

**WSSA Board of Directors Meeting – October 13, 2021**  
**Hybrid In Person Site Visit and ZOOM Meeting**

**In attendance:**

Anita Dille, Eric Gustafson, Lauren Lazaro, Greg Elmore, Delaney Foster, Bill Curran, Stanley Culpepper, Rakesh Chandran, Carroll Moseley, Christian Willenborg, John Lindquist, Lee Van Wychen, Rob Richardson, Brett Miller, Alan Helm, Dawn Refsell, Victoria Brooks (Local arrangements chair for CWSS)

**Call to Order:**

Anita Dille at 10:03AM CST

**Roll Call**

**Approval of Agenda:**

Motion to approve by Anita Dille at 10:13AM; seconded by Rakesh Chandran. Motion passed unanimously.

**Updates on WSSA Committees: Carroll Moseley**

General Update

WSSA has 45 committees, and the committees are ready to be posted to the website. Carroll proposes that committee chairs need to replace committee members, not the WSSA Vice President. Eric notes that each BOD liaison needs to facilitate the replacements. Annual committee reports (template is sent out) are due prior to the annual meeting which should include members rotating off and replacement members. The MOP likely needs to be updated to reflect these changes. Lee suggested that the BOD liaison be removed from committees. Bill notes that the BOD liaison role has changed since the committee meetings are not always prior to the BOD meeting. There is agreement that there needs to be a more formal plan on who handles these changes. Currently the VP is still in charge of the committees overall.

Annual Meeting Survey Results

Over half (55%) the people who answered (US survey: 258 total; Canada survey: 68 people) the survey stated that they would attend the annual conference in person. The remainder of people were split between uncertain (23%) and will not attend (22%) in person. Greg noted that 52% of people will not bring students if able because they do not want to financially pay for students to quarantine for two weeks if they test positive for COVID. The top two concerns including needing permission of employer (66%; 170 respondents) and ability to fly (48%; 124 respondents). Many people are still very cautious about travelling. Stanley noted that it is important to know if students are attending or not and that it is for great concern that students may not be attending. Need to very clear on COVID testing/regulations (as they change) on entering Canada and returning to the US and send the information to the society. Carroll noted

that the BOD should investigate bringing someone to the hotel to administer COVID testing to return to the US. Greg suggested that instead the BOD should provide a list of testing facilities instead. Stanley noted that the survey participants prefer an in-person (47%; 119 respondents) conference followed by a hybrid (29%; 74 respondents) format. Eric noted that the opening session and the awards session could be made hybrid.

## **Finance Committee Update: Greg Elmore**

### General Update

Financial health as of Aug 31, 2021: \$2.5 million in total assets (\$2.3 million last year). The Cambridge payment was not included in this report. Revenue is tracking well. Chris Willenborg is working on a new contract with Cambridge. Eric notes that there is a lot of revenue (~\$150,000) coming in by the end of the fiscal year that is not reflected in this update. Overall revenue for the annual meeting was down \$4,000 (virtual meeting).

### Innovative grants program update

Need to draft/modify language that outlines the Innovative Grants Program. The BOD has approved the concept, but the MOP needs to be developed within the Finance Committee section. A sub-committee needs to be assigned to review the grant proposals. The draft language of the MOP will be provided to the BOD by the end of October/beginning of November. Revisions from the BOD will be assessed within two weeks. Anita asked Dawn where this would go in the Strategic Plan? John Lindquist said that initial discussions have been had, but he agrees that this should remain within the Finance Committee. There was general agreement.

### Budget Needs

Approved open access publication of the WSSA Weed Loss Committee report on Weed Loss in Wheat (\$2,000). Additionally expecting funding requests for symposia at the annual meeting, five-year strategic plan, and potential travel for an in-person CAST meeting in Columbus, OH in October.

## **Publications Committee Update: Chris Willenborg**

Chris is working with the various journals to select people for Outstanding Reviewer awards. Press releases have been remedied. Weedy Rice Special Topics has been released in Weed Science, IPSM special topics also released. Some headway is being made on the Herbicide Handbook, but it is slow going. A new contract is in the works with Cambridge. It will remain the same overall, but Chris is working with Cambridge on the societies royalty's revenue (increase to 70%). This change is currently with Cambridge's legal team.

