



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

The trees are beautiful. Their leaves are bright red, yellow, and orange. My 2024 season is mostly done. Our fall weather was dry, and harvest is way ahead of normal. Early harvest should provide an opportunity to control weeds this fall. Recently, we had a slight frost in Minnesota; I will be applying certain systemic herbicides to certain perennial weeds, before a killing frost. I hope your efforts to harvest plots, enter data, analyze results, and write up reports and papers go well. I am eager to see and hear what you have learned. I hope you had a great growing season and weed management efforts were successful.



I was able to ride WEED PAIN, my Polaris Slingshot, on some fun adventures this year. I traveled to the International Peace Gardens in honor of the 2025 WSSA/CWSS Joint Annual Meeting. The International Peace Garden is located on the international border between the United States and Canada. It is located between North Dakota and Manitoba. It was beautiful. I wish all of you Peace. I also invite you to join us for the 2025 WSSA/CWSS Joint Annual Meeting in Vancouver, BC in February. I enjoyed meeting with several Extension Weed Specialists on my travels. I was pleased to see many fields that seemed weed free. There were other fields that were a mess. We still have work to do.

Congratulations to the Winners in the Regional Weed Science Contests! Well Done! Thanks also to the Sponsors, Coaches, and Volunteers. These contests are great opportunities to learn and meet other weed scientists.

WSSA and the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants, NAICC, hosted a tour across Wisconsin regarding the Endangered Species Act. The tour

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**WSSA-CWSS
Joint Meeting
February 24-27, 2025 • Vancouver, BC**

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on September 3–5, 2024, was for representatives from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We had great stops at sites where endangered species were present and discussed how to protect endangered species while minimizing restrictions to growers and applicators. Thanks to Lee Van Wychen, Bill Chism, Mark VanGessel, Hilary Sandler, Joshua Miranda and Sarah Chu. Thanks also to Steve Hoffman, James Todd, Jim Steffel, and others hosting for the NAICC. I would also like to thank Eric Spandl, Steven Fredericks, Annie Makepeace, and everyone at the Winfield United Innovation Center for the tour and meeting and Connor Fergusson and Andrew Walmsley representing CPDA. We are planning follow-up information, webinars, and other outreach to help protect endangered species with the least amount of burden for growers and applicators.

I would like to thank Lee Van Wychen, Presidents of the Weed Science Societies, and others for requesting that Drift Reduction Adjuvants, DRAs, be considered as a mitigation option for the EPA Herbicide Strategy for the Endangered Species Act. EPA has included DRAs in their final Herbicide Strategy. It is likely they will include them for their Insecticide and Fungicide Strategies as well.

There have been many updates to the WSSA web site. The site is easier to use. There has been a lot of useful information added to the site. It is much easier to locate information on Publications, Meetings, Society information, Committee information and other weed science topics. I recommend that you look at the information provided by the WSSA Endangered Species Act Committee. My thanks to the WSSA Web Site Committee and everyone involved.

Hilary Sandler, WSSA, and Robert Nurse, CWSS, and their planning team are putting together a great 2025 WSSA / CWSS Joint Annual Meeting at the Sheraton Wall Centre, Vancouver, BC on February 24–27, 2025. They have plans for great symposia, student events, social gatherings, tours, and other events. Vancouver is a wonderful city. I am looking forward to seeing you at the meeting. Please plan to attend.

WSSA and the Regional Weed Science Societies have selected a new abstract submittal system. WSSA will be using the new system to put together the 2025 WSSA / CWSS Joint Meeting. The WSSA Board of Directors approved that WSSA will pay for the Abstract Submittal System for both WSSA and the Regional Weed Societies for the first complete year. Mark Bernards, NCWSS President-Elect, is the first to use the system for the NCWSS Annual Meeting in December. Thanks, Mark, for doing this.

Weed Science is full of successes and still has many challenges. I am proud of our successes and look forward to your efforts and achievements on the challenges still before us.

Thanks for all you are doing!

Make the world a better place. Go mess up some weeds!

