkeeping, communication and coordination, and surveying and monitoring. Several respondents described the difficulty in obtaining funding for outreach and education and monitoring, the latter being critical for adaptive management and informing future management actions.

Most organizations do not have the capacity to address their highest priorities, and few have the capacity to address secondary priorities, which elevate to higher priorities when not addressed quickly. Barriers to addressing highest priorities included funding, lack of sufficient numbers of skilled contractors in both rural and urban parts of the state during key times of the year, insufficient resources to address new vectors of introduction, insufficient legal ability to treat weeds and lack of an adequate regulatory framework, the tension that exists between expending the majority of resources on small acreages in remote areas versus expending the majority of resources along roadsides, lack of in-house expertise on chemical treatments, public perception issues, lack of adequate personnel, and insufficient prioritization of weeds locally (versus statewide priorities). Numerous participants expressed concern about the future of existing funding programs, including the Farm Bill, Oregon State Weed Board grants, and other programs.

A complex network of organizations work together at a variety of scales to collaborate, exchange services, and provide and share resources. Essential to that network is ODA, which is recognized for their expertise and assistance in providing information and on-the-ground activities relative to chemical treatments. Collaboration and coordination is integral to successful noxious weed control management in Oregon, and little, if any, duplication exists. It was noted that if counties had a leadership role in weed programs, then landowners would have local staff that could provide noxious weed management assistance.

There are gaps in Oregon's ability to administer an effective and comprehensive noxious weed control program. These include lack of adequate funding, failure to perform risk assessments in a reasonable period of time, inability to prevent new introductions by failing to focus on vectors, lack of a statewide awareness public campaign re: noxious weeds, lack of political will to adequately fund noxious weed efforts, lack of weed control districts throughout the state, regulatory shortfalls, procedural barriers, lack of statewide prioritization, inconsistent border patrols, lack of adequate county enforcement, gaps in the ability of entities to use all of the tools available for invasive species management, lack of biosecurity at the state level, lack of good information about the controls and treatments of noxious weeds, failure to develop an adequate infrastructure for early detection rapid response, and failure to create a clearinghouse for noxious weed information best management practices.

Participants described the leadership role that ODA plays as critical to noxious weed management in the state, from grants disbursed through the Oregon State Weed Board to their role as regulators and enforcers as well as educators. Participants described the efficiencies they experienced as a result of ODA staff expertise and on-the-ground control, although several noted if less on-the-ground management was performed, more time could be available for their staff to serve in a consulting and education role [currently, shortfalls in funding require ODA staff to perform on-the-ground management on federal lands]. ODA staff play an important role intersecting with local weed managers, they coordinate across states, they participate in important biocontrol programs, they practice quality control as they visit sites, they work closely with the nursery industry, and they provide a statewide framework that other entities rely on and intersect with as noxious weed programs are implemented.

Weaknesses in ODA's noxious weed control program include lack of visibility, inadequate funding and capacity, failure to address larger political issues, lack of visibility and sharing success stories, the need to enhance notifications to land management entities when biocontrols are being released, the desire to more clearly articulate State Weed Board priorities, the existence of regulatory gaps, and duplication of efforts with weed mapping databases.

ODA could improve the ability to manage noxious weeds in Oregon by making changes in three areas: outreach, education, communication, and training; strategic planning and priorities, and risk assessments and listing species. There is a need for increased statewide education, providing comments on federal plans, creating a stronger web presence, improving communication about biocontrol releases, and offering more technical training on weed treatments. There is a need for clear articulation of priorities, guidance, and overall leadership in strategic planning as well as a need to complete more and timely risk assessments, conduct enforcement at local nurseries, and list species known to be invasive. The Oregon State Weed Board should have more authority relative to its grant program, regulatory gaps need to be articulated and addressed, more work should be conducted on biocontrols, ODA staff should be added to expand services provided, and improvements should be made relative to integrating best management practices for dealing with new weeds.

ODA needs to better tell its success stories, demonstrating that preventing establishment saves money long-term. Oregon could benefit from making comparisons with other states that are inundated with noxious weed problems, and increased use of the media and social media could enhance ODA's profile. Describing how noxious weed management protects Oregon's native habitats is important to create alignment with the Oregon Conservation Strategy.

In the past decade, positive changes have occurred, including the Silent Invasion statewide campaign, regional Environmental Impact Statements, a shift in the focus from weed eradication to restoration of habitats, use of technology to share information, and a Clinton-era executive order that has stimulated more action on federal lands. Negative changes include more regulations, the new link between the Oregon State Weed Board grant program and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, budget reductions and the economy, the ability to purchase invasives online, increasing urbanization, and increases in anti-herbicide sentiments.

ODA needs to showcase its successes, work collaboratively with partners to help tell Oregon's success stories, raise awareness of noxious weed issues with policy makers, partner with academia to respond to the need for risk assessments on a timely basis, provide focus to areas where gaps exist, be more transparent re: decisions, provide guidance and leadership on consistency among county weed programs, provide visible leadership, create access to best management practices and up-to-date information on invasives, offer more local training, and work collaboratively with partners to advance noxious weed issues.

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## ODA'S NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL PROGRAM PARTNERS—THEIR ROLES, STRUCTURE, FUNDING, AND PRIORITIES

### Roles and responsibilities

*Listening session participants described their roles and responsibilities relative to noxious weed management in Oregon. Participants included federal, county, and local government entities, nonprofit organizations, weed control districts, soil and water conservation districts, academic extension, cooperative weed management areas, and watershed councils. Participants represented the diverse geography of Oregon, ranging from Astoria and Medford to central Oregon, Lakeview, Vale, and Enterprise. Coordination, facilitation, outreach and education, early detection rapid response, stewardship, communication, enforcement, control, management, engineering, providing technical assistance, offering incentives, conducting surveys and assessments, and working with private landowners as well as numerous partners were key roles and responsibilities described by participants. The following are examples of the types of roles and responsibilities that were described during the listening sessions:*

#### **Weed Control District**

- Noxious weed coordinator of the Vale District.
- Noxious Weed Coordinator for Lincoln County, Oregon. Weed control supervisor for county—roadside weed control; if we control roadside weeds first, we take care of a lot of invasive problems in eastern Oregon; serve as resource for landowners; helps to facilitate grants; assist with enforcement.

#### **Federal Agencies**

- USDA-APHIS domestic program coordinator; facilitate our NW program—regulatory as well as implementation of biocontrols.
- US Forest Service—Manage invasive plant program for all national forests in Oregon and Washington, and manage state and private grants to invasive plants partners; Deschutes and Ochoco Invasive Plants Manager; USFS Region 6 regional office—coordination National Environmental Policy Act for IP projects, and coordinate monitoring of projects; Umatilla National Forest IP Manager, mostly in OR, but partly in WA, and have 4 district weed coordinators.

#### **Nonprofit Organizations**

- Science Director for The Nature Conservancy—support stewardship staff in planning and control of noxious weeds on preserves.

#### **Sea Grant**

- Oregon Sea Grant Extension—extension role to help formulate research and best practices and communicate to people using them in the field; provide educational resources for managers and teachers interested in engaging in IS projects, and control and education.

#### **Soil and Water Conservation Districts**

- West Multnomah SWCD—run local EDRR program and chair 4-county CWMA—also have education programs to help people identify EDRR targets.
- SWCD in SW Oregon—help private landowners and agencies with weed concerns.
- Program Manager for Clatsop SWCD Weed Control Projects; also, chair of local cooperative weed management area.
- SWCD in N Oregon—direct technical assistance to landowners—weed or conservation-related issues; offer technical and monetary support to landowners; conducting a landscape-level assessment; conducting

management on-the-ground to contain invasives; some biocontrol and integrate with regional and local partners

- SWCD with landowners to bridges the gap between private individuals, state and government agencies
- Urban conservationist at Jackson SWCD; assist urban landowners with small weed problems and neighborhood efforts to reduce weeds; provide fact sheet.

### **Municipality**

- City of Portland—Invasive Plants Coordinator.

### **Watershed Councils**

- Coordinator for LCRWC—extensive weed control between St. Helens and across Clatsop County line; work with invasives such as knotweed, yellowflag iris, purple loosestrife, using many control methods.
- Project Manager at the Clackamas River Basin Council. We manage several riparian re-vegetation programs and work with landowners on invasive species management.

### **Academia**

- Provide technical assistance and management of aquatic weeds in Oregon, including EDRR and outreach.

### **Cooperative Weed Management Area**

- Wallowa Canyonlands CWMA—facilitate noxious weed management in NE Oregon and SW Washington.
- Director for Tri-County CWMA and cover Baker, Union and Wallowa counties.
- CWMA—work w/private landowners controlling noxious weeds on property.
- Enhance the organizational and technical capacity of NW Oregon CWMA's.

### **County**

- County weed control program—roadside maintenance, vegetation management, and aid CWMA for resource concerns; education awareness collaboratively with CWMA; take direction from Harney County Weed Board, including enforcement policy county has; offer no-spray permits; address concerns and work through management programs for individuals with no-spray areas, and look for alternative control methods.
- Natural Resource Engineer for Jackson County, Help private and public landowners/operators with engineering and design to implement conservation plan projects.

