



President's Letter Eric Webster

Well, 2020 is finally coming to a close, and I know everyone can't wait for the new year. As you know the board has decided that a virtual meeting is the best way to proceed with the SWSS 2021 annual meeting. I always look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting, and catchup on the family, job and school. The 2021 meeting will just be a different opportunity for us all. From a Society standpoint, it is extremely important for everyone to register for the 2021 Conference to insure the SWSS is around for years to come.



The 2021 program is coming together, and Dr. Clete Youmans has done an excellent job of putting together the schedule and presentations. You should all be seeing schedules in the next couple of weeks. I know this has been a difficult process for Clete, but he has been up for the task. He has a program committee that has really done a nice job of determining how things will be conducted over the meeting time frame. Many of the normal events will not occur this year, but keep your fingers crossed for getting back to "normal" in 2022. In the next few days Committee Chairs will be contacted concerning setting up committee meetings prior to the 2021 conference. Please try to get these virtual committee meetings completed and reports written prior to January 18, 2021. These reports are extremely important to help the Society to run smoothly over the next year.

Dr. James Holloway put together a great list of candidates for open positions on the SWSS Board of Directors for 2021. Eric Castner was selected as Vice President, and Andy Kendig and Tom Barber were selected as Member at large for Industry and Academia, respectively. Sandeep Rana was selected to the Endowment Foundation Board. If you speak with any of these folks give them a congratulations and a thank-you for their continued support of the SWSS. If you have interest in serving on the SWSS Board or as a committee member let any board member know you wish to help.

This is my last newsletter article as President of SWSS. As I have done in the previous newsletters, I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve the Southern Weed Science Society. It has been a true honor and a privilege. Give me a shout if you have any comments, concerns, or suggestions for the SWSS.

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The 2021 Annual Meeting is January 25-26, 2021.
The SWSS is Moving Obstacles with a 100% Virtual Annual Meeting!
Look for more details at: www.swss.ws

2021 in-Coming Officers



Vice President
Eric Castner



Member at-large
(Industry)
Andy Kendig



Member at-large
(Academia)
Tom Barber



Endowment Board
Trustee
Sandeep Rana



"Moving Obstacles" A Virtual Meeting

We are excited to announce that the SWSS 2021 Annual Meeting is going virtual. Below you will find important dates and deadlines. Should these dates change, we will notify you.

Registration is OPEN!

Registration is open! You can register via the member portal or if you are a non-member you can register here. Registration will remain open until the Annual Meeting begins on January 25, 2021.

Title Submission OPENS (must pre-register) Oct. 17

Title Submission CLOSSES (must pre-register) Nov. 9

Poster Submission DEADLINE Jan. 8 (All Posters due in pdf format)

Abstract SUBMISSION DEADLINE (Poster & Talk) Jan. 8. (All Abstracts due in PDF format)

Tentative Meeting Agenda

Posters viewable online Jan. 19

SWSS Board of Directors Meeting – Jan. 20 9am-11am CST

Committee Meetings (virtual/Zoom) Jan. 19 Last Possible date to conclude the meeting

Committee Reports due Jan. 19

Live Talks: Jan. 25 7:15am to 5:15pm via Zoom (PPT not submitted / live from your computer)

Gen. Session, etc. Jan. 26 1pm to 5pm via Zoom

As a reminder, all abstracts are due January 8, 2021, and can be submitted here

<http://weedscimeetingabstracts.com>.

Letter from the Program Chair Clete Youmans

PROGRAM: 74th ANNUAL MEETING of the SWSS (Virtual via Zoom):

As the winter progresses and I work many days on the program I've come to appreciate that the 2021 SWSS annual meeting will end up using half the time as in the past. This meeting is heavily condensed so most people can see the most important parts in one and a half days. This meeting is designed to provide you a break on Tuesday morning, for your personal work, and that afternoon the meeting continues. Monday, Jan. 25, 2021 will be full of virtual talks and you can possibly attend a maximum of 32 complete virtual talks, good luck. The following day's meeting begins in the afternoon and includes four invited speakers, the businesses session, and ends with the awards session. You can view the "guts" of the annual SWSS meeting in 13 hours. Our theme is "Moving Obstacles" and we didn't want to build an obstacle to burn you out on the meeting or your job. I hope you enjoy the 2021 condensed meeting and we hope to return in 2022 in Austin, TX with a full meeting.

