

WASHINGTON REPORT

July 2010

Weed Resistance to Biotech Crops Stressed in NRC Report

The National Research Council (NRC) report, *The Impact of Genetically Engineered Crops on Farm Sustainability in the United States*, says that glyphosate resistant crops "could lose their effectiveness unless farmers also use other proven weed management practices." NRC Panel Chairman David Ervin, a Portland State University agricultural economist, said it's a "pivotal time" for genetically engineered crops. "Now's the time to take stock and document the weed resistance problem." Dr. Mike Owen from Iowa State was one of 12 authors on the report, but the only weed scientist.

The report includes 10 key findings and makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1. Federal and state government agencies, private-sector technology developers, universities, farmer organizations, and other relevant stakeholders should collaborate to document emerging weed-resistance problems and to develop cost-effective resistance-management programs and practices that preserve effective weed control in HR crops.

Recommendation 2. The U.S. Geological Survey and companion federal and state environmental agencies should receive the financial resources necessary to document the water quality effects related to the adoption of GE crops.

Recommendation 3. Public and private research institutions should allocate sufficient resources to monitor and assess the substantial environmental, economic, and social effects of current and emerging agricultural biotechnology on U.S. farms so that technology developers, policymakers, and farmers can make decisions that ensure genetic engineering is a technology that contributes to sustainable agriculture.

Recommendation 4. Public and private research institutions should be eligible for government support to develop GE crops that can deliver valuable public goods but have insufficient market potential to justify private investment. Intellectual property patented in the course of developing major crops should continue to be made available for such public goods purposes to the extent possible. Furthermore, support should be focused on expanding the purview of genetic engineering technology in both the private and public sectors to address public goods issues. Examples of GE-crop developments that could deliver such public goods include but are not limited to:

- plants that reduce pollution of off-farm waterways through improved use of nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizers,
- plants that fix their own nitrogen and reduce pollution caused by fertilizer application,
- plants that improve feedstocks for renewable energy,
- plants with reduced water requirements that slow the depletion of regional water resources,

- plants with improved nutritional quality that deliver health benefits, and
- plants resilient to changing climate conditions.

The report is the first comprehensive assessment of how GE crops are affecting all U.S. farmers, including farmers that do not use biotechnology and is available for free download from the NRC at http://books.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12804

EPA Releases Draft NPDES Permit Language

The Environmental Protection Agency released a draft **pesticide general permit** (PGP) that would set general conditions for point source discharges from the application of pesticides to “waters of the United States”, defined by EPA to be:

- 1) Navigable waters
- 2) Tributaries of navigable waters
- 3) Interstate waters
- 4) Intrastate lakes, rivers, and streams:
 - a. Used by interstate travelers for recreation and other purposes; or
 - i. Which are the source of fish or shellfish sold in Interstate commerce; or
 - ii. Which are utilized for industrial purposes by industries engaged in interstate commerce to include:

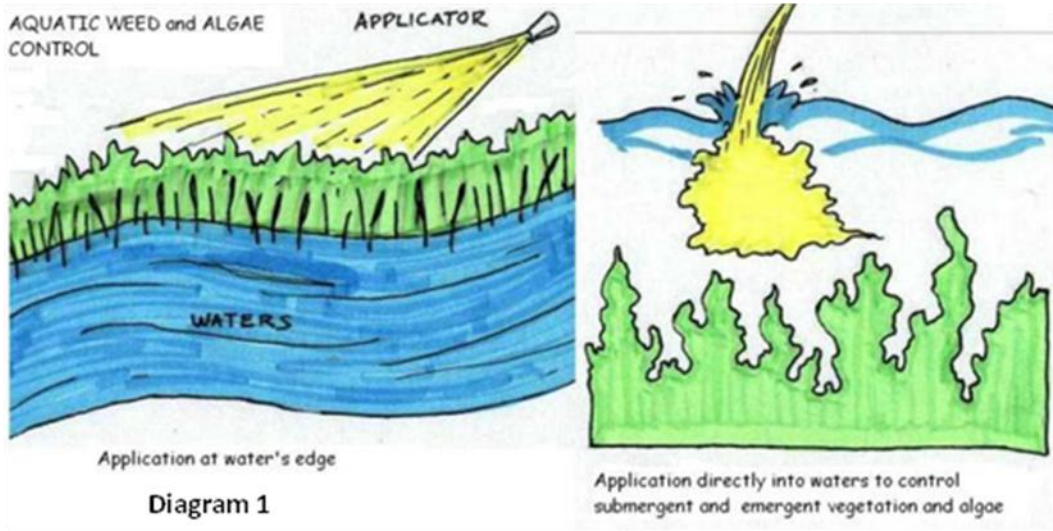
This definition has been interpreted to cover virtually all types of surface waters including: Rivers and streams; lakes and ponds; wetlands; sloughs; prairie potholes; intermittent streams; territorial seas, etc.