Greg Dahl
WSSA President



WSSA FUTURE MEETING SITES AND DATES

February 24–27, 2025
WSSA-CWSS Joint Meeting
Vancouver, British Columbia
www.wssa.net and
www.weedscience.ca

WSSA HOME PAGE
ACCESSED AT:

www.wssa.net

THINK NEWSLETTER

Deadline for January issue
December 1, 2024

SEND NEWSLETTER

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WASHINGTON REPORT

by Lee Van Wychen, Director of Science Policy

EPA HERBICIDE STRATEGY FOR ESA MITIGATIONS—RELEASED AUGUST 20, 2024

EPA's Final Herbicide Strategy for ESA: What Could Change

The following description has been endorsed by the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) and reviewed by the WSSA ESA Committee. Special thanks to Bill Chism for leading this effort.

Questions covered include:

1. What is the Endangered Species Act (ESA)?
2. What is the Final Herbicide Strategy?
3. How will the Herbicide Strategy affect pesticide use?
4. What about fungicides, insecticides, and rodenticides?
5. How can I reduce spray drift?
6. How can I reduce runoff/erosion?
7. Mitigation Relief Points for Runoff Vulnerability
8. Pesticide use in critical areas: Pesticide Use Limitation Areas (PULA)

For more information: WSSA ESA Website at <https://wssa.net/endorangered-species/> and the full article at [Fall 2024 Washington Report](#).

EPA FINALIZES VULNERABLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN

On September 26, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a [Vulnerable Species Action Plan \(VSAP\)](#) as part of its Endangered Species Act (ESA) Workplan implementation for pesticide products. The VSAP builds on EPA's June 2023 Vulnerable Species Pilot Project (VSPP).

In the VSAP release, EPA identified 27 species listed by USFWS in the lower 48 states as "vulnerable species" and within the scope of the VSAP. These species include various types of plants and animals, adding seven species that were not originally in-

cluded in June 2023 pilot project. The final VSAP also removed seven species from the pilot project after determining that they did not meet the definition of a vulnerable species. Over time, EPA expects to add species in the VSAP through formal consultations or coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (FWS).

Twenty-Seven Vulnerable Species Included in the final September 2024 VSAP:

1. Attwater's greater prairie-chicken
2. Buena Vista Lake ornate shrew
3. Avon Park harebells – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
4. Carter's mustard – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
5. Florida ziziphus – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
6. Garrett's mint – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
7. Highlands scrub hypericum – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
8. Lewton's polygala – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
9. Sandlace 0 – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
10. Scrub blazingstar – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
11. Scrub mint – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
12. Short-leaved rosemary – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
13. Snakeroot – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
14. Wireweed – Lake Wales Ridge, FL
15. Leedy's roseroot (MN & NY)
16. Madison cave isopod
17. Mead's milkweed
18. Ozark cavefish
19. Palmate-bracted bird's beak
20. Poweshiek skipperling (MI & WI)
21. Rusty patch bumblebee
22. Scaleshell mussel
23. Spring creek bladderpod (TN)
24. White Bluffs bladderpod (WA)
25. Whorled sunflower
26. Winged mapleleaf
27. Wyoming toad

The Seven Species from the pilot project (VSPP) that are NOT included in the final VSAP are:

1. American burying beetle
2. Okeechobee gourd
3. Ouachita rock pocketbook
4. Rayed bean
5. Riverside fairy shrimp
6. San Diego fairy shrimp
7. Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly

The VSAP also explains that when EPA has developed a different strategy that applies to a pesticide, it will apply that strategy before applying the VSAP. The VSAP would thus supplement that strategy to the extent that the strategy does not cover pesticide uses and exposure routes to a vulnerable species. The VSAP includes mitigations for common exposure routes, including spray drift and runoff, but also addresses other routes of pesticide exposure to the vulnerable species. Examples include on-field exposure to a vulnerable species and pesticide volatilization. This action plan, along with the Ecological Mitigation Support document, are available in the public docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-0327](#) at [regulations.gov](#), and on [EPA's website](#).