Thanks to everyone for submitting a virtual talk or poster title to the SWSS internet site. We have developed a great, quick program for you, requiring one full day of virtual talks and a half day of Invited speaker, business and an awards session. We have a total of thirty-four PhD virtual talks and twenty-eight Masters' virtual talks in the student contest. There are a total of 101 Poster titles. The posters will be viewable prior (Jan. 19, 2021) to and during the meeting. The Student Poster Contest is composed of twenty-four PhD posters and twenty-four Masters' posters. There are 53 non-contest posters submitted from students and non-students. The entire SWSS 2021 Annual Meeting and program is virtual and you'll use Zoom to connect to the meeting using a computer of your choice. A Sunday afternoon and Wednesday morning Exec. Board meeting will be virtual for those on the SWSS board. We hope you enjoy the shortened program beginning for most on Monday, Jan. 25, 2021, at 7:05am CST, the presentations (Monday), invited speak-ers (Tuesday afternoon), and the business and award sessions (Tuesday afternoon). When you view the program, remember all listed times will be in Central Standard Time.

VIRTUAL TALK CONTEST

(Monday, January 25, 2021): For most people this will be the first day of the meeting. An introduction to the program will begin at 7:05am CST, followed by Pete Eure discussing the student contest, and then the volunteer hosts running the show at 7:10am. There are eight hosts (moderators moving students into the live room and making introductions) to conduct the virtual talks: Dr. Jim Brosnan and Dr. Tim Adcock will run the PhD session in the morning, Dr. Greg Stapleton and Dr. Larry Steckel will run the PhD section in the afternoon, Dr. Gary Schwarzlose and Dr. Nilda Burgos will run the Masters session in the morning, and Dr. Eric Castner and Dr. Jacob Reed will run the Masters session in the afternoon.

The first virtual talk will be in the PhD section beginning at 7:15am and the last PhD virtual talk will end at 5:15pm CST. This PhD session will be in Zoom Webinar room 1. The Masters' session will begin at 7:50am CST in Zoom Webinar room 2 with an opening by the program chair, student program chair, and hosts (Drs. Schwarzlose and Burgos) of the morning contest. The first Masters' virtual talk begins at 8:00am CST and the last M.S. virtual talk ends at 4:30pm CST. To receive credit for a virtual paper, an abstract must be submitted online at the SWSS website no later than Jan. 8, 2021. There is no submission of the virtual talk .PPT as it will be run live from your computer.

POSTER CONTEST and NON-CONTEST

Forty-eight posters make up the PhD and Masters' contest. There is a total of nine sections (areas of expertise) with "Weed Management in Agronomic Crops" involving twenty-seven of the forty-eight posters in the contest. Fifty-three posters were submitted in the non-contest portion of the poster session. These non-contest posters will cover eleven sections (Weed Management in Agronomic Crops had the most entries with Horticulture Crops being the second most non-contest posters). ***An abstract is required for the student poster contest and should be submitted no later than Jan. 8, 2021. An abstract is requested -***

for the non-contest poster also and should be submitted by Jan. 8, 2021 at the SWSS website as a .pdf file. If an abstract is not received for a non-contest poster, the poster will be shown during the meeting, but not be listed in the proceedings. **Posters are to be submitted in .pdf format at the SWSS website no later than Jan. 8, 2021.** Posters will be viewable by all current SWSS members on **Jan. 19, 2021.** From Jan. 19, 2021 to Jan. 24, 2021 the posters in the student contest will be judged (see Pete Eure for more details on judging).

STUDENT CONTEST (General)

The past presentation formats will be followed closely for the 2021 meeting. Downloading the posters will be similar to submitting the abstracts. Use the SWSS website to submit posters abstracts in .pdf format. If you have additional questions about the contest or rules, please contact Pete Eure, Student Contest Chair (pete.eure@syngenta.com). If you have questions about the program, please see the SWSS website or contact Clete Youmans, Program Chair (cletus.youmans@basf.com or 731-445-8880).

GENERAL SESSION (Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2021)

The General Session will start the meeting on Tuesday at 1:15pm. Four invited speakers will speak about their roles and past during the two-hour session. These speakers include:

Mrs. Emily Unglesbee: A staff reporter for DTN/Progressive Farmer, a subscription-based news service and monthly magazine focused on agriculture.

