



CWMA Cookbook



A Recipe for Success

Idaho Noxious Weed Coordinating Committee
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Credits

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Preface

Idaho unveiled its Strategic Plan for Managing Noxious Weeds in 1999. This plan was developed by a consortium of participants representing federal, state and county government, environmental groups, as well as educational, agricultural, commercial, tribal and local interests.

The strategy specifies that, “The participants of this strategic plan recognize that through the development of a statewide coordinated and cooperative approach to noxious weed management, they can more effectively advance the actions necessary to achieve both the strategy’s goals and objectives, and respective individual and organizational responsibilities.”

The plan established the Idaho Weed Coordinating Committee which coordinates state level weed management

programs and the agencies responsible for - or with interest in - noxious weed management.

The “CWMA Cookbook,” a product of that cooperation, has been prepared by the Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinator at the request of Idaho Weed Coordinating Committee.

In 2001 the Idaho State Department of Agriculture and USDA-Forest Service, Intermountain Region, established an Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinator position charged with facilitating the development of Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMAs), a major component of Idaho’s strategic plan. The purpose of this position is to create, coordinate, consult and provide technical assistance in the development and operation of CWMAs.

Significant success has been achieved as a result of the Idaho strategy, the resulting organizations, and the cooperative efforts it inspired. The “CWMA Cookbook,” a product of that cooperation, has been prepared by the Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinator at the request of Idaho Weed Coordinating Committee. It is intended as a guide to help organize, develop and operate successful CWMAs, and has application wherever noxious weeds are an issue.

Additional information is available at www.agri.state.id.us/animal/weedintro.htm.



Introduction

Cooperative weed management is not a new concept. State and county noxious weed experts have helped private landowners for years, but often the scale of the cooperative effort was confined to a particular area of land ownership rather than a community or watershed. For a variety of reasons one landowner might have diligently combated noxious weeds while another did not, exacerbating the problem. Varying levels of interest, knowledge, skill, resources and commitment were often wasted while noxious weeds continued to spread throughout the West.

It became apparent that a new approach was needed and Idaho's Strategic Plan for Managing Noxious Weeds was developed and implemented. National leaders provided increased funding to help fight noxious weeds irrespective of land ownership. Concerned neighbors began to share available resources. The phrase "Pulling Together" was coined and all parties began looking at the bigger picture with renewed hope and support.

Local citizens, city, county, state, tribal and federal leaders began creating Cooperative Weed Management Areas. The term CWMA refers to a local organization that integrates all noxious weed management resources across jurisdictional boundaries in order to benefit entire communities. Significant gains were made by the initial CWMA's as neighbors, who were once critical of each other. Physical and social barriers faded as partners experienced new success against a common threat.

The term CWMA refers to a local organization that integrates all noxious weed management resources across jurisdictional boundaries in order to benefit entire communities.

Recently a dramatic increase in the number of CWMA's has taken place in Idaho and many other states. Some CWMA's have been in operation for several years while many communities have just begun to recognize the value of this type of cooperation. This guide is meant to aid the organization and operation of a CWMA.

Each element is an important step toward the goal of an integrated and cooperative weed management area. Examples of CWMA supporting documents are available from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. Success depends on all CWMA members' willingness to cooperate.

But organizing and leading a CWMA takes considerable time. Is it worth the effort? For the answer, let us examine a community before and after the CWMA approach.

The CWMA Approach: A Story

One partner of a six-year-old CWMA recounts a prior story of work, animosities, wasted energy, and dissatisfied neighbors before trying the CWMA approach. In 1975 there were approximately 70 acres of leafy spurge on the land he managed. Twenty years and hundreds of thousands of dollars later the infestation had increased to 3,000 acres. At the same time, noxious weeds ran unchecked through local communities because the county did not have an effective weed control program. Neighbors blamed each other, and the noxious weed problem seemed so hopeless that some landowners gave up in disgust while congressional complaints were recorded against a federal agency. The problem grew worse.

Noxious weed experts proposed the formation of a Cooperative Weed Management Area. Potential partners were contacted and asked to participate. A steering committee was selected and the new group began focusing on solutions instead of fault. Initially, distrusting neighbors came to the CWMA table skeptical of the organization's aims.