The draft PGP would cover discharges in areas where EPA is the permitting authority for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. These areas include Alaska, Idaho, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Massachusetts and Oklahoma, 6 of the 7 U.S. Territories, Indian Country lands, and certain federal facilities. The remaining 44 states, which are authorized to administer NPDES permits, will issue their own permits. State-issued general permits must meet all Clean Water Act requirements that the Federally-issued permit must meet but can be more stringent. EPA received comments on its draft permit through July 19 and intends to issue a final general permit by December. The 44 NPDES authorized states will need to have permits issued and effective by April 9, 2011.

EPA estimated the permit program will affect approximately 365,000 pesticide applicators nationwide that perform 5.6 million pesticide applications annually. Pesticide uses covered under the draft PGP:

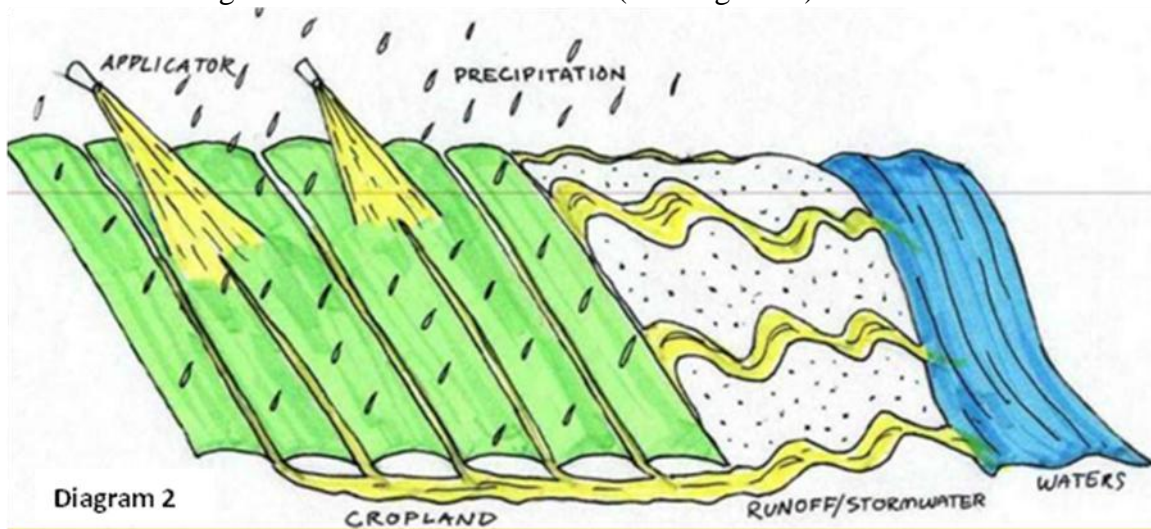
- 1) Mosquito and Other Flying Insect Control (in or above “standing or flowing water”)
- 2) Aquatic Weed and Algae Control (in “waters of the US” as well as “water’s edge,” including irrigation ditches/canals (see diagram 1)
- 3) Aquatic Nuisance Animal Control (in “water and at water’s edge”)

- 4) Forest Canopy Pest Control (where a portion of the pesticide will unavoidably be deposited to “water” below the canopy)



Pesticide uses outside the scope of the draft PGP:

- 1) Terrestrial applications to control pests on agricultural crops or forest floors
- 2) Off target spray drift
- 3) Activities exempt from permitting under the Clean Water Act:
 - a. Irrigation Return Flow
 - b. Agricultural Stormwater Runoff (see diagram 2)



The application of pesticides for control of terrestrial pests associated with crop production is **not** covered under EPA’s NPDES draft PGP. Farmers that apply pesticides in any of the four use patterns that discharge to U.S. waters may need permit coverage. Example: application of pesticides in or along the sides of irrigation canals or ditches to control vegetation.