Emily received a BA in Classics from Notre Dame in 2009 and after deciding she enjoyed agriculture far more than Latin and Greek, she earned her master's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia, while working part-time for DTN/Progressive Farmer and as a columnist at the Missouri Ruralist. In 2013, she joined the DTN newsroom full-time. There, she primarily covers crop production issues, including agronomy, biotechnology, regulatory issues, insects, diseases and -- of course -- weeds. Her work has netted many awards from the American Agricultural Editors' Association (AAEA), the North American Agricultural Journalists (NAAJ) and the Jesse H. Neal Awards. She was also the 2020 recipient of the WSSA Excellence in Journalism award. Emily lives in Maryland with her husband and fellow journalist, Ben, and their two young children. Ms. Unglesbee speech will be "Science Communication Troubleshooting: How to Survive Talking to a Journalist"

Dr. Bob Scott: Director of the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service in Little Rock and is Senior Associate Vice President for Agriculture in the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture. He received a B.S. and an M.S. (Weed Science) from OK State Univ., and a PhD from Mississippi State Univ. He joined American Cyanamid in 1994 as a technical rep in Arkansas spending much time working on Clearfield Rice. He worked 1.5 years for BASF before joining the Univ. of Arkansas Extension as the AR State Extension Weed Specialist for 16 years. He was the Director of the Rice Research Ext. Center near Stuttgart, AR. Bob has been a president of the SWSS in 2018-2019 and received the SWSS Outstanding Young Weed Scientist in 2010. Bob lives in Cabot, AR with his wife Susan and their youngest daughter, Elizabeth, who is a senior at Cabot High School. His older daughter Samantha is a chemistry major and attends the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, where she is a Junior.

Dr. Stephen Powles: Emeritus Professor – University of Western Australia, Scientific Advisory Board - EnkoChem, USA, Australian Academy of Science -National Agriculture, Fisheries & Food Panel, Australian Academy of Technology & Engineering – Agriculture & Food Panel and operates a 349-hectare grain farming enterprise in Kojonup, WA. Stephen received a B.S. from Western Sydney Univ., a M.S. from Michigan State Univ. and a PhD from the Australian National Univ. He received awards in 2020 from BASF as the Inaugural Industry recognition Award, 2018 American Chemical Society International Award for research in Agrochemicals, and in 2010 received the Grains R&D Corp. "Seed of Light" Award. Stephen was a Professor and director at the Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative, and managing Director of the Co-operative Research Centre-Aust. Weed Mgt., an Associate Professor at the Univ. of Adelaide, a Del Duca Fellow at the Univ. of Paris-Saclay, France, and a CSIRO & Carnegie Fellow at Stanford Univ., CA. His speech will be "Poor to Prof: My Fortunate Career".

Dr. David Bridges: President (longest running in history) of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Tifton, GA. David holds a PhD from Texas A&M in 1987, B.S. and M.S. from Auburn Univ. and an Assoc. Degree from ABAC. In 1987 David became an Asst. Prof. at UGA in Crops and Soil Sciences, and in 1992 a full professor. Before becoming Pres. of ABAC David was the Assistant Dean of Univ. of Georgia College of

Agriculture and Environment Sciences. He has over 200 publications, including five books, seven book chapters and 70 refereed journal articles. David grew up in Terrel Co., GA near Dawson, GA. He and his wife Kim have two grown children and two grandchildren.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

The Business meeting will be held **Tuesday Jan. 26, 2021**, from 3:45 to 5:00pm and include Committee Reports and Awards. The Awards will occur from 4:15 to 5:00pm and include professional awards as well as student contest winner and runner up announcements.

OTHER BUSINESS

Committees: Committee meetings of the SWSS are usually part of the annual program and almost never have a schedule change. For the 2021 Annual Meeting, committee meetings will take place virtually, likely utilizing Zoom or Webex. Because the 2021 meeting is condensed, and **an Executive Board meeting will occur on Wednesday, Jan. 20 from 9-11 am CST**, before the annual meeting, all committee meetings should be completed before Wednesday Jan. 20, 2021. Chairpersons of each committee are responsible for conducting their meetings at a time that best fits their committee members, and these committee meetings could be completed in early January. Having the committee meetings prior to the Pre-Annual Exec. Board meeting will allow for committee reports to be submitted to the President in a timely manner. The Student Contest committee (for training judges, etc.) might like to meet close to Jan. 19 when the posters are released for viewing. **The Student Contest committee should also report all poster and paper contest winners by Monday, Jan. 25, at 6pm.**

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Board members will meet the week before the annual meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021 from 9-11 am CST. A post annual board meeting will occur on Wednesday Jan. 27, 2021 at 8:00 am CST.

