

Advocacy for Invasive Species Management

Rocky Mountain Weed Summit & Healthy Habitats Coalition

**John D. Cantlon
Government Resource Manager
DuPont Land Management**

HHC Steering Committee Member

Rocky Mountain Weed Summit

“The Beginning of Change”

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Fort Collins, Co.

It's About the Invasive Harm

- Loss of wildlife and fisheries with impaired ecosystem health,
- Loss of natural resource diversity,
- Soil erosion, diminished water quality and quantity.

- Reduced recreational opportunities,
- Increased wildfire and flood events,
- Disruption of energy and commerce.

- Reduced agricultural yield & quality,
- Diminished livestock health with increased mortality and cost.

- Declining public health from air quality to pest control.

The Setup at RMWS

WHY: To bring the collective passion and pride together to begin to convey the negative impacts of uncontrolled species to a higher level of public awareness.

- Focus included awareness, education and solutions.

WHO: Nearly 90 representatives from the weed management community representing eight (8) western states met to collaborate, network and develop strategy for enhancing progress toward weed management structure and funding.

WHAT: The group presented information, conducted a field trip, and through group work, developed three major initiatives for advancing the weed management movement.

Three Findings at RMWS

NEED ONE:

Stable, dependable and adequate funding for prevention, detection, eradication and control. Need to gain champions in the legislature and at the governor's office.

- Lead to legislative action and the Healthy Habitats Coalition

NEED TWO:

Regional coordination and communication structure and function; a regional approach in the west starting with WWCC.

- Lead to states communication and the Healthy Habitats Coalition.

NEED THREE:

A National/Regional societal awareness sufficient to speed legislative, policy and funding improvements.

- Lead to sharing marketing tools and Healthy Habitats Coalition.

A KEY Element: Marketing and external communications...

Education is key to the issue demands. But, much of society is still unaware about the harm invasive species cause to society.

- We need a new audience capturing mechanism.

We need a common brand and message as opposed to redundant but different and separate communication efforts.

- We need to penetrate through clutter and impact target audiences.
- We need professional promotional materials.

3 Overall Objectives Can Come Under One Umbrella:

Collaborate, network and develop strategy to...

1. Strengthen advocacy efforts to lobby on national policy issues,
2. Leverage resources, skills, knowledge and funds,
3. Move toward aligned, simple and consistent communications.

Healthy Habitats Coalition (HHC) A Wildlife Forever Advocacy Effort

HHC is a collection of the leading expertise from industry, university, state, county partners and practitioners.

Advisory & Steering Board (building a broader base)

- Lobbyists
- Champion legislators
- Western Governors Association.
- NGO's: TNC, DU, Cattleman's, FFF, Save the Everglades...
- National Invasive Species Council - Advisory Council.
- National Network for Invasive Plant Centers.
- National Congress of State Legislatures
- Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.
- National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.
- Agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, mining, forestry, chemical, retailers, invasive professionals.

Mission

The Healthy Habitats Coalition (HHC) promotes the conservation and restoration of the nation's natural heritage and economic interests from the negative impacts of invasive species.

Specifically, HHC seeks enhanced federal legislation and appropriations that assist public and private landowners nationwide. *Improved structure and procurement of funding for the protection and restoration of the nation's land assets across the USA is the goal.*

To accomplish this mission, HHC will engage the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. HHC will immediately begin to engage the new Administration, Senators, and Congressmen to get support.

Federal Magnitude

Current federal efforts and budgets are inadequate to address the invasive crisis effectively. Local and state interests alone cannot resolve invasive issues.

The magnitude and scope of such invasive issues require a strong federal commitment with a sustained, long-term involvement.

HHC Successful Actions:

1. Demonstrate measurable gains in the management of federal land and water in partnership for a healthy ecosystem.
2. Support private landowner management efforts.
3. Establish national, competitive funding sources to facilitate essential efforts that get the money on-the-ground.
4. Expand the understanding of invasive species management and restoration with associated scientific knowledge.

HHC People:

Tim Richardson,

a full time Director in Washington D.C. will lobby and coordinate efforts to insure the goals are met before invasives reaches epidemic proportions exceeding any level of funding.

HHC's Steering Committee directs staff, issues and resources to support national invasive species management policies.

Batt, Roger

Beck, George

Cantlon, John

Clark, Janet

Lane, Eric

Richardson, Tim

Uhing, Kelly

VanWychen, Lee

Lobbyist – Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign

Colorado State University

DuPont Land Management

Center for Invasive Plant Management

Colorado Department of Agriculture

Wildlife Forever

Colorado State Weed Coordinator

Lobbyist –WSSA DC

Approach:

Identify and select priorities. In consultation, HHC identifies and develops advocacy initiatives that advance effective federal legislation and appropriations.

Foster expertise. Cultivates and coordinates a network of individuals engaged in lobbying activities that exert influence on the federal executive and legislative branches.

Organize action. HHC develops and implement appropriate legislative and administrative strategies.

Advance awareness. Conducts targeted media outreach to raise awareness of the invasive species crisis.

Costs & Contributions

Director Costs:

- Director (DC based lobbyist) to develop strategy, coordinate and lobby.
- Organizational assistance to build broad and strong networks.
- Fiscal measurement of the management of assets and goal achievement.
- Travel, printing, shipping, etc.

Annual contribution levels – three year commitment:

- \$10,000 Corporate
- \$ 7,500 Business
- \$ 4,000 Association
- \$ 1,000 Friend

HHC Launch Date:

December 18, 2008

Tim Richardson

HHC Director

Wildlife Forever

301-770-6496