Who Has to File a Notice of Intent (NOI)?

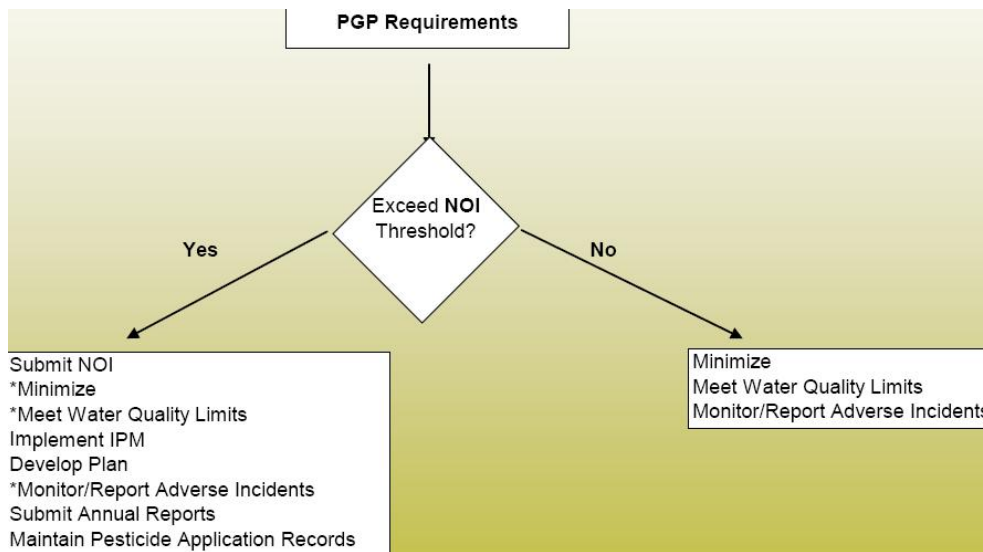
NOIs will be required for entities that know or reasonably should have known that they will exceed any of the pesticide application thresholds. The NOI filer, in most cases, would be the entity with control over financing for or the decision to perform pesticide applications, as opposed to the person performing the applications that result in a discharge, if different. However, any contract applicator would need to file an NOI, if it exceeds the application threshold for any applications not already covered under another NOI

What are the Annual Treatment Thresholds?

Pesticide Use	Annual Threshold
Mosquitoes and Other Flying Insect Pest Control	640 acres of treatment
Aquatic Weed and Algae Control	
In Water	20 acres of water treatment area (1)
At Water's Edge	20 linear miles at water's edge (2)
Aquatic Nuisance Animal Control	
In Water	20 acres of water treatment area (1)
At Water's Edge	20 linear miles at water's edge (2)
Forest Canopy Pest Control	640 acres of forest canopy

(1) Calculations should include the area the applications made to: (a) waters of the US, and (b) “conveyances with a hydrologic surface connection to waters of the US at the time of pesticide application”. For calculating annual treatment area totals, count each application as separate activity. For example, applying pesticides twice a year to a 10 acre site should be counted as 20 acres of treatment.

(2) Calculations are identical as above and each application counts as a separate activity. Thus, if you were treating both sides of a 10 mile ditch, that would equal 20 miles of linear water treatment.



While EPA is proposing an NOI framework to "obtain NOIs from the largest dischargers", the annual treatment threshold triggering an NOI submission for aquatic weed and algae management is only 20 acres of total treatment area or 20 linear miles of treatment area at the water's edge. The 20 acre threshold for aquatics is extremely low given EPA's stated intent to exclude small area operators. Operators that do not exceed an annual treatment area threshold are covered automatically under the PGP without the need to submit an NOI.