Position Vacancy Announcements

Director NE Rice Research & Extension Center

Link to announcement:

https://uasys.wd5.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/UASYS/job/Harrisburg/Research-Farm-Manager_R0001523

Summary of Job Duties:

The individual will facilitate with the implementation and management of field and plot-level agronomic crop production and research at the Northeast Rice Research and Extension Center (Center). The successful candidate will implement and manage: field/plot preparation, planting, fertilization, pest management, irrigation infrastructure, and harvest of all Center crops. The individual will maintain farm records documenting agronomic operations at the Center. Job duties will also include plant/soil monitoring; installation and management of water control structures/sensors; irrigation management and scheduling technologies; machinery management; facilities management; and farm personnel management/scheduling. The individual will assist in managing and supervising farm staff including research technicians, farm workers, and hourly student workers. Furthermore, this individual will facilitate communications among researchers, technicians, students, tenant farmer(s), and other center collaborators to accomplish project objectives.

The individual will be responsible for:

- implementation and management of all field and plot-level research and demonstration crops at the Northeast Rice Research and Extension Center (Center), including: field/plot preparation, planting, fertilization, pest management, managing irrigation infrastructure/sensors, and harvest. Job duties will also include: soil/plant health monitoring, precipitation monitoring, soil moisture monitoring, and machinery management for all associated field and plot-level research/demonstration activities at the center. [60%]
- working directly with tenant farmer(s) to assist in the planning, implementation and management of agronomic production plans for portions of the Center. This will include facilitating communication between the tenant farmer(s) and project supervisors as well as communication with other cooperating partners

such as researchers, university administrators, and industry professionals. [20%].

- supervision of hourly student labor and farm workers. [10%].
- maintaining farm records that document agronomic operations at the Center [5%]
- assisting in preparation of reports, manuscripts and presentations for lab meetings, field days, scientific meetings, and scientific journals [5%]

Minimum Qualifications

This position requires a Bachelor's degree in a related field with three years of relevant professional experience, OR a Master's degree in a related field.

Preferred Qualifications

Graduate training in agronomy, plant/soil science, agricultural engineering, agricultural systems technology, and statistics with field research experience is preferred. Preference will be given to individuals with experience in rice production in the Arkansas Delta. Experience in crop management, geographic information systems, and water management is preferred. Private Pesticide Applicator certification is preferred. Excellent verbal and written communication skills are essential. The candidate should have the ability to collaborate with a wide range of professionals including university/federal scientists, tenant farmer(s), and the general public that collaborate with the Center. A valid Arkansas driver's license is required and the individual must be capable of operating university vehicles, farm equipment (tractor, combine, backhoe, etc.), and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) that are typical of a research and demonstration farm.

Position Available: Director, Tidewater AREC in Suffolk, VA

Content: The College of Agriculture & Life Sciences (CALs) at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) is seeking a Director for the Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center (TAREC). This is a tenure-track position at the Associate or Professor rank. The tenure home for this position will be within one of the 9 academic units with CALs, negotiated at time of hire.

The TAREC pursues a vision of excellence in discovery, development, evaluation, and dissemination of technical information critical to profitability and sustainability of field crop agriculture and commercial swine production in the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond.

The primary responsibility of the Director, who serves as the administrative head of the TAREC, is to provide leadership and support for regional, national and international excellence in current and future integrated research and Extension programs appropriate for TAREC's vision and mission. Leadership activities include, but are not limited to, recruiting and facilitating the professional development of faculty, staff, and graduate students; developing and implementing short- and long-term strategic plans for the Center; managing the Center's human, physical, and financial resources; and facilitating intra- and inter-departmental teamwork among faculty and staff and collaboration with other units. The Director is responsible for providing or coordinating mentoring and professional development opportunities as well as providing annual evaluation of TAREC faculty and staff members, in pursuance of enriching the TAREC community and promoting collaboration, programmatic, and unit excellence. The Director will build TAREC's capacity in digital and precision agriculture in support of the VT SmartFarm Innovation Network™. In addition, the Director will maintain a research/extension program in an area relevant to the mission of the TAREC at a level that fits with the leadership role priority.