But experience taught that a lack of coordinated and cooperative weed control was expensive and ineffective. Slowly the steering committee evolved into a cooperative problem-solving group. At the end of each year the steering committee chairperson asked members, "If we don't receive any additional funding, will you still be here?" The answer was always a unanimous "yes," and the most vocal initial critics had become the CWMA's strongest supporters.

While money may be the initial driving force for organizing a CWMA, other lasting benefits, such as increased local communication, cooperation, and trust, can be realized.

Equipment, expertise, labor, supplies, and ideas become abundantly available in the cooperative setting of CWMA's. People become more aware of noxious weed issues and often evolve into a community of weed warriors. More people take note of noxious weeds during their normal activities. New weeds are identified early when eradication is possible. Heightened awareness can lead to more preventive measures that minimize noxious weed spread. Communities pull together and build positive relationships that replace old animosities. Establishing a CWMA is a unique win-win opportunity.





Getting Organized

Someone who is excited about cooperative noxious weed management should lead the cause. This “champion” should have energy, commitment and available time. It is equally important that they exhibit good communication skills, possess integrity, and have the ability to bring people together. A self serving leader who places personal goals above those of the Cooperative Weed Management Area will not be successful.



1. CHOOSE AN INITIAL LEADER OR CHAMPION.

The CWMA champion should lead only until the CWMA is fully organized and operating at which time a chairperson and vice-chairperson assume leadership responsibilities.

A successful CWMA includes many agencies and individuals all working towards a common goal.

It should be understood that shared problems require cooperative efforts. Weeds know no boundaries and it is only by eliminating boundaries that a weed management program will succeed. Partners should understand that combining resources results in greater benefits for everyone. Without cooperation on a broad scale, noxious weeds will spread virtually unchecked.



2. RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST.

Trust is also contingent upon personal and agency integrity. Members must be able to depend upon each other.

View individual weed problems as a part of a much bigger picture - one in which trust and cooperation are the only reasonable answer. Hence, the need to begin organizing a CWMA.

Noxious weeds negatively impact our way of life at all levels. Farm productivity as well as fishing streams, fields, city lots, hunting spots, highways, scenic drives, parks, commercial real estate, suburban developments, and even our national wilderness areas are under siege by noxious weeds.



3. DETERMINE COMMON GOALS.

Locally you may have one specific noxious weed of concern. Some may have a great love for a river corridor or wetland. Maintaining real estate values may be another priority. Communities may even have a productive area not yet infested with noxious weeds and want to keep it that way. Talk to neighbors, friends, politicians and community leaders about noxious weed issues in order to elevate awareness and support. **Find at least one common concern and focus on it to initiate a CWMA.**

View each major land management entity within a CWMA as critical: Federal, tribal, state, county, local municipalities, public utilities, transportation departments, irrigation



companies, and private landowners should all be represented to ensure success.

4. IDENTIFY POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND BEGIN BUILDING SUPPORT.

Contact the county weed supervisor as they are the local weed experts and provide an invaluable service. Hold public meetings with county commissioners and local media to build awareness. Meet with local, state and federal land managers as they may provide significant resources to a Cooperative Weed Management Area.

Private landowners are another critical contact and may be the catalyst that brings the CWMA together. Continue building support through each layer of agency administration for each potential partner until representatives with authority to sign agreements are engaged.

In discussing a new CWMA, address how to limit the scope of your area. Each time you stretch your proposed boundary to incorporate another interested partner or land feature, remember that while your CWMA must be big enough to handle your weed problem; it needs to remain manageable. Coordinate the CWMA boundaries with adjacent CWMA's to avoid excluding areas and overlap. Do not extend or reduce your CWMA without careful consideration.

Organize the CWMA on political or natural features. In some cases, county lines fit nicely. In other cases, ecological features such as landscapes or wetland areas may be determining factors. It is important to recognize natural components and the contours of noxious weed habitat. Be flexible and consider organizing a CWMA into smaller administrative subunits such as basins, watersheds, or management zones.



5. DEVELOP AN AGREEMENT.

Establish a document specifying terms of agreement and assure that every partner carefully reads, subscribes to, and supports that agreement.

