



## The Idaho Association of WEED CONTROL SUPERINTENDENTS

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Representative Dayley,

I asked Weed Superintendents throughout Idaho for input and this letter is a compilation of those responses. As per our conversation last week the three topics addressed are how we feel the ISDA is doing (good and bad) with Invasive Species, how they are doing with merging both aquatic and terrestrial invasives, and finally how the State is working with other agencies including Federal, State and Local.

The consensus seems to be that the ISDA is good at getting programs off the ground when money is involved but long term support lags. A common theme was those programs that generate money (invasive species sticker for example) or the legislature allocates money to garner full attention but those less profitable are ignored. Tom Woolf, Matt Voile and Amy Ferriter were all mentioned by name as great to work with and great assets to the ISDA invasive species programs. It was also mentioned that the top administration in the ISDA is unresponsive.

Idaho was the first State to develop an invasive species strategic plan that included noxious weeds. Essentially combining terrestrial and aquatic weeds programs under one heading. Idaho's programs were emulated by other states and we were leaders on our boat inspection programs but now are falling behind. Idaho is doing a great job of keeping us informed about new invaders. Unfortunately, the strategic plan expires in 2016 and no work has been done to reimplement it. Overall the thought is that the ISDA regards Terrestrial weeds as a reluctant aggravation. It doesn't generate money like mussels or have the awareness of Milfoil and Hydrilla. Invasive Species is the hot topic and that is what they are addressing. There needs to be more "terrestrial weeds are also an invasive species".

The Cost Share program was sighted as a success in working with other agencies until recently when all state and federal agency funding was cut from the program. These are important partners in the overall landscape management on invasive weeds. We hear these decisions are made at the recommendations of the "Cost Share Review committee", but when you talk to individuals on the committee you hear a different story. Also, the inability of ISDA employees to travel within the state or outside of the state to meetings that include all the state, federal and local leaders in the invasive species arena weakens Idaho and leads to the belief they aren't willing to cooperate. Within Idaho, other agencies view ISDA as lacking dedication for valuable invasive species programs. All of these things have lead to failing relationships with other agencies.

The role of ISDA shoud be to effectively administer programs with an emphasis on fostering cooperations, collaboration, and working relationships with all other government and public organizations. If we are going to be successful in protecting and preserving Idaho's land and water we must have passionate, cooperative leadership from the top administration to the local technicians working at the ground level.

Thank you for all you do.

Bryce Fowler  
Fremont County Weed Control Superintendent.