



FEDERAL INTERAGENCY
COMMITTEE FOR THE
MANAGEMENT OF NOXIOUS
AND EXOTIC WEEDS



NORTH AMERICAN
INVASIVE SPECIES FORUM

North American Invasive Species Forum

Shared Borders, Shared Opportunities



May 13 - 16, 2025

**A free online event co-hosted
by the Weed Science Society of
America (Registration Required)**



A Letter from FICMNEW Co-Chairs

The U.S. Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds (FICMNEW) and WSSA (Weed Science Society of America), in collaboration with partners in Canada and Mexico, are excited to invite you to the virtual 2025 North American Invasive Species Forum (NAISF).

NAISF is an ongoing collaboration of over two decades to bring together leaders and organizations from various jurisdictions across North America to highlight new policy and legislation, research, emerging issues, success stories, and prevention and response initiatives across the continent and among international neighbors. We anticipate participants from a wide range of invasive species policy, management, and research affiliations for this virtual event.

NAISF 2025 will explore innovative and effective approaches for invasive species collaboration with in-depth exploration of 7 important topics from the viewpoint of the United States, Canada, Mexico, our international neighbors, and Indigenous groups:

- Engagement in international frameworks
- Cross-border biosecurity
- E-commerce of invasive species
- Risk management
- Early detection and rapid response
- Citizen and community science
- The nexus of invasive species and wildfire

The forum will feature facilitated breakout sessions, bringing together participants and speakers each day to generate cross-border strategies and establish a strategic framework for continued collaboration in reducing the impacts of invasive species.

We look forward to your participation in the 2025 NAISF!

FICMNEW CO-CHAIRS



Seth Flanigan
Bureau of Land Management



Christine Taliga
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Thank You To Our Sponsors!



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Agenda

12:00 PM EDT IN
OTHER TIME ZONES

6 AM Hawai'i
9 AM Los Angeles
5 PM London

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 12:00 PM EDT | Opening Remarks and Keynote Address: Dr. Laura Meyerson |
| 01:20 PM EDT | Break |
| 01:30 PM EDT | Panel Session 1: Engagement in International Frameworks |
| 03:00 PM EDT | Break |
| 03:10 PM EDT | Day 1 Breakout Session |
| 04:00 PM EDT | Virtual Mixer |
| 05:00 PM EDT | Adjourn |

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

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|--------------|--|
| 12:00 PM EDT | Day 2 Announcements and Keynote Address: Jane Breckinridge |
| 01:00 PM EDT | Panel Session 2: Cross-Border Biosecurity |
| 02:25 PM EDT | Break |
| 02:35 PM EDT | Panel Session 3: E-Commerce/Organisms in Trade |
| 04:00 PM EDT | Break |
| 04:10 PM EDT | Day 2 Breakout Session |
| 05:00 PM EDT | Adjourn |

Thursday, May 15, 2025

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|--------------|---|
| 12:00 PM EDT | Day 3 Announcements and Canada/US/Mexico updates |
| 01:00 PM EDT | Panel Session 4: Early Detection and Rapid Response |
| 02:25 PM EDT | Break |
| 02:35 PM EDT | Panel Session 5: Risk Assessment |
| 04:00 PM EDT | Break |
| 04:10 PM EDT | Day 3 Breakout Session |
| 05:00 PM EDT | Adjourn |

Friday, May 16, 2025

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|--------------|--|
| 12:00 PM EDT | Day 4 Announcements and Panel Session 6: Citizen and Community Science |
| 01:25 PM EDT | Break |
| 01:35 PM EDT | Panel Session 7: Invasive Species and Wildfire Nexus |
| 03:00 PM EDT | Break |
| 03:10 PM EDT | Final Breakout Session |
| 04:20 PM EDT | Closing Remarks |

Keynote Speakers

Science Has Spoken—But Policy, Practice, and Priorities Lag Behind



Dr. Laura Meyerson

Professor, Department of Natural Resources Science
University of Rhode Island

Laura is a professor at the University of Rhode Island in the Department of Natural Resources Science where she conducts research, teaches courses on invasion science and restoration ecology, and trains graduate students. Dr. Meyerson's research is global in nature and focuses on invasive species and ecological restoration with a particular emphasis on plants and their interactions. Much of her work uses the model species *Phragmites australis* to study the effects of environmental change on genetics, genomics, metabolomics, microbial ecology, and plant-insect interactions.