The agency asks for feedback on whether the framework "strikes an appropriate balance between capturing information on discharges from the largest pesticide application activities and avoiding the imposition of unreasonable burdens on operators whose pesticide application activities affect smaller areas," as well as comments on whether the threshold will result in EPA receiving NOIs from "an appropriately targeted set of large dischargers."

EPA is also seeking comment on other significant issues, including input on how many entities will be covered under the permit as written, limitations on coverage, technology-based effluent limitations, and water quality-based effluent limitations, as well as monitoring and reporting issues.

The National and Regional Weed Science Societies comments included:

- 1) EPA should ask 6th Circuit Court for additional time (at least 2 more years)
- 2) Application rate objectives are best met by directing the applicator to follow the FIFRA prescriptive label, rather than requiring research-based judgments the applicator is unqualified to make in order to "minimize" application rates.
- 3) EPA is incorrect that reduced rates are effective for resistance prevention (Note- EPA Office of Water staff assured me that this is not their objective, but that is not how the draft PGP currently reads.). Again, the PGP stresses "MINIMIZE" and makes it sound like you will be in violation of your permit if you DO NOT USE LESS than the labeled rate.
- 4) Increased jurisdictional clarity would help others determine if their pesticide use(s) warrant inclusion under this general NPDES permit. It's plausible that an applicator could be sued for applying a herbicide in their field where that field has a ditch with water in it at the time of application. While Agricultural Stormwater runoff and Irrigation Return Flow are exempt from Clean Water Act permitting, the application of pesticides for control of terrestrial pests associated with crop production is not covered under EPA's NPDES draft PGP.
- 5) Make Outstanding National Resources Water (Tier 3) eligible for PGP.
- 6) Pesticide R&D (such as that done at Land Grant colleges or Industry) should be automatically covered by this permit and not be required to submit an NOI and be subject to "citizen lawsuits"

More information on the NPDES requirements for discharges from pesticide applications is available at www.epa.gov/npdes/pesticides Copies of the draft PGP, the PGP fact sheet and Federal Register notice can be downloaded from that site as well as details on how to provide public comment through EPA's website at www.regulations.gov (for

docket number EPA-HQ-OW-2010-0257). The Federal Register comment period closed on Monday, July 19, but if you have comments that you would like to relay to EPA, please contact me directly.

WSSA Appeal to USDA to Restore Weed Science Funding

The restructuring of the old CSREES into the new National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has resulted in many changes in programs and priorities. While the National and Regional Weed Science Societies have been very vocal supporters of increasing the Agricultural and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) competitive grant money and maintaining the Land Grant formula funding, we were very disappointed when the AFRI request for applications (RFA's) were released in March. Since that time, we have had many meetings with USDA-NIFA and I have coordinated comments submitted jointly by the National and Regional Weed Science Societies. The National and Regional Weed Science Societies appealed to USDA to make three changes: **1)** Add a Foundational program within AFRI to address weedy plant biology, ecology and management, similar to those focused on phytopathology and entomology; **2)** Reconfigure larger AFRI research programs to encompass the full breadth of the agricultural sciences. Currently, program objectives are written so narrowly as to exclude not only weed science, but many other important areas of study; and **3)** Restore funding for integrated activities under the Section 406 Legislative Authority. Section 406 supports integrated weed management research through initiatives like the Regional IPM Centers, Risk Avoidance and Mitigation Program, Crops at Risk and Organic Transitions Program. Funding for these programs was zeroed out in the President's FY 2011 budget. I'd like to give special thanks to Dave Mortensen and Adam Davis on the WSSA Research and Competitive Grants Committee as well as Mike Barrett for substantial comments and editing. In addition, both Mortensen and Barrett traveled to Washington DC to represent the WSSA in separate USDA-NIFA stakeholder workshops in April and June. The NIFA response to the Weed Science Societies letter indicates that money will be directed to weed resistance issues and that slightly more money will go to foundational programs rather than the five "pipeline" initiatives. The letter from Roger Beachy also indicated that NIFA will not support separate funding lines for the Section 406 programs (which has been the USDA position for a number of years), thus I will continue to lobby House and Senate appropriators to restore that funding through the appropriations process (which they have done up to last year). The 2011 AFRI RFA's are tentatively scheduled to be announced in December.

