Advocacy 101:
Public Policy for the
Dedicated Weed Worker!

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This talk covers...

- What it is!
- Why you care!
- Who is out there working on it!
• What they’re working on!
• How you can be an important part of it!
WHAT IS “ADVOCACY”?  

- Literally, “speaking out” for something
- Trying to affect decisions about public policy in line with your priorities
- When you apply for funding, you are in effect advocating for your program
Decision Makers

- Elected and appointed government officials
- Business leaders
- Public
  - Voters
  - Consumers

Then I grab the seed head...
WHAT DOES ADVOCACY LOOK LIKE?

• Stereotypical lobbying:
  – savvy people in suits talking to decision-makers

• Grassroots lobbying:
  – Building coalitions
  – Getting normal folks involved
Why should weed workers care about advocacy?

• Funding $$
• Big restoration
• Policy context in which we work
• Agency support
• Prevention
• Feels good - democracy in action
Weed workers can be great advocates!

- **Credibility** – we know the land from working on it
- **Passion** – we can motivate others to care
- **Dedication** – we have a “good” message
- **Strategy** – we plan and adapt.
- **Patience** – we take small steps to address big challenges.
Levels of advocacy

- Local
- State
- Federal
- International
LOCAL LEVEL

- **Coalition - WMAs**
- **Goals** – support for local work ($)
  - carry info with them to higher office
- **Grassroots Strategies** – Get to know county officials
  - show officials (county, state, federal) around during **California Weed Week in July**
State level

• **Coalition** - CALIWAC

• **Goals** – Funding for WMAs $$
  – Coordinate agency efforts (ie. mapping…)
  – Implement State Weed Plan

• **Gressroots Strategies**
  – **Day at the Capitol** each March
  – **Organization letters**
Federal Level

• Coalitions – NAEPPC, NCIPA
• Goals – WMA funding
  – Prevention policy
• Grassroots Strategies – National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week (NIWAW) end of February
  – Organizational letters
Coalitions - State

CALIWAC—California Invasive Weeds Awareness Coalition

– Cal-IPC
– California Native Plant Society
– Regional Council of Rural Counties
– California Farm Bureau Federation
– California Cattlemen’s Association
– California Forest Pest Council

Together we revived WMA Funding!

$3 million in weed projects in 2007 & 2008
Coalitions – National

NAEPPC—National Association of EPPCs
NCIPA—National Coalition for Invasive Plant Advocacy
**Top 3 Reasons to Do Something:**
1. $$ Steady funding
2. Strategic coordination
3. Restoration on a landscape scale

**Top 3 Things to Do:**
1. Connect with local officials
2. Come to Day at the Capitol in March
3. Send organization letters
3 State issues

1. Secure full funding for WMAs

2. Establish Invasive Species Council(?)

3. Implement state’s weed action plan
Federal issues

1. Weed Control Act of 2004
3. Farm Bill
4. Q-37, NAPPRA
5. Natural Resource Cooperative Protection Act
6. REPAIR Act
7. 100th Meridian Invasive Species Revolving State Fund - S. 1949
Wildland Weed Worker Advocates