



University of Kentucky  
UKnowledge

---

International Grassland Congress Proceedings

XXI International Grassland Congress / VIII  
International Rangeland Congress

---

## Overcoming Biological, Political and Social Obstacles to Achieve Effective Integrated Management of Harmful Organisms in Rangelands

Robert E. Wilson  
*University of Nevada*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/igc>



Part of the [Plant Sciences Commons](#), and the [Soil Science Commons](#)

This document is available at <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/igc/21/16-1/13>

The XXI International Grassland Congress / VIII International Rangeland Congress took place in Hohhot, China from June 29 through July 5, 2008.

Proceedings edited by Organizing Committee of 2008 IGC/IRC Conference

Published by Guangdong People's Publishing House

---

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Plant and Soil Sciences at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Grassland Congress Proceedings by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact [UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu](mailto:UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu).

## **Overcoming biological , political and social obstacles to achieve effective integrated management of harmful organisms in rangelands**

Robert E. Wilson , Extension Educator , University of Nevada Cooperative Extension , White Pine County , 995 Compton Street , Ely , Nevada , 89301 , USA . wilsonr@unce.unr.edu

**Key words :** invasive weeds ,invasive organisms ,collaboration ,organization management

**Introduction** The dramatic spread of invasive harmful organisms across western U.S. landscapes is having a significantly detrimental effect on natural resources . Unchecked , they will not only diminish the natural environment , but also the economic wellbeing of the area . This threat , recognized for quite some time , is generally not being adequately addressed .

**Results and discussion** When Nevada Rancher Tony Tipton was asked what he has learned when trying to implement a different method of resource management he responded : " I have underestimated people's resistance to change ." Many approaches have been made across the world to overcome the obstacles to control or manage harmful organisms on rangelands . After a number of different approaches , the author has developed a process that has proven successful in East/Central Nevada , USA . It has these different important components :

- 1) Responsibility : All landowners (including federal , state , or county government ownership) are socially and legally responsible for invasive species populations on land owned and/or managed by them . Even with laws requiring compliance , education and involvement will vary from one location to another according to land expanse and ownership , and the specific invasive specie(s) involved . The issue cannot be assigned to others for solutions-instead the landowner has that responsibility .
- 2) Ownership of the problem and the program by people within the community is probably the most critical ingredient to successful long-term programs . It is also the most overlooked ingredient because of the difficulty to internalize among those affected .
- 3) Collaboration : Working together and creating trust among participants is paramount to successfully controlling invasive species across land ownerships .
- 4) Active involvement : Active participation by landowners is key to internalizing ownership and to acknowledging responsibility . A hired assistant may be needed to teach community groups about coordinating , proper planning , and provide current management knowledge , but the landowner must assume the role of administration of all resources .
- 5) Continuity requires authority : All too frequently within bureaucracies it is difficult to get actions accomplished on the ground . Whenever obstacles ( administrative , legal , authority , etc .) can be minimized the efficiency can improve .
- 6) Knowledge : Educational focus on modifying land use practices for functioning ecology can be achieved . This ecological approach is usually missing . The weakness is that our current land management practices continually leave openings for new invasions .
- 7) Scope : The fact that invasive species do not respect boundaries across the vast expanses of minimally managed rangelands requires programs of tremendous scope when compared to urban areas .
- 8) Efficiency : It is very efficient to mimic profit motivated private industry . Government run programs tend to lose efficiency over the long term . Long-term efficiency requires a systematic approach to the invasive species problem conducted in a holistic manner , using modern technology .
- 9) The use of technology and dedicated , well trained , permanent staff is a step frequently missing .
- 10) Understanding where people started , the steps being taken , and their effects are essential to understand the effectiveness of the program . Only with ongoing and regular evaluation can program managers determine mistakes , accomplishments , and results to be presented to program partners and oversight organizations .

**Conclusions** The demonstrated program is flexible in approach to finding solutions to sometimes very difficult problems , whether they are social , biological , logistical or financial . This program has demonstrated that an efficient , cost effective program primarily funded from fees charged directly for services rendered can be developed . Oversight and evaluation occurs as the work is completed . Some groups may need a catalyst (hired assistance which is part of the process) to help landowners address their own problems , but the solutions must be owned by the participants .

### **References**

- Alonso , A . , F. Dallmeier , E. Granck , P. Raven . 2001 . Biodiversity ; Connecting with the Tapestry of Life . President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology ; Smithsonian Institution Monitoring & Assessment of Biodiversity Program . *Smithsonian , Washington , D.C .*
- Amatya , P . 2005 . Problems of provision , externality and efficiency , and the case of coalition-based invasive weed management in the Southwest . Unpublished M.S. Thesis , *Utah State University , Logan , Utah .* 112 p . June 13 , 2007 .
- Eiswerth , M.E . , W.S. Johnson , S. Lewis , L. Hughes , 2001 . The Economic Costs of Delaying Weed Control : An Illustration Based on Nevada's Tall Whitetop Initiative , SP-01-08 .
- Shelley , R.L . and J.K . Petroff . 1999 . Biology and Management of Noxious Rangeland Weeds