Dr. Meyerson is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Biological Invasions* and an Associate Editor for the journal *Neobiota*. She was a Contributing Lead Author for the recent IPBES report on Invasive Alien Species. She has twice been a Fulbright Fellow, once as a Fulbright Global Scholar, an Aldo Leopold Fellow, and a Switzer Fellow. Dr. Meyerson has also served on the Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC). Before joining the URI faculty, Dr. Meyerson was a staff scientist working on The State of the Nation's Ecosystems at the The Heinz Center in Washington, DC, AAAS Fellow at the US EPA ORD detailed to the Global Invasive Species Programme and the National Invasive Species Council, a Research Associate at the Smithsonian Institution, and a visiting professor at Brown University. Dr. Meyerson earned her graduate degrees at the Yale School of Forestry.

Connection, Collaboration and Context: Exploring Indigenous Perspectives on Invasive Species



Jane Breckinridge

Citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Director of the Euchee Butterfly Farm Leonard, OK

Jane is a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the co-founder of the Tribal Alliance for Pollinators (TAP), a Native-led coalition that assists tribes with restoring native plants to their lands. TAP has created the largest native plant seed bank in Oklahoma. Jane is also the director of the Euchee Butterfly Farm located in Leonard, OK, which creates sustainable economic development for Native people through butterfly farming, and provides education about the need for habitat conservation and cultural preservation.

Panel Session 1: Engagement in International Frameworks



Andréanne Léger

Director of National Biodiversity Policy, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

Prior to joining ECCC, Andréanne spent several years in different roles at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, working on environment and science policy issues. Andréanne has studied agricultural sciences and agricultural economics at McGill University, Wageningen University and Humboldt University.



Marianela Araya-Quesada

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Marianela is a biotechnology engineer, with a MSc in Biosafety in plant biotechnology. Marianela started her work for UNEP, based in the regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean, where she managed a portfolio of projects on biodiversity related areas. Currently, she works for the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Canada, as a program officer for Invasive Alien Species and Biodiversity and Health. In her current position, Ms. Araya supports the international negotiations on these two topics.



Roylene Comes At Night

Member of the Aamsskáápipikani, Pikuni, The Blackfeet Nation
State Conservationist, Washington, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Roylene is the NRCS Washington state conservationist, headquartered in Spokane Valley, Washington, serving as Dean of the state conservationists, and has worked with the agency for 35 years. She has been selected for a multitude of awards for her exceptional leadership. She is the fifth generation raised on her family's cattle and horse ranch located on the Blackfeet Nation in northwestern Montana. She graduated from Montana State University where she majored in range science and minored in soil science.



Stanley W. Burgiel (“Stas”)

Executive Director of the U.S. Department of Interior National Invasive Species Council

Stas facilitates high-level policy dialogue across the Federal government on invasive species.



Yolanda Barrios

Head of Department of Invasive Species Assessments in CONABIO, the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity, Mexico

Yolanda has worked for the invasive species department at the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity in Mexico for the past 17 years. She participated in the development of the National Strategy for Invasive Species, the official list of invasive species for Mexico. Her work brings together information related to research, management, risk, and legislation, in collaboration with researchers from various government, academic, and non-government institutions throughout the country.

Panel Session 2: Cross-Border Biosecurity



Andrew Rhyne

Professor of Marine Biology, Roger Williams University

Andrew is currently on sabbatical funded by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), focused on wildlife trade data. He is a founding member of the Wildlife Detection Partnership and co-developed the Nature Intelligence System, which assists governments with real-time data and analysis of wildlife shipments.