For further information on the VSAP see the report at [Fall 2024 Washington Report](#)

As part of WSSA's comments on the proposed vulnerable species pilot project, I also asked my Science Policy Fellows to research one of the 27 pilot species. Sarah Chu, PhD Candidate at Texas A&M, reported on the *Rusty-Patched Bumble Bee* and Josh Miranda, PhD Candidate at Oregon State University, reported on the *Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly*. Their reports can be found here: [Fall 2024 Washington Report](#)

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CONGRESS PASSES STOPGAP SPENDING BILL

On Wednesday, September 25, just five days before FY 2024 funding for the government was set to expire, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the government until December 20, 2024. Members of the House of Representatives passed the CR on a bipartisan vote of 341–82. The Senate subsequently voted and passed the CR on a vote of 78–18 and it was signed by the President before the September 30 deadline.

FARM BILL AUTHORIZATION EXPIRED ON SEPTEMBER 30

The 2018 farm bill, which was already extended one year in FY 2023, has now expired on September 30, 2024. The Farm Bill is a complicated piece of legislation with different programs with many different provisions for each title of the Farm Bill with varied expirations and authorizations.

The federal crop insurance program is permanently authorized. It doesn't need to be reauthorized by a farm bill. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which accounts for about 80% of the spending in the farm bill, is reauthorized through appropriations bills and continuing resolutions (CRs). As of October 1, 2024, the government is operating under a continuing resolution (CR) through December 20, 2024.

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) extended four major conservation programs and their funding authority through FY 2031: the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program. Notably however, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) wasn't extended to 2031, so its authority expired Sept. 30, 2024. The same is true for the Healthy Forest Restoration Program and Watershed Rehabilitation Program.

Then there are other Farm Bill programs that are impacted by “Permanent Law,” such as some commodity support programs and dairy that would “drop off the cliff” come January 1, 2025. Permanent law provides support based on a parity price from the 1910–1914 period that does not recognize productivity gains and technological advances in agriculture or modern marketing and policy approaches.

Finally, Farm Bill programs that rely on mandatory funding are typically most affected. In the Research Title (VII), this would include programs like the Specialty Crops Research Initiative (SCRI) and the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) that receive mandatory funding every year and do not depend on year-to-year discretionary appropriations. Research title programs that are funded with discretionary appropriations on year-to-year basis include the USDA NIFA AFRI competitive grants program, the IR-4 project, Smith-Lever and Hatch capacity funds, and the Crop Protection and Pest Management (CPPM) program. You could make the argument that this is the one time where discretionary funded programs are better off compared to mandatory funded programs. Either way, Congress must address the Farm Bill by January 1, 2025 or things will get crazy out in rural America.

USDA-ARS NP304 CROP PROTECTION AND QUARANTINE STAKEHOLDER REVIEW

In March, the USDA-Agricultural Research Service (ARS) held a stakeholder meeting to review their National Program 304 (NP304) and layout research priorities for 2025–2030. The NP304 covers four main components in crop protection and quarantine: 1) Systematics and Identification; 2) Weeds; 3) Insects and Mites; and 4) Postharvest Protection of Commodities.

Many thanks to those who could attend and represent weed and invasive plant science interests: Ian Burke, Carroll Moseley, John Byrd, Bill Chism, Jim Anderson, Gaylon Morgan, Dave Horvath, and Emily Unglesbee. A special thanks goes to USDA-ARS scientist Steven Mirsky for his presentation on advancements and application of technology for managing weeds in cropping systems during the meeting. Last, but not least, we'd like to thank Steve Young, USDA ARS National Program Leader for Weeds and Invasive Species, for his excellent guidance and leadership in this stakeholder review.