## Structure and Funding

*The diversity of organizational structures and methods of funding for noxious weed control in Oregon is as diverse as the organizations involved in program implementation. Some entities, such as federal agencies (i.e., US Forest Service and USDA-APHIS) are wholly funded with federal funds, while others, such as nonprofits, cobble together funding from a variety of sources, including federal, state, and private foundation funds. Some programs are funded entirely with “soft” funds, making long-term sustainable program planning and priority setting difficult. Others that receive government funding through direct program funding have seen declining program budgets and are anticipating future reductions in those government funds. Clearly, reductions in federal and state funding for invasive species will have a negative cascading effect among organizations throughout the state of Oregon. The following are some examples of how weed programs are funded in Oregon:*

- Harney County Weed Control Program support comes from the county (general funds) as well as grants from the Oregon State Weed Board and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. About 75% of the program manager’s position is directly involved with vegetation management on right-of-ways. Program direction comes from the county court and their goals as well as from the Harney County Weed Board re: to what they would like done and species they want targeted. The CWMA is funded entirely with soft monies from the Oregon State Weed Board, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, challenge cost-share with the Bureau of Land Management, Rocky Mountain Elk and Mule Deer Foundations, and other groups. The county program and CWMA work collaboratively and cooperatively to engage other entities. In Harney County, there is no road levy, thus no tax base exists for the county to maintain right-of-ways, and general fund dollars cannot be used for maintenance of right-of-ways.
- Oregon Sea Grant is funded through state and federal funding as well as grants faculty and staff apply for, thus there is a broad range of funding sources. Federal funds are received from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as part of national Sea Grant programs; state funds are received via the Oregon State University research and extension office; Sea Grant staff applies for grants (any relevant funding sources).
- One US Forest Service District’s weed programs are funded with tax dollars and funds from grazing receipts (allotments). The majority of funds in the Vale forest district is directed toward assistance agreements with cooperators to do on-the-ground work; there is a small in-house treatment program, which relies on partnerships (CWMA and county) to do weed control; ODA provides biocontrol help.
- USDA-APHIS funds are derived from taxpayer dollars as line items. The noxious weed line item was zeroed out in 2011 (funds from this line item were once given to ODA for survey and eradication of giant hogweed). Nationally, USDA-APHIS also funds the Nez Perce biocontrol center; facilitate the study of new biocontrols and fund some of that with Ag Research Service and other programs.
- Membership organization (nonprofit)—funding comes from membership dues. Rely on private fundraising, corporate, etc. When we acquire a preserve, we establish a management endowment and the proceeds are used to manage the preserve, including weed work. We obtain funding for projects from OWEB, Weed Board, sometimes federal grants, and private donations.
- The main focus for funding is the local tax base, and then Oregon State Weed Board grants provide targeted funding. Partnership dues through the CWMA also provide funding. And the SWCD recently received a grant from western integrated pest management center.
- Partner with Columbia SWCD and obtain funding from Oregon State Weed Board grants, and have partnered with the Bureau of Land Management and Title II funds; partner with landowners, have a fee-for-service program for unlisted weeds; working with drainage districts (don’t have a weed board in Columbia County – Columbia SWCD is the designated weed authority – without a regulatory profile); shy away of being a weed board with regulatory powers. Involved in North Coast CWMA, but no funding from those sources.

- County-funded position with the road department; about 50% of funds for the position come from federal state agencies as well as private entities in the form of weed control and restoration grants.
- SCWD Funded by Jackson County Taxpayers and ODA.
- Tri-County CWMA is funded from grants of federal, state and local agencies.
- The City of Portland invasive plant program is funded by utility ratepayers of the citizens of Portland.
- US Forest District funding is federal, but forest districts apply for and are successful in getting Title II money (also federal money).
- Oregon State Weed Board grants are our primary funding source for weed control projects. Partnering agencies are able to provide limited cash match for the Oregon State Weed Board grants.
- Work through road department as an employee conducting spraying; funding is through the road department via road dept. dollars; not full-time noxious weeds.
- 501 c 3—there is little local funding; county does not have county funded weed control program currently; receive some \$ via local the Bureau of Land Management (19%) to do weed control adjacent to their property; the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board provides 30% of funding for our program; remainder comes from title II dollars (this is the last year those funds will be available). Receive some Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife agreement funding, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and US Forest Service funds to implement weed control efforts for other agencies. Over half of our funding comes from state programs.
- Federal agency—funding comes through Farm Bill, which is currently in Congress; funding comes through various programs (wetland reserve, environmental incentive programs such as EQUIP [largest program]); moving toward strategic approaches on the statewide level, so district conservationists will be with local working groups to decide what the highest priorities are in their local area to leverage resources; EQUIP dollars will then fund “strategies”—one example where we are funneling money into weed control is cheatgrass on the eastside; a conservation implementation strategy for one weed or a suite of weeds would be an ideal way to funnel money down.
- Funding comes from the Oregon State Weed Board for survey, technical assistance, and outreach; Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency; the Oregon Marine Board also provides funding for surveys, etc.
- Tax rate locally within county provides the majority of budget; small portion comes from ODA; when there are special needs for invasive or noxious weeds, then the district has written grants to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, etc. Pots of money change hands and names.
- Local tax base from SWCD; also seek grant money to complete a particular project, traditionally funded through the Oregon State Weed Board and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

*Participants were asked to rank their priorities as a program based on where they place the most emphasis, i.e., reporting and recordkeeping, education and outreach, on the ground control work, survey and monitoring, etc. Responses were similar to the outcomes of the statewide management assessment of invasive species conducted by the Oregon Invasive Species Council in 2008—the majority of entities devote most of their staff time and financial resources to on-the-ground work, but all recognize the importance of a diverse program that consists of outreach and education, early detection, rapid response, recordkeeping, communication and coordination, and surveying and monitoring. Several respondents described the difficulty in obtaining funding for outreach and education and monitoring. The following are some examples of weed program priorities in Oregon:*

- Education that empowers organizations to implement priorities; we emphasize early detection monitoring and agency coordination as well as education; tend to emphasize the value of early detection networks.
- Harney County—look at early detection rapid response to new invaders with education and proper management of our program as our high priority—all of that goes to on-the-ground work; CWMA goal is education and awareness that results in awareness of proper on-the-ground project work; priority is to provide coordination and collaboration between agencies and private interests to make it happen.
- All are priorities; education and outreach is something we would like to do more of, but we usually do that through partnerships (CWMA); early detection rapid response is our top priority, followed by monitoring treatments. We prioritize based on resources we try to protect—we work on chipping away on poor condition sites, but put more emphasis on intact sites.
- Facilitate the implementation of biocontrols, involving surveying and monitoring. We train our cooperators on technology transfer, and we have an outreach and education component.
- Priority is early detection and surveying to prioritize control; our other priority is on-the-ground work. We do some on-the-ground work, and we contract it out. A priority is to evaluate the effectiveness of our weed treatments; we're good at calculating what we're spending on control, but we're not good at evaluating effectiveness.
- SWCD (West Multnomah)—Outreach and Education and on-the-ground work; for the CWMA, all of the above, but as a CWMA, we have done more outreach and education than any other aspects.
- All are priorities, but on-the-ground is the most important thing we do. We try to coordinate that with education with landowners so they can do early detection programs; monitoring effectiveness is important. Difficult to prioritize these things and say one is much more important than another—the most important thing is to get rid of invasives.
- Oregon Sea Grant Roles/priorities 1) emphasis on aquatic and riparian invasive species and 2) supporting and engaging in research on invasives.
- On-the-ground treatment and control work—everything we do is geared toward weed management and control that works off of a list predicated by our knowledge of plant distribution, etc. We do lots of early detection rapid response, and that is our highest priority, but we also prioritize control and containment for different species—they are important to our program as well.
- All of the above, but we have a special emphasis for on-the-ground control work because we are assigned targets (acres treated and effectiveness of treatment—compiled into acres restored metric) from Congress that we are responsible for. We also participate as much as possible in all aspects. Starting to look at outcomes versus activities.

- The leadership in our area prefers that we take an educational approach in advance of any regulatory requirements. So, the emphasis is currently on education/outreach, combined with on-the-ground control activities.
- Ground control work, survey and monitoring. Reporting and record keeping, education and outreach.
- Ground control work. Prioritizing early detection rapid response projects in Lincoln County and grant work with different weed control projects; and then after that control work with the road department—recording and recordkeeping on up to six different grants and then survey/monitoring. We have very little focus on education/outreach.
- On-the-ground control and education are the two biggest. Survey, data management next.
- We place an emphasis in all areas; it depends on the phase of program/project management we are in, depending on whether inventory is our highest priority or planning or on-the-ground work and follow-up. We place a high priority on record keeping; it's the best way to retain our funding.
- Because the Umatilla NF has the blessing of having a weed Environmental Impact Statement in place, our priority is on-the-ground control, and then ongoing inventory and monitoring, and then recordkeeping.
- We like to focus on the on-the-ground work, then outreach and education for landowners so they understand why programs are important to remove weeds, then monitoring and maintenance, which is underfunded and harder to implement.
- We have a new program on the urban side—we tend to focus on outreach efforts. We rely a lot on our CWMA for priorities. We would like to have more time for monitoring and surveying, but we're not quite there yet.
- High priority on ground control work due to funding limitations, survey work and record retention and continuous GIS Database management are also secondary priorities. Outreach and education are typically harder to fund.
- Most is on-the-ground control work for road shoulders (spraying) and monitoring adjacent fields while spraying; will conduct outreach to private landowners.
- Sixty percent to 70% of our funding goes to herbicide application and on-the-ground work; our program is changing and we're looking at doing more monitoring now that our projects are being completed (5 years). We do a lot of landowner education and in the classroom work.
- Cost share with landowner for the landowner to take care of the weeds themselves; we do some inventory to identify the problem, but the bulk of the funding will be spent on the ground.
- Focus is on early detection and outreach.
- We like to think most of our work is on-the-ground, but the reality is that there is a lot of education and outreach; if we give landowners a good plan . . .
- It's a three-legged stool; the most important thing in the district is a countywide biosecurity scenario. Early detection is important, but rapid response is important, too; we get the word out to the public so they understand the risks and can report them.
- Education and outreach to natural resource professionals and the public.

