

STRATEGIC PLAN YOLO COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED MANAGEMENT AREA

Mission statement: The mission of the Yolo County Weed Management Area (YCWMA) is to promote and coordinate efforts toward the management and control of the County's noxious weeds through education and cooperation with landowners, agencies, organizations and the general public.

I. **NEEDS ASSESSMENT** - Why are we here?

1. To focus attention on the TOP 10 Yolo County weeds of concern, as well as Calif. Dept. of Food and Agriculture A & B weeds.
2. education component
 - a. reduce & remove weeds using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approaches
 - b. replace with beneficial plants
3. Coordination of efforts to avoid redundancy among Yolo County agencies & organizations
4. Develop a volunteer program
 - a. children/parents: schools, 4-H, programs and others as discovered
 - b. lay volunteers
5. address legislation and policy
6. develop cooperative responsibility for weed management through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
7. address the movement of seeds via equipment/truck tires
 - a. agricultural equipment movement
 - b. CDF fire trucks moving throughout the state
8. address liability issues: when landowner controls weeds and neighbor won't.

II. **LINES OF BUSINESS**

1. **Education**

Goal 1. Provide noxious weed management or control information options to the public, rural landowners, agencies, policy makers, and others as identified:

Objective 1. Increase the awareness and education level of the above.

Contact will be made with: all public schools in county, all private schools in county, key agencies (Calif. Dept. of Forestry (CDF), Ag. Commissioner, CalTrans, Yolo County Planning Dept., City Parks, Community Service Districts (Esparto, Madison, Yolo, Capay), County Parks, US-Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Reclamation District 108 (RD108), YC Flood Control & Water Conservation District (YCFWCWD), Dunnigan Water District, Dept. of Water Resources (DWR), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Calif. Dept. of Forestry (CDF) Nursery, private plant nurseries, Railroad Companies (RxR rights-of-way), Port of West Sacramento, Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game (CDF&G), Delta Wildlife Refuge, Yolo Basin Foundation, DQUniversity, Rumsey Rancheria, Gravel companies, Public & Private golf courses, Yolo County Sportsman Assn. Knights Landing Sportsman's Assn., private hunting clubs, all fire districts, mosquito abatement (Sac/Yolo Abatement Dist.), Farm Bureau, YC Cattlemen's & Woolgrowers Assn., Calif. Native Grass Assn.(CNGA), Calif. Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), County Road Commissioner, County Parks Commission, Calif. Rice Commission (CRC), County Tax Assessor, Board of Realtors, Putah Creek Council, Bicycle club, Audubon, Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), local beekeepers, rafting concessions, Cache Creek Conservancy, Putah Creek Council

Action 1. Provide curricula to schools - link with Ag in the Classroom if possible

Action 2. Create a resource list: brochures, pamphlets, videos, cards, posters, web page, coloring books, TV/radio/newspaper

Action 3. Set up a Speakers Bureau using CalEPPC, Farm Bureau and others

Action 4. Annual update to Board of Supervisors at Annual Resource Conservation District (RCD) Luncheon

Action 5. Search for available materials (to avoid duplication of efforts).

Objective 2. Support research on weeds of concern to the Yolo County Weed Management Area (YCWMA).

Action 1. Arrange for appropriate agencies/organizations to support graduate students and research projects consistent with the goals of the YCWMA.

Goal 2. Complete mapping of infestation areas for specified weeds in Yolo County.

Objective 1. Hold annual training sessions for key organizations and agencies on observation and reporting

Action 1: Schedule speakers for annual YCWMA Weed Forum agenda.

Objective 2. Map locations (through GIS) of problem weeds. Coordinate with County Agencies such as the Ag. Dept., RCD, NRCS, CDFA, DWR, etc.

Objective 3. Create a volunteer system to help with mapping (weed “hot line,” or set up contests)

Objective 4. Create an incentive program for reporting weeds.

Objective 5. Include a component for weed problem assessment within NRCS Individual Conservation Plans (ICP’s)

Goal 3: Reducing transport of seeds or other plant parts capable of reproduction

Objective 1: Increase awareness among agencies and public on the methods and impacts of transport and ways to reduce it.

Action 1: Develop a brochure about weed seed transport on and cleaning of bicycles, horses, hikers, vehicles, and equipment: (“Are you a Carrier;”) list procedures for cleaning equipment in maintenance shops or wash areas.

