

# Weed Management Areas: Before, Then, Now & Future



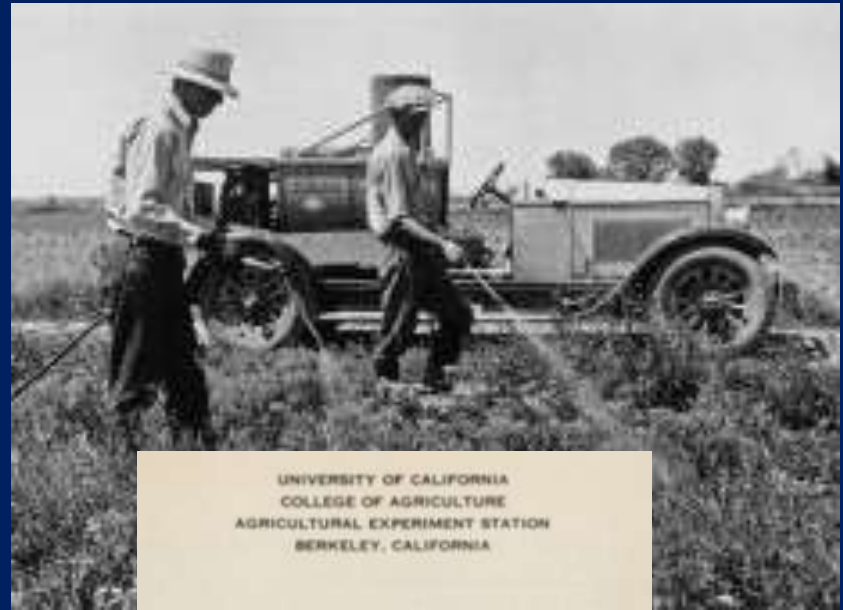
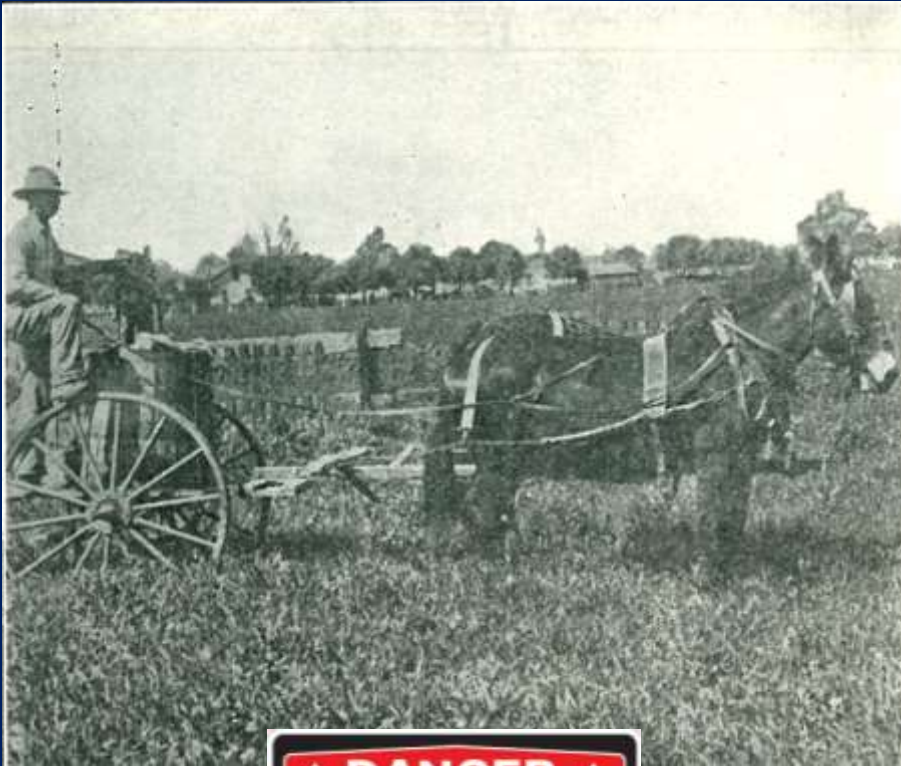
Steve Schoenig  
Cal-IPC