Individual legal requirements and autonomy for each partner must be recognized and protected. A CWMA should not overshadow nor preclude partner considerations.

Keep the agreement short, generic and as simple as possible. An agreement should:

- identify the partners
- establish the legal authority(s) under which the agreement is made
- define the purpose
- list items of agreement
- describe land area covered under the agreement

Items of agreement should also specify organizational components including:

- the group of partners (board)
- steering committee
- responsibilities
- strategic plan
- annual operating plan
- reports

Other items could address contributions, waivers of claims, exchange of resources, injuries, federal laws and orders, and accountability.

The purpose of an agreement is to facilitate cooperation across jurisdictional boundaries and eliminate administrative barriers.

The steering committee will organize members, set priorities, make assignments, and accomplish the goals that brought participants together. This group will provide direction and establish priorities, operating procedures, locate opportunities, and in general further the common goal of cooperative noxious weed management.



6. ESTABLISH A STEERING COMMITTEE.

Ensure that broad representation continues on the steering committee.

Rotate membership to provide participation opportunities for all partners.

Those who are actively involved will have a greater

commitment and bring new energy and ideas to the steering committee, which is important to maintaining a quality organization.

The steering committee should be led by both a chairperson and vice-chairperson. Consider having the vice-chairperson automatically rotate into the chairperson position. This provides continuity, sharing of leadership responsibilities and subsequent leadership training. It is recommended that, over time, each steering committee member have the opportunity to serve as chairperson. Organization and operational details can be specified in your agreement, strategic plan, or another policy document.

With direct participation of county weed superintendents, the steering committee will prepare a strategic plan to provide long-term direction. This should include:

- a map of the Cooperative Weed Management Area area
- inventory of noxious weeds
- rationale for determining priorities
- long-term management goals and objectives
- appropriate integrated pest management tools
- determination of management units

Revisit this plan periodically to ensure projects support the strategy. Adjust the plan to reflect revised goals and objectives as appropriate.

With direct participation of county weed superintendents, the steering committee also develops and implements an annual operating plan. This document will detail annual projects, expected in-kind contributions, necessary funding, the personnel necessary for project completion, and the basis for outside grant requests.

Each project identified in the annual operating plan should have an assigned project manager. This is the person responsible for project implementation, coordination, expenditures, in-kind documentation, completion, photo records, and final reports.

Working together on coordination and plans typically strengthens relationships and unity, and solidifies organizational goals and efforts. Initially, the steering committee may elect to meet only once or twice a year. Monthly meetings are usually necessary to conduct business and organize efforts. Coordination is very important and larger CWMAs with complex programs often meet monthly for three or four hours.

The steering committee is, or will soon become, the heart and soul of the

CWMA. The steering committee, selected by the board, represents all partners. It may not be necessary for every partner to

have a corresponding steering committee member, but there is a need for everyone on the steering committee to represent all partner interests. This will be a cooperative endeavor. While individuals may only be concerned with their own area of responsibility, the steering committees area of responsibility is the entire CWMA, including partners not physically present.



7. HOW THE STEERING COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS.

The number of partner representatives on a steering committee is important. Broad representation and participation is needed, but the steering committee must avoid becoming so big that tasks cannot be completed expeditiously: having too many representatives will limit steering committee productivity. **Try to keep the steering committee to a maximum of twelve individuals.**

It is important to find a balance of representatives on the steering committee, and this will be affected by the personality of a community. In some areas federal lands dominate and thus federal agencies may have a greater representation. In other areas private lands dominate; thus the steering committee should focus on private representation.

Whatever the case, it is important to involve private citizens in the steering committee. Cooperative Weed Management Areas are grassroots efforts that depend on local participation.

Make sure appropriate government agencies are represented. They may be a significant management entity and could bring valuable resources to the CWMA. However, government representation can also overwhelm private citizens, especially where trust has not yet fully developed.

Partner representatives on the steering committee may change, especially when government agencies are involved. Representatives from government agencies may rotate frequently or multiple agencies may designate a single representative for a specified term.

Take advantage of changing representation as an opportunity to infuse new ideas and enthusiasm into the CWMA.

How do steering committees operate? Robert's Rules of Order is one example of procedure. Another example is decision by consensus. Both approaches have been used successfully by existing CWMAs.