The 2025–2030 strategic plan was released on July 27, 2024. Overall, the plan reflects well on the priorities and challenges facing weed and invasive plant science:“*ARS will leverage recent advances in robotics and machine learning, herbicide resistance management, integrated approaches including cover crops and harvest weed seed control, bio-based chemistries and control tactics, gene editing and RNAi, and plant physiology and development, that provide novel, affordable, safe, and effective management strategies, and to anticipate and prevent the introduction and spread of weeds and invasive plants.*”

Can ARS rise to meet the challenges facing growers and land managers struggling with some of the most intractable weeds and invasive plants? WSSA is working on a letter to USDA Secretary Vilsack discussing the importance of funding for federal programs for weed and invasive plant management. During the stakeholder meeting, several of the major commodity groups, including cotton, soybean, sorghum, sugarbeets, voiced their concerns that a lack of new weed management tools coupled with herbicide resistance issues are greatly impairing their ability to effectively manage weeds resulting in significant crop yield losses. Simply stated, fed-

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WSSA PUBLICATIONS NEWS

Cambridge University Press experienced an attempted ransomware attack in late June. Fortunately, it was detected immediately and CUP's online journal production systems were shut down to thwart the attackers. Extensive investigations have found no evidence that financial or other society information was compromised, but journal publication workflow — including for WSSA journals — was disrupted for much of the summer while production systems were rigorously inspected and then brought back online. All CUP systems are now restored and backlogged manuscripts are moving into production. We expect all accepted articles currently in the pipeline for *Weed Science*, *Weed Technology* and *IPSM* to be published by the end of the year.

On a more positive note, manuscript submissions to all WSSA journals this year have increased noticeably compared to 2023. The latest impact factors released by Clarivate at the end of June are 2.1 for *Weed Science*, 1.3 for *Weed Technology*, and 1.3 for *IPSM*. These numbers are based on citations in 2023 of papers published in 2021 and 2022. Updated five-year impact factors are 2.5 for *Weed Science*, 1.5 for *Weed Technology*, and 1.6 for *IPSM*.

The online disruption caused by the ransomware attack will not affect our timetable for transitioning *Weed Science* and *IPSM* to full open access and continuous publication in January 2025. Upcoming author flip dates (after which any manuscript received by the journal will automatically be published open access if accepted) are October 14, 2024 for *IPSM* and November 6, 2024 for *Weed Science*. A reminder: If your manuscript is accepted for publication in a WSSA journal, the cost of open access will not be a barrier. For many corresponding authors, open access article processing charges (APCs) are covered by transformative agreements between CUP and their institutions. Corresponding authors of accepted manuscripts who lack funding and are not covered by a transformative agreement should apply for a waiver. Check [here](#) for transformative agreement eligibility and waiver information. If you have a good manuscript, a WSSA journal wants to publish it!

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In Memoriam

We are sad to announce the death of the following members who have recently passed away:

Linda Hall
Dr. Richard Byrnes
Jim Gilreath
Dr. Donald Leroy Wyse

Their obituaries can be found on the Society's website: "[In Memoriam](#)."

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WASHINGTON REPORT

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eral research programs focused on weed and invasive plant management are not receiving enough attention and funding. It is paramount that USDA leadership and Congress hears about these challenges and getting the letter endorsed by as many grower and stakeholder groups as possible will be key to this ongoing and important effort.

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
November 2024	Canadian Weed Science Society (CWSS) Annual Meeting	Virtual Meeting	www.weedscience.ca
December 8–12, 2024	North Central Weed Science Society (NCWSS) Annual Meeting	Kansas City, Missouri	www.ncwss.org
January 6–10, 2025	Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS) Annual Meeting	Annapolis, Maryland	www.newss.org
January 20–23, 2025	Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS) Annual Meeting	Charleston, South Carolina	www.swss.ws
February 24–27, 2025	Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) and Canadian Weed Science Society (CWSS) Joint Annual Meeting	Vancouver, BC, Canada	www.wssa.net and www.weedscience.ca
March 10–13, 2025	Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS) Annual Meeting	Seattle, Washington	www.wsweedscience.org
November 10–13, 2025	International Weed Science Society (IWSS) Weed Science Congress	TBD	www.iwss.info

Additional Weed Science Meetings and Events can be found at <http://wssa.net/meeting/calendar-of-meetings/>

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