# Early History of Coordinated Noxious Weed Control 1900-1945



Bureau of Rodents and Weeds started within the California Department of Agriculture in 1919


Implemented Weed Free Area Act  
Trained County Commissioners  
Conducted risk analysis, design experiments, coordinate surveys, funded county projects



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

**SULFURIC ACID  
FOR CONTROL OF WEEDS**

W. E. BALL AND O. C. FRENCH



*Control of wild radish in grain with sulfuric acid.*

BULLETIN 596  
NOVEMBER, 1935

# Progress & Success





## Total Statewide Eradication

- 13 established noxious weed species were eliminated completely from California.
- 9 additional species were reduced to less than 5% of their statewide distribution
- 1000's of individual infestations were detected and permanently eradicated.

# Eradicated Species

- 1) Whitestem distaff thistle – *Carthamnus leucocaulos*.
- 2) Dudaim melon – *Cucumis melo var. dudaim*
- 3) Giant dodder – *Cuscuta reflexa*
- 4) Serrate spurge – *Euphorbia serrata*
- 5) Russian salttree – *Halimodendron halodendron*
- 6) Blueweed – *Helianthus ciliaris*
- 7) Tanglehead – *Heteropogon contortus*
- 8) Creeping mesquite – *Prosopis strombulifera*
- 9) Meadowsage – *Salvia virgata*
- 10) Heartleaf nightshade – *Solanum cardiophyllum*
- 11) Austrian peaweed – *Sphaerophysa salsula*
- 12) Wild marigold – *Tagetes minuta*
- 13) Syrian beancaper – *Zygophyllum fabago*

# County and State Weed Program Decline

The state and county weed eradication programs suffered a series of funding cutbacks and other setbacks accelerating from the 70's onward.

## Some key events:

- 1978 Prop 13 tax rollback hit county weed programs drastically.
- 1980 Medfly program redirected CDFA county weed biologists during eradication season.
- 1990 recession led to reduction of CDFA weed biologists by 1/3.
- 2001 recession led to reduction of CDFA weed biologists by 1/2.
- 2004 cuts led to reduction of CDFA weed biologists by 1/2.
- 2011 Great Recession state revenue deficit led to elimination of program.

Why the weed program cuts? – Weeds move slow; not eradicable in top Ag commodities; the Weed Program didn't updated priorities; didn't document success well.

# WEED MANAGEMENT AREAS

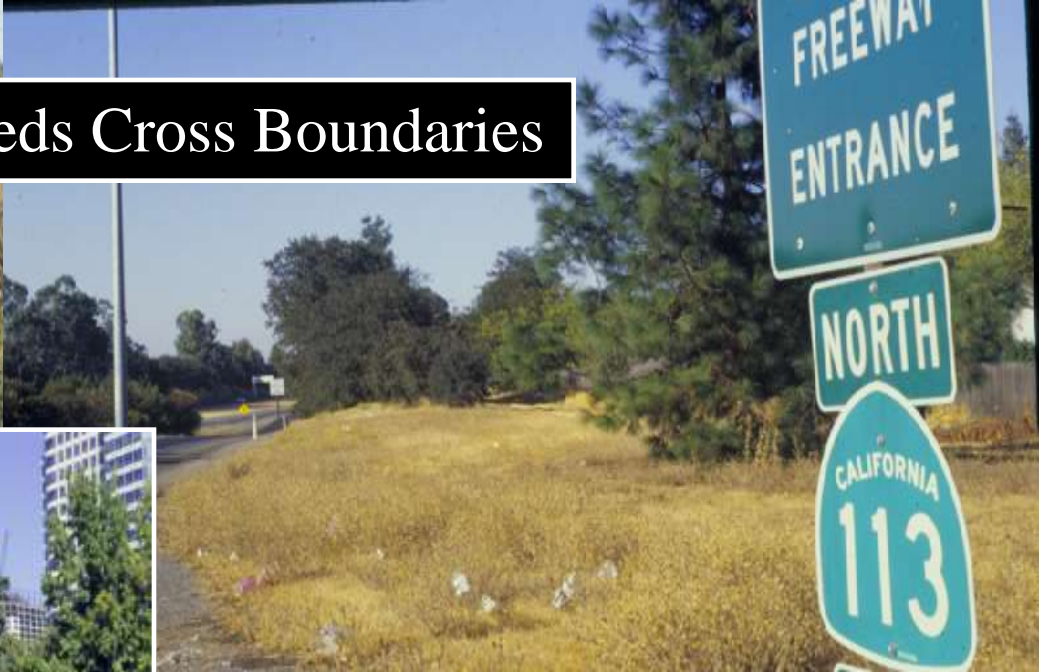
**Food & Ag code 7272 (b) A “Weed Management Area” is a local organization that brings together all interested landowners, land managers (private, city, county, state, and federal), special districts, and the public in a county or other geographical area for the purpose of coordinating and combining their action and expertise to deal with their common weed control problems.**