Stanley asked if the journal Editor's stipend (\$25,000/editor) should change based on responsibility or if it should remain equal between journals? Chris noted that this may be seen as unfair and the metrics that this changed would be made would be difficult to decide. Chris recommends that the stipend remains the same across the journals. Eric noted that Cambridge may be able to help with the metrics behind the decision and they do provide some financial support for the journal editors.

*Note: Mark VanGessel joined the call at 11AM CST.*

### **Nominations Committee Update: Bill Curran**

WSSA elections are now open (sent out on October 1). Committee is composed of past presidents from all societies. Potential names were submitted prior to the August Nominations Committee meeting. Candidates: Two VP: Greg Dahl, Stephen Enlow. Member at Large: Michael Flessner and Nicholas Bassinger (Dawn is rotating off). Elections close December 14, 2021. Eric will send out reminders. Bill was pleasantly surprised at how the committee worked on a virtual format. VP position is hard to fill due to time commitment.

*Note: James Kells and Janis McFarland joined at 11:15AM CST.*

### **EDSP Science Policy Updates: Lee Van Wychen**

#### 2021 Science Policy Fellows

This year's Science Policy Fellows are Rebecca Champagne at the University of Maine and Devon Carroll at the University of Tennessee. They are working on the weed science research priorities survey and analyzing the 2021 survey results for the most common and troublesome weeds in aquatic and no-crop areas, among many other projects and meetings. They have received the first of their two stipends of \$2,500. The second and final stipend will be for travel to the WSSA annual meeting in Vancouver.

#### FY22 Ag Appropriations Update

Congress approved resolution through December 3. The House has moved forward with their \$26.5 billion spending plan for the FY 2022 Agriculture budget that would provide about a 10% increase over current funding levels, including \$3.391 billion (\$321 million above the FY 2021 enacted level) for agriculture research programs. The House ag appropriations bill passed out of committee on a bipartisan vote. It is now part of a more controversial Seven-Bill Appropriations Package in the House that was approved on a party line vote on July 29.

The Senate ag appropriations bill cleared the Appropriations Committee on a 25-5 vote on August 4, has not passed the full Senate. The bill includes about \$25.9 billion and would boost spending on ag research by \$292 million over the current fiscal year to \$3.6 billion, roughly the same increase included in the bill that cleared the House.

Many ag research programs are slated for increases in both the House and Senate versions compared to FY 2021 levels. This includes an approximate \$150 million increase for ARS and \$100 million increase for NIFA. Specifically, the IR-4 Program, which has been flat funded at \$11.9 million per year for the past decade was recommended at \$20 million in the president's FY 2022 budget, but only \$14 million in the House and \$14.5 million in the Senate. Other NIFA programs that were slated to receive increases in both the House and Senate include the Hatch and Smith-Lever Act capacity funding programs, AFRI Competitive Grants, and SARE.

However, there is still no agreement yet on overall spending levels in the Senate for the next fiscal year, which started October 1. Congress passed a continuing resolution on Oct. 12 that

funds the government at FY 2021 levels until Dec. 3, 2021, while also increasing the federal debt limit.

### Infrastructure Package for Invasive Species Management

An “Infrastructure Package” has been under consideration many times in the past decade but has never made it across the finish line. However, Congress has gotten further down the road to final passage in the past couple months than in recent memory.

However, there is a complicated political “do-si-do” going on (some might call it a “game of political chicken”) where the fate of the current \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package that passed the Senate on a 69-30 vote in early August is inextricably tied to the more monstrous “budget reconciliation” bill that currently has a \$3.5 trillion price tag. The current version of the infrastructure bill will cost \$1.2 trillion over eight years, and has more than \$550 billion in new spending

Part of the “environmental remediation” spending in the infrastructure package includes the following two programs that could channel almost a \$500 million over five years for invasive plant management:

- Sec. 11522. **\$50 million per year for five years for an “invasive plant elimination program”** through the Federal Highway Administration.
- Sec. 40804. **\$200 million** split between the Dept. of the Interior and USDA over 5 years for “ecosystem restoration” through **the US Forest Service for “invasive species detection, prevention, and eradication, including conducting research and providing resources to facilitate detection of invasive species at points of entry and awarding grants for eradication of invasive species on non-Federal land and on Federal land”**.

### Budget Reconciliation Bill

On Sep. 13, the House Agriculture Committee advanced its portion of the \$3.5 trillion reconciliation package by a party line vote of 27-24. The bill includes a massive \$7.75 billion investment in agriculture climate research and infrastructure.

