

Prevention efforts across the state: Weed-free materials and Prevention Best Management Practices.

Moderators: Wendy West, UC Cooperative Extension and Jen Stern, Cal-IPC

25 attendees

Prevention Team Update (Wendy West):

-Sales of weed-free material are dependent on supply and demand. We need more people to start requesting weed-free material in order to get local producers to certify that their material meets those requirements.

-YST Leading Edge Project is putting together a list of locations where one can buy certified weed-free material. The Team is currently asking producers where they are vending and so far have found 26 vendors. This list will be done in mid-November and a few organizations will be posting this list on their websites, including Cal-IPC and the CDFA Pest Exclusion Branch.

Comments:

-People are starting to charge for inspections of their material and inspections have dropped.

-How would we update inspection procedures? We should look for funding for a formal inspection program. Pest Exclusion wants to make the in-field inspection process more rigorous and some agriculture commissions are working with their local governments to promote weed free materials.

Weed-free Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Update (Bobbi Simpson):

-The MOU is a commitment to incorporating weed-free material into everyday practices that agency representatives from USFS, BLM, NPS, DPR, CACASA, Caltrans, and CDFA signed. The language of the MOU has not changed much since the original came out, and extending the original one is being considered. MOU language is currently pretty loose, assuming the requirements will become more refined in the next phase. The biggest problems of maintaining the MOU is that there are not enough known vendors of weed-free materials. We cannot fulfill the MOU if we can't find the weed-free material. Agencies write Weed-free materials into their contracts (ie Caltrans), but this can be waived if weed free materials cannot be found.

Comments:

- It would be nice to see county and local governments say that they require weed-free materials, as this would definitely increase its demand.

Weed-free gravel Project Update (Garret Dickman):

-Educational materials are being readied in order to hasten buy-in from local land managers. The goal is to get Central Sierra land managers to agree to use weed-free gravel within the next year.

-The gravel quarries themselves do not object to certifying their materials as much as do straw and bale producers, since reclamation of material should not contain infestations.

Comments:

-There has to be a clear communication of specific contract expectations. Should quarries have to provide pit condition details to agencies and then have agencies decide whether or not to use their materials from that assessment?

-We must be careful about generalized inspections. Quarry conditions change from day to day, so cleanliness expectations must be based on sound research and widespread agreement. Right now, quarry conditions are based on subjective recommendations; there needs to be a liability of inspection. A formal inspection protocol is currently being explored by a few ag commissions.

-The best idea so far is to outline a monitoring program in contract language in order to follow-up the condition of a certain site after using quarry materials.

-Quarries are very cooperative. There is a need for more land managers to visit quarries and express their concerns of spreading weeds through quarry materials. It seems like there is a need for a trade association marketing certificate/sticker that advertises when materials have been deemed “weed-free.”

-“Weed-free” is a misleading term and can give people a false sense of security about the possibility of future infestations. Maybe should be changed to something along the lines of “weed-reduced.” This needs more thought.

Prevention Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Land Managers Update (Jen Stern):

-This is “version 1.0,” a living document that can be updated with new BMPs in the future. The six chapters are based on common vectors of invasive plant spread. The “Project Materials” chapter contains recommendations that agencies use weed-free material whenever possible.

-Comments: Future versions of this document should include guidelines on how to determine which materials are weed-free and how to monitor areas where materials have been applied.