



The Ag Line

Donna Rise Joins Department of Agriculture

Well... I guess I'm the newbie! As an introduction, I was born and raised in Great Falls, Montana (right where the Missouri river turns east). I graduated from CM Russell High School (named after the famous – at least in Montana – cowboy artist). After working for a year as a secretary and insurance technician in Wyoming and Montana, I fell in love and married David, the man of my dreams. During the first year of our marriage we were blessed with a daughter. I was fortunate enough to have the luxury to be a stay-at-home mother till Michelle, my daughter started school. Actually I started school too! I earned an associates degree from Omak Washington and then a bachelor's degree in Bozeman, Montana. My first job, post degree, was with the Montana department of agriculture. My plans were to stay for two years, get a little experience, and then move on. Well, I did move on, it just took a little longer than two years (about 15). I've worked in or with weeds, groundwater, pesticides (training, disposal, and regulatory), vertebrate pest management, exotic animal

imports, apiary, general entomology (cereal leaf beetle, grasshoppers, Japanese beetle, etc.), nursery, organic certification, feed, fertilizer, grain, seed, produce, anhydrous ammonia, and USDA pest surveys. My all time favorite project was a pesticide groundwater and surface water risk analysis and sampling project for Glacier National Park! Time does seem to fly by very quickly and I find my self still in love 26 years later, an awesome 25 year old daughter, and a great new job.

I have some definite thoughts and ideas of where I think we, as an agency, should go, but I am more interested in what each employee's visions and dreams are and where they think we should be going. My vision is to work with our industries to build on what's best, fix what needs fixing and do great things! My favorite work activities are analysis (workload, fees, programmatic, statutes, rules – really anything), relationship and consensus building. I strongly believe each employee is critical (or they wouldn't be here) and as such, each person brings



Donna and her husband, David.

value to the agency and programs, and no one person is more important than another. We are a team! I am excited to work with such a talented group of people. I would like to say thank you for welcoming me with such warmth and enthusiasm. I will do my very best to make ya'll proud.

On a personal note, some of my favorites are the color cobalt blue, plants and landscaping, sewing, reading, beading, floating tubing (not fishing), shopping, power tools and vehicles, watching the flames flicker from a fireplace and sleeping in on Saturday mornings. Favorite cartoon character – Tigger. Dislikes – snow, cold, winter driving (I wait, not so patiently, for the spring seed and plant catalogs and then drool over them till planting time).

Premises Registration

The National Animal Identification Program administered thru the Nevada State Veterinarian's office continues to register premises for livestock, tag identification distributors, exhibitor locations, boarding/holding facilities and practicing Veterinarians. To date, over 1200 premises have been registered. The intent of the program is animal health; the ability to trace back and notification as needed should an outbreak occur. The State Animal Identification Coordinator is Holly Pecetti, who is available to attend organization meetings and community interest events on behalf of the program.



Virginia Range Estray Horse Program

The Virginia Range horse herd extends from I80 west to the Moundhouse a distance of 100 miles. The Manager of the program is Mike Holmes. In addition to working with groups who are interested in the horse management, Mike supervises the horse operation at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center in Carson City. He can frequently be found "riding the range" to monitor the general health and food supply. The management program now includes an individual microchip to trace and relate to ownership information and destination of horses sold.

The staff of the Division welcomes the opportunity to be of assistance, answer questions, provide information, attend meetings, and support to the producer community, general public, and youth groups. The telephone contact information is 775-6881180 ext. 231/232 for the ADL and Dr. Rink, Dr. Works ext. 261, Holly Pecetti ext. 236, Sandie Foley ext. 230, Dr. Forbes ext. 284, Mike Holmes 775/721-3470, Dr. Dan Crowell 775/738-8076.

NDOA Completes EPA Desk Review

In late March, the Nevada Department of Agriculture received word by email that we had been randomly selected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a review of our administrative and financial practices related to the EPA cooperative agreements in which we participate. This review, called a Desk Review, is the equivalent of a self-audit, and required an in-depth review of policies and procedures, and compilation of all financial records related to reimbursements from three periods of time, ending on February 13, 2007, July 28, 2006 and January 25, 2006. We had just over three weeks to complete the review and deliver our response submission to the EPA in San Francisco.