There are important advantages to consensus, especially in a cooperative effort like CWMAs. Consensus eliminates the need to vote for decisions. Voting basically sends the message to a dissenting individual that what he/she thinks is not important and creates a "win-lose" atmosphere. Every individual concern is important and valued in building a trusting and cooperative relationship.

It is essential that healthy dialogue precede steering committee decisions. It is this dialogue that provides more information and fosters understanding while pulling a community together. Individually, there are no winners or losers in CWMAs. Team efforts should, when effective, result in achievements satisfying both individual and collective needs.



8. SELECT A CHAIRPERSON.

After organizing efforts evolve, and in the early stages of operating a CWMA, it is necessary to select a steering committee chairperson. The chairperson will facilitate meetings and help organize efforts while ensuring steering committee members comfortably provide input and help make decisions.

Leadership, communication and organizational skills are trademarks of an effective chairperson. A chairperson needs commitment and energy.

Who leads the CWMA should not be as important as overall steering committee activity. The goal is to move from leadership by one person to leadership by the entire steering committee.

Only when steering committee members feel their input is valued will they aid the CWMA effort. The opportunity to be an important member of the steering committee should elevate participants to higher levels of involvement and

spark the development of new ideas. Actions undertaken by your team of experts will often lead to greater success than that of any single individual. If a steering committee is dominated by one personality, participation and creativity by less dominant members could be lost. The chairperson must ensure that all steering committee members have opportunities to participate.

The chairperson should not be domineering. He or she should initiate participation and then step back, allowing discussion and decisions to flow from the steering committee. The chairperson must step in, when necessary, to guide dialogue and keep the steering committee focused but not hamper constructive debate. If the steering committee is functioning well, the chairperson will simply be an equal member of the steering committee.

Another important duty of the chairperson is administration. Establishing a schedule of meetings, searching for funding sources, organizing and coordinating efforts, and preparing the annual operating plan as approved by the steering committee will take time. These duties can be shared with the vice-chairperson or a designated ad hoc committee.

The chairperson, in accordance with steering committee decisions, may delegate responsibility for project accountability. Fiscal responsibility to grantors is often dependent upon who signs the grant request. If the chairperson signs a grant request, he or she is responsible for projects related to that grant. Accountability can be delegated to and accepted by another entity such as the fiscal manager. In either case the chairperson should ensure compliance with project and grant requirements.

A chairperson should be in position for a minimum of two years. An exception to this might be when the Cooperative Weed Management Area is first organized. In this case, it

may be beneficial for the chairperson to serve a four-year term in order to provide initial leadership and train a replacement in the vice-chairperson position. Remember, the CWMA will outlive its champion; look to the steering committee as a pool of potential future leaders.



9. SELECT A VICE-CHAIRPERSON.

The vice-chairperson assists with leadership and organizing efforts.

It is recommended that a steering committee member serve in this position for two years

before moving to the chairperson position. This will provide the necessary skills and confidence while promoting continuity in leadership.

Clearly define CWMA objectives and priorities.

A strategic or integrated weed management plan will help you identify concerns, quantify scale and scope of problems, and establish criteria for CWMA operations.



10. DEVELOP A STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN.

For example, the plan should:

- develop an accurate map of the CWMA
- inventory and map known noxious weed infestations
- determine management responsibilities including the establishment of management areas or zones
- establish criteria for the prioritization of noxious weed management activities
- identify integrated pest management techniques and resources available to your CWMA



A strategic plan is another document often desired by partners and required by grantors.

11. DEVELOP AN ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN.

strategic plan, work priorities for the upcoming year can be identified in an annual operating plan.

Annual operating plans vary greatly in size and complexity. Newly established Cooperative Weed Management Areas may have one or a few annual projects and may utilize grant applications as part of the annual operating plans.

CWMAs with more complexity or operational experience may find it advantageous to develop detailed annual operating plans. Whether simple or complex, the annual operating plan should clearly identify annual priorities and associated work projects. It is important to remember that the annual operating plan is a plan of CWMA intentions to prospective grantors, administrators and your CWMA partners.

Enlist additional help from partners and the community by establishing ad hoc committees.