- Program created (AB 1168) in 1998.
- Program expanded and budget increased to \$5.4 million / 4 yrs through SB1740.
- Program reauthorized through annual budget 2007-2010.
- Program eliminated 2011 due to General Fund budget cuts.



# Weeds Cross Boundaries



**Weed Management Areas**



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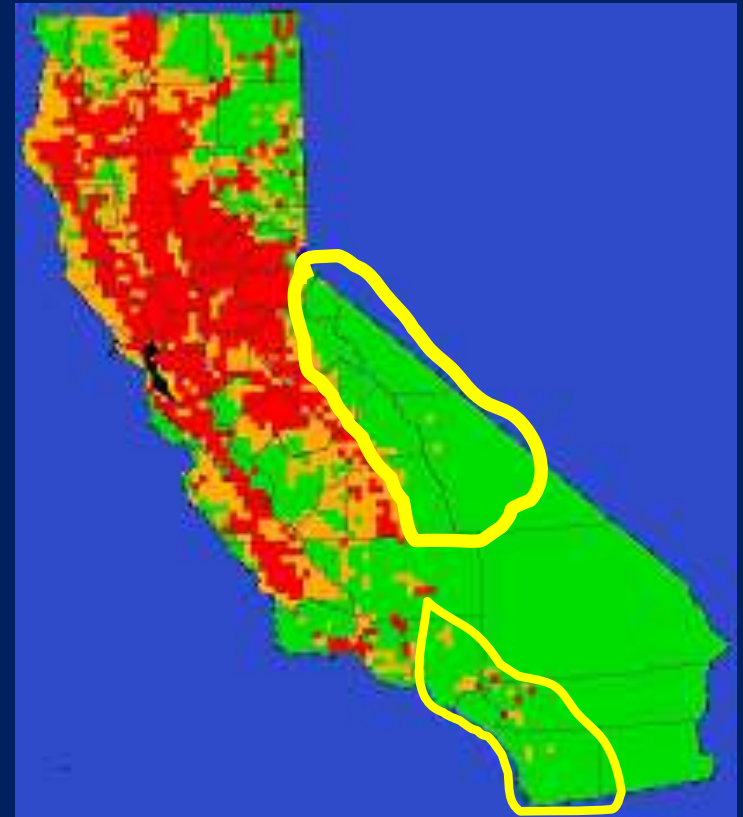
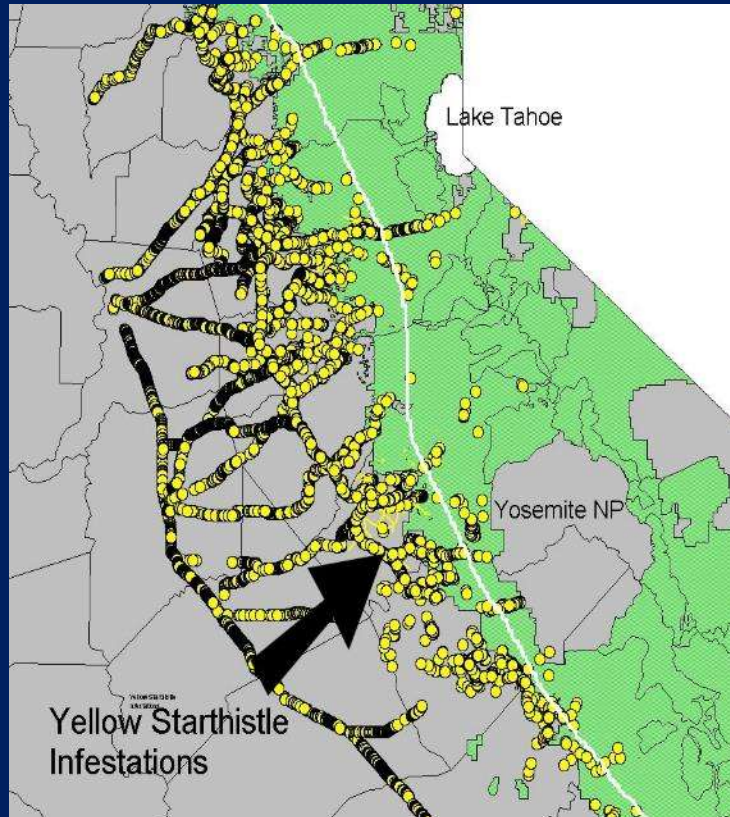


