

HWCWMA HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Humboldt Watershed Weed Warriors,

I would like to start off by saying that I sincerely appreciate all of you for your volunteer services which has helped our organization respond to weed management concerns throughout the Humboldt River Watershed. I would also like to express my gratitude by thanking our dedicated staff for being able to keep projects moving forward through all of the hardships that were presented to most of us over the last year or so. We were able to treat a huge amount of weeds this year through our BLM assistance agreement, and thousands of residents and landowners were reached through our public education efforts.

The HWCWMA will be holding an annual meeting prior to March 15th of 2021. A doodle poll will be sent out in January to get a sense of when and what time works best for cooperators; this meeting will most likely be held via teleconference due to current Covid restrictions. Also, this is the meeting where we will hold elections; please feel free to attend if you would like to serve as a board member or if you are interested in seeing what our organization has to offer.

As always, if you have anything that you would like to discuss give me a call at 775-461-6569. I feel we need to educate our legislators on state needs for funding long-term weed control projects. I foresee future federal and state dollars funding watershed scale projects where weed treatments will be a critical component for preventing soil erosion and promoting water conservation. Legislative funding for rehabilitation projects for organizations such as ours will be important for restoring wildlife and riparian habitat within the Watershed.

As head of the HWCWMA, I sincerely thank all of you for your interest in our productive organization. Until our paths cross in the new year, I'm hoping that you stay healthy - we will be out in the field treating noxious weeds before we know it.

Wishing everyone all of the best during this holiday season and please take care of yourselves!

Best wishes,

Gerry Miller

2020 Accomplishments

This year has certainly been a year to remember. Despite the numerous setbacks, the HWCWMA was able to move forward with projects and put funding on the ground through our on-going partnerships with the BLM, NDOW, NDF, NDA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Gold Mines, Spring Creek Association, the South Fork Band as well as many landowner agreements.

Through our 2020 partnerships, the HWCWMA was able to accomplish:

- Aerial and Broadcast Treatments:
 - Spring 2020 – 1,000 acres
 - Fall 2020 – 1,970 acres
- Monitoring and Inventory: 2,500 acres of medusahead and ventenata
- Gravel Pit Inspection: 5 locations within the Elko BLM District
- Education Outreach Events:
 - noxious weeds presentation to the South Fork Tribe
 - two noxious weeds flyers for Spring Creek Association and South Fork Tribe residents
 - two medusahead digital billboards displayed at two Elko locations
- Data collection and tracking in a GIS-based system
- Weed data verified and collected by staff as well as project contractors
- Weed Management Plans were drafted and accepted by the South Fork Band and Spring Creek Association
- IFA Herbicide cost-share program for landowners through NGM partnership

A huge thank you to all of our partners – we wouldn't be able to do the work that we do without your help!



Weeds to Watch: Medusahead and Ventenata

We have long considered cheatgrass to be an invasive annual grass; however, two new species found in Northern Nevada are posing an additional threat to rangeland health and production. Invasive grasses increase the risk of wildfire & fire frequency, decrease bio-diversity, out-compete desirable vegetation and potentially reduce grazing capacity for wildlife and livestock by as much as 70%. The first, medusahead grass was actually identified in Washoe County more than a decade ago, but has recently rose to prominence throughout many Northern Nevada's counties including Elko, Humboldt and Eureka Counties. The second, Ventenata was first identified in Washington State in 1952 and is spreading rapidly throughout most of Nevada. Like cheatgrass, these annual grasses are capable of forming dense monotypic stands as they typically germinate in the fall capitalizing on late summer moisture, then robbing available nutrients, allowing them to get a head start in the spring over desirable vegetation. However, whereas cheatgrass has some grazable qualities at least early, these two species do not, due to their high silica content. Livestock producers should be extremely concerned with these two invasive threats and diligently be on the lookout. Little is known, at this point, the threat they pose to cropping systems, but could be substantial based on what cheatgrass can do.

The HWCWMA Board and staff are taking the threat of medusahead and ventenata seriously. Many of the known infestations in Northern Nevada have been treated and will be monitored and re-treated as necessary. Control options are somewhat limited and expensive. The cheapest form of weed control is prevention so we need to be on the constant lookout for new infestations and respond swiftly or the cost of lost production and control will be astronomical. Contact the HWCWMA for more information on what to do if you suspect you have either of these two species.

Ventenata



Stephen Novak

Medusahead



Andi Porreca