Some of the “Budget Reconciliation” bill increases occur in a single year, while other increases would occur over five years with the total increase reached by FY 2026. Either way, you can do the math and see why some of these numbers are both mind-boggling and a game changer. The path forward for the “budget reconciliation” bill remains unclear. Senators Manchin (D-WV) and Sinema (D-AZ) have requested a much smaller package of about \$1.5 trillion package (compared to the current \$3.5 trillion). The National and Regional Weed Science Societies are continuing to engage on both the budget reconciliation bill and the infrastructure bill to make sure weed science research and management issues are well represented.

As part of the AFRI Coalition, WSSA sent a letter to Congressional leadership in support of the \$7.75 billion for USDA research in the House Agriculture Committee reconciliation proposal. The letter highlighted the \$500 million in additional funding proposed for AFRI and emphasized the transformative impact that level of funding could have on American agriculture. The weed science society presidents are also considering supporting another ag research support letter to House leadership due TOMORROW.

## Paraquat Decision

EPA finalized its interim registration decision for paraquat on Aug. 1, reversing its proposal last year to ban most aerial applications.

Instead, the agency will permit aerial applications of the Group 22 herbicide in crops, with expanded buffer requirements and acreage limits designed to protect applicators. Aerial use of paraquat is most common in cotton, where it is used as a plant desiccant to prepare for harvest.

Lee notes that the cancellation of backpack sprayers and mechanically pressurized handguns does NOT have an impact on the experimental use of paraquat under an Experimental Use Permit or the 40 CFR 172.3(b) exemption. Carroll notes that as long as it is not mechanically pressurized sprayer it should be ok. He will circulate information. Also, after a thorough review of the best available science, EPA has NOT found a clear link between paraquat exposure from labeled uses and adverse health outcomes such as Parkinson's disease and cancer.

## Weed Science Societies Support NEPA and Lacey Act Fixes for Invasive Species

The national and regional weed science societies supported letters that would improve invasive species management on two separate issues.

The first letter requests that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) approve the Department of the Interior's request for a number of categorical exclusions under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for invasive species control. Without the ability to use categorical exclusions to promptly control invasive annual grasses after a fire on federal lands, those invasive grasses have spread rapidly while federal land managers have to go through the NEPA process, which has taken years in many cases, before those invasive grasses can be managed.

The second letter supports legislation, S. 626, in the Senate that would fix a flaw in the Lacey Act, which came about through a federal court case, where the court interpreted that the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) could not regulate interstate commerce in injurious species, notwithstanding decades of generally accepted practice during which FWS had exercised that authority.

## Improving Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Approval Times for Weed Control Treatments

The BLM's herbicide risk assessment process has historically proven to be overly time consuming and costly. It is imperative that the agency improves the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement process under NEPA to ensure BLM field offices and representatives can actively engage in landscape scale management programs on BLM lands. I'm working on a letter to Secretary of the Interior Haaland and newly confirmed BLM Director Stone-Manning asking for approval of indaziflam for use on cheatgrass on BLM lands. Indaziflam was first labeled by EPA in 2010-11, but because of NEPA and the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement process, BLM managers cannot use indaziflam as a tool for an

integrated weed management program for cheatgrass, which will subsequently reduce fire frequency and occurrence and improve sage grouse habitat.

### NISAW 2022

The next National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW) will be February 28 – March 4, 2022 and will return to a single weeklong event and “fly-in” to Washington DC. If you have topics or issues of concern, or would like to help plan next year’s NISAW, please let Lee know.

### **Advisory Committee Reports and Updates:**

#### NIFA (James Kells)

No real update outside of written report.

Stanley asked about travel restrictions. Jim noted that it was hopeful that they would be lifted by the end of the year.

#### Webinar Planning

Discussions are ongoing regarding future webinars as a follow-up to the three webinars held in late 2020 and early 2021. Under consideration is a webinar series focused specifically on NIFA grant programs where proposals involving weeds could be competitive. These would involve presentations by key NIFA NPLs along with presentations and a panel discussion from recent grant awardees. An alternative to the webinars would be a symposium at the 2023 WSSA Meeting in Arlington, VA.

Anita and Jim discussed the possibility of one webinar with key NPLs describing their grant programs, perhaps in March after the WSWS Meeting. This could then be followed by a short (2-hour or so) symposium at the 2023 WSSA Meeting in Arlington with presentations from recent successful PIs and a grantsmanship panel discussion with the presenters. There are many other possible combinations of webinars and symposia. Jim would appreciate guidance from the BOD on what delivery method(s) will be most effective. The BOD supports this decision.