## CAPACITY

*Participants were asked if they had the capacity to address their highest priorities. The answer to the question was a resounding “no” by almost all of the participants. Participants described in further detail barriers to addressing their highest priorities, which included funding, lack of sufficient numbers of skilled contractors in both rural and urban parts of the state during key times of the year, insufficient resources to address new vectors of introduction, inability to address secondary priorities, insufficient legal ability to treat weeds and lack of an adequate regulatory framework; the tension that exists between expending the majority of resources on small acreages in remote areas versus expending the majority of resources along roadsides, lack of in-house expertise on chemical treatments, public perception issues, lack of adequate personnel, and insufficient prioritization of weeds locally (versus statewide priorities). Numerous participants expressed concern about the future of existing funding programs, including the Farm Bill, Oregon State Weed Board grants, and other programs. ODA was recognized by numerous participants for their expertise and assistance in providing information and on-the-ground activities relative to chemical treatments. The following are some examples of capacity issues in weed programs in Oregon:*

- We have the capacity physically to do it, but having the capacity funding-wise to address all our invasive problems, no. We have great equipment, a great team, knowledgeable, but not the funds we need to do on-the-ground work.
- We are meeting the highest priorities, but because resources are competitive and in short supply, it is important we show we’re using resources effectively and not going into a black hole—which would result in our losing that capacity to address the highest priorities.
- Capacity for survey is good; capacity for treating what we find is not (NE Oregon) —a lot of weeds and not enough contractors. We need to treat a lot of species at the same time and don’t have the contractors to do the work. There have been instances where we have the funding and don’t have the contractors.
- In the metro area in general—weather window, skill level and timing—to have meaningful survey and gauge effectiveness; we’re not close to where we need to be. We’re constantly looking at new species and how and if we should address these species given that we would have to wait for an ODA risk assessment, which may or may not be timely for early detection rapid response.
- We need to have a way to spread contractors around because in Columbia and Clatsop Counties, we often don’t have enough funding to keep our contractors busy.
- From a federal noxious weed standpoint, we do not have that capacity. When we found goats rue in Portland, we could not assist ODA with any of the eradication of that plant. We do have funds for biocontrol (there’s never enough), but we have capacity to do the high priority work.
- There are not enough contractors in SE Oregon—our funding and our capacity for getting on-the-ground projects is equal, but if we get funds, we’ll do those projects. We have a difficult time getting applicators in here to do the work at a reasonable price.
- We have a long list of stakeholders we would like to reach that are a bit outside of our target group—in that vein, we’re trying to figure out how to reach different vectors, ranging from the aquarium industry, to hikers, bikers, etc. We have a ways to go before realizing reaching everyone we want.
- We have capacity to meet our highest priorities (as I average it out over the past 3 years). But we don’t have the ability to follow up on our secondary priorities, as well (like containment and control projects—we struggle to deal with these well, logistically, and in a long-term way).

- A limiting factor is our legal ability to treat—we don't have the clearance to treat in all cases (e.g., federal land).
- We have the capacity to address our highest priorities, but that comes at a cost to meeting other priorities, including acreage targets. Our weed control is all about preserving the integrity of ecosystems, so the highest priority weeds may be the most expensive and most difficult to get to (e.g., early infestations in a wilderness area). So do I expend my entire weed budget to go after those few acres in high priority areas, or do I meet my targets by treating a bunch of roadside infestations, which is important, because that is where spread comes from. National forest districts rarely have the capacity to do both.
- We have the funding capacity on the Deschutes National Forest, but not on the Ochoco National Forest (Ochoco is smaller with less recreation, so we receive less funding overall for the forest, and the forest supervisor has to make the tough decision about what programs will get funded). We do not have the capacity as far as expertise of chemical treatments, and we rely on other agencies, especially ODA for that expertise.
- You're right; the answer is a resounding NO. Our system is operating with only me as staff, and only 30–50% time. Increased funding would offer an opportunity to increase capacity, and thereby expand our abilities to better combine our education/outreach efforts with the treatment and follow-up monitoring needs. Additional capacity would also allow for expanding partnership projects, and do a better job following up on citizens after making contact, etc.
- I guess we do have adequate funding for what we are focusing on but personnel and public perception issues are our bottleneck. So budget yes, bodies and tools to do the job no, not so much.
- Our highest priorities seem to be addressed, but with such a large area to cover, we have found it difficult to help landowners with containment or control. Personnel to get the job done is a bit challenging.
- There is always a tension within the Forest Service re: what gets funded and what does not. There are Congressional targets for forest timber harvest, and they hold more weight. So not meeting a weed target is probably not a huge deal, but not meeting a timber harvest is probably a big deal.
- Somewhat—we do a lot of on-the-ground work w/ 3 sub-programs and get a bunch of education done through the 4-County CWMA. There are lots of properties and property owners, though. Always a threat of funding cutbacks looming overhead.
- No. Some of that has to do with the legal structure working w/in the federal forest, and the difficulty to get through legal requirements to get work done on-the-ground. We struggle with funding, not having enough money to go around. It's a learning curve dealing with chemical control, and the requirements we have on the forest—it's a massive learning curve, and you pair that with turnover, and we're constantly behind the curve. On a positive note, we are benefiting from the other program areas (engineering, etc.), and are getting a lot of program support from land manager side. While funding is not adequate, the ability for people to keep their eyes open is inexpensive, and we're doing a good job of that. That awareness and prevention attitude is increasing exponentially.
- No. As a nonprofit, we have focused programs and projects that occur in a specific area with a specific landowner. When we have a landowner contact us outside of that project area or focus, we can't find the funding.
- On the Umatilla, we support the No answer. One of the challenges is that our weed coordinators are range managers and silviculturalists, and they do weed management on the side.
- No. We are only able to provide technical assistance and control work to regionalize or priority target areas that we have funding for.

- We do okay with county resources, and are not trying to increase staff or get extra contracts; landowners are proactive; we have decent capacity as long as the funding isn't reduced; they support us well here.
- We're okay right now because state grants and funding exist; we have received a lot of startup funding through the Bureau of Land Management, but those funds may go away; day to day activities—we're getting by, but it's scary—the CWMA's are in the same boat, especially since we don't know the future of the State Weed Grants. Capacity funding is our weakest link. We have 20 projects on the ground. We need more funding to strengthen our organization.
- We'll see if they fund the Farm bill . . . our staff is going out on private lands to determine all of the conservation issues on a farm. In some cases, people interested in plants will be able to detect weed issues; in other cases, people are not as conscious of weed issues and could not be seeing key weeds (high priorities). We need more outreach and education with our staff, but if a confined animal feeding operation is spewing brown water, they may consider that a higher priority than weed management. Our partners (local weed folks) could help to elevate and educate; I send out EDRR booklets, etc.
- We work statewide and our priorities are early detection; very short of resources to do an adequate job; aquatic resources are difficult for people to identify, especially if they are submerged—it requires special expertise, and we don't have the resources to service that. We can never have enough early detection work to deal with the problems.
- Time and money are always limiting factors; we need to be on the same page about what is a bad weed to have in your neck of the woods. We give assistance to people that have weeds that are low on the state's list—it's hindering their operation, so it is important to them, but they can't access state funds because of where that weed is listed on the state list.
- No matter what we do out there, we're dealing with a Band-Aid on a chest wound. We could throw millions at my county alone, and we wouldn't get things under control. I can always use more capacity. We address that by carving out a smaller niche. In terms of overall capacity, we lack the capacity to identify new invaders, especially through the horticultural trade. We lack the regulatory framework to deal with these things—it's all voluntary with landowners.
- We work on soft money—the biggest concern is where the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board/Oregon State Weed Board grant process is going. This year, they are going to award \$1.23 million across the state, but in the future, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board may manage the whole program, which will affect 90% of the people I work with.
- We are lacking statewide and regional strategic planning to get ahead of new invaders and try to figure out ways to diminish the vectors that allow weeds to move around. We're doing a shotgun approach; people that apply for and receive Oregon State Weed Board grants have good projects, but these projects may not work toward the greater good for the region.
- Six or eight years ago, the legislature passed a bill that codified in statute that ODA makes the decisions about what the weed priorities are in the state because there are activities that happen that don't make sense (locally abundant weed versus attacking satellite populations). We wanted one agency to have responsibility for determining priorities.
- It's important for a single agency to identify statewide priorities, but there needs to be consideration for local importance. We're dealing with things at the local level that are widespread across the state, but at the local level, we can make a meaningful contribution to the county. We need to figure out how to address local priorities with statewide perspectives. The value of regional and statewide planning will help rectify this.
- One of the challenges is the slow, slow, reluctant process to list new species.

