

CWMA Legislative Policy Guide

CWMA MISSION

The mission of the Colorado Weed Management Association is to strengthen the field of science-based invasive species management.

ABOUT CWMA

CWMA members are dedicated to invasive species prevention and management. Our members include invasive species and weed managers representing many government agencies, private and commercial applicators, non-governmental organizations, industry, and concerned citizens.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Legislative Policy Guide is to guide CWMA Members, the Board of Directors, the Legislative Committee, and Lobbyists when forming policy or taking positions on legislation, regulation, or policy on behalf of the organization. This document is not intended to be used as outreach to legislators or decision makers.

Noxious weed and invasive species prevention and management is a non-partisan issue that impacts all Colorado residents and visitors: agriculture, conservation, environmental protection, forestry, natural resources, outdoor recreation, tourism, water, etc. are all impacted by invasive species.

In order to continue to strengthen CWMA's ability to influence invasive species policy in Colorado, while reflecting a membership-driven agenda, the CWMA Board of Directors began working in 2021 to create a policy framework. The CWMA Policy Framework document (Framework), was created by the Legislative Committee and approved by the CWMA membership to give the CWMA Board of Directors and CWMA Legislative Committee very clear guidance on priority issues as they influence state government on behalf of our members.

This Legislative Policy Guide is long range in nature and is not meant to tackle each specific issue of the day, but rather to lay out CWMA's position on high level issues. This Legislative Policy Guide is not meant to be an indisputable document, but rather a guide for the CWMA Legislative Committee and Board of Directors to help make decisions in the best interests of CWMA members.

It is recognized that this legislative policy guide is a fluid document that will be amended to represent the changing needs of the organization and the members it represents over time. Amendments to this document may be proposed by CWMA Board Members or its Association Members at-large; adoption of amendments will require a simple majority of current CWMA members casting votes. Votes will be conducted electronically or in-person at the direction and at the discretion of the CWMA Board.

BACKGROUND

The Colorado Weed Management Association (CWMA), is a statewide organization formed in 1990 that is made up of invasive species management professionals, including noxious weed managers and public and private applicators and other *invasive plant or noxious weed* professionals. CWMA was formed to drive policy conversations with the State of Colorado, to provide education, and coordinate across weed management jurisdictions in Colorado. Our membership is a group of professionals that address land stewardship across diverse ecosystems, industries, agencies, and infrastructure. CWMA members are stewards of Colorado's land and water resources.

CWMA has retained professional lobbyists since 2009 to represent membership interests in legislative, regulatory, and policy issues at the state capital. Managed by the Legislative Committee with approval from the CWMA Board, the lobbying team works to represent the collective interests of CWMA.

The draft of this Legislative Policy Guide created by the Legislative Committee, was reviewed by the Board at its November 18th meeting and recommended for a member vote. ■

It is encouraged that members bring forth local, regional, or statewide, federal concerns or ideas to be considered for addition to this Legislative Policy Guide. This will foster discussions and allow members to provide input to current and future CWMA leadership, members, and consultants. Changes to this document can be made by a member proposing those changes to the legislative committee. The legislative committee will review proposed changes and make recommendations to the Board to include or not. With Board approval, those future changes will then be presented to the membership and must be approved by a majority of the attending voting members at the annual general meeting or through a members-only electronic vote.

The legislative committee can evaluate and respond to issues or take a position on legislation, regulation, or policy that may arise at any time in coordination with the Board of Directors. This Legislative Policy Guide will be widely distributed to all CWMA members following approval and made available on the CWMA website.

LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR INVASIVE SPECIES IN COLORADO

The Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) is authorized by the State Legislature through the State Noxious Weed Act, Seed Act, Nursery Act, Pesticide Applicator's Act, Pest Act, and Governor Executive Orders to coordinate noxious weed management statewide in coordination with other state departments, local governments, and federal agencies.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), is authorized by the State Legislature through the State ANS Act and the Mussel Free Colorado Act to coordinate aquatic nuisance species management, including invasive weeds, across all jurisdictions and private waters and lands in Colorado. CPW also has regulatory authority to coordinate and manage invasive fish, wildlife, and pathogens.

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and other state agencies must comply with state laws. Both CDA and CPW are directed in state law to coordinate with federal agencies.

The Governor's Executive Order D099 (July 19, 1999) states that CDA, DNR, CDOT, and Colorado State University (CSU) shall each designate a noxious weed coordinator and collaborate on noxious weed management. In addition, each department and agency listed below shall create and implement an agency weed plan, establish funding sources to implement the agency's weed plan, coordinate with local governments, and serve on the State Noxious Weed Advisory Board coordinated by CDA.

- Department of Agriculture
 - Division of Animal Industry
 - Division of Plant Industry
 - State Board of Stock Inspection
- Department of Natural Resources
 - Colorado Parks and Wildlife
 - Colorado Geological Survey
 - Colorado Water Conservation Board
 - Division of Minerals and Geology
 - Division of Water Resources
 - Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
 - Soil Conservation Board
 - State Board of Land Commissioners
- Department of Transportation
- Colorado State University
 - Cooperative Extension
 - State Forester

CWMA POLICY POSITIONS:

- CWMA should advocate for increased funding for invasive species prevention, management, and control.
- CWMA should advocate for increased capacity within invasive species programs at the local, state, tribal, and federal levels.
- CWMA supports the implementation of integrated pest management including prevention, chemical, biological, mechanical, physical, and cultural invasive species control, as appropriate.
- CWMA supports re-vegetation and restoration with native species.
- CWMA supports healthy and resilient landscapes.
- CWMA supports invasive species pathway prevention programs.
- CWMA supports science-based decision making and policies.

Adopted February 2022