#### EPA (Mark VanGessel)

The EPA is still working remotely. Next week there is a seminar on Cranberry Production and Weed Control by Hillary Stanler. The spring speaker topic is on ornamental weed control. Mark is giving a seminar tomorrow on weed seeds for the Environmental Federal Expedition.

#### CAST (Jill Schroeder – not in attendance; Anita read over submitted report)

October 26-28 is the annual meeting of the CAST Boards (<https://www.cast-science.org/about/>). Jill plans to attend the meeting in person to represent WSSA on the CAST Board of Representatives. At the upcoming meeting, Jill intends to advocate for the approval of a proposal for an issue paper titled “Preventing the next invasive plant: Opportunities and Challenges”. The report was drafted by a group of scientists representing WSSA and the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA): Jacob Barney (lead and chair of the WSSA Noxious and Invasive Weeds and Biocontrol Committee), David Coyle, Erik Lehnhoff, Daniel

Tekiela, Paul Tseng. Both WSSA and NAISMA boards had previously approved partnering with CAST to develop this proposal.

Jill circulated the draft proposal to the CAST Plant Working Group at our September meeting and requested input into the topic and proposal. The group concluded that the proposal fits within CAST guidelines and objectives. However, they requested that both WSSA and NAISMA review and vote to support the project prior to final consideration by the workgroup – this is to be certain that all parties are in agreement that the proposal is well conceived and has the support of all the partners. The NAISMA Board has expressed their approval – with a few review questions for the authors to address prior to finalizing the proposal. Jill is asking for WSSA support as well. Dr. Dille has asked the Noxious and Invasive Weeds and Biocontrol Committee to provide input to the board for your meeting this week.

Jill requests WSSA board support for moving this proposal forward to the Plant Working group at our October meeting. If the working group votes to approve, the proposal will go to other boards and CAST officers for approval as an issue paper. Jill also asks WSSA for input on potential financial sponsors of this project if approved.

**Motion made to approve the CAST proposal by Carroll Moseley at 11:45AM. Seconded by Stanley Culpepper. Motion passed unanimously.**

Advisory Groups (Bill Curran and Janie McFarland)

No updates.

*Note: Mark VanGessel and Jim Kells left the meeting at 11:50AM. Francois Tardif joined at 11:52AM.*

### **Regional/Affiliate Member Society Updates:**

Canadian Weed Science Society (Francois Tardif)

CWSS will have AGM virtually in November. Some grad students will present remotely then. Others will present in Vancouver. Despite the pandemic, the society is in good shape right now.

Northeast Weed Science Society (Rakesh Chandran)

NEWSS will make a decision about the meeting format by the end of the year. They will likely be in-person or hybrid. Stanley asked what portion of the conference would be presented in the hybrid format. Rakesh responded with they are not sure yet. Eric notes that it is hard to know the metrics behind in-person to hybrid formats. The largest draw back of not having a conference in-person that involvement decreases, however a larger audience is reached virtually. GSO contest closes November 1.

Southern Weed Science Society

No update as John Byrd is not in attendance.

North Central Weed Science Society (Brett Miller)

NCWSS Board voted to proceed with annual meeting week of Dec 13 in Grand Rapids, MI (Amway Grand Plaza Hotel) with a full program in person. Based on number of titles for papers and posters submitted the attendance could be 30-40% lower than normal with fewer graduate students and industry representatives attending. Currently there are no local, state or federal Covid restrictions or mandates in place that would prevent an in-person meeting. Biggest concern besides the lower attendance seemed to be limited number of restaurants open for breakfast and lunch options.

Western Weed Science Society (Eric Gustafson on behalf of Alan Helm)

Preparing for the 75<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in New Port Beach in March 2022. Will commemorate with a group photo and bring in old posters.

APMS (Rob Richardson)

No report. Lee notes that APMS met in July in New Orleans, LA at about 60% attendance.