2012 Farm Bill Hearings Begin

The House and Senate Agriculture Committees have begun holding hearings on the reauthorization of the Farm Bill. House Ag Committee Chairman Collin Peterson, MN, noted that a mere 14% of the 2008 Farm Bill was targeted on actual farming. He stressed that existing support for small farmers must be maintained or large corporate farms would further dominate agricultural production. Likewise, the House Ag Committee Ranking Member Frank Lucas, OK, noted that 75% of the 2008 Farm Bill was devoted to nutrition programs. He also mentioned that increased regulations by the EPA are driving

farmers and ranchers out of business by subjecting them to financial burdens to comply with new regulations.

Spray Drift Comments Submitted

The WSSA, Entomological Society of America -Plant-Insect Ecosystems Section (ESA P-IE), and the American Phytopathological Society (APS) jointly submitted Federal Register comments on the EPA Spray Drift Pesticide Registration Notice in March. One of our main recommendations included removing the word “could” from “could cause” (compared to the existing “causes adverse observable effects”) on the proposed spray drift label language. “Could cause” is very subjective and could attract frivolous complaints, leading to difficult, confusing and uneven drift enforcement decisions. Obvious and off-label drift occurrences that might not have readily observable adverse effects are already enforceable as application violations (residues, species decline, etc).

Another important recommendation was to only use downwind buffers between target and sensitive sites instead of uniform buffers around all sites regardless of wind direction. USDA determined with the previous EPA drift PR notice in 2000 that if buffers were not made wind-directional, the economic loss would be on the order of \$1-2 billion dollars due to the large amount of irreplaceable acreage removed from production.

Finally, I am working with Jill Schroeder and John Jachetta to bring Bob Wolf into Washington DC this fall to give a presentation to federal staff on the progress made in spray drift reduction technologies.

LEN GIANESSI Presentation.

I coordinated a seminar on Capitol Hill on June 28 in conjunction with NC-FAR and CropLife America titled “Solving Africa’s Weed Problem” presented by Leonard Gianessi. Over 90 congressional staffers attended this event at the House Agriculture Committee. The main purpose of the seminar was to spur USDA, NGO’s, and international development agencies to help fund weed science work in Africa. The primary method of weed control by smallholder farmers in Africa is hand weeding with short handled tools. Herbicides have been tested for forty years in Africa and have been widely-adopted by large-scale commercial farmers but not by smallholders, who lack training and access. CropLife Foundation (CLF) and CNFA, Inc. have launched a pilot project in Kenya and Malawi and 4 WSSA scientists have been supported as volunteers to visit and aid in the weed research. We hope to continue to build support for this program, but face large opposition from anti-pesticide groups.

PUT IN PHOTOS

~ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Director of Science Policy Moderated National C-FAR's Seminar on Agroforestry

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Director of Science Policy, Karl Glasener moderated the National C-FAR "Lunch~N~Learn" hill seminar on 19 July which featured Dr. Andy

Mason, Interim Director of the USDA's National Agroforestry Center (NAC). Dr. Mason described the six categories of agroforestry practices: alley cropping, silvopasture, windbreaks/shelterbelts, forest farming, riparian forest buffers, and special applications during his presentation. He also described the long standing partnership between the FS and NRCS which supports the NAC. The NAC develops and delivers technology and tools on a broad suite of agroforestry practices, and conducts research on how to design and strategically install these practices at the site, landscape, and regional scales to protect natural resources and enhance productivity on farms, forests and ranches. Dr. Mason's presentation is posted at:
http://www.ncfar.org/AgroforestryNCFARSeminar_FINAL.pdf.

Those Despised Earmarks may Fund Vital Research

By Allen S. Levine, Dean, University of Minnesota, in Politico.com

These days, in the world of politics and policymaking, “earmarks” is an eight-letter word that might as well be a four-letter word.

Earmarks are simply congressional provisions directing funds to specific projects. But when you hear the scorn heaped on them in the nation’s capital, you’d think they were serious crimes worthy of capital punishment. Yet this rare bipartisan near consensus raises many questions. Yes, we need to get rid of federal funding for pork-barrel projects and esoteric scholarship. By all means, there should be no more bridges to nowhere.