## PARTNERS AND CUSTOMERS

*Participants were asked to define their customers and partners. Answers to the question shed light on why it is difficult to articulate the structure that exists in Oregon for the management of noxious weeds. Essentially, a complex network of organizations work together at a variety of scales to collaborate, exchange services, and provide and share resources.*

- SWCD (WM)—garlic mustard program—working with as many on-the-ground folks that we can engage has helped agencies that could not convince their boards that the funding was needed; good intact memorandum of understanding showing that people are working in the city, unincorporated Multnomah County; when we can show all of the different funding sources and in-kind work being leveraged, it helps to secure funds we need.
- The federal agencies provide partners with funding.
- In central Oregon, I am on several local weed boards as a board member, and there are other US Forest Service folks as well on other weed boards, which increases collaboration locally.
- Community support through work with private landowners—almost 79% of our county voted for a weed levy because we cater to community needs.
- The Bureau of Land Management, Soil and Water Conservation District, and North Santiam Watershed Council create a close-knit project-based partnership that tackles specific issues in arguably the most sensitive watershed in our county.
- Lincoln SWCD—good communication between us, dividing up work/weed species and covering the county—good relationship.
- Excellent relationships between US Forest Service and state and county partners; we believe it is working well—it's not just disbursing funds—it's good communication and good working relationships.
- We work with Cooperative Weed Management member organizations and ODA, mostly. Customers are the good people of Portland.
- Partnering with the local Soil and Water Conservation District, we each have unique programs (they focus on agriculture, and we focus on riparian), so we can visit a landowner together and address their needs through several different programs—we can provide options for a full restoration on that site. Our customers tend to be private landowners, but we work on public land when we can.
- We also work with local elected officials who want to know how we can deal with a local weed—we have local education with elected officials.
- There is a role for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to do a lot more work, particularly if the weed people could, get involved with local working group meetings, put forth priority weed designations in local areas—we could get conservation implementation strategies set up; work within priority watersheds, and move on with another grant to another area . . . NRCS grant programs need to pay for something on the ground.

## DUPLICATION OF EFFORT

*Participants were asked if they perceive a duplication of efforts exists between their program and other weed entities in Oregon, and if so, provide details on where that overlap exists. Participants emphasized how they collaborate and coordinate across a variety of scales and scopes in the invasive weeds arena. A few participants noted the potential exists for duplication of effort if coordination does not exist, e.g., producing outreach and educational materials. A few participants gave the example of weed management databases as one place in Oregon where duplication of effort exists (e.g., WeedMapper and iMapInvasives). A suggestion was made to narrow the scope of noxious weeds to a basin-by-basin list to help private landowners understand noxious weed and early detection priorities. It was also noted that if counties had a leadership role in weed programs, then landowners would know whom to contact for assistance. The following are comments relative to duplication of effort in weed programs in Oregon:*

- No. We're all collaborative and talking with each other. We're all working on different aspects within the invasive species realm.
- There isn't that much duplication of efforts. The CWMA's have helped us coordinate our efforts—because we're all neighbors working on the same thing, it's important we talk about it and be coordinated in our approach. It's good that the ODA and the Weed Board and the funding they provide are extremely important to controlling invasives in the State of Oregon.
- I don't think there is duplication in what we do because we keep open lines of communication and coordination.
- There are a lot of organizations engaging in outreach and education, so there's potential for duplication of effort in the creation of educational resources—those might be more effectively shared if there are species that are priorities in multiple areas. But I don't see duplication in groups attempting to reach audiences. Fact sheets, reporting information—it is important to be aware of all of the reporting information and try not to reinvent the wheel—work in a coordinated way.
- There isn't any duplication of effort; the varied scales that we work, the weed priorities are different. Weed management areas, county priorities, state priorities, they all overlap, but they are not the same. No duplication of effort in terms of on-the-ground activities.
- The scales that we work on are variable. In eastern Oregon, we work on vast scales. We don't have enough boots on the ground. ODA helps us do the dirt work, but they are our go-to agency for technical expertise, consultation, biocontrols, monitoring.
- The biggest place we see duplication is the mapping and online database. Different ones provide different functionality.
- The US Forest Service doesn't believe there is duplication of effort with ODA—their program is integral to our success because of their authority to manage weeds on state and private lands and the fact that they don't have the regulatory hurdles we have on federal lands. They can respond quickly, whereas we are hampered on the rapid respond end of things. Their technical expertise is extremely valuable, and we rely on that quite a bit.
- Not here in Lincoln County.
- There's a number of CWMA's and "layers," and you would think that would be terribly inefficient, and there would be duplication and inefficiencies. What changes that is the clear communication about each of our roles dictated by funding sources, authorities, etc. ODA's involvement here is critical and key to our success—technical expertise, regulatory authority, and monitoring regarding what is working and what is not.

Dan Sharratt—irreplaceable leadership. High level of responsibility, expertise, etc.

- No. Through solid partnerships with continuous communication, and because our program is “local,” there is no duplication in our area. The partnerships allow for utilizing the strengths of each person/agency and providing increased benefits for each and the area in general. Additionally, ODA has taken a more or less hands-off approach to our efforts, unless specifically invited to join a project.
- No duplication of effort with ODA. They complement our work. In addition to the noxious weed list, we rely on them for technical information that helps us prioritize our work.
- You cannot have enough layers when you are dealing with invasive plants. With clear definition of roles and communication, there is no redundancy or overlap. You can’t have too many people involved in invasive plant control or education . . . Different programs emphasize different things.
- Tri-County works with many partners. By working together and communicating, we are capable of achieving a more thorough coverage of our area.
- No. Our jurisdiction and municipal laws about invasive species add to the fed and state laws and give us flexibility we wouldn’t otherwise have. We do partner on specific plants with the ODA; which could be construed as a duplication of efforts (but actually isn’t).
- There’s a lot of duplication of effort between what happens in the regional office, and what happens in the forest and the district, and with nonprofit organizations, but I recognize the need for that because otherwise you don’t have everyone participating with the full education and awareness level. Without overlap, you have gaps. Example: In planning, we work with the same groups (regional plan, local plans) —we outreach to the same groups of people for every one of those plans. Alyssum project in SW Oregon—we have the Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy—might all have different responsibilities; we don’t stay on our own land base—we work together.
- On the SW Oregon Alyssum project, the group works together, but there is some overlap. The Nature Conservancy, watershed councils, extension, are working to reduce the same weed, but it’s different land types, so it works well. It’s a good model, but they could do a better job sharing information. Even though very little of the infestation is on the national forest, the US Forest Service came up with quite a bit of funding to use on the project as a whole.
- The state could play a major role as a weed clearinghouse; they have done a lot better job in the past few years doing that—weed contacts, e.g. There’s a duplication of effort with weed Internet sites; Oregon could be the one-stop shopping for weeds. Weedmapper and iMapinvasives is confusing—there should be one. There are so many people trying to make something better than what we have.
- In our area, we don’t duplicate with the state. The state works on early detection rapid response species, and we work together, talking to state ODA people once a week. If anything, state and county people need to communicate more (if they are not).
- One of the things that is overwhelming for landowners is the ton of information out there—can we chisel it down on a basin-by-basin basis so they wouldn’t have to sift through the entire list of weeds that exist? We had all local weeds on our calendar and fun tips on when to treat them, spray them, and look for flowers, directly relevant to that area.
- I’ve always been a big proponent of a weed supervisor in every county. On the east side, we have a lot of strong programs. There are a lot of different entities on the west side. On the east side, we designate leads for each county. If we had a go-to person in each county, and used the state resources (early detection rapid

response, biocontrols, etc.), we can be used as a tool of the state and visa versa.

- There's a significant amount of overlap in Clackamas County caused by inertia—recent formations of groups—progression of people trying to fill vacuum of management in the area. We bump into activities with watershed councils, Oregon State University extension, and ODA itself. We do a lot of early detection work, and we're coordinating, but there is a schism while people learn the roles—opportunity to streamline efforts, and it's happening.
- Support weed supervisor in every county. In Yamhill County, landowners don't know whether to call the Soil and Water Conservation District, Oregon State University Extension, ODA, or who . . . no one has stepped up to take a lead in the county. Create a one-stop shop. In theory, a conservation district is the weed supervisor entity, but people don't know that.
- Aquatics is specialized, and we don't see overlap with anyone else.