Chuck Moses, Maureen Groach and Wes Bills met to review the 100+ question survey and began formulating our responses. The questionnaire contained sections about administrative policies, procedures and state regulations; organizational structure and personnel policies; travel procedures and policies; accounting, financial management and controls; budgeting, cost-sharing and treatment of program funds; procurement policies and procedures (including property management); and policies and procedures related to minority/small business practices.

Included in the requirements of the Desk Review were the submission of copies of written regulations and policies from the agency and state level; complete documentation of every financial transaction that occurred during the reported time periods; and written responses to the questionnaire. Compiling the supporting documentation for the financial transactions was the most time-consuming part of the process, and required almost 10 full business days of work. Each transaction had to be researched in DAWN, the supporting documentation located in our files, then copied and labeled, and assembled into a record set for each reporting period. The fully assembled record sets and questionnaire responses measured over 10 inches high, and completely filled a standard copy paper box.

To the best of our corporate knowledge, this is the first time that NDOA has ever completed such an extensive EPA review.

Compiling the supporting documentation needed for the EPA Desk Review required nearly 10 business days of work.

Animal Disease and Food Safety News

Dr. Roger Works has joined the Department as State Veterinarian. Dr. Works is a graduate of Colorado State University and has worked most recently in private practice.

Dr. Anette Rink, ADL Supervisor, and the staff will be prepared for the summer testing season. Included, but not limited to, are testing for bubonic plague, Tularemia, and rabies. Arbovirus testing has started in mid April and again this year will include assays for West Nile Virus, St. Louis Encephalitis Virus and Western Equine Encephalitis Virus. Random testing of susceptible avian species such as corvids and raptors started in February. During mosquito season 2005 and 2006 mosquito pool testing replaced a significant portion of dead bird testing for Arbovirus. In 2005 ca. 3,000 mosquito pools were tested and in 2006 ca. 2,700, respectively. However bird submissions (susceptible species only) from the public will still be tested at no cost in 2007.

Dr. Anette Rink was appointed to the University of Nevada's Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). The IBC consists of laboratory principal investigators and off-campus scientists representatives and serves as an advisory to the Provost. On April 18th Dr. Rink gave a lecture on BSE to the freshmen class of Biochemists at UNR.

In FY 07 Nevada Cattle producers significantly increased voluntary T. fetus testing. Nevada's Trich regulations were passed by the Board of Agriculture at the December 2006 meeting and by the Legislative Committee on March 22nd, 2007. The Trich regulation was developed after a request from the Nevada Cattlemen's Association and producers throughout the state who have experienced production losses as a result of Trichomonosis. The division of Animal Industry's staff worked in conjunction with the NCA Livestock Committee and the Farm Bureau to develop regulations and provide outreach and education to producers throughout the State in the summer of 2006. To review a complete copy of Nevada's 'Trich' regulations go to <http://agri.nv.gov/>.

Dr. Keith Forbes, will continue to direct studies for Scrapie and Johne's. Scrapie is a neurological disease in sheep and goats. It is thought to be caused by an infective protein known as a prion. Johne's is a chronic wasting disease in domestic and wild ruminants. Dr. Forbes remains active in flock/herd testing and education programs.

The new diagnostic laboratory facility in Elko is operational and able to provide enhanced services to veterinarians, livestock producers, the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), and local communities. Onsite testing is available for Equine Infectious Anemia, Trichomonosis, and Brucello-

sis. The necropsy facility has the capability of handling large animals and post mortem exams are also conducted in the field.

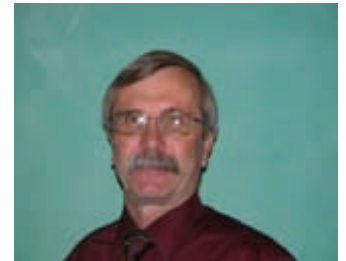
Dr. Dan Crowell, will continue to work with NDOW Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) surveillance, diagnostics, and assistance with capture and relocation efforts. CWD is a neurological disease which can affect deer and elk populations in the US, but has never been diagnosed in Nevada.

Dr. Crowell has recently welcomed Sidney Merkley to provide assistance in the laboratory and the Premises Registration program.