2. Agency/organization coordination and cooperation (note: the WMA is a coordination organization for local agencies)

Goal 1: Improve coordination and cooperation between all agencies involved with noxious weeds in Yolo County.

Objective 1: Identify all agencies, organizations, and other interested parties that should consistently attend the YCWMA meetings and events.

Action 1: Upgrade mailing list with specific agency contacts; add supervisors and city council-members

Action 2: Identify alternate attendees.

Action 3: Place cross-agency articles in newsletters.

Objective 2: Have 1/3 of identified participatory agencies and organizations (especially critically identified ones) to attend meetings on a consistent basis.

Action 1: Identify incentives to increase meeting attendance, perhaps through a general questionnaire or other methods.

Objective 3: Coordinate weed control programs and cooperation between the Ag. Commissioner's office, Cal Trans, County Planning and Public Works, and railroad rights-of-way.

Action 1: Have members of the WMA make presentation(s) before the Board of Supervisors on noxious weeds and how the Board can support better coordination between agencies, organizations and the public.

Action 2: Generate MOU's between appropriate "rights-of-way" agencies specifying what each agency can contribute (include good neighbor policies).

3. Build a program that supports an eradication, management and research program for specific weeds designated by the YCWMA

Goal 1: Provide an infrastructure and facilitate research programs for weed management and eradication within the county

Objective 1: Clarify structure of the YCWMA for funding purposes, e.g. WMA as grantor, 501c3 non-profit, connect to University and/or State colleges.

Action 1: Research what format options are available to YCWMA to allow effective receipt of funding.

Action 2: Create an "Administrative Committee" (for Financing/Reporting)

Action 3: YCWMA Administrative Committee will determine what funding status action to take.

Objective 2: Procure and disperse grant money to individual landowners or non-government organizations to fund management, eradication, and research programs consistent with YCWMA goals.

Action 1: Establish a funding procurement program, including selecting a lead agency, writing grants, administering funds, and developing a grant program.

Action 2: Write grants

Action 3: Develop grant fund dispersal program and procedures.

Action 4: Develop accountability program for grant dollars

Objective 3: Designate land-treatment areas (streams, roadsides, rights-of-way) that will be focused on for funding.

Action 1: Evaluate current activities, funding needs, upcoming needs; assign dollar amounts needed, prioritize treatment areas.

Objective 4: Have the 2-county Conservation Work Groups include weed management as a funding priority within the two priority areas: Willow Slough and Colusa Basin Drain.

Action 1: Give presentations at Work Group Meetings.

4. Land Treatment

Goal 1: To promote changes in land treatment that result in a reduction of weeds of concern to the YCWMA.

Objective 1: Provide clear and brief information to the landowners on specific land treatment procedures

Action 1: Write and produce "Weed Action Sheets" for distribution

Objective 2: Simplify the permitting process for any permissible land treatments

Action 1: Review all land treatment types that require permits and produce a brief "how-to" guide on getting through the permit process.

YC-WMA Capacity Analysis:

1. Internal Analysis:

- A. Shared Values: What values do or don't the participants in the YC-WMA share?
(Send questionnaire addressing these issues)
- B. Who are our Champions, i.e. are there weed warriors out there who will really help get this group and its activities off the ground?
- C. Infrastructure:
 - 1.) Currently: We have a place to meet, a desk available (FSA office) through NRCS, telephone, modem port. RCD types up minutes, keeps mailing list, does routine mailings, can give some computer access time, has grant funding for part-time WMA intern (until Oct. 2000); active Ag. Commissioner and staff time available until March.
- D. Gaps:
 - 1.) Need a ½ time coordinator working under either the Ag. Commissioner's office or RCD to really get the program going, write grants do administrative and support activities.
 - 2.) A Budget and Funding Coordinator, computer, publishing budget, events budget, postage, some travel, support services, ideally, vehicle access.

2. External Analysis:

- A. Who are our champions on the outside, other WMA groups we can learn from; other projects, literature, funders?
- B. Who are the stakeholders, their supports, limitations of action, concerns
- C. What are the barriers to success for the YC-WMA?
 - 1. Apathy
 - 2. Lack of a critical mass of participants for it to move forward (½ the county is in agricultural row crops, areas which are already under individual weed control programs)
 - 3. Our weed problems are in the rangeland and in corridors (road, highway, streams, canal), so do we have enough acres of weeds for people to get "excited" enough about participating in a WMA group.
 - 4. Hostility to fire
 - 5. Hostility to herbicides
 - 6. Lack of funding
 - 7. Lack of education