## GAPS

Participants were asked to describe the gaps, if any, that currently exist in Oregon's ability to prevent the introduction of noxious weeds; control, manage, and eradicate noxious weeds; provide leadership in noxious weed issues, deal with invasive species at the statewide level, and raise awareness of the importance of invasive species issues. Gaps described include lack of adequate funding, failure to perform risk assessments in a reasonable period of time, inability to prevent new introductions by failing to focus on vectors, lack of a statewide awareness public campaign re: noxious weeds; lack of political will to adequately fund noxious weed efforts; lack of weed control districts throughout the state; regulatory shortfalls; procedural barriers; lack of statewide prioritization; inconsistent border patrols; lack of adequate county enforcement; gaps in the ability of entities to use all of the tools available for invasive species management; lack of biosecurity at the state level; lack of good information about the controls and treatments of noxious weeds; failure to develop an adequate infrastructure for early detection rapid response; and failure to create a clearinghouse for noxious weed information best management practices. The following are some examples of gaps in weed program priorities in Oregon:

### Risk assessments and Plant Lists

- Ability to prioritize species and rapidly perform risk assessments for new species so there can be information support to identify ED lists.
- Why is a certain plant not listed as a noxious weed? Working in two states, one weed is listed as Class B and it's not listed in a neighboring state, and I've been told it's political, but I don't know the answer.
- It is difficult getting new species listed. When we see things that are becoming aggressive and naturalizing, we give feedback, but can't get traction at the state level for listing consideration. We're several years after the fact, and plants skip the A listing and jump to B listing. No species should jump an A listing status.
- Biosecurity at the state level—*Arundo donax* highlighted some of the gaps in our biosecurity within Oregon. ODA can step up and take an active and progressive role doing risk assessments. Just came from interagency noxious weed symposium, and we discussed cheatgrass, and it's not a noxious weed in Oregon, and we don't have a risk assessment for it. It's low-hanging fruit.

### Vectors and pathways

- Across the state of Oregon, there's a gap in being able to prevent the introduction of species, esp. re: vector control (roads). There's quite a few species Harney County does not have that Malheur County does—there's no coordinated statewide effort to block those introductions. Oregon, through all the agencies and efforts, we need to start addressing it—and don't limit it to aquatic invaders.
- An all vector-all lands approach, and we have gaps in vectors and land management approaches. Using weed-free rock, some entities use rock from infested sources that we would not use in the forest service. The state could take a leadership role in weed-free rock and hay, etc.

### Outreach and Education

- There's a weakness in the ability to prevent introductions from elsewhere. ODA has historically not jumped on the outreach and education with a statewide campaign for weeds. Look at what Oregon Marine Board has done with AIS—much bigger audience. ODA could do a better job at helping with statewide awareness.
- One of the shortfalls that exists is good information for control of each of the species. There are some fact sheets, but there should be a one-stop shop—identify the plant, then control it. The Nature Conservancy once had a website where you could click on a region of the map—the state could do that—click on a county map, and it lists the weeds at issue in your area, with pictures, etc. Then once they identify the plant, there is information on weed control. Trying to get on the Oregon State University weed site is a nightmare. The other piece that is lacking is training—we need aquatic identification training courses to bring people up to speed to teach and educate further.

- Create a clearinghouse to address weed issues—I go to King County Washington’s page for best management practices.

### **Political Will**

- Lack of political backing for weed department (budget). Their eradication efforts come from lottery dollars—should be a dedicated line item.
- We may be able to keep the bare minimum, but we are not addressing the scope and scale of this issue, and that means political buy-in.

### **Funding**

- Gaps we see in ODA are due to their funding and the amount of money they get. Controlling the spread of invasive species is a huge issue, and it’s a challenge for ODA because they are restricted to listed noxious weeds and other programs may have weeds they are interested in that are not listed noxious weeds. Invasive spread is a huge issue.
- Having adequate resources and plans in place to address AIS—prioritizing and addressing all other taxa.
- Biggest gap is funding, outreach and education. Most people outside this small group of weed warriors don’t really understand the problem of how important it is to keep invasives under control. Not sure how you get the word out and make people understand until it impacts them directly. Funding is always the biggest gap.
- Decreases in federal funding for invasive plant management will affect states—and federal, state, and private lands. Decreases in county level funding for invasive county weed programs are being seen.
- I feel there is a little room for more hand-in-hand cooperation between all. We can all pass information to others regarding new weeds, id, etc., but this and other processes WILL be gaps and problems if cutbacks at the state and county level continue.
- In many areas of the state, there is a lack of the long-term funding needed to prevent noxious weed infestations even though the numbers show we save money by getting them early.
- A tremendous amount of uncertainty regarding where ODA will be sitting re: the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board taking a stronger role in the weed grants. It’s a time-will-tell type of thing, but it prohibits the ability to have any certainty in future worldview.

### **Lack of Weed Control Districts**

- An additional gap that Oregon faces is the lack of Weed Control districts across the state.
- If there was a county weed supervisor in every county, the state folks could be regional managers—we would have the infrastructure. The county folks would be the on-the-ground folks, and ODA would be a resource to bring together information from other counties, etc. ODA could do the educational programs for those regions. That framework would go a long ways (multiple agreement).

### **Regulatory and Enforcement**

- In terms of prevention and introduction of species, there remains regulatory gaps at the state and federal level in terms of bringing in new species for a specific purpose—that isn’t prohibited unless there is good evidence that it would be harmful (yellowtufted alysseum—a purposeful introduction gone wrong—and there are many of those). There’s a regulatory limit in our ability to prevent harmful introductions. On the control, manage, and eradicate side, there are procedural barriers that hinder a rapid response once a known invasive plant shows up—e.g., on the federal level, we have NEPA requirements that do not “fit” well with invasive species management (not just weeds). At the state level, ODA cannot go after a weed and expend much of their

funds unless it is listed in the state as a noxious weed, and the listing process can take time, and be influenced by political or corporate desires.

- We have regulatory gaps, as well. Within ODA, there are 2 departments that deal with the introduction of weeds—there needs to be adoption of common goals and coordination. It used to be that you could have medusahead in hay from outside the state.
- We have not strengthened our counties enough to do enforcement. We need statutory penalties. Big gap in enforcement at the county level because of no cohesive state regulation.
- I think the ODA could take a more visible and active role in enforcing noxious weed laws already on the books. That said, there should be an investigation of how existing ORS could be tweaked to give counties and municipalities some ED/RR authority (not sure this is feasible). I think we are all doing a good job of working together to notify each other of the next big thing; this dynamic should only strengthen with time.

### **Priorities**

- The proposal to cut ODA's noxious weed program is a lack of prioritization at the state level—we need REAL support and real choices politically to say that invasive species control is a priority. We have done just enough to say we have a program, we have a Council, but we don't have teeth and solid funding to stand on.

### **Border Patrol**

- Some sort of consistent border patrol (not sure how to fund that); more staff willing and able to provide guidance consistent with current thinking; more staff to be available more regularly in higher-density areas like ours; more thorough examination of new introductions, regardless of the rationale for the introductions (ex: even though alternative energy is in high demand, encouraging the production of a species that has already demonstrated its tendency toward invasiveness seems a rash decision); work more closely with OISC in the state- and region-wide outreach efforts, and perhaps work with local groups more frequently to get the word out about local issues.

### **EDRR Leadership**

- Statewide leadership in early detection rapid response—developing an infrastructure—currently, there is the hotline and toll free phone line (ODA), but there hasn't been near enough public education re: what to look out for – what's on the ODA watch list? We aren't getting the support for early detection rapid response that we could at the state level. We realize there aren't that many people working at ODA, but it is a gap.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Weed-free agricultural projects (hay, seed)—more certified products need to be available and used. I ask feed stores where you get weed-free seed, and some are knowledgeable, and some are not. We have a ways to go there.
- A statewide effort to evaluate the monitoring efforts and be able to monitor the progress people are making, and push that information to others attempting to manage these weeds.
- There are gaps in who can use certain tools in the toolbox. I've been made aware of groups like ODA that gaps in federal ability to use certain tools have caused us a problem.
- Covering ground is a gap. ODA is grossly understaffed in terms of field folks, so we need to think smarter about how to address weeds at a regional level. Maybe focusing on local-level folks and using them better to address on-the-ground issues will be key to being more effective in the future.

- The expertise that ODA field staff has—would be of greater use working in an advisory capacity and educational capacity versus dragging hose.

## THE ROLE OF ODA'S NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL PROGRAM

*Participants were asked to describe what they believe is the role of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Noxious Weed Control Program, including how it both complements and supports your program. Participants described the leadership role that ODA plays as critical to noxious weed management in the state, from grants disbursed through the Oregon State Weed Board to their role as regulators and enforcers as well as educators. Participants described the efficiencies they experienced as a result of ODA staff expertise and on-the-ground control, although several noted if less on-the-ground management was performed, more time would be available for their staff to serve in a consulting and education role [currently, shortfalls in funding require ODA staff to perform on-the-ground management on federal lands]. The following are some examples of how participants described ODA's role relative to noxious weed control in Oregon:*

### **Regulatory**

- Primary role is regulatory—to protect the state from noxious weeds, and use that to enforce those regulations (A, B, T listed weeds), and provide the cooperators (counties, CWMA's) with the expertise and funding through the grant program to do the on-the-ground work.
- They are important in helping us deal with regulations and permitting and being able to use herbicides in particular situations and dealing with EPA and DEQ issues.
- I see them as more regulatory, having more teeth, and actually get the message out to the nurseries, rock quarries.