Sandie Foley, Program Officer is now a full time member of the Division's staff. Sandie left her administrative duties and is responsible for pasture to pasture permits, livestock entry requirements and monitors the division's federal fund programs.

Lon Beal, Computer Network Specialist, has completed the installation and updating of the computer equipment and programs. The mapping abilities are of valuable assistance at meetings and analysis for each program.

Linda Dessauer and Katherine Lofthouse, both of Fallon, provide staff support; Linda at the livestock markets and Katherine with the NAIS program at video sales, fairs, and conventions.



Dr. Roger Works, the new State Veterinarian

**Nevada's complete
"Trich" regulations can
be found online at:
<http://agri.nv.gov>**

Grand Champion Market Lamb Breaks Record at the Nevada Junior Livestock Show

The Nevada Junior Livestock Show recently celebrated their 68th Anniversary on May 3rd through the 6th. Both 4-H and FFA members participate by raising animals including beef, sheep, swine, goats, and dairy cattle. Participants compete with their project animals in quality and showmanship judging with some auctioning their livestock on the final day of the show

"The Highlight of the event included the 139 pound Grand Champion Market Lamb, which sold for a record-setting \$40 per pound."

The Nevada Junior Livestock Show (NJLS) would like to extend a sincere thank you to all those from the Department of Agriculture who helped us in volunteering their time for putting on the event. We especially thank Rick Gimlin, Jennifer Bartlett, April Zozaya, Ed Foster, Holly Pecetti, Annette Rink and Maureen Groach. Thank you for your much needed assistance.

The highlight of the event included the 139 pound Grand Champion Market Lamb, which sold for a record-setting \$40 per pound. Mr. Ken Hellwinkel of Gardnerville pur-

chased the lamb in memory of his wife Victoria "Vickie" Hellwinkel.



Ken Hellwinkel, Larissa Works, Scott Holland, Alyssa Holland, and Amanda Holland with the award winning lamb.

Mrs. Hellwinkel lived in Gardnerville, NV and worked in both construction and ranching. She was an active supporter of 4-H and the Nevada Junior Livestock Show for many years. "She was a tremendous asset to NJLS," said NJLS Vice President and Show Manager Judy Rumbaugh, "She would be happy to know she had been a part of something like the sale of this lamb."

The animal was resold to the JT Basque Restaurant in Gardnerville with the agreement that the proceeds would go to the newly-established Vickie Hellwinkel Memorial Scholarship fund. The Nevada Junior Livestock Show has given over \$50,000 in scholarships since 2000. Only two students were awarded scholarships in the first year of the program. This year, with generous donations and support, NJLS awarded eleven outstanding 4-H and FFA members with scholarships.

The Nevada Junior Livestock Show had another successful year and only accomplished this with the support and generosity of numerous individuals and companies. For further information on this and other events, please contact the Nevada Junior Livestock Show Office at (775) 688-1180 ext. 292.

Cattle Thief Captured

An allegedly notorious cattle thief was captured red-handed in Elko County last month and will be arraigned next week.

As was mentioned in previous newsletters, there was an unusual number of illegal importations of non-vaccinated cattle from other states into central and northern Nevada last year. The most blatant violator who brought in 640 head, has had to pay to have all his cattle worked thru the chute and be individually identified, pay a fine in both Nevada for illegal entry and California for leaving without a brand inspection, and now can only move the cattle in a USDA sealed truck to specific destinations or slaughter. He has spent approximately \$30,000 so far in fines and compliance.



Brand Re-Recording Coming Soon

As mandated by the NRS, statewide re-recording of all livestock brands takes place every four years and will begin late this summer with invoices being sent to all registered brand owners of record approximately the first of August. In order to be included in the Official 2008 Nevada Brand Book, all livestock brands must be re-recorded prior to December 31, 2007. Any brands not so re-recorded will be held for 1 year and if not re-recorded by that time, they will be considered lost to record and available to the public for recording.

Division of Measurement Standards

Steve Schultz hosted the Western Regional Assurance Program (WRAP), in Reno. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) provided training for the group of 20 metrologists from the Western States. The intermediate level training was presented and discussions on achieving National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP). NVLAP is the level of certification the metrology lab is seeking to achieve. When achieved the measurements in the lab will be accepted worldwide.