View the complete job posting at <https://careers.pageuppeople.com/968/cw/en-us/job/514607/director-tidewater-arec> or go to jobs.vt.edu and search for Job # 514607.

Contact Information:

Susan E. Duncan, Ph.D., R.D., Associate Director, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station,
duncans@vt.edu

Tony Wolf, Ph.D., Director, Alison H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center
Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech, vitis@vt.edu

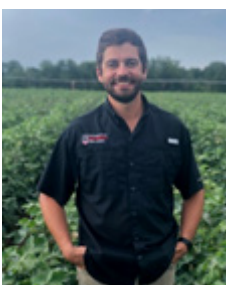
WASHINGTON REPORT

December 1, 2020

Lee Van Wychen

2020 Weed Science Policy Fellows: Camp Hand and Vasiliy Lakoba

The Weed Science Policy Fellowship program is a unique opportunity for graduate students to assist me in my role as Executive Director of Science Policy for WSSA while gaining experience dealing with a broad array of weed science policy issues. This year's Science Policy Fellows are Lavesta "Camp" Hand at the University of Georgia and Vasiliy Lakoba at Virginia Tech.



Camp is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Georgia under the direction of Dr. Stanley Culpepper. Camp received a B.S. and M.S. in Horticulture from Auburn University, and is passionate about weed management in vegetable systems, which led him to Dr. Culpepper's program. Through his studies, Camp became extremely passionate about doing work that was unbiased and based on grower needs. Currently his research focuses on determining the possibility of using 2,4-D or dicamba as preplant burndown herbicides over plastic mulch prior to vegetable transplanting, quantifying the reduction in selection pressure associated with the utilization of cover crops, residual herbicides, and layby applications in cotton, and cereal rye response to commonly used wheat herbicides for improved weed control in rye produced for grain. Camp is interested in policy because he has seen the positive impact that Dr. Culpepper's involvement in policy has made on Georgia agriculture. Camp wants to help producers in a similar way, and having exposure to policy through this fellowship will allow him to do that, wherever he ends up.



Vasiliy is a fourth year PhD candidate at Virginia Tech working on invasive plant ecology with Dr. Jacob Barney. His primary research is on local adaptation to climate and stress across the agricultural and non-agricultural ecotypes of Johnsongrass. At Virginia Tech, he is an Interfaces of Global Change Fellow, pursuing additional research into noxious weed policy, as well as freshwater salinization. Prior to this, he worked on forest understory restoration while completing an M.S. at Penn State. Vasiliy is interested in how invasive species policy can be informed by bolstering communication channels between researchers, land managers, industry, advocates, government agencies, and other stakeholders.

Major Changes in the House and Senate Ag Committees

There will be a significant transition in leadership for both the House and Senate Ag Committees. House Ag Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) lost his re-election bid after a 30 year tenure in the House. He has served as either chair or ranking member of the House Ag committee since 2005. In addition, House Ag Committee Ranking Member, Rep. Mike Conway (R-TX) is retiring this year after 16 years in Congress. He also served as chair of the committee from 2015-2019.

On the Senate side, Senate Ag Committee Chairman Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS) is retiring after 40 years in Congress. He spent 16 years in the House and 24 years in the Senate. He is the only member in the history of Congress to chair both the House and Senate Ag Committees. Senate Ag Committee ranking member Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) is the only Ag Committee leader who will be returning. Sen. Stabenow is in her 4th Senate term and served as chair of the Senate Ag Committee from 2011-2015.

The top two candidates for the House Ag Committee chairmanship are Rep. David Scott of Georgia and Jim Costa of California. For Republicans, Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson of Pennsylvania and Rep. Rick Crawford of Arkansas are most often named as candidates to take over the ranking member spot on the committee.

Sen. Stabenow of Michigan likely will remain the top Democrat on the Senate Ag Committee, while Arkansas Sen. John Boozman is the lead candidate to take over the GOP side, likely as chairman if Republicans maintain the hold on the Senate.

FY 2021 Appropriations Update

A bipartisan agreement on spending levels for fiscal 2021 is raising hope that lawmakers can agree on a government-wide spending bill before the end of the year. The continuing resolution (CR) that has been funding the government since FY21 began Oct. 1 expires Dec. 11. The government would partially shut down after that unless Congress passes another CR or reaches an agreement on an omnibus measure.