### **Leadership**

- Protecting the state from existing weed infestations and new weed invasions. Challenge to do that when you are just dealing with a listing process. They don't have the resources to do that, and they are limited by the species they can actually list. Limits their ability to protect the state.
- Role is being a leader in the state for prevention (new invaders), trying to keep what we already have from invading new areas.
- Leadership – which comes with experience, expertise, authority, and coordinated effort. They provide accountability for local programs. They are hugely important.
- Main Coordinator. Understanding about the seriousness of weed problems in specific areas and the great support from the ODA rep (Glenn Miller)...priceless technical advising also.
- To help guide weed control activities across the state through regulatory authority and on-the-ground experience. They should and often do provide the most up-to-date information regarding control effectiveness and alternatives. The challenges in our area have included getting consistent input from each staff member, so perhaps that's something they could look at internally (ensuring they are all on the same page).
- ODA gives us the state wide and regional perspective and leadership. Many groups rely entirely on Oregon State Weed Board funding for weed control work. They make sure we are all on the same page with which weeds to go after and the best practices to use. The biocontrol work is also crucial.
- Leadership, biocontrol and enforcing ORS 569.
- Providing leadership in noxious weed issues – providing information; providing regulatory role; get weeds listed; communicating with commercial agriculture and nursery partners for newly listed weeds to be taken off the nursery list so that it cannot be sold.

- Providing priorities, statewide vision in helping to direct efforts.
- Administering a framework for getting things done. A one-stop shop, but also a structural component – identifying where gaps exist.
- Biosecurity and biocontrol issues – administering them at the state level.
- Risk assessments.

### **Education**

- Primarily education—get information from one program to another and across the state. Data for weed sites and infestations. Also first ones for early detection rapid response—provide the avenue to do that.
- ODA weed program complements and supports us through education (we can get the best formula for attacking an invasive).
- Getting a message out on a big level.
- Sharing of information at interagency noxious weed symposium.
- Outreach/mentoring – they have the expertise to help people new to weed control and help people when new species of concern move to an area and people need information about prevention and control.
- When ODA staff attends CWMA meetings, they bring a lot of knowledge to the table re: topic at hand and what may be occurring in neighboring counties - useful.
- Listserv is a useful tool to get information out throughout the state – recent listings of A-rated weeds.
- Noxious weed symposium ODA leads is complementary to everything we do.

### **Enforcement**

- They back up the county programs when we're dealing with enforcement issues. Responsibility is passed down from state statutes to counties for regulatory issues – not as effective if we don't have ODA backing (political commodities).

### **Statewide Prioritization**

- Prioritization—a key role for the state. We're looking locally at what we think is going to be a priority, but we look to the state for species that will be quarantined and have a risk assessment.
- They do help prioritize local efforts because of their statewide view, and they have an extremely important role among neighboring states.

### **Expertise**

- I rely on the state for technical expertise, both in biocontrol matters and in chemical control in my area—the Forest Service does not want to take on the burden of becoming pesticide applicators full time, and the expertise that has to go along with that. We rely on ODA heavily for that expertise, and the same for biocontrol. ODA plays a role in my area being the tie between all of the layers (organizations) in invasive species efforts. They do a very good job of being the central link for communication and coordination.
- Another important role is providing technical input when other groups are visiting the legislature trying to advocate for support for weed control.

- I'm regularly in contact with ODA staff for questions on many different weeds; I'm the main contact for any weed question a homeowner/landholder may have countywide and I very often defer to information received from Shannon, Tim, Glenn, Eric and others. ODA noxious weed program is crucial and a shining light among usually dim government programs, direct help, support, funding, herbicide work, communication, etc.
- ODA acts as a highly specialized technical assistance provider to our programs on the SWCD level. In some projects they act as a leader of the project and give us the tools or strategies we need to continue the project on our own. The regulatory aspect is also useful for entities that have only voluntary programs.
- Biocontrol program is very complementary to our county program. Have had a # of success stories we can attribute to ODA's biocontrol program. We have seen an impact on diffuse knapweed, and now Dalmatian toadflax. Their program complements a county program greatly.

### **Managing Weeds on Private Lands**

- ODA's role in managing weeds on private lands within the state is extremely important. E.g., yellowtuft alyssum—without their technical ability and authority to speak to landowners with infestations that our neighboring federal lands would be at the mercy of a terrible situation. ODA has completely stepped up to the plate to take the lead to manage that issue, which helps protect all of our lands, especially true for counties that do not have a weed program.

### **Funding**

- State Weed Board Grant Program is a funding mechanism—quality control prioritization—it is so critical to what we have been able to accomplish in our region and across the state. Their ability to administrate that program well has been huge (over many years now).
- The State Weed Board Grant program has provided the bulk of project-based funding for many groups, including ours. They have also responded to challenging private land situations wherein the landowners weren't responsive on a local level, but would respond to the state. ODA has also partnered when we have worked with large landowners to provide appropriate and accurate land management plans to the landowner, and helping to "encourage" them to be active land stewards.

### **On-The-Ground Management**

- ODA actually does USFS herbicide control—Dave Langland does Deschutes NF herbicide work. We could contract that out to a private contractor, but the benefit we get to have Dave do that is that we don't have to completely direct his work. There is a level of trust there—he follows up monitoring for us, he supplies all of the biocontrol expertise—he is the person that we rely on for what herbicide works on what weeds (which changes as we experiment with different chemicals). If we rely on Forest Service personnel, we would be behind the curve because we don't have the time to gain that information that ODA has from working with so many partners. We gain all of that knowledge. It is crucial for our program.
- ODA saves the national forests quite a bit of money by doing the herbicide work. If we have to hire trained seasonals (proper certification, knowledge of local weeds, etc.), that is time and money that doesn't get spent actually doing treatment. [Additional comment: it is important to maintain their balanced role in working with all different kinds of groups across the state, and not be fully consumed with contract work such that they can't deliver on all services].
- As an example, the Noxious Weed Program has been crucial to prevent the establishment of Giant Hogweed in the Portland area. They respond quickly to sightings, give positive identification, and are able to do the control on difficult sites like school grounds.
- ODA has not ever done treatment for our group—we always hire contractors. Could that be different from region to region?

- We do treatments with ODA and coordinate on A ranked spp.
- ODA manages the on-the-ground work for the Forest Service in many cases (not everywhere). It's a huge role. A benefit of that role is that it allows us to look at the weeds in a boundary list manner to work across ownerships.
- Providing funding to on-the-ground implementers.

## WHAT DISTINGUISHES ODA FROM OTHER ENTITIES

*Participants were asked to describe what distinguishes ODA from other programs, nonprofits or agencies in this region addressing noxious weed control issues. The answers to this question mimicked, to a large degree, the responses to the previous question. In addition to the areas mentioned in the previous question (e.g., regulatory agency, enforcer, leader, coordinator, educator), respondents added that ODA staff play an important role intersecting with local weed managers, they coordinate across states, they participate in important biocontrol programs, they practice quality control as they visit sites, they work closely with the nursery industry, and they provide a statewide framework that other entities rely on and intersect with as noxious weed programs are implemented. The following are some examples of how participants described how ODA's noxious weed control program interfaces with other entities in Oregon:*

- They are a regulatory agency that gets out of the office—their people are spread thin, they're on-the-ground working hard, they're writing and enforcing regulations, and also helping with weed management.
- Leadership role—agency people look to for looking for species with risk assessments and priorities. Statewide education role—standard information re: what species to look for and how to control them at a state level. Provide coordination and consistency—across different scales of weed management.
- Get out of the office, know how to get the job done—cannot speak highly enough of the weed folks we work with in Columbia County slogging through the mud and weeds with us. An important role.
- Only entity that can list a species as a noxious weed, and with that recognition comes a lot of potential resources for the control of that weed. Resources are tied to the noxious weed list.
- ODA is the only state agency we have ever worked with that operate a computer in an office setting, to running a four-wheeler, on horseback, and they are always available to help out where we need them to help out to provide the services we desperately need in our areas. They have the knowledge and expertise we need. When we call about a funding source and how to fill out an application, or a chemical treatment, they have the answers; they are easy to work with.
- Interagency Noxious Weed Symposium addresses an issue that everyone can get behind (Oregon's economy, etc.). It should make it that much more elevated as an agency.
- The symposium allows us to learn about new issues on a statewide basis. No other agency does that in that comprehensive a manner.
- Technical expertise.
- Statutory authority.
- Influence with other state agencies.
- Coordination across multi-state areas.
- Authority and ability to enforce—they actually do the enforcement.
- Development of biological control agents for release.
- They way the program is structured with regional positions, on-the-ground folks. They are able to evaluate, give feedback, and prioritize programs for funding. They are the connection that makes the program live. Quality control visiting sites.