*Note: John Lindquist and Janis McFarland left the meeting at 11:57AM.*

**BREAK (12 to 12:30PM CST)**

*Note: Lymm Sosnoskie joined the meeting at 12:30PM CST.*

**2022 Joint CWSS/WSSA Conference: Stanley/Eric/Francois**

Program is well developed, but some changes need to be updated due to a Canadian holiday (Family Day) on Monday, February 21. Tentatively the BOD meeting is Sunday, Feb 20. Tours were originally planned for Monday February 21 morning with the General Session in the afternoon, and the Welcome Reception in the evening. Tuesday, February 22 format would follow a typical format (student contests in the morning, women in weed science lunch, CWSS competition in the afternoon). Wednesday, February 23 includes the odd number poster session, WSSA student business meeting, joint student lunch, followed by the student awards. Thursday, February 24 includes the business breakfast and oral presentations, BOD meetings in the afternoon. Symposia will be scattered Tuesday through Thursday. Stanley commends the CWSS for all their help and hard work. Stanley notes that once updates are made the program will be recirculated to the BOD.

**GSO Update: Delaney Foster**

Delaney feels that an in-person meeting is critical for graduate students as these meetings facilitate students networking for advisors and jobs. However, with the COVID regulations as they currently are limiting the number of students able/willing to travel. This will affect the program with potential gaps to fill. Bill noted that this occurred in the Hawaii program, and it was a problem.

WSSA GSO listserv with 112 people (separated into MS and PhD) has been developed. Delaney noted that anyone can send information to her to send out on the listserv.



Delaney asks why can CWSS graduate students not compete in the WSSA graduate contest at the same time? Anita responds that at the national level you can only compete in one graduate contest at a time, whereas regional societies can compete in both at the same time. In addition, the CWSS wants to protect their membership and society.

Delaney asks how COVID regulations may affect the student contest? Stanley notes that it will all be in-person or all virtually, but hybrid is not an option.

Delaney is still working on ideas for the GSO meeting, but one idea is how the interview process is changing for academia and industry. Dawn notes that this is the same graduate symposia for NCWSS. Delaney recognizes the overlap but notes that it is very important. Additionally, the GSO elections may be held virtually depending on how many students are in-person versus virtual. The WSSA and CWSS will have a joint mixer on Wednesday night, but Delaney still needs ideas. The art museum in Vancouver is open on Tuesday nights. There was discussion surrounding what night works best within the program. Stanley will work on the changes to the program and see if moving this event to Tuesday would work.

### **New Business:**

#### Symposium Publications Budgets (Stanley Culpepper)

Three current symposium request funds for symposium publications. Currently, the MOP states that with a half day symposium allows for \$1,000 towards publication fees (a full day allows for the \$2,000 publishing cost). However, it now costs \$2,000 to publish a manuscript. Stanley is suggesting increasing the publishing fee to \$2,000 be an allowable expense for half day symposia, but not to increase the overall symposium budget. Bill asks if the journals can help with these costs. Will responds with yes, but it is at the editor's discretion. Dawn asks how many symposia publish? Will responds with about 25 to 50%. Dawn suggests that the publishing funds be held back until actual a publication is accepted for publication. Eric notes that symposia awardees are not paid upfront but reimbursed later. John Lindquist notes that the MOP needs to be changed, if so, then specific language needs to be sent to him. The Program Committee needs to propose some revised language of the MOP to the BOD first.

*Note: Alan Helm left the meeting at 1:29PM CST.*

#### Strategic Planning Committee (Anita Dille)

Anita was tasked to find someone to chair the committee and is still looking for someone.

#### Special Committee – Herbicide Resistance Definitions (Anita Dille)

Anita has reached out to people who sowed interest in this committee to act as the chair of the committee. Someone will be in place by the annual meeting.

#### New Issue (Greg Elmore)

In the absence of a WSSA approve position, it is important that people making statements to outside entities are doing so on their own and not as apart of WSSA. For example, Bayer was told by EPA senior leader that the WSSA had taken a certain position on dicamba when WSSA

has not. Greg noted that it needs to be made clear that individuals need clarify that a verbal statement is indeed their own and not of the organization. Anita notes that WSSA does not verbally make positions on issues, only written formal communications. John Lindquist states that our EPA liaison positions is possibly where the miscommunication occurred, but those positions are only there to support and not make statements. Dawn asks that we provide a disclosure statement pertaining to statements are that of the individual and not of the society in an SOP. Stanley says that is easy for presentations but not for verbal communications. John Lindquist is not aware of any such SOP, but there is potential room within the MOP. Dawn suggested possibly language be placed in the Code of Conduct/Ethics. Carroll suggests that we reach out to other organizations to determine how they handle these situations. More information will be gathered.

**Motion to adjourn made by Rakesh Chandran at 2PM. Seconded by Stanley Culpepper.  
Motion passed unanimously.**