But what about the essential research, education and outreach programs conducted at the nation’s land-grant universities?

These programs run the gamut of issues from food safety to child nutrition, soil conservation to climate change. They’re funded by the Agriculture Department, often with — gasp — earmarks that direct money to specific programs at specific universities.

What about the earmarks for breast and prostate cancer and spinal cord injury research at the Defense Department? These programs fund game-changing studies at institutions across the country — and they exist only because of congressional budget intervention.

Some critics argue that earmarks for academic institutions are harmful because they circumvent the peer review process. But this mechanism gives small institutions the opportunity to develop their faculty and expand their funding base.

Whatever the merits of earmarks, by no stretch of the imagination can the agricultural research programs be called “pork” — unless you object to the sort of program that might instruct food producers in safe techniques for processing pork products.

If Congress curtails or entirely ends earmarks, how can the nation continue to pay for and make use of such valuable research?

In fact, the nation's agricultural and nutritional research is increasingly essential but still woefully underfunded.

News sites are filled with reports about the very problems that agricultural research can study and help solve: childhood obesity, food scares over products like peanut butter or chopped meat and the challenge of feeding a growing global population of about 7 billion that is expected to reach 9 billion by 2050.

But federal funding for agricultural research has not increased enough to help us meet these challenges. After rising from slightly more than \$1.3 billion in 1998 to just above \$2 billion in 2003, it has hovered at about \$2.1 billion since 2005.

Because its research budget is underfunded, the USDA's National Research Institute — now known as the Agricultural Food and Research Initiative — had to reject 84 percent of the research proposals it received in 2006 and 78 percent of those it received in 2007.

In recent years, the picture has not gotten brighter. Cutting back on earmarks blocks a funding stream that is already like a dry creek at a time when the nation urgently needs new ideas, more information and expanded educational efforts about how to better farm our land and feed our people.

If Congress really wants to do away with most earmarks, whether wasteful or essential, one alternative course suggests itself: Provide a steadily increasing stream of funding for agricultural and nutritional research.

Farmers need to make the most efficient and productive use of their land. Families want to have hamburgers or peanut butter and jelly sandwiches without fearing that their food is unsafe. School lunches need to feature healthful options, not salty or sugary junk food.

Funding research to address these challenges isn't a scandal. But ignoring them could cause a tragedy.

Allen S. Levine is dean of the University of Minnesota's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences. The views presented here are his own.

Read more: <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0510/37359.html#ixzz0pa5DdzRr>

House Passes Science Funding Reauthorization Bill

The House passed legislation at the end of May that would authorize \$85.6 billion over five years for federal science research and education programs. H.R. 5116 would reauthorize the 2007 America Competes Act (PL 110-69), that boosted funding for science and research. Specifically, the bill would authorize spending for fiscal years 2011 through 2015 for research programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Energy Department. It

also would authorize funding to support education and training in the “stem” fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Of the money authorized by the bill, \$44 billion would be steered to NSF, \$30.2 billion to the Energy Department’s Office of Science and \$5.4 billion to NIST. An additional \$4.3 billion would be provided for the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy.

Tamarisk Can Use More Water than Natives – It Depends on the Site!

By Tim Carlson, Research and Policy Director, The Tamarisk Coalition

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) recently released a report on the impacts of tamarisk and Russian olive to riparian systems. The full report, [USGS Scientific Investigations Report 2009-5247](#), is available online along with [USGS Fact Sheet 2009-3110](#) that summarizes the findings. This information complements the [Colorado River Basin Tamarisk and Russian Olive Assessment](#) and [Evapotranspiration Peer Panel Report](#). Findings from both studies are nearly identical; i.e., tamarisk and Russian olive use about the same amount of water as native phreatophytes, cottonwood and willow. This is not new information – scientists have known this for decades. The bigger issue, identified in both reports, was that deep rooted tamarisk and Russian olive, when growing in the higher terraces of a floodplain, will use more water than dryland species (grasses and native shrubs). Cottonwoods and willows do not grow in these areas because the groundwater is deeper and is not accessible to their shallow root systems. Thus, the greatest opportunity for meaningful water savings will occur on upper terraces within the floodplain where more xeric vegetation is appropriate as replacement vegetation.

