



Agenda Date: 3/21/2006  
Agenda Placement: 9A

## NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Greg Clark for David Whitmer - Agricultural Commissioner  
Agricultural Commissioner  
**REPORT BY:** Greg Clark, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer, 253-4357  
**SUBJECT:** Napa County Weed Management Area

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Agricultural Commissioner requests approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign the Napa County Weed Management Area Memorandum of Understanding.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Agricultural Commissioner and other County departments and public and private landowners currently work to control and eradicate noxious invasive weeds. Much of this work is done on an individual basis with little coordination or consideration of combining efforts and resources. Establishing the Napa County Weed Management Area, pursuant to California Food and Agricultural Code, Section 7272(b), will allow each of these entities to develop a better understanding of how noxious weeds negatively effect the environment and allow for a coordinated and more strategic approach to noxious weed control, including the leveraging of available resources and development of shared priorities based on local conditions.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:** The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

The Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's Office currently maintains an invasive and noxious weed eradication program. The integrated program utilizes physical, cultural, and herbicide weed control methods. In addition, the Agricultural Commissioner's Office uses biological control organisms, such as host specific fungi and insects to help control over eight weed species. Other County entities, including the Napa County Mosquito Abatement District, and the Napa County Department of Public Works which includes Roads, County Services Area III, Airport, Silverado Special District, Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Lake Berryessa Resort Improvement District, and Monticello Cemetery District, are currently engaged in similar weed management efforts.

Invasive, non-native, weeds are plants that have been introduced into an environment from which they did not evolve and have no natural enemies to limit their reproduction and spread. These weeds affect both agricultural and natural systems, and cost the U.S. economy over \$13 billion a year. Invasive weeds are able to displace native plants and have devastating impacts on natural areas. Some of these plants, such as pampas grass and English ivy, are common garden escapes, while others, such as skeletonweed and hydrilla, are transported accidentally from other countries in less obvious ways.

Weed Management Areas (WMA) have been established throughout the United States and California to help educate public and private landowners about problems related to invasive and noxious weeds. A WMA is a voluntary association of public and private land and watershed managers dedicated to successfully halting the spread of noxious weeds and to restoring infested lands to a healthy and productive condition through the implementation of an integrated weed management program. As a result, landowners become better informed and able to make informed choices about weed pest prevention, eradication and management. Problems associated with invasive and noxious weeds have become so widespread that the best solution is for all concerned parties to work in a coordinated and cooperative manner. Establishing the Napa County Weed Management Area (NCWMA), pursuant to California Food and Agricultural Code, Section 7272(b), will allow cities, state and federal agencies; land managers and owners; and agricultural and environmental associations to work collaboratively through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and allow for the sharing of resources such as weed expertise, money, labor, and education.

Weed management areas typically sponsor technical educational opportunities, map and inventory noxious weed infestations, establish local research and demonstration projects, and prepare educational brochures and pamphlets. A number of areas receive grant monies for education, research and control projects within their region relating to the integrated management of noxious weeds. These projects improve recreational value, enhance watershed quality, and expand agricultural opportunities of land currently infested with noxious weeds.

The MOU establishes a local steering committee comprised of the Agricultural Commissioner and stakeholders, including representatives from agriculture and livestock production, parks and public land management, water and natural resources, transportation and utilities, education and research, and environmental advocacy. The mission of the NCWMA will be to increase the quantity and quality of noxious exotic weed management efforts in Napa County by promoting and/or conducting noxious exotic weed control projects and by coordinating the activities of those County stakeholders and resource managers interested in stemming the tide of environmental degradation and agricultural incursion by invasive and/or noxious exotic weeds.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

A . Weed Management Area Strategic plan

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Andrew Carey