**Weed Management Areas**



# Yellow Starthistle

Containment of Spread, Strategic Control & Biological Control



# WEED MANAGEMENT AREA PARTICIPANTS

- County Ag Department
- State Agencies- CDFA, Parks, Fish & Game, Forestry & Fire, Etc.
- Federal Agencies- BLM, Forest Service, NRCS, NPS
- Growers, Cattlemen, RCDs, Forest Industry, Landowners
- UC Cooperative Extension
- Cities
- Military Landowners
- Departments of Transportation
- CNPS, Nurserymen
- Railroads, Utilities
- Volunteers, Pest Control Ops
- Open Space, Parks, Water Districts



# Benefits & Accomplishments

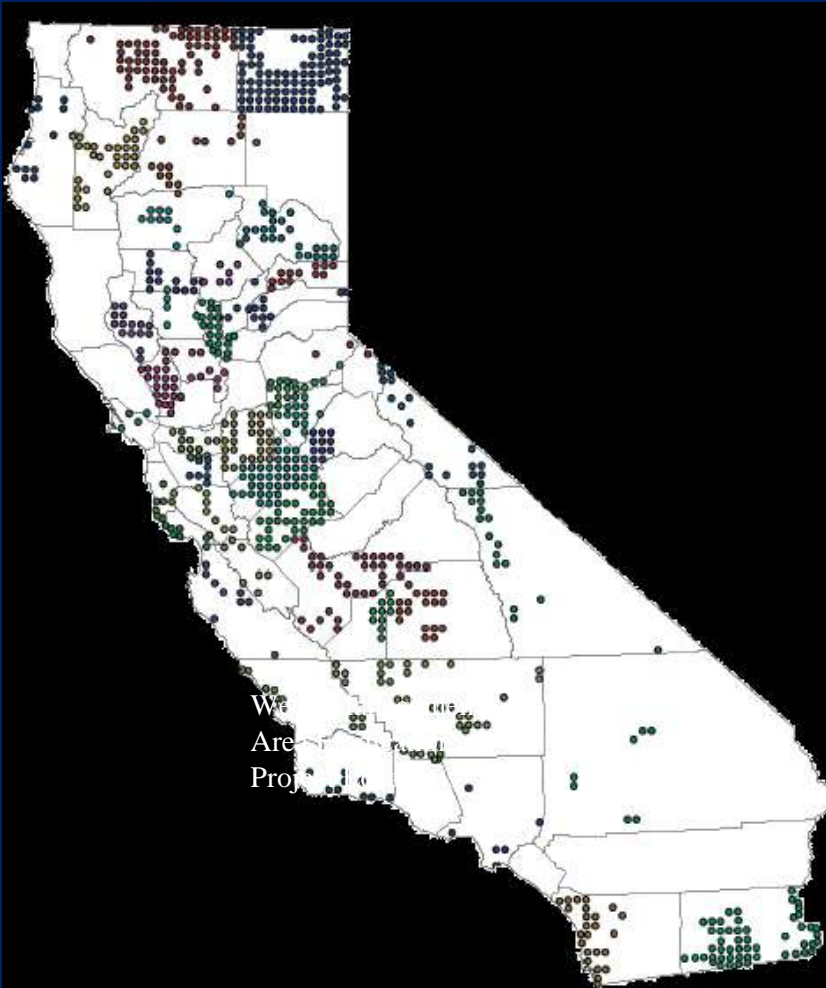
- Enhanced cooperation, sharing, and joint planning
- Coordinated weed education & awareness
- Tests plots, workshops, local symposia, regional mapping
- \$\$\$\$ = More Weeds Killed