What is not known is whether any of this saved water can be recovered. The Tamarisk Coalition is in absolute agreement with USGS that large-scale demonstrations coupled with detailed research are critical to answering this question. In 2006 Congress passed legislation (PL 109-320) with overwhelming bi-partisan support that authorized funding to help answer these types of questions. The Tamarisk Coalition therefore encourages states to pursue carefully designed demonstration projects that can be coordinated with USGS and other scientists.

Both the Tamarisk Coalition and USGS also found similar impacts to wildlife from tamarisk and Russian olive. Effects on wildlife are diverse and depend on the species considered, but again both reports identify that native vegetation provides superior habitat and affords greater biodiversity than do dense stands of tamarisk and Russian olive. The Tamarisk Coalition supports this research as it can be considered along with other research and site-specific information for restoration and land management decisions.

USDA APHIS PPQ Ends *Diorhabda* Biological Control Program for Salt Cedar

The saltcedar leaf beetle, *Diorhabda* species, (including all species, subspecies, or ecotypes in the *Diorhabda elongata* complex) was previously permitted for

environmental release for the biological control of salt cedar (*Tamarix* spp. L.) in the United States by USDA APHIS. Concerns about the potential effects to the critical habitat of the federally-listed, endangered southwestern willow flycatcher have resulted in the following actions by USDA APHIS on June 15:

1. The APHIS PPQ saltcedar biological control program in 13 states has been terminated. Survey and evaluation of PPQ program releases will continue to assess the impact on saltcedar density and reestablishment of native vegetation.
2. The PPQ Permit Unit has discontinued issuing new permits for field cage or greenhouse studies using the saltcedar leaf beetle outside of a containment facility.
3. The PPQ Permit Unit has discontinued issuing new permits for interstate movement and environmental release of *Diorhabda* spp.
4. The PPQ Permit Unit has cancelled all issued (Le., active) permits for interstate movement and environmental release of *Diorhabda* spp.
5. PPQ will not authorize the release of *Diorhabda* spp. from containment or caged field study sites. However, the PPQ Permit Unit will authorize continuation of
 1. existing *Diorhabda* spp. activities in containment facilities.

In the event that endangered species issues are resolved, consultation between USDA APHIS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be initiated to allow resumption of APHIS *Diorhabda* spp. permitting and biological control program activities. Until these concerns are alleviated and the program activities are officially reinitiated, any unauthorized human-assisted movement of *Diorhabda* spp., particularly into the critical habitat of the southwestern willow flycatcher, is not authorized by APHIS, and may constitute a violation of the Endangered Species Act which could result in criminal punishment and/or fines. Additionally, the unauthorized collection, interstate transportation, and release of *Diorhabda* spp. in the U.S. may constitute a criminal and/or civil violation of the Plant Protection Act, with criminal penalties and/or fines assessed up to \$250,000 per violation. APHIS does not permit unauthorized provision of *Diorhabda* spp. or access to them to parties who intend to move, transport and/or release the beetles. Should any questions arise on the interpretation of this memo please contact me or one of the individuals listed below.

Safeguarding American Agriculture

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For additional information please contact Mr. Robert Tichenor

(Robert.H.Tichenor@aphis.usda.gov) for permits of biological control agents; Dr. Tracy

Horner (Tracy.A.Horner@aphis.usda.gov) for environmental compliance; and Dr. Jo-Ann Bentz-Blanco (Jo-Ann.Bentz-Blanco@aphis.usda.gov) for the PPQ National Biological Control Program.