The new weights and measures software is online June 11th. The project will have the inspectors using tablet PCs to collect inspection data for commercial weighing and measuring devices as well as tracking public weighmasters, price verification testing, package testing, and registered service agencies. The software also is the invoicing and tracking program for the Division.

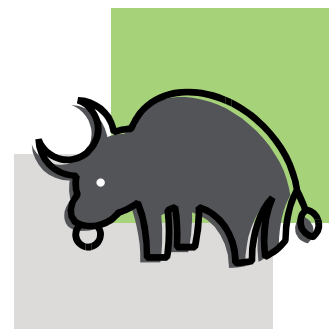
For ten months of fiscal year 2007, weights and measures has inspected 22,125 commercial devices with approximately a 5% device failure rate. The current statewide device inventory is 34,418 commercial devices. Inspectors also completed over 500 price verification and packaged goods inspections.

Bill Striejewski and Shannon Rudolph have completed testing the quality of 2,283 samples of motor vehicle fuel this fiscal year.

Earlier this year the petroleum lab and weights and measures inspectors were able to track down and help resolve diesel contaminations at several retail stations. This helped the business owners deliver quality fuel and prevented potential damage to the public's diesel vehicles.

Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (<15ppm) is the most common diesel fuel available now, it is replacing the Low sulfur diesel (<500ppm) supply. If you have a new diesel engine you may be required to use the ULSD or your emissions system could be damaged. Fuel dispensers are required to carry a label that indicates the sulfur content of the diesel fuel.

Steve Grabski met with the LP Gas Board to introduce Bob Green and to discuss mutual interests regarding the safety and testing of liquefied petroleum gas.



It's Time for Head Tax

The Head Tax Declaration forms were mailed out last week to all known livestock owners in the state. They have 30 days to respond before a \$5 late penalty will be assessed. If any livestock owners come to a brand inspector asking for a declaration form, please get their name and address and let the office personnel know and we will send them one.

News from the Brand Division

“Road stops by brand inspectors and agriculture enforcement officers will continue in a constitutionally acceptable way”

One of the more pertinent rumors, which has resulted in at least one e-mail campaign, is that the legislature had passed a bill that prevents brand inspectors and agriculture enforcement officers from stopping vehicles on the road for inspection of animals, plant stock, and/or documents. As they say, “Well, Not Exactly!”

There was a challenge based on the 4th amendment rights in the Constitution of the U.S. and some restrictive wording added to a bill in the legislature. However, **that wording was removed** and certain guidelines were developed for proper regulatory road stops.

Road stops by brand inspectors and agriculture enforcement officers will continue in a constitutionally acceptable way and, as always, any person hauling livestock must continue stop at any roadside checksite and present their documentation. If anyone asks, or brings this subject up please be sure to tell them the above.

Another issue that involves the Brand Division is two legislative audit findings that were brought to bear in the controversy over the director and the Department.

One finding was that the Brand Division failed to collect on certain **transfers of brand** ownership transactions. This Division has had a policy for many years that certain simple transfers, that are in name only and are properly documented, are not charged the \$100 transfer fee. Examples would be removal of a deceased person from a brand registration, a change from a maiden name to a married name, a change from a person to a trust whose trustee is the same person, removal of a parent or guardians name from the brand registration of a minor when the minor comes of age. These exemptions were requested by the industry, and the policy adopted many years ago. However, the auditors required this to be placed into the NRS which is before the legislature this session.

The other audit finding that concerned the Division was that we failed to collect on enough animals for the **Head**

Tax. The law required every owner of livestock, including cattle, dairy cattle, horses, mules, asses, hogs, and goats to declare their livestock and pay a small tax every May. This is an important source of revenue for the Division. Owners of sheep have to pay their own assessment for predator control and to support the sheep industry programs. I contend that nobody knows how many head of livestock are actually in the state and the auditors used USDA estimates to get their number which doesn't take into account the fact that there are a large number of seasonal pasture cattle that are only in the state for a portion of the year and therefore, only get charged a portion of the Head Tax.

That being said, we all know there is a “fudge factor” in reporting by many owners of livestock. The office staff will be trying to remedy this discrepancy by comparing the declared numbers with brand inspections, entry permits, and any other databases that would indicate actual numbers.