USDA Program	FY19 Final	FY20 Final		FY21 President	FY21 House	FY21 Senate	FY21 Final
	-----Millions-----						
ARS	\$1,303	\$1,414		\$1,368	\$1,452	\$1,510	?
NIFA	\$1,471	\$1,527		\$1,591	\$1,574	\$1,539	?
AFRI Competitive Grants	\$415	\$425		\$600	\$435	\$435	?
Hatch Act (Exp. stations)	\$259	\$259		\$243	\$259	\$259	?
Smith Lever (Extension)	\$315	\$315		\$299	\$315	\$315	?
IR-4 Program	\$12	\$12		\$17	\$15	\$12	?
Crop Protection and Pest Management (CPPM)	\$20	\$20		\$20	\$20	\$20	?

Note- For FY 2021, both the House and Senate provide \$3 million to APHIS to partner with State departments of agriculture and forestry commissions in States considered to be the epicenter of **cogongrass** infestations to assist with its control and treatment.

USDA-NIFA Establishes Two Artificial Intelligence Research Institutes

Two artificial intelligence (AI) research institutes are being created by USDA-NIFA with a \$20 million investment in each to expand artificial intelligence research in farming and food processing over the next five years. NSF also announced the creation of five AI institutes. More institute announcements are anticipated in coming years. USDA's two AI institutes are:

Future Agricultural Resilience, Management and Sustainability: This AI institute will be led by a team at the **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign** and will advance AI research in computer vision, machine learning, soft object manipulation, and intuitive human-robot interaction to solve major agricultural challenges including labor shortages, efficiency and welfare in animal agriculture, environmental resilience of crops, and the need to safeguard soil health. The institute features a new joint Computer Science + Agriculture degree and global clearinghouse to foster collaboration in AI-driven agriculture research.

Next Generation Food Systems: This AI institute will be led by a team at the **University of California, Davis**, integrates a holistic view of the food system with AI and bioinformatics to understand biological data and processes, addressing issues of molecular breeding to optimize traits for yield, crop quality, and pest/disease resistance; agricultural production; food processing and distribution; and nutrition. Major emphasis is on inclusive education and outreach approaches to build a diverse, next-generation workforce.

New CAST Issue Paper: "Ground and Aerial Robots for Agricultural Production: Opportunities and Challenges"

This Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) issue paper is now [available for free download](#). The paper discusses ground and aerial robots; robotic manipulators; robots used for row crops, orchards, and specialty crops; automated systems in animal agriculture; and enabling factors for the deployment and adoption of robots.

Conservation Enhancement Act Signed Into Law

America's Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Act was signed into law ([Public Law No: 116-188](#)) on October 30. The new law contained eight bills that were introduced in either the House or the Senate or both that reauthorized a number of key conservation programs as well as created new authorization for a chronic wasting disease (CWD) task force and for national fish habitat partnerships. The legislation, led by Senate Environment and Public Works Committee chair Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) and ranking member Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE), had strong support across the conservation community and marks one more success for conservation legislation enacted during the 116th Congress.

Among its provisions, the ACE Act will:

- Reauthorize the North American Wetlands Conservation Act at up to \$60 million per year through 2025.
- Reauthorize the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) through 2025 at \$15 million per year for Interior, \$5 million per year for USDA and \$5 million per year for Commerce.
- Authorize funds to combat the threat of invasive species through the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act with up to \$2.5 million per year through 2025 for both Interior and the Army Corp of Engineers.
- Reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program through 2025.
- Commission a study by the National Academy of Sciences regarding the pathways and mechanisms of the transmission of chronic wasting disease in the United States.

EPA Finalizes Application Exclusion Zone Requirements

In January, the National and Regional Weed Science Societies [submitted comments](#) on EPA's proposed Application Exclusion Zone (AEZ) regulation revisions. We are happy to see that EPA adopted most of those revisions when they released their final AEZ requirements in October 29, 2020. The AEZ is the area surrounding pesticide application equipment that exists during outdoor pesticide applications. Below are some of the improvements made:

- AEZ requirements only apply within the boundaries of the agricultural establishment, removing off-farm responsibilities that were difficult for state regulators to enforce.
- Immediate family members of farm owners are now exempted from all aspects of the AEZ requirements. Farm owners and their family are now able to shelter in place inside closed buildings, giving them flexibility to decide whether to stay on-site.
- New clarifying language has been added so that applications that are suspended due to individuals entering an AEZ may be resumed after those individuals have left the AEZ.
- Simplified criteria to determine whether applications are subject to the 25- or 100-foot AEZ.