These committees focus on a specific assignment and are usually disbanded upon completion of an assignment. Examples might include a Dyers Woad task force, education committee, or mapping committee.



12. ESTABLISH AND UTILIZE AD HOC COMMITTEES.

Establishing ad hoc committees increases participation by partners and citizens not included on the steering committee and broadens the base of ownership inside the commu-

nity. They also perform tasks that provide more time for the steering committee to devote toward coordination and administrative duties.

Keep all partners informed about CWMA activities. **Send agendas, meeting schedules, and minutes to all partners.**



13. COMMUNICATION IS CRITICAL FOR SUCCESS.

Celebrating successful CWMA projects will reinforce partnerships. **Utilize media and newsletters to broadcast your accomplishments.** Successes will help build additional interest and support in the community. Consider designating an ad hoc communication committee responsible for the dissemination of information.

Depending on CWMA complexity, there may be a myriad of agendas, minutes, information requests, project reports, volunteer and contribution documentation, and coordination efforts necessary. **Consider standardizing documentation forms with other CWMAs and the state department of agriculture.**

It is also important to facilitate information sharing with partners, other CWMAs, interested members of the public, grantors, and state department(s) of agriculture. Consider setting up a CWMA web page.

Hold an annual meeting of partners, participants, volunteers, and interested members of the public. This is a great opportunity to educate attendees and strengthen cooperative relationships. Pesticide applicator recertification credits are also normally available to participants of noxious weed educational meetings. Coordinate availability of recertification credits with the appropriate state department of agriculture.

Annual meetings should also be a time to discuss working projects and to reward efforts. In general, this is an activity that can solidify established bonds, attract new partners and build recognition for a Cooperative Weed Management Area while attracting new funding sources. Establishing bonds and building enthusiasm and support is an ongoing process within a CWMA.

Prepare an annual report. An annual report can be an important communication tool for the public and stakeholders. Keep it simple and remember to give credit to partners, cooperators, volunteers and all who participated in your efforts.



14. SELECT A CWMA FISCAL MANAGER.

A CWMA needs to establish fiscal capabilities for the receipt of funds and to make expenditures. The CWMA will probably be seeking outside funding in the form of grants,

which require additional accountability.

Direct receipt of federal funds by a CWMA requires a federal tax identification number. Applying for and receiving separate nonprofit or 501(c) 3 tax status is one option but it is not recommended; you will be busy enough managing noxious weeds. However, if you choose this approach be prepared to hire an accountant.

Another method is to enlist a county as the CWMA fiscal manager. It has a tax number, trained staff, and would likely charge your CWMA a fee for administering finances, which is normally a percentage of grant funds received. This opportunity may bring a welcomed source of revenue, especially to smaller remote counties with limited budgets. However, some counties may not be interested in this approach. Check with county organizations in your CWMA to see if this option is available.

Utilizing a Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) office as your fiscal manager has many advantages. RC&Ds have nonprofit status with a tax number, expertise in grant management, and skills in preparing reports. RC&Ds typically charge an administration fee. **The use of RC&Ds is highly recommended especially in larger CWMA with significant funding.**





Important Activities to Consider in your CWMA

Education

Education is absolutely essential to any successful noxious weed management program. While noxious weeds should be everyone's concern, not everyone is aware of the problem. Until they are, local noxious weed experts will be overextended while the noxious weed problem intensifies.

The public may not understand the negative impacts resulting from the spread of noxious weeds, such as:

- low resale value of property
- loss of wildlife and fisheries habitat
- accelerated erosion
- decreased water quality
- degraded recreation opportunities
- toxic effects to some animals and humans
- reduced forage production for agricultural producers
- increased cost of consumer goods
- disruption of productive ecosystems

While individuals may not have knowledge or expertise to combat noxious weeds, entire communities must share the burden of managing them. Only when the public is aware and educated can they provide valuable assistance.

There are many examples of educational efforts in existing CWMA's that have proven successful.

The Utah and Idaho CWMA consisting of, three counties in Idaho and two in Utah, holds an annual high school essay contest entitled "How Noxious Weeds Affect Me." Essays are judged by the steering committee and cash awards given to the top three students in each school. Each first place essay competes again with all first place winners in the CWMA. A grand prize is issued to the overall CWMA winner.