Organic Certification Program Passes Annual Review

The Department of Agriculture has administered the Nevada Organic Certification Program for approximately eight years and was accredited by the United States Department of Agriculture in May 2002 to certify producers and handlers of organic agricultural products.

Peggy McKie is currently in charge of the program. In April 2007 the fiscal section performed its annual review of the program and found the Department to be in full compliance with the federal and state rules and regulations pertaining to this program.

Reno Office Certificates and Shipping Point Inspections Statistics

Federal Phytosanitary Certificate

27 - Hay - shipped to Japan/Taiwan /South Korea/Korea/China

9 - Onion - shipped to Mexico/United Arab Emirates

1 - Mushroom Spawn - shipped to China

State of Nevada Phytosanitary Certificate

4 - Mushroom Spore - shipped to Japan /Chile

Certificate of Free Sale

4 - Crunch Granola Raisin Bran - Mexico/Israel

2 - Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein - shipped to China/Panama

1 - Ice Cream & Water Novelties - Mexico

3 - Soy Sauce Powder - shipped to Germany/Belgium

1 - Various Cereals - Dominican Republic

1 - Whole Bran w/Raisin Bran - Mexico

Onion/Produce Inspections:

David Herrand completed 30 Onion shipping point inspections. The total weight of onions were 1,046,000 lbs.

Jim York inspected 20 Produce shipments for Wal-Mart in order to facilitate shipments into California.

Leonard Joy inspected 12 Produce shipments to meet California requirements for the prison.

New Headquarters Building Approved!

By Steve Grabski

The Headquarters building in Sparks has been approved! SB 578 is the CIP bill. I'd like to thank everyone that has contributed to this project so far; your input and expertise has helped to design a building that will meet the needs of the Department for years to come. Your continued support will be needed through the construction of the project to ensure we get what we pay for.

I have confirmed with State Public Works Board and with the Division of State Lands that the agreement signed between Don Henderson and Mike Willden will assign the land to build our Headquarters. The land will not include the cemetery that we had originally planned on; instead that small piece will remain the property of DHHS. June 14th I have a meeting with DHHS, SPWB, State Lands, and NDOA to address any issues or concerns of our new neighbors concerning our building. The placement of our building was planned to minimize the chance of encountering any graves; we also have contingency funds and procedures to deal with any grave issues. The land was checked with ground penetrating radar and old aerial photographs to lower any risks.

When I have a better timetable from SPWB I will send an update on the timing and process we will go through to bid the project, break ground and finally move into our new headquarters building.

NDOA at the Clark County Fair

The Agriculture staff had a great time at the Clark County Fair. It was enjoyed by one and all. It ran from April 12 -15, 2007. Our Agency was represented by Director - Rick Gimplin; Administrator - John O'Brien; Regional Manager - David Walch; Administrative Assistant - Marie Virkus; Agriculturist - Marv Berson; Agriculture Inspector - Paul Frigo; Weights & Measure Inspectors - Les Smith, Larry Johnson and Tom Grayson.

The hours were long but the staff enjoyed meeting all the nice people of Nevada and our visiting friends from other states. There were between 70,000 - 80,000 attendees. The highway was backed up again for hours.

The fair is located approximately 70 miles northeast of Las Vegas. We started by bringing the Homeland Security trailer up on Wednesday. This was a good idea as we checked our response time for relocating the trailer in case of an emergency. George Stipes, Agriculture Enforcement Officer, hauled it up there for us.

This year, we were at a new location. We were located by RC Farms in the small animal pavilion. It was nice as we had more space for our exhibits. We had an insect exhibit, a weights & measure exhibit, and new this year a kids corner exhibit. Marie printed up a lot of educational games from our website. We also had many handouts for our residents relating to everything from insects to West Nile virus. We actually ran short and needed to make more handouts for our Sunday people.

The staff was told by one of the people in charge of the fair, Pledger Solomon, that all he heard about from his children was how great they thought the Nevada Department of Agriculture was and they said it was their favorite booth. We had two interesting visits from two Nevadans who had been bitten by the desert brown spider. This is why we like to take the insect samples up, especially ones like the desert brown spider, black widow spider and the bark scorpions, so our citizens can actually see the insects and teach their children not to touch them.