Gustavo Torres

Subdirector of Phytosanitary Diagnosis in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mexico

Gustavo is an Agricultural Phytotechnician Engineer with a Master's degree in agricultural parasitology. He has been Head of Department of the Control of Rodents, Birds and Weeds and is currently Subdirector of Phytosanitary Diagnosis in the Ministry of Agriculture where he has been for over 20 years. He has participated in establishing federal legislation and inspection criteria for pests as well as in activities related to their detection, control and eradication. He participated in the creation of the official invasive species list for Mexico, the Mexican standard for quarentenary weeds, and is part of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Technical Advisory Group on the biological control.



Kellyn Montgomery

Assistant Director for the Phytosanitary Advanced Analytics Team in the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Plant Protection and Quarantine Program

Kellyn's team supports data-driven decision making by developing automated data pipelines, visualization tools, and forecasts for plant health safeguarding programs.



Dr. Laura Meyerson

Professor at the University of Rhode Island in the Department of Natural Resources Science

Laura is one of the NAISF 2025 keynote speakers.

As Professor at the University of Rhode Island she conducts research, teaches courses on invasion science and restoration ecology, and trains graduate students.

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Dr. José Francisco Bernal Stoopen

Procuraduria Federal de Proteccion al Ambiente (PROFEPA)

José is the General Director for Environmental Inspection in Ports, Airports and Borders in Mexico with the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (PROFEPA). He holds a PhD on threatened fauna species from the University of Texas A&M and different specialties from ZSL in London and the University of Kent in Canterbury. He has been an associate researcher with the Wildlife Conservation Society and Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in the USA. He has worked with the federal government in Mexico for over 35 years. He was the General Director of the Chapultepec Zoo, in Mexico City, General Director of Zoos and Wildlife, Director of Wildlife Conservation at the National Commission for Protected Areas, General Director of Wildlife with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

Panel Session 3: E-Commerce/Organisms in Trade



Armando Rosario-Lebron

Editorial Administrator for Southwestern Entomologist

Armando is a professional entomologist specializing in insect taxonomy, biodiversity, and museum collections management. With extensive experience in systematic biology, he has contributed significantly to invasive species research, quarantine pest management, and insect identification techniques. He has held key positions in federal agricultural agencies, supporting agricultural safeguarding and science-based pest management initiatives. Passionate about science communication, Armando actively engages youth audiences, providing education on responsible practices within the invertebrate pet trade and promoting awareness about biodiversity conservation. Additionally, he consults for film and media projects to ensure accurate portrayals of entomology and ecological themes. Armando is currently preparing for doctoral research in the United Kingdom, where he will further his commitment to sustainable agriculture and public outreach.



Bruno Gallant

Senior Legislative Officer, Canadian Food Inspection Agency

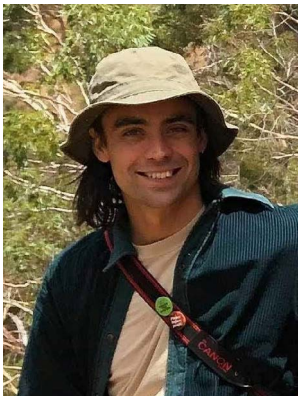
Bruno is a Senior Legislative Officer with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Invasive Alien Species and Domestic Programs section. One focus of Bruno's work in recent years has been e-commerce, exploring means for addressing risks to plant health, promoting collaboration among CFIA's areas of business and working with domestic and international partners and industry stakeholders.



Dr. Christine Densmore

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Christine has worked in wildlife disease ecology as well as invasive species science and management for the United States Department of the Interior for 31 years. Currently and for the past two years, Christine serves as an injurious wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, evaluating wildlife species for listing as injurious under the Lacey Act (18 U.S.C. 42) based on the threats they represent to ecological, economic, and health related interests of the United States. Christine is a graduate of the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine and Virginia Tech. Serving as a Veterinary Medical Officer, Christine worked with the U.S. Geological Survey's Eastern Ecological Science Center conducting and supporting research related to both aquatic animal health and invasive species science.