The Highland CWMA, which includes counties in Idaho and Wyoming, initiated "Bag of Woad Days," which was far more successful than predicted. Local students were paid for every pound of Dyers Woad they pulled, bagged and delivered to the county weed supervisor. Farmers discovered young students in their fields and taught them about the noxious weed that invade their farms. Nearly 24 tons of Dyers Woad was eliminated from seed production the first year of this community education project.

The Upper Payette CWMA, which includes three Idaho counties, focused its efforts to support the Noxious Weed Free Hay, Straw or Mulch program. A local youth group loaded certified hay onto a trailer and then parked it near an

Idaho Department of Fish and Game checkpoint during hunting season. A portable lighted sign was put in place to notify motorists and hunters that certified hay was required and available. Again, not only was hay provided, but awareness was heightened with every passing motorist.

Partners in some Cooperative Weed Management Areas exchange certified hay for non-certified hay that hunters bring to public lands.

Although certified noxious weed free hay is required on some public lands, the prevention practice is valuable on all lands. Offering to exchange hay is a great way to educate the public and build support.

In another example, a CWMA developed several educational programs for elementary and high school students. Partners were asked to visit schools and other organizations, and present their message on noxious weed education, prevention, and concerns.

Many CWMA's develop a multitude of posters, pamphlets, calendars, booklets, public notices and newsletters. Noxious weed "Wanted" posters are placed in campgrounds, at trailheads, and in other prominent places throughout the community. Newsletters are sent through various mediums including tax notices, billings, and mailing lists. Calendars are made available that also contain valuable information. Pamphlets are handed out at county fairs and other events to further build local awareness in the community.

The Black Snake CWMA, which encompasses the entirety of Bingham County, initiated a program that enlisted high school students to inventory and map noxious weeds habitat. In school the students learned computer skills, map reading, project planning, and the use of remote sensors. The next summer they applied those skills via a student employment program for the CWMA. This innovative approach of teaching local students and providing subsequent job training and employment opportunities is highly recommended.

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Get your communities involved and interested in what you are doing because without their help you will not succeed.

Weeds are everyone's problem. A CWMA provides the best opportunity to educate the community and energize its interest and support.

Prevention

While citizens may be environmentally sensitive, they may not be aware how human activities spread noxious weeds. Prevention measures in communities can dramatically curtail the expansion of noxious weed infestations.

Prevention may be the single greatest contributing factor in curtailing the spread of noxious weeds.

Education, already addressed in the previous section, is the initial step in creating awareness of the problem. When citizens become aware, they can then engage in prevention activities, which are the most cost effective method to combat noxious weeds.

There are many active practices that can make a dramatic difference. Establishing a community high-pressure wash station to clean equipment, ATVs and vehicles can significantly reduce the spread of noxious weeds.

Promoting and enforcing the Noxious Weed Free Hay, Straw and Mulch Order is also an excellent prevention practice to limit weed introduction onto public lands.

Developing community and/or Cooperative Weed Management Area noxious weed prevention regulations are useful. Requiring inspection and weed-free certification of gravel pits would greatly reduce noxious weed spread during road construction and maintenance.

Some communities have established noxious weed guidelines to prevent weed spread. Real estate developers may be required to provide a noxious weed bond. In one community, real estate cannot be sold unless inspected and certified noxious weed free.

Public notices on cleaning pets and clothing of noxious weed materials can also help.

Cooperative Work Projects

Cooperative workdays are an essential CWMA activity. Select a project that is achievable and highly visible. Make it a fun day where communities can combine their efforts, see real results, and even enjoy a picnic or cookout in the process. It is this kind of activity that builds the understanding and the sense of cooperation that is essential to a CWMA's success.

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In one small community the local CWMA organized a workday. Nearly 40 participants showed up with weed control equipment and the desire to work together. The local county weed supervisor provided herbicides and a local business provided lunch. Bonds of friendship developed as a sense of accomplishment and community pride emerged.

“Many hands make light work” is a basic concept in successful cooperative efforts. One CWMA identified a section of federal highway as contributing to significant weed spread. Nearly 40 federal, state, county, and private partners brought trucks and ATVs to spot treat weeds on an eighty-mile stretch of the highway corridor.

One new Cooperative Weed Management Area had a town noxious weed cleanup day. Awareness and interest resulted as noxious weeds were pulled, bagged and sprayed.

There are many other examples of cooperative workdays. Use your own imagination or borrow ideas. The objective is to build community awareness, strengthen cooperative relationships, and combat weeds.

Remember, sharing good food can be the catalyst for good participation at work days.

Sharing Your Resources

The signed agreement, including an annual operating plan, authorizes you to share resources. This includes equipment, personnel, supplies, expertise, and even funding. Often federal agencies have computer, mapping, and remote sensing skills and equipment essential to effective efforts. Most partners will have ATV and truck sprayers. Farmers and ranchers will have tractors and seeding equipment necessary in reclamation projects. The Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service fire crews are your best source of trained fire practitioners for prescribed burning. **The pooling of resources is an important part of CWMA's.**

Hiring or Contracting CWMA Crews

When pooling efforts, consider hiring or contracting CWMA work crews. Many individual partners may have limited financial resources but could collectively fund an entire crew. Consider contracting a pesticide applicator crew to perform treatment work. If the CWMA is making use of significant biological control agents, it may want to contract a bio-crew to do the work throughout the CWMA. This particular approach, used by one CWMA with a \$10,000 grant, resulted in collection and redistribution of \$233,000 worth of biological control agents. There are also examples of CWMA's contracting large scale mapping and inventorying work across several land ownerships on a large scale using hired or contract crews.

Expand the CWMA focus and be creative. Contracted CWMA crews can accomplish a significant amount of work.





Summary

Cooperation is an old idea with new applications in today's Cooperative Weed Management Area. More resources, energy, creativity, and problem solving can be realized under the umbrella of this organization. It is important to remember that partners and their cooperative relationships are the focus. A CWMA should serve only as the tool to facilitate and empower local citizens.

Successful CWMAs require time and effort, but can strengthen communities and expand the possibilities for effective noxious weed control.

Start with simple achievable plans and projects. Build projects and planning efforts to match the needs and organizational maturity of the CWMA.

Use this guide to help you develop your CWMA. An organization with the right tools in place is important, but it must be flexible enough to support individual ideas and enthusiasm in order to build lasting success.

There are three basic documents that are normally required for the successful functioning of a CWMA: an agreement, a strategic plan, and an annual operating plan to guide your efforts. Start with simple achievable plans and projects. Build projects and planning efforts to match the needs and organizational maturity of the CWMA.

Many communities already enjoy the benefits of CWMAs as more weeds are eliminated and new weeds detected earlier. A CWMA can benefit any community with noxious weed concerns as it heightens awareness, increases knowledge, and strengthens relationships.





Definitions

CWMA – A Cooperative Weed Management Area or local grassroots organization where partners and communities combine resources to manage noxious weeds across land ownerships using integrated pest management practices.

Board – Signing partners, normally land management entities and individuals that establish the foundation of a CWMA.

Steering Committee – A group of representatives, selected by the board, which provides strategic and project planning as well as general CWMA management.

Annual Operating Plan – A plan that identifies projects, funding and management activities covering one year of CWMA operating activities.

Resource Conservation and Development – A unique USDA program, led by local volunteer councils that help people care for and protect their natural resources in a way that improves local economies, the environment, and living standards.

Ad Hoc Committee – This is a group of individuals with a temporary assignment to accomplish a specific short-term task.

Champion – A champion is the initial leader that brings partners and communities together in forming a CWMA. This person demonstrates knowledge, enthusiasm, and interpersonal skills while uniting communities in the common vision of cooperative noxious weed management.

Fiscal Manager – An entity, with a recognized federal tax identification number, which will manage CWMA funding. This includes receiving funds, disbursing payments, and completing a fiscal year-end report for accounting purposes.

Robert's Rules of Order – A highly structured operating procedure by which an organization might conduct business. This includes parliamentary procedures such as addressing a recognized speaker, making formal proposals, acknowledgment by second motions, and voting to determine acceptance.

Consensus – A less formal operating procedure by which an organization might conduct business. This format includes individual opinions and group interaction, but lacks structured proposals, seconds, and voting. Mutual agreement and/or understanding are reached with group interaction.





Notes







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