Often WMA groups form to address management concerns (Suppression) for the widespread crisis weeds in their area.

As the group gains momentum and members it can address the full range of regional weed control activities – especially eradicating new invaders.

# Benefits & Accomplishments

From Weed Management Area 5-year Report 2006



- Eradication of 2,015 populations of infestations.
- Treatment to 128,421 acres of priority infestations.
- \$5.6 million distributed to 58 counties.
- A 3-to-1 match from outside grant funding and in-kind donations.
- Outreach programs to 88,803 people.
- 6,781 regular participants at weed management area meetings

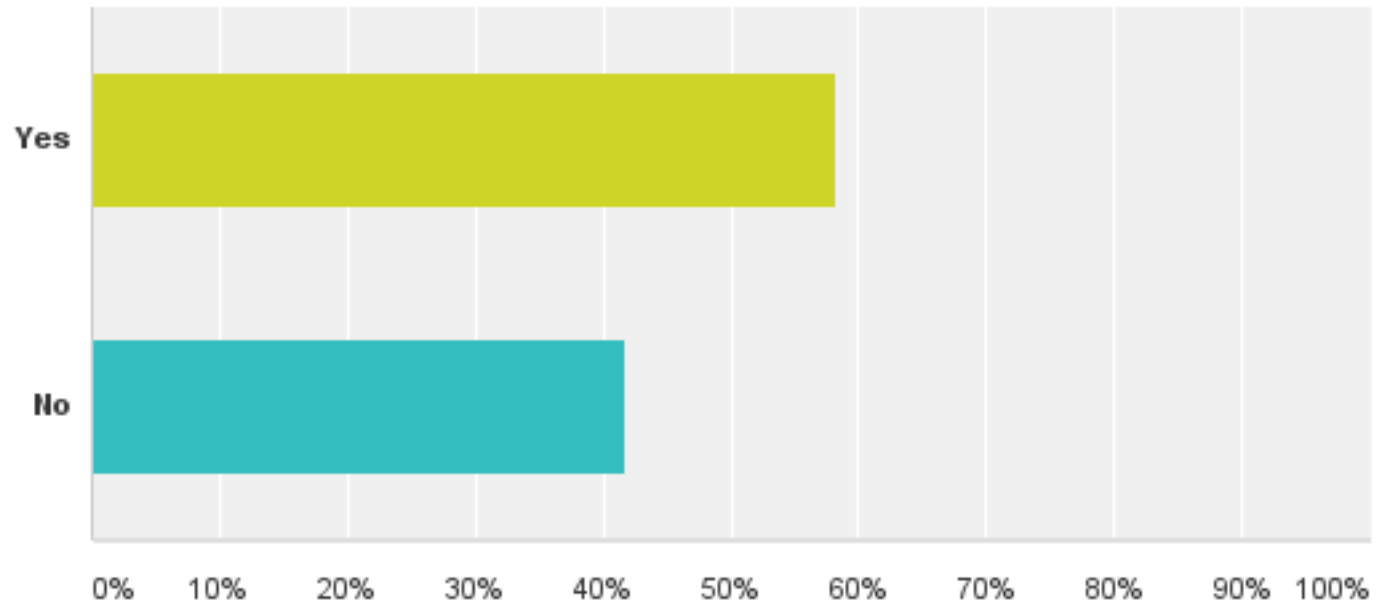
2011



# From Ag Commissioner Survey:

**Q24 Is there still a Weed Management Area (WMA) meeting in your county?**

Answered: 48 Skipped: 2

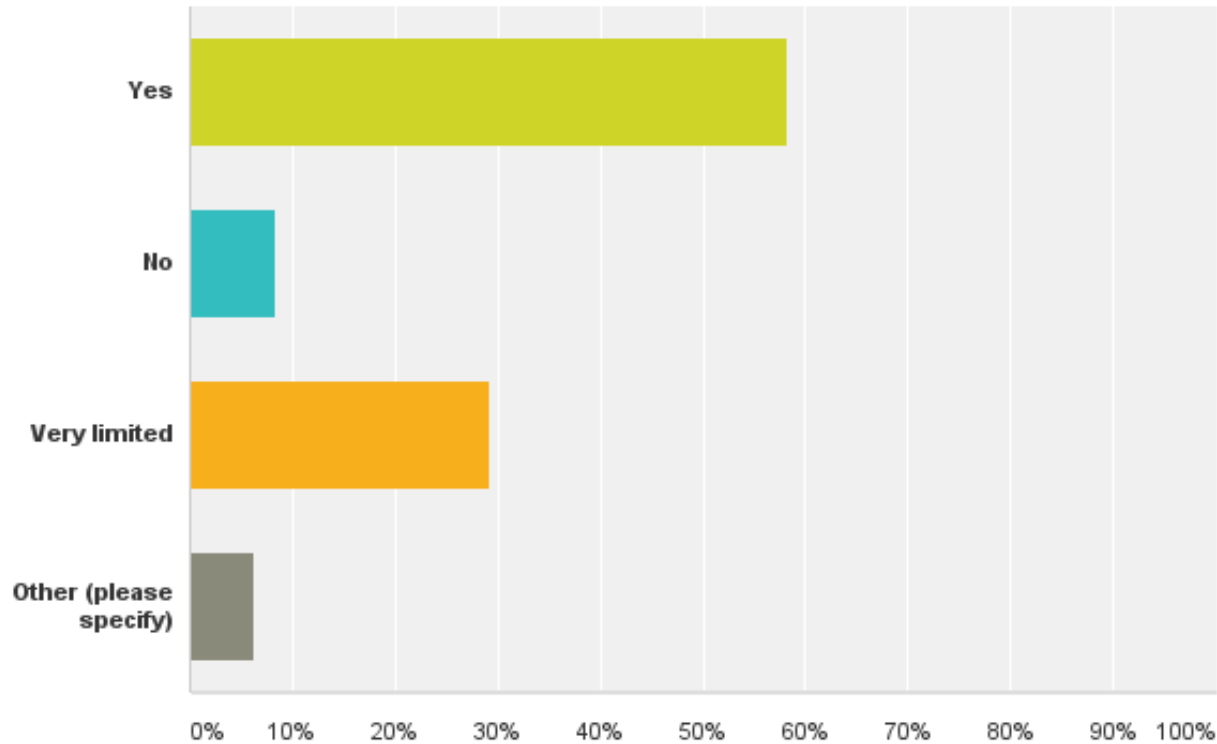




# From Ag Commissioner Survey:

## Q7 Is there a Noxious Weed Program or weed activities in your office?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 2



# Future

- #1 Goal of Cal-IPC Policy committee. Restore funding to Weed Management Areas and restore statewide leadership/state weed coordinator to CDFFA or another agency/department.