The visitors have a lot of questions about the insects and the weights and measures standards that we bring up for display. We educate them on how our programs run. We came up with the idea of giving the people coupons, so they know they can get insect samples identified at no charge. This year we handed out an information sheet informing them that if they feel they have a gasoline complaint or get shorted at the grocery store, we will check it out for them at no charge.

All in all it was a wonderful experience for all that attended.

Christy Lew Gets Excellent Results in Check Sample Program

As part of our Quality Assurance Program, the Chemistry Lab participates in a check sample program run by the Association of American Pest Control Officials. The results from the last set of samples have been received and we are pleased to announce that Christy identified and quantified all of the samples received well within standard. (All within 1 standard deviation of each data set when 2 standard deviations is OK)

Over 70,000 people attended the Clark County Fair this year.

Pest Control News

In a continuing effort to keep the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Pest Control Study Manuals current, Scott Cichowlaz & Greg Hymas updated the Structural Pest Control Study Manual. Much of this manual had to be changed due to recent regulation changes that took effect last year. Scott Cichowlaz revised and updated the General Urban Structural Study Manual, while Scott Cichowlaz and Jay Steele revised and updated the Industrial & Institutional Study Manual by making some minor working, form, and reference changes, as well as adding new information to the manuals that should benefit the readers.

During March, Scott Cichowlaz monitored the fumigation of a 53' truck trailer whose contents, cut flowers from Florida, were infested with surface pests. Pro-Tech Pest Services performed the fumigation, and Scott Cichowlaz issued a Fumigation Certificate so the truck could continue on to California.

Scott Cichowlaz was invited to present a Nevada Laws Update at a UNIVAR USA sponsored pest control educational program which was held in Las Vegas, NV on March 27, 2007. The presentation requested was one hour in length and covered both new laws and regulations as well as several old laws and regulations which many pest control companies and individuals seem to violate. There were about 75 Pest Management Professional in attendance at this program.

Paul Frigo Completes Food Defense Training

Paul Frigo, Inspector III and USDA Poultry & Egg Inspector/Grader, has completed the USDA Food Defense Awareness Training & Examination required and conducted by USDA-AMS Training Institute, Washington, D.C. The Food Defense Awareness Training places emphasis on "threats to the food supply" and "vulnerabilities" in all aspects of the poultry products industry, namely, shell-eggs, liquid eggs, powdered eggs, turkey roasts, chicken parts, nuggets, and ingredients such as corn syrup, sugar, salt, gum and bacteria cultures used in processing plants.

A note of economic interest reflects why the poultry industry is so concerned with safety: "In 2005, the total U.S. wholesale value for chicken, turkey and eggs was 33 billion dollars. Six billion pounds of chicken and turkey plus 206 million dozen eggs were exported. There were 167 chicken and 36 turkey slaughtering plants, 183 shell-egg plants and 73 egg processing plants. Over 350,000 people are employed by chicken and turkey processors." (Food Defense Awareness/2007).

" In 2005, the total U.S. wholesale value for chicken, turkey and eggs was 33 billion dollars... Over 350,000 people are employed by chicken and turkey processors."

Las Vegas Ag Enforcement Statistics

Xenia Duranovic

Xenia Duranovic inspected 16 out of state nursery trucks and issued three state Phytosanitary Certificates. Xenia did follow up surveillance on a PCO as well as issuing him an interview notice that confirmed him doing unlicensed pest control applications and solicitations. Xenia also caught up with three unlicensed landscapers and collected payments. Xenia also monitored and recorded the destruction of a shipment of magnolia trees that came from Florida. The state entomologist identified them to be infested with tulip tree scale and white magnolia scale. The shipment originated in one of Florida's nurseries that had previous violations in Nevada. This violation could mean an introduction of a new pest in our state.

Marc Olson

Marc Olson conducted 18 nursery inspections and 4 out of state truck inspections during April. Marc Olson also conducted 8 marketplace inspections with 7 samples taken.

Marv Berson

Marv completed 24 NV nursery inspections and one landscaper inspection.

He also completed 50 out of state nursery shipments and NV Phytosanitary inspections.

