

NAWMA-A TOOL FOR ON THE GROUND WEED MANAGERS. Riley G. Walters,
Director, Butler County Noxious Weed Department, El Dorado, KS 67042

Eighteen years ago, county weed directors from Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado and Wyoming came together to form an organization called the North American Weed Management Association which is typically known as NAWMA. The purpose was to share information about invasive weeds and control strategies with the goals of increasing effectiveness and efficiency of control and raising awareness of the impacts of invasive plants.

A conference was held in Fort Collins, Colorado where Dr. George Beck and Dr. Phil Westra led tours of some of their work. A conference has been held annually since then in a different host state usually in late September. A goal of NAWMA has always been to equip members to recognize potential noxious weeds when they appear in their county and deal with them before they spread. Membership now also includes weed managers from Montana, Idaho, North and South Dakota, Washington, Arizona, New Mexico, Minnesota, Canada and Alaska.

Standards have been developed for certifying forage and gravel as weed free. Mapping standards have also been developed. Both mapping and forage standards are recognized and used by federal and state agencies. NAWMA has sponsored three Weeds Across Borders conferences and started National Invasive Weed Awareness Week in Washington, D.C., which this year is being incorporated into National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NIWAW), an all taxa event. NAWMA has joined the Healthy Habitats Coalition working with Wildlife Forever and other groups to hopefully be more effective in attracting funding for control of invasive species. Rob Headburg and Lee Van Wychen have been very helpful in coordinating the past events. The NIWAW conferences were very helpful in resolving problems with federal agencies.

NAWMA has a program to certify members as Invasive Plant Managers. It hopes to continue developing new services to assist those working to control invasive plants. We would welcome the opportunity to work with anyone who is involved with controlling invasive plants. Our website is www.nawma.org. It is being redesigned. The new version will be available after Jan. 1.