Jacob Maher

PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide and a member of the Invasion Science & Wildlife Ecology lab led by Phill Cassey

A key area of focus of the lab is the trade of animals and plants online and the implications for conservation and biosecurity. Jacob researches the trade of invasive plants online and is assessing the emergence of new invasive species. His research also extends to evaluation of current biosecurity regulations and socio-cultural perceptions of invasive plants. Jacob Maher's research extends to evaluation of current biosecurity regulations and socio-cultural perceptions of invasive plants.



Jane Breckinridge

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Jane is one of the NAISF 2025 keynote speakers.

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Panel Session 4: Early Detection and Rapid Response



Federico Méndez Sánchez

Executive director of the Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (GECI), Mexico

The Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (GECI), is a Mexican civil society organization devoted to the comprehensive restoration of Mexico's islands. In 26 years, GECI has benefitted over 200 endemic flora and fauna species by eradicating 60 populations of invasive mammals from 39 islands, 30 of which are now completely free of invasive mammals.



Helen Roy

Ecologist and Professor with the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and the University of Exeter

Helen's research focuses on the effects of environmental change, particularly biological invasions, on biodiversity and ecosystems. Helen leads many collaborative national and international research projects on biological invasions, with a focus on enhancing information flow to inform understanding of the impacts of invasive alien species. She recently led a global assessment on invasive non-native species for the IPBES on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.



Dr. Katie Kamelamela

Assistant Professor at Arizona State University in the School of Ocean Futures

Dr. Katie Kamelamela (Kanaka Maoli) is an Assistant Professor at Arizona State University in the School of Ocean Futures and a researcher in the Global Discovery and Conservation Science Center who studies ethnoecology, ecological restoration, Indigenous conceptions of wealth, and Indigenous economies. Her research focuses on historical and contemporary Native Hawai'ian forest plant gathering practices and continues to expand policy that includes community input within forest restoration management.



Mark Frey

US Department of Interior (DOI), Coordinator | National EDRR Framework

Prior to joining DOI, Mark worked as the National Park Service's Southeast Regional Lead for Natural Resources. He has also served details as the NPS national Invasive Plant Program Manager, as the Chief of Natural and Cultural Resources for Mount Rainier National Park, and as a Project Director for the National Invasive Species Council.



Dr. Michelle Franklin

Research Scientist, Small Fruit Entomology and Integrated Pest Management, Agassiz Research and Development Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Michelle's research encompasses a continuum of activities from surveillance to building integrated pest management strategies based on a clear understanding of the biology and ecology of insect pests and their natural enemies. Dr. Franklin has developed tools to aid in multi-modal large-scale surveillance efforts, including molecular identification tools, predictive models, and standardized data collection tools. Dr. Franklin also works on the development of reduced risk mitigation strategies that make use of biocontrol and microbial control agents.

Panel Session 5: Risk Assessment



Cheryl Corbett

National Manager, Plant Health Risk Assessment Unit, Science Branch Canada Food Inspection Agency / Government of Canada

Cheryl is the National Manager of the Plant Health Risk Assessment Unit (PHRA) at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), which is Canada's National Plant Protection Organization under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). PHRA conducts scientific evaluations to summarize the available information on a pest, evaluate the probability of entry, establishment, and spread in Canada, and estimate the potential economic and environmental consequences of introduction.



Deah Lieurance

Assistant Professor of Invasive Species Biology and Management at Penn State University

Deah works on improving invasive species prevention and management through horizon scanning, risk assessment, and pathway analysis. Other research areas include investigating how rising temperatures and increased CO₂ levels affect invasive plants in forests. She is a member of the U.S. Invasive Species Advisory Committee and also serves on the board of directors for the North American Invasive Species Management Association.



Olaf Booy

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) the United Kingdom

Olaf is the Deputy Chief Non-native Species Officer for the UK Government and Technical Coordinator for the Great Britain Non-native Species Secretariat. His roles include managing the British non-native species risk analysis mechanism, which produces risk assessments for non-native species that pose a potential threat to GB.



Zenia Ruiz-Utrilla

Doctoral student and Fulbright Scholar at the University of Kansas

Zenia's research integrates biodiversity data, GIS tools, and ecological theory to develop a comprehensive framework for managing alien species.