Two notices of violation were issued, one for an unlicensed out of state broker who was escorted back to California by AEO Stipes. The other violation was of a minor nature and resolved on site. 8 EPA Marketplace Inspections were also completed as well a confirmation of a NV Producer's Certificate application

Nevada Noxious Weed Program Update

The Nevada Noxious Weed Program is off to a busy start this spring. By the end of May, the Weed Free Forage Program has already certified 5 growers totaling over 1,000 acres of Certified Weed Free Forage. Inquiries and “Requests for Inspections” have increased this spring due to the increasing regulation and refusal of entry of hay trucks carrying noxious weeds in to other states. As a result, the department is working to increase the scope of the program to include additional assistance to growers through grant funds, education and marketing.

This spring, the Noxious Weed Program is working toward assisting Nevada Hay Growers and organic hay growers to comply with Nevada’s Weed Free Forage Certification. We are assisting them with treatment options, funding and biological control agents. Two of the Certified Weed Free Forage Growers also participated in biological control releases.

The Biological Control Program has been lining up landowners to receive biological control agents that are on Nevada’s APHIS-PPQ permit. To date, the Department has conducted three releases of Field Bindweed mites in Lyon, White Pine and Lincoln Counties. The Noxious Weed Program has also worked with State Entomologist and the State CAPS Assistant to release a biological control agent on Dalmatian Toadflax in Douglas County. The Dalmatian Toadflax and Tamarisk releases are part of an established program lead by Jeff Knight, State Entomologist.

The Nevada Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) are already conducting projects this spring. In addition to the \$150,000 USFS funds awarded in January, the Department awarded \$45,000 of the Excess Pesticide Registration Fee Funds to nine groups in April. The projects range from new and small treatment projects to supplementing already on-going

larger projects. The nine awards went to groups in Elko, Humboldt, Pershing, Lander, Nye, White Pine, Washoe, Carson City and Lincoln Counties.

The State Noxious Weed Mapper has been hired and is located at the Nevada Natural Heritage Program. She is working to input and verify existing data and will be working with the CWMAs shortly. The University of Nevada Cooperative Extension has also hired a State Weed Specialist. Earl Creech, the new Weed Specialist is located at the Fallon UNCE/ARS office. The Nevada Department of Agriculture is working with these two new positions to help coordinate mapping needs, research priorities and education.

The State Noxious Weed Program Coordinator continues to work on expanding the Biological Control Program as well as conducting abatement investigations.



Dalmation Toadflax



Sahara Mustard

Nearly \$200,000 was awarded to various groups around the state to help combat noxious weeds.

Nevada Department of Agriculture

350 Capitol Hill Ave.
Reno, NV 89523

Phone: (775) 688-1180

Fax: (775) 688-1178

E-mail: ndoa@agri.state.nv.us

Website: agri.nv.gov

Mike Holmes Named Employee of the Quarter!

Mike Holmes has been named employee of quarter, for the first quarter of 2007. Mike works in the Division of Animal Industry, and is the program manager for the Virginia Range Estray (VRE) program.

The following is an excerpt of the narrative from Mike's nomination. Mike's fulltime job is managing the VRE feral horses, which entails interaction with many constituents, including employees from state and federal agencies. Mike has to deal with a lot of irate people at all hours of the day. He is doing a great job dealing with the public, smoothing ruffled feathers, capturing and transporting horses, assisting with veterinary care and husbandry and he does that far beyond the call of duty. On many occa-

sions over the last years he has also assisted the Animal Disease Lab (ADL) when help was needed in collecting and transporting specimens when time was of the essence.

On one occasion he picked up a canine specimen in Gardnerville after a small child had been attacked so the ADL could test for rabies that same day (he dropped what he was doing and rushed to get that done).

On another occasion he was asked to collect some dead rabbits in Minden after the ADL had isolated Tularemia in Elko County, as there was concern that this could be a second case of a potentially deadly zoonotic disease. It turns

out that he did this while on annual leave for that day! Mike Holmes is one of those truly exceptional employees who can be relied upon at all times and under any circumstances, and he deserves recognition for that.

Like many of our programs, the VRE program operates on less than optimal funding. Mike does his best to operate the program in a manner that benefits our constituents, and protect the assets of the program. Please join me in congratulating Mike for a job well done!