For information on permits for regulated organisms please visit: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/permits/organism For information on the PPQ Biological Control Program please visit:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plantjpest_infolbiocontrol

Update on the Nomination **of Catherine E. Woteki** to serve as USDA Under Secretary for Agriculture for Research, Education and Economics - On June 30, 2010, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry forwarded her nomination to the full US Senate which is in recess until July 12 - She " ... currently serves as Global Director of Scientific Affairs for Mars, Inc where she manages the company's scientific policy and research on matters of health, nutrition, and food safety. From 2002-2005, she was Dean of Agriculture and Professor of Human Nutrition at Iowa State University. Dr. Woteki served as the first [USDA] Under Secretary for Food Safety ... [and] as the [USDA] Deputy Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics ..." - She has also served in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and held positions in the HHS National Center for Health Statistics, the USDA Human Nutrition Information Service and as Director of the Food and Nutrition Board of the Institute of Medicine - She received her M.S. and Ph.D. in Human Nutrition from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (1974) and her B.S. in Chemistry from Mary Washington College (1969).

New Director for EPA Office of Pesticide Programs

Monday June 21 2010

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Steven Bradbury, who'd been serving as acting director of EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs since January, took over as OPP director earlier this month.

Steve Owens, assistant administrator for OPP's parent office, the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, announced the appointment in a June 3 memo.

Bradbury has been with EPA for 25 years in various positions, including heading up OPP's Special Review and Reregistration Division from 2007 to 2008 and the Environmental Fate and Effects Division from 2003 to 2007. He had been OPP's deputy director for programs since January 2009 and this past January took over for former office director Debbie Edwards upon her retirement.

Stakeholders have characterized that transition as seamless even though Bradbury didn't have a lengthy "break-in period" as deputy director and has been dealing with "sticky" issues like endangered species assessments and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits (see PTCN, April 12, Page 14).

Owens also announced the appointment of Bill Diamond, director of OPP's

Field and External Affairs Division (FEAD), as acting deputy director of OPP. Diamond will continue to serve as FEAD director in addition to his acting deputy director duties until an acting FEAD director is appointed, which will be "soon."

NISAW is being planned for February 28 to March 4, 2011. I am working at this from two fronts. My goal is to have the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) coordinate invasive species education and awareness events and PR during that week. This is a departure from past NIWAWs in that 1) it is all-taxa, 2) NISC will put resources into coordinating this; and 3) individual invasive species coalitions will encourage their members to have legislative fly-ins that are independent of NISAW. Planning is underway for a Kid's Day event at the U.S. Botanic Garden, an invasive species briefing on Capitol Hill, and a joint reception between federal agency staff and NGO's such as the WSSA. While I am helping NISC move in this direction (and to hopefully lead the national invasive species education and awareness effort in the future), my main focus is on coordinating a legislative fly-in during NISAW for the Healthy Habitats Coalition (HHC) and possibly the Aquatic Plant Management Society. Current members of the HHC Steering Committee are John Jachetta (Dow), John Cantlon (DuPont), Eric Lane (WWCC), George Beck (Colorado St), Fred Raish (NAWMA), and me. HHC has been working at the state, regional and national level to obtain new funding and more effective federal participation in invasive species management efforts. As a result of these efforts, the Western Governors Association (WGA) just passed a new Resolution on Combating Invasive Species in support of invasive species management that we intend to utilize as a lobbying platform. Our 3 main legislative goals are to 1) procure the funding Asks associated with the WGA invasive species resolution; 2) pass the Invasive Species Emergency Response Fund Act; and 3) insure that the 2012 Farm Bill adequately addresses invasive weed management. HHC members have visited DC in February and May where we have already met with over 20 different Representatives, Senators, NGO's and Federal Agencies. If you are interested in traveling to Washington DC during March 1-3, 2011 to lobby for invasive weed funding, please contact me.

NORTHEAST ONLY- House Agriculture Committee Approves **Chesapeake Bay Bill**
On 28 July, the House Agriculture Committee discussed H.R. 5509, the Chesapeake Bay Restoration and Improvement Act (Act) and approved via voice vote that the bill be considered by the U.S. House of Representatives after amendments were made. The Act is a bipartisan bill that will give farmers and ranchers in the Chesapeake Bay region additional tools to help them meet regulatory requirements imposed on them by the Environmental Protection Agency. Chairman Tim Holden, D-Penn. and Ranking Member, Bob Goodlatte, R-Va. of the House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit, Energy, and Research introduced the bill. View HR 5509 here: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d111:H.R.5509>:

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