EPA Proposes Interim Registration Decision for Paraquat

EPA issued a [proposed interim decision \(PID\) for paraquat](#) on October 22, 2020. WSSA has previously submitted comments on EPA's draft human health and ecological risk assessments for paraquat in 2016 and 2019. The proposed interim decision contains the following measures:

- Prohibiting aerial application for all uses and use sites except cotton desiccation;
- Prohibiting pressurized handgun and backpack sprayer application methods on the label;
- Limiting the maximum application rate for alfalfa to one pound a.i./ac;
- Requiring enclosed cabs if area treated in 24-hr period is more than 80 acres;
- Requiring enclosed cabs or PF10 respirators if area treated in 24-hr period is 80 acres or less;
- Requiring a residential area drift buffer and 7-day restricted entry interval (REI) for cotton des-

iccation;

- Requiring a 48-hour REI for all crops and uses except cotton desiccation
- Adding mandatory spray drift management label language.
- More permissive: Truck drivers who are not certified applicators can transport previously opened paraquat containers.

[Comments on EPA's proposed interim decision are due Dec. 22, 2020](#). WSSA has requested a 90-day extension.

EPA Releases Draft Biological Evaluations for the Triazines

On Nov. 5, 2020, EPA released its [draft biological evaluations](#) for atrazine, simazine and propazine for review and comment. Biological evaluations (BEs) are the beginning of EPA's Endangered Species Act consultation review process for pesticides where they determine if an endangered or threatened species or critical habitat could be affected by the use of a certain pesticide. After considering the public comments and any additional data received, EPA will finalize the BEs. If the EPA determines a pesticide may affect a listed species or its critical habitat, it will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service (the Services) as appropriate. The Services will then issue a biological opinion to determine if the population of a species would be adversely impacted and, if so, propose ways to reduce risks.

- These are the first herbicides to go through EPA's Revised Method for Species Biological Evaluations of Conventional Pesticides. Glyphosate will be second (see below).
- The BEs make effects determinations for 1,795 listed species and 792 designated critical habitats
- The draft BEs predict that:
 - Atrazine is likely to adversely affect 54 percent of all species and 40 percent of critical habitats;
 - Propazine is likely to adversely affect 4 percent of all species and 2 percent of critical habitats; and
 - Simazine is likely to adversely affect approximately 53 percent of species and 40 percent of critical habitats.

[Comments on the draft BEs for the triazines are due on January 5, 2021](#). WSSA has requested a 90-day extension.

EPA Releases Draft Biological Evaluations for Glyphosate

Not far behind the triazines, EPA issued its [draft biological evaluations](#) for glyphosate on November 27, 2020. EPA predicted that glyphosate is likely to adversely affect 93% of the endangered species, with plants accounting for more than half of them. EPA also concluded that 96% of the critical habitats it considered could be at risk from glyphosate as well.

[Comments on the draft BEs for glyphosate are due Jan. 26, 2021](#). WSSA will likely request an extension of this comment period.

National Academy of Sciences Webinar on the Future of Sustainable Agrochemistry

This webinar, hosted by the Chemical Sciences Roundtable on November 12th, examined the current landscape of agrochemistry and discussed methods and technologies to sustain crop production into the future using chemistry. Speakers included: Dr. Peter Eckes, BASF Bioscience Research; Dr. George Frisvold, The University of Arizona; and Dr. Tejas K. Shah, Corteva Agriscience. The webinar recording is [available here](#).

2020 Survey Results of Common and Troublesome Weeds Now Available

The 2020 survey results for weeds in grass crops, pastures & turf are posted at <http://wssa.net/wssa/weed/surveys/>. Weeds barely mentioned in 2017 that increased in 2020 include medusahead, ventenata, dogfennel, Scotch thistle, vaseygrass, Lehmann lovegrass, milkweed spp., and Lepidium spp.

- Top 3 most common weeds in all grass crops: 1) pigweed spp., 2) foxtail spp., and 3) crabgrass spp.
- Top 3 most troublesome weeds in all grass crops: 1) pigweed spp., 2) Cirsium/Carduus spp., and 3) bluegrass spp.