Panel Session 6:

Citizen and Community Science



Beatriz Maruri

Biologist, Cadereyta Regional Botanic Garden, Querétaro, Mexico.

Since 2008, Beatriz has been the head of the scientific research area at the Cadereyta Regional Botanical Garden in the State of Querétaro, central Mexico. Her position encompasses planning, conducting, and overseeing scientific research. She has co-authored more than 20 peer-reviewed articles, published scientific papers and ten book chapters, primarily focusing on the flora in the semi-arid region of Querétaro. She received the Elizabeth E. Bascom Fellowship in Conservation Biology from the Missouri Botanical Garden (2016) and the Kittleman Award for Aspiring Public Garden Leaders from the American Public Gardens Association (2022).



Chuck Barger

Director of the Center for Invasive Species & Ecosystem Health at the University of Georgia

Chuck has been with UGA for 26 years, during which time his work has focused on invasive species and information technology. He is the former Chair of the National Invasive Species Advisory Council and former President of the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA).



Helen Roy

Ecologist and Professor with the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and the University of Exeter

Helen's research focuses on the effects of environmental change, particularly biological invasions, on biodiversity and ecosystems. She leads many collaborative national and international research projects on biological invasions, with a focus on enhancing information flow to inform understanding of the impacts of invasive alien species. She recently led a global assessment on invasive non-native species for the IPBES on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.



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Rebecca Lord

Executive Director, Invasives Canada

Rebecca has over 15 years of experience leading non-profit initiatives focused on invasive species, community engagement, and sustainability. She specializes in strategic planning, project management, and partnership development, with a strong track record in youth education, Indigenous outreach, and building organizational resilience.

Panel Session 7: Invasive Species and Wildfire Nexus



Anibal Pauchard

Professor at the Faculty of Forest Sciences in the University of Concepción, Chile, Director of the Institute of Ecology and Biodiversity (IEB)

Anibal is the founding Director of the Laboratory of Biological Invasions (LIB) and co-founder of the Mountain Invasion Research Network (MIREN) and former co-chair of the IPBES report on Invasive Alien Species.



Dr. David Clements

Assistant Dean, Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences
Professor of Biology & Geography and Environment

David is a plant ecologist at Trinity Western University in Langley, British Columbia, Canada. He has published more than 90 peer-reviewed works including many papers and book chapters on climate change and invasive species. He is a co-editor of the Biology of Invasive Plants series in Invasive Plant Science and Management and was the lead editor of the book Global Plant Invasions (Springer, 2022).



Dr. Clay Trauernicht

Dept of Natural Resources and Environmental Management,
University of Hawai'i Mānoa

Clay has been an Extension Specialist in the Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Management at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa since 2013, working on wildfire mitigation and ecosystem restoration to support communities, watershed programs, and landowners across Hawai'i and Micronesia. He grew up on Long Island, NY and came to Hawai'i in 1999 as a wildlife project intern. He soon turned to plant science with graduate degrees at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and the University of Tasmania, leading to work with land care projects in many parts of the world.



Mayra Valdez

External Collaborator to Mexico's National Forestry Commission, former Head of the Department of Monitoring and Control of Invasive Species, National Forestry Commission

Mayra holds a technological Master's Degree in Conservation and Sustainable Forest Management and has experience as a trainer in the Early Warning and Aerial Mapping System for the timely detection of bark beetle in Guatemala (2017) and Honduras (2018). She serves as representative of the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) working group "insects, diseases and invasive plants" of COFAN at the alternate meeting of the international forestry week. She is headquartered at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Rome, Italy 2018.



Michele Crist

Program Manager and Acting Coordinator of the Wildland Fire Science Program in the Ecosystems Mission Area of the US Geological Survey

Michele is a landscape ecologist who specializes in fire science geospatial modeling and risk assessments. She manages the Wildland Fire Science Program and coordinates all fire science across the U.S. Geological Survey's mission areas, programs, and science centers. She holds a Master of Science degree in landscape ecology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a bachelor's degree in biology from University of Georgia, Athens.