- General leadership to landowners and weed supervisors.
- Authority (perhaps ostensibly).
- Regulatory leadership to list noxious weeds and deals with nurseries. The federal government doesn't do that, and the locals don't. It's entirely ODA, and it's a specific role.
- ODA provides a statewide framework and also regional framework that is able to unify control, survey, and outreach efforts of other more local entities.
- Working on getting biocontrols approved and released is very important.
- They are the only entity legally responsible for having statutory responsibilities for weeds. They are in the crosshairs of the legislature when it comes to weeds.
- ODA could enter private property and levy fines.
- ODA has the ability to quarantine if need be.
- ODA has a role to address weeds from a state perspective. Thinking about what could profoundly affect the state is important.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF ODA'S NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL PROGRAM

*Participants were asked to describe what they believe are the strengths and weaknesses of ODA's Noxious Weed Control Program. Strengths described include staff expertise, ability to do risk assessments, the overall role in protecting Oregon's agricultural industry, weed management, expertise, and biocontrols. Weaknesses mentioned include lack of visibility, inadequate funding and capacity, failure to address larger political issues, lack of visibility and sharing success stories, the need to enhance notifications to land management entities when biocontrols are being released, the desire to more clearly articulate State Weed Board priorities, the existence of regulatory gaps, and duplication of efforts with WeedMapper and iMapInvasives. The following are some examples of how participants described the strengths and weaknesses of ODA's noxious weed control program in Oregon:*

### Strengths

- Ability to quickly do risk assessments and prevent the introduction of new invasives.
- Staff—from management (Tim Butler) to boots on-the-ground folks.
- Good people that are well educated and easy to work with.
- Their role in helping protect the state's agricultural production and agriculture is huge.
- Strengths—how they have managed different weed needs and issues regionally within the state. When I go to eastern Oregon, they have focused different programs for the weeds out there.
- Coordinators on staff are good people.
- Incredible expertise—good staff; the more they can be in the position of helping to teach and educate and have others that do the spraying, would be useful. Spend more time working with local work groups (this would be more useful to NRCS—we could have more funding if weed issues are more plugged in).
- Biocontrol program is a strength; it's one of the best in the country.
- In terms of early detection rapid response species, they have been very responsive, which is extremely important particularly in areas not covered by any other jurisdiction.

### Weaknesses

#### **Funding and Capacity**

- Funding is a big issue—they could use more funding than they currently have. They could use more staff. Assume that some of the questions about overlap of activities might relate to that.
- Lack of funding and there's not enough of them. They are the first on the chopping block. We could lose the grant program manager for the OSWB.
- Related to funding—ability to enforce regulation.
- Relationship with OWEB and funding for weed control—if ODA loses that authority, I think it is going to weaken the noxious weed program.
- Ability is limited by capacity, which is limited by funding, which is limited by support at state level.

- Due to staffing levels, they are not able to provide the same amount of on-the-ground work around the state. They are forced to be reactive instead of proactive due to the need for listing.

### **Visibility and Communication**

- Another weakness (political situation) is they need to address larger political issues, which can impact listing, and management decisions, which, as a weed program, they may wish to not have to deal with or think about.
- We don't talk about the things we have done that are successful—what is of value to the people of Oregon. That relates to lack of funding—we usually finish a project and move on to the next thing. Should take credit for accomplishments.
- Lack of visibility is a big deal (as that relates to the natural resource community), perhaps there is a perception that because they are a part of ODA, it's just about agriculture that it's only about agriculture, but they work in agriculture and in natural resources.
- Their weakness is their lack of visibility and the natural resource community realizing the importance of what they do. We have been able to raise salmon issues to high points but it's difficult for the general public to get excited about weeds.
- Although their biocontrol program is excellent, they need to do a better job of communicating where they are actively using biocontrols. Sometimes there are conflicts—they put bugs in an area, while we do a complementary activity, like hand pulling or spraying, and this causes hard feelings.
- For our group, it would be very helpful to have State Weed Board Grant Program priorities clearly identified to encourage more successful and better applications.
- A weakness is they are already understaffed! Which affects the only other issues I have complaints about—getting Weedmapper up and running faster, IT personnel etc.
- My experience in this area is that staff is not regularly available, and that information on the same topic between staff doesn't always match.

### **Regulatory Gaps**

- A few regulatory holes exist—if these were addressed, this would allow the program to work more effectively. EX: One state's noxious weed program director has the ability to list a noxious weed (emergency) for 18 months. If something is "taking off," they don't have to wait for a risk assessment, presentation to the Weed Board, and listing process—then control efforts are not hampered. There may be other examples.
- How ODA regulates weeds on public lands.
- Federal lands are dictated by what is listed on the noxious weed list.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Duplication of effort: WeedMapper and iMapInvasives.
- They should fill a position with someone with a robust botanical/scientific background.
- SW Oregon has so many SMALL properties with weeds OUT OF VIEW AND/OR BEHIND LOCKED GATES, that it's difficult to tout the impact of time and \$\$\$ spent.

It was noted that strengths and weaknesses are sometimes the same thing. Strengths—ability to work with numerous entities, and they are tactful working with landowners to achieve goals. Sometimes, I want to see more teeth than tact. However, they are very successful with the tactful approach.

## WHAT ODA COULD DO TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF NOXIOUS WEEDS

*Participants were asked about what could ODA do to help improve the ability to manage noxious weeds in Oregon. They responded in three primary categories: outreach, education, communication, and training; strategic planning and priorities, and risk assessments and listing species. They noted that there is a need for increased statewide education, providing comments on federal plans, creating a stronger web presence, improving communication about biocontrol releases, and offering more training. They noted a need for clear articulation of priorities, guidance, and overall leadership in strategic planning. And they commented on the need to complete more risk assessments, conduct enforcement at local nurseries, and list species known to be invasive. They also recommended the Oregon State Weed Board have more authority relative to its grant program, that regulatory gaps be filled, that more work be conducted on biocontrols, that staff be added, and that improvements be made relative to integrating best management practices for dealing with new weeds. The following are some examples of how ODA could improve management of noxious weeds in Oregon:*

### **Outreach, Education, Communication, and Training**

- Increase statewide education efforts.
- The more ODA can do to get comments on record in our planning documents, that helps us—maybe that hasn't been prioritized in the past.
- More training—conferences, networking, providing framework. More on the outreach side. More education to implementers. Maybe things that are not focused to a yearly event. Maybe a monthly newsletter—Here's the newest research on this.
- More advisory—education and training.
- Stronger user-friendly web presence.
- Communicate more about biocontrol releases (when, where, and what).

### **Strategic Planning and Priorities**

- Provide clear priorities.
- The strategic plan provides guidance, specifically with respect to educating leadership and citizens about the potential expenditures on invasive species.
- Statewide strategic plan for managing weeds—ODA needs to take the lead on developing that—and integrate regional plans. Funding has not been there to implement the last plan that was implemented.

### **Risk Assessments and Listing Species**

- Completing more risk assessments and robust enforcement of local nurseries.
- List species that are known to be invasive (although I understand the need to weigh commerce against natural area protection).

### **Miscellaneous**

- Have more authority in granting program via the Oregon State Weed Board.

- Send money and let Glen Miller treat weeds for us.
- More work on biocontrols.
- Fill existing regulatory gaps.
- Double their staff. Triple!
- Would like to see better integration of best management practices for dealing with new weeds as well as the northwest program helping us wade through new regulations (water quality, e.g.).

## DEMONSTRATING SUCCESS

*When asked what participants believe are the most effective ways ODA can demonstrate success of noxious weed control in Oregon, they responded that ODA needs to better tell its success stories, demonstrating that preventing establishment saves money long-term. They noted that Oregon could benefit from making comparisons with other states that are inundated with noxious weed problems, and recommended increased use of the media and social media could enhance ODA's profile. Participants also emphasized the importance of describing how noxious weed management protects Oregon's native habitats. Additional ideas—including asking individuals to sign a pledge to be a weed warrior as well as hosting legislative tours. The following are some examples of ways ODA's noxious weed control program could demonstrate success:*

- Work toward collecting and compiling data from multiple landowners to get a complete picture of spread or lack of spread of IS across the landscape—that will help demonstrate success, especially ED success stories (acres controlled isn't necessarily a reflection of how successful you are)—it's about preventing establishment. Data can help demonstrate that.
- Being able to demonstrate lack of spread and movement of IS—containment is key.
- Quantify the negative impacts of weeds on rangeland or forest resources, similar to what ODA did with tansy ragwort (kills livestock)—put a \$ figure on these weeds on these resources.
- Create a clever marketing campaign like Smokey the Bear that engages the public (expensive) and makes them pay attention. People are inundated with media all the time. If it's not something that makes them pay attention, they just shrug it off.
- Preventing spread and demonstrating the prevention of spread is important, but it's hard to do that compellingly when you're talking about something that didn't happen. Document something that did happen—not sure what that would be.
- Look to other states and noxious weed issues that have become a big problem and make sure they don't become a big problem here.
- Goat's rue—compare what is happening in Utah with what is happening here.
- Showing the success of treating—a decrease of acres of the species or showing what was surveyed would be good—in addition it would be good to show the 'do nothing' model. Show the importance that if we did nothing what our resources would look like.
- Hold conference/lectures (could be one for the whole county) educating people on weed/invasives issues and also explaining IPM and covering herbicide use issues.
- Highlight EDRR treatments—purple starthistle in our area to demonstrate the # of plants coming into Oregon that have not spread due to our efforts (negative reporting).
- More weed control work on State Park properties.
- You Tube videos broadly distributed and well advertised.
- Assess the number of weed species—how many species are in neighboring states compared to Oregon?
- TV, Radio and all media sources—EG: Oregon Field Guide shows have been very effective, people who hardly know what a weed is watch those shows and learn what is being done. Hire Sam Chan to go around

and give presentations.

- Count the number of phone calls they get and we get from citizens who now know about X species and it's negative impact on certain elements of our region (in our area, tansy ragwort provokes hundreds of calls from knowledgeable citizens in our area).
- Advertise the partnerships and the financial benefits it provides. Because of the partnership between ODA and the USFS, x # of “more” acres of weeds can be treated, etc.
- Give dollar amounts for the money saved from EDRR work versus how much it would have cost without it.
- What do invasive species cost (translation)?
- I like the "negative reporting" model, but perhaps they could add the amount of dollars saved by denying the weed access.
- I agree with “give dollar amounts for the money saved from EDRR work versus how much it would have cost without it.”
- Monitoring and demonstrating the trends and differences in where infestations are. We really have to be careful about how we do this because we don't necessarily treat large acreages, but we protect large acreages with our treatments. There needs to be more than one indicator – treatment of X number of acres leading to protection of Y number of acres. And also reporting that even if the acreages where the extent of the noxious weeds have not changed, we have changed density or distribution of these areas – e.g., riparian areas (listed fish species, how many endangered plants were protected by our treatment).
- Looking beyond how the weed contributes to the habitat, but looking at the value of removing the weeds—it's about the native plants and how they contribute to habitat.
- Being able to see demonstration sites of restoration areas that have worked—exciting for implementers and landowners. Focus on prevention and look at what we haven't got here. Hear more about methods that didn't work so that I make sure I don't try those—a 15-year perspective of trying to fight a weed so that I don't try those methods.
- It's a lot like non-point source pollution, where we try to quantify that. One idea is a pledge—I have agreed to do X and that equals a certain amount of pollution removed. If you can get people to take a pledge about weeds (e.g., I agree to remove weeds on my property). Do this online. There's a habitat certification program that could be packaged and distributed—people that pledge to be a weed warrior.
- Some of the television videos that have been developed on Oregon Field Guide, etc., could help promote the great success stories of biocontrol programs and EDRR.
- Performance metrics (similar to the OISC report card)—reduce the number of new invaders to X per year—or reduce the acreage of A/B listed weeds in the state. I don't think they have these kinds of metrics.
- Communication—OISC developed the economics of invasives—frame that in terms of how much weed control saves Oregon's economy. Highlight what we spend and what we save Oregon. That is meaningful.
- Sponsor weed tours for legislators (similar to Washington state). Show them weeds and management activities. We can make that work in Oregon. They need more champions in the legislature. Educate legislators.

## CHANGES IN THE LAST DECADE THAT INFLUENCE THE ABILITY TO ADDRESS NOXIOUS WEEDS

*Participants were asked if there are any changes that have taken place over the last decade that affect the ability of ODA and conservation partners to address noxious weeds. Respondents described positive changes, including the Silent Invasion statewide campaign, regional Environmental Impact Statements, a shift in the focus from weed eradication to restoration of habitats, use of technology to share information, and a Clinton-era executive order that has stimulated more action on federal lands. Negative changes included more regulations, the new link between the Oregon State Weed Board grant program and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, budget reductions and the economy, the ability to purchase invasives online, increasing urbanization, and increases in anti-herbicide sentiments. The following are some examples of changes in the last decade that influence the ability to address noxious weeds in Oregon:*

### Positive Changes

- Silent Invasion effort—that had, at least temporarily, a strong impact with OPB’s documentary, the production of *GardenSmart* documents, and a lot more invasives information in front of the public. Very positive – great to try and do that again.
- Incredible work that took place with the public education and outreach campaigns (Silent Invasion and other campaigns have raised awareness) makes people more aware of weed treatments and other activities.
- Regional EIS from USFS has begun to affect that process and we hope it continues (invasive plants).
- Leadership's opportunity for involvement on the State Weed Board and similar organizations has helped.
- I've noticed much more focus on restoration rather than weed killing as an overall approach. That is extremely positive.
- Early detection rapid response programs are fairly new, and I think that is something that has resurged people’s energy in the landowner and implementer communities.
- Internet is also a great tool to share information.
- Databases that show spatial distribution—GIS—they are so powerful now. We’re not really utilizing the spatial tools to do landscape-level analysis.
- A lot of the federal agencies have completed their EIS documents, which has allowed federal weed management after years of injunction.
- Clinton’s 1993 executive order motivated federal agencies to get more active.

### Negative Changes

- EPA regulations that make it more difficult to work on-the-ground.
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting requirements.
- NPDES—and along with that, the reluctance of the public to allow any kind of chemical control for any purpose.
- Increasingly complex regulatory environment, Clean Water Act, NPDES permits for spraying, but increasingly less money, and it’s going to affect all of us, including ODA.

- Lawsuits on the Clean Water Act have impacted how we manage aquatic weeds. Now an NPDES permit is required for every application. It makes it difficult to manage weeds. This recent decision on forest roads as point sources of pollution—will make it more difficult to manage forest weeds.
- Measures 66 and 77, while they have opened some doors, is now being tied to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, which has more restrictions, time requirements, and complexity.
- Funding cuts that ODA has received that affect our manpower and how they handle situations with lack of staffing.
- Funding challenges are the obvious ones.
- Decreases in funding and increases in the number of lawsuits (use of herbicide), usually as it pertains to the feds, but it affects our relationship with ODA and what they can do on our lands, etc.
- Economic situation.
- I think there has been a movement away from larger/rural properties to more urban areas, the farther people get from dependence on soil/agriculture in general the less they seem to care, this makes the message tougher to get across.
- There's been a lot of growth and development in the hinterlands.
- Internet—ability to police the Internet is nonexistent. People can buy plants from anywhere in the world and have them shipped overnight.
- Internet—the ability to quickly bring in exotic plants.
- Anti-herbicide sentiment seems to be increasing in some places on the west side—and these individuals are sharing their sentiments using the Internet. Their views can be seen more widely.
- We caused a lot of problems when hazardous fuel reduction after the Biscuit fire—we didn't take an integrated approach.

## GUIDANCE TO ODA

*Participants were asked what advice they would give to ODA's Noxious Weed Program managers to improve the ability of noxious weed management in Oregon. Participants emphasized the need for ODA to showcase its successes, working collaboratively with partners to help tell Oregon's success stories. Raising awareness of noxious weed issues with policy makers, partnering with academia to respond to the need for risk assessments on a timely basis, providing focus to areas where gaps exist, being more transparent re: decisions, providing guidance and leadership on consistency among county weed programs, providing visible leadership, creating access to best management practices and up-to-date information on invasives, more local training, and working collaboratively with partners to advance noxious weed issues were recommended. The following was offered as guidance to ODA's noxious weed control program:*

- ODA does a wonderful job—solicit the support of entities that believe that—have them talk with legislators, etc. without their program, there would be dire straits—no early detection rapid response, etc. Control efforts happening o-t-g because of them or facilitated by them would be hindered drastically. We might have 25 sites of African rue instead of two.
- Advertise their accomplishments and roles more so that people understand the ramifications of losing the program, particularly the agricultural community.
- Demonstrate success. Maintain the awareness of legislators—what we stand to lose. Why is it we care? If we were to close up shop, what successes that we've had in the past would we lose? It would be money spent in vain?
- The state needs leadership and ODA can be the one that does that.
- Work toward showcasing the successes and use that to raise awareness of the value of their work and the potential environmental and economic damage that is being prevented.
- ODA cannot lobby for their own funding, but they can showcase their successes and the cost of not controlling noxious weeds and encourage cooperators to lobby for them.
- Encourage cooperators in urban areas to do the lobbying on urban legislators to educate them to understand the problems. Most rural legislators have a clue about invasive weed species, but sometimes our urban counterparts do not.
- Seek out creative partnerships, especially since funding issues are not going away. Partner with academia to more quickly put out risk assessments.
- Keep Shannon Brubaker.
- Focus efforts on areas of the state that lack local funding for weed control.
- Make themselves more valuable across the board: be more engaged locally and statewide, continue partnerships that “require” their assistance to be successful, strengthen ties to neighboring states, again tightening their hold as a stakeholder in the region.
- Do not work or make decisions in a vacuum.
- Make core structure determinations, e.g., what is a county weed program and what are the minimum requirements that make it fundable? Provide the kind of accountability that they have for the state weed program. SWCDs and CWMA's are good, locally grown groups, but having some parameters and descriptions

that we can translate to Salem—this is how it works, this is the enforcement parameters, this is what they cost us, this is what they fund. That type of system description will help people around the state understand.

- Try to get someone to visit each county in person (no matter how small and insignificant), each year and go out hear concerns etc. Also get all counties in Oregon on board, there are still some large areas unrepresented in the State. Staff is available on the phone/email but face-to-face would be great too. Keep doing a great job!
- ODA could take a greater leadership role in promoting and directing weed management on other state agency properties (weed free forage program is mandatory on federal lands, but not state lands).
- These are all fantastic ideas and comments, especially the one about transparency. Some natural areas managers gripe about this continually and even take the tack that ODA is somehow an impediment to invasives control in the state (I have personally never understood this). I think opening up their decision-making processes would go a long way to helping their image in some circles; it seems they have already begun to do so.
- More improvements on one-stop shopping website for weed identification and control so that it is readily accessible.
- More local training for conservation people. We're not experts—we need to learn this stuff, too.
- Biosecurity issues associated with early detection and risk assessments.
- Work as a team—there's enough to be done everywhere—we need to work together to get after this stuff.

General comment: With everything we have said about what they provide and the gains we have made within the last decade re: public awareness, with the amount of species coming in at an accelerated rate within the last decade, we have a successful program within ODA. Now is not the time to be cutting the funding of a program that is working well. It's just getting to be in its stride now. We are on such an accelerated uphill effectiveness; it's unfathomable to me (what reason) why we would cut a program in that state.