Hello everyone out there in Nebraska land. It’s been a hectic winter here in southeast Nebraska. Just a few reminders-

Our NWCA Annual Winter Conference is February 10th through the 12th, I hope to see everyone there. I know the education committee has put together a good group of topics and speakers for our meetings, and we have some great entertainment for our banquet. Let’s hope Mother Nature will be kind to us in our travels to North Platte.

We will once again have the SILENT AUCTION for our NWCA scholarship program. It has been a great success to our program and to the young men and women who are using the scholarship to advance their education. A good variety of auction items makes the event better, so please plan to bring an item or two if you can.

The annual business meeting will be held on Tuesday noon. If you have an item you want to put on the agenda for our meeting, please let a board member know so we can add it to our agenda.

The Presidents reception will be the 10th of February, I know some of you make the best snacks, can’t wait to have some, of course there will be other things to drink and eat. I hope all is safe with you in your travels to and from. See you in North Platte.

Important Dates:

NWCA Conference, North Platte, Sandhills Convention Center – February 10-12, 2020
NWCA Spring Training, Kearney, Ramada Inn – March 31-New Supt. April 1-2 Spring Training
NWCA Fall Training, Kearney, Ramada Inn – November 3-New Supt. Nov. 4-5 Fall Training
Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) Conference- Younes Conference Center Kearney - December 9-11, 2020
Updates from Region Directors

Region I, Max Birkel - Director

Hello from Region 1, Wow can you believe its 2020! Seems like only a few years ago it was Y2K and the year 2000. So far this year the weather has been good to us in Butler Co and all of us are looking forward to a “normal” spring whatever that is. The older I get the slower I move, but time seems to move faster. After attending the Education meeting in Grand Island I found out that the NWCA is losing some very integral people to retirement, these people will be missed but hopefully someone will step up to take their place. I wish these people good health and a Thank You for your work in your Counties and the NWCA, you have made a difference.

Talking to Randy Group in Cass County, Five Rivers WMA hosted a landowner appreciation dinner for landowners that participated in their cost sharing program for spraying invasive weeds. Lower Platte WMA also hosted an appreciation dinner for everyone involved in that group’s work during the past year in December. Seems like we always appreciate a chance like I say to “belly up to the bunk”. We have a meeting for Lower Platte WMA coming up this month to finalize billing on cost share on helicopter spraying done last fall.

The Southeast District is holding its meeting March 12 at 9:00 am at the Career Academy in Lincoln, most of our Region 1 Counties are in the Southeast District for NACO. We will probably plan our Region 1 meetings for the summer, so our Weed Superintendents will come up with some great ideas for us.

Don’t forget to take these winter months to look for Phragmites. I have been going out every week and have been finding new patches each trip. It helps if we can get landowners to treat these areas when they are still small before they get out of hand. The Education committee has been working hard on the NWCA Conference Feb 10-12 in North Platte and getting the agenda ready for the Spring Training April 1-2 in Kearney. It’s always good to see familiar faces and meet the vendors and new Weed Superintendents that join us every year. Everyone have a safe trip to Conference and take care!

Region II, Terri Krysl - Director

Hello, from Region II. Hopefully everyone had a great Holiday season. Now that the tinsel and sweets are safely tucked away; we can get on with this bright new year.

Several of our counties are doing tree shredding. The rest of us are either on seasonal break or trying to get our paperwork caught up or both. Hopefully everyone has their yearly reports in to the State. I know as I sat and figured up the numbers, I could not imagine how those acres added up even with the worst conditions in years. First, we had washed out roads & bridges. Then came the continued cold weather, rain and a second flood. I applaud the resilience of the weed warriors. We kept plugging along and got the job done.

The four schooling events offered last year were filled with information. Great ideas to incorporate into our programs. We need to work a bit on our participation in Public events. I know it’s hard to get away sometimes but, when we work State Fair and/or Husker Harvest Days we are in the Public eye and they
realize that we exist. This is a much-needed area of promotion for our organization. This keeps us viable and alive in the eyes of the Public.

Ok I’ll get off my soap-box and wish everyone a great, uneventful weed season ahead. Hope to see everyone at The Conference in North Platte.

Region III, Mike Smith - Director

Region III hopes everyone had a super holiday. We are all awaiting Spring to start popping up flowers (not thistles!). With the crazy weather we have been having in our region, we cancelled our last region meeting. The meeting has been rescheduled for January 29th.

Looking forward to Conference in North Platte...we hope the weather will cooperate. Hope to see you there.

Region IV, Todd Boller - Director

Hello from frosty Region 4! You would think that winter is a slow time for Weed Superintendents but we all know with the State Reports, Trade Shows, Trainings, meeting with County Boards and getting equipment ready to go for the fast approaching Spring season there is plenty to do. Region 4 Superintendents are working through all of these and are looking forward to networking with the other regions when we attend the Annual Conference in North Platte.

Sadly we will be losing a couple of Superintendents in our region this year. Mark Goebel in Franklin County was a mainstay and very active within the Association. He dedicated 27 years to the control of Noxious Weeds and helping educate landowners not only in his county but across the state. He was very active in the Twin Valley Weed Management Area and was even instrumental in the formation of the group. We wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

Dennis Vanwey is retiring this year and will also be missed greatly. He has served as Chairman of the TVWMA and will be at least lucky enough that he will be staying on as an “at large” member. He might not have the years in the NWCA but with his background in Agriculture he has been a great source of knowledge to the region. You will be missed Dennis (this is the only time you will hear it but Go Chiefs).

Mitch Huxoll helped get the NWCA booth involved with the York Farm Show. Great conversations were had with landowners and hopefully we helped educate them in Identification and control methods on Noxious and Invasive Plants. At this show they do recertification’s for private pesticide licenses and chemigation so there were over 200 landowners, land managers and employees that attended.

We are looking forward to seeing you all in North Platte at the 73rd Annual NWCA Conference and Trade Show. Stay warm.
**Region V, Dan Wordekemper - Director**

Happy New Year from Region 5. We had a region meeting in Scottsbluff in December; and had a nice lunch at Backarack’s Grill. We still have snow on the ground in Dawes, Sioux and Sheridan County, the farmers are still battling to get crops harvested.

Fall Training was successful, with Commercial Applicators Recertification to renew our licenses for three more years. Thanks to all the superintendents that do the work to line the trainings up. NACO also went smoothly, with several entities presenting updates about their programs. Next up is the NWCA Annual Conference in North Platte. Don’t forget about the President’s Reception, the Banquet and Awards, and the NWCA Scholarship auction, all part of conference.

With some changes at the Department of Ag, our new NDA Inspector is Tim Stortz. Tim made the rounds or met with Superintendents to get our office evaluations done. Superintendents are finishing up the five annual reports; and making plans for 2020 weed season. A few have taken time off for travel or health issues. In our neck of the woods, health issues usually involve travel!

As we look forward to Spring, we know one thing…..there will be weeds and weed challenges. Planning and preparing now will help us to be ready for the battle. Hope to see you all at Conference in a few weeks.

**Region VI, Ridge Horky - Director**

I hope everyone is enjoying their slower season. As I write this it’s snowing/raining outside. The moisture just doesn’t seem to stop. There should no doubt be an abundance of moisture in the soil for spring green up. Hopefully the grass can get a jump start on the weeds and take care of some of our problems, but that would just be too convenient.

Conference is approaching soon and every year we pass around a list of committees in the NWCA. With several weed superintendence planning to retire we are losing a lot of valuable help and experience. These committees are always looking for new people that can help out the association. Even if you don’t think you’ll be much help, it doesn’t hurt to join and listen in on a couple meetings. We welcome the input from all members.

Nothing has been set yet for this year’s LSWTF annual tour. Last year we weren’t able to have it due to all the flooding and road damage. So this year if you have any ideas or interest let Jimmy Petersen or me know. Once a location is found there’s plenty of people willing to help set up the tour, that have done it in the past.

It looks like we have another great conference set up this year in North Platte with new speakers and great entertainment. Don’t forget about the silent auction that takes place during the banquet. Any item that you bring or purchase is greatly appreciated and goes toward the NWCA scholarship program. It has been a while since conference has been held in region 6 so I hope that the weather allows everyone to make it and I look forward to seeing you all there.

P.S. Kristi Paul is the one that puts this newsletter together for all of us to read. Kristi plans to retire this year even though we offered her multiple bribes to stay. If you have the chance at conference, please take a minute to thank her. There are few that have done as much for the association as she has. Thanks Kristi, we will all miss you!
NORTH AMERICAN INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Todd Boller, NAISSMA Board Member

NAISMA has been growing by leaps and bounds in the last few years. Our focus is to facilitate educational and networking opportunities for the “on the ground” managers, educators and policy makers regarding noxious and invasive plants. At the 2019 Conference in Saratoga Springs, New York, there were attendees from 7 countries and over 30 states. This was the first time to be held in that region, so attendance numbers were high with 457 people attending. If you have never attended a NAISMA conference I would highly recommend it. There is no other conference that provides so many educational topics at one time, concerning invasive species.

The 2020 NAISMA Conference will be in White Fish Montana, and the following year 2021 Nebraska will be hosting. We will plan to combine this with our NWCA Fall Training that year.

In the last year NAISMA has officially taken over the Play Clean Go campaign and received grant funding through the USDA to expand this campaign to the east coast. There have also been more states getting involved in the Weed Free Forage program. There is a great need for certified weed free hay, gravel and, mulch (a new one that is in the works) all across North America. You, as Weed Superintendents, can help by getting certified through NAISMA at a cost of $10 per year. By doing the online training, you receive certification for 3 years at a time for a $30 fee. We consider it a “win-win” situation when the landowners invite us out to inspect and share our knowledge about the presence or absence of noxious or invasive plants in their hay meadows, wheat fields or alfalfa. It also helps in the relationships with gravel pit owners.

This is my last year on the NAISMA Board, so if there is any interest in serving on the NAISMA board, please reach out, so we can get the application started. Thanks for all of the support to NAISMA. Nebraska is an essential part of that Association and I would love for one of you to represent us. Happy New Year!
Two STRANGERS that stopped me in my tracks this summer....

And musk thistle like I've never seen it before!!
73rd Annual NWCA Conference and Trade Show

February 10-12, 2020

Sandhills Convention Center, North Platte NE

Monday, February 10
1:30 p.m. Education Committee Meeting
2:30 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting
5:00 p.m. President’s Reception

Tuesday, February 11

7:30-8:25 a.m. Registration
8:25 a.m. Roll Call & Welcome Moderator: NDA
8:30 a.m. Vendor Updates
8:45 a.m. Surfactants- Bill Walker- Nutrien
9:30 a.m. Break—Visit Trade Show Vendors
10:00 a.m. Institute of Excellence- Carroll Welte and Jessica Jones
11:00 a.m. Weed ID Jeopardy- Todd Boller
12:00 a.m. Lunch- provided
1:10 p.m. Roll Call & Announcements Moderator: NDA
1:15 p.m. Amy Seger- Plant edibility/uses
2:00 p.m. Kevin Price- Air Data Solutions- Weed Detection and Mapping
3:00 p.m. Break—Visit Trade Show Vendors
3:30 p.m. 2019 NAISMA Conference Review- Brent, Scott, Mike, John and Todd
4:15 p.m. Exam

Tuesday Evening: Banquet and Awards Ceremony, plus entertainment

Wednesday, February 12

7:55 a.m. Roll Call & Announcements Moderator: NDA
8:00 a.m. Union Pacific Railroad- Kristina Stonner
8:45 a.m. Joseph Milan- Tracking Bio Control Releases
9:45 a.m. Break—Visit Trade Show Vendors
10:00 a.m. Scott Erthum- Nebraska Bio Control Update
10:30 a.m. Global Harmonization- Tim Baxter- NIRMA
11:30 a.m. NWCA Annual Business meeting and luncheon
12:55 p.m. Roll Call & Announcements Moderator: NDA
1:00 p.m. Canada Thistle Rust Bio Control- Kayla Malone- Chaffee County Colorado
1:45 p.m. Break—Visit Trade Show Vendors
2:15 p.m. Drone testing- Greg Kruger UNL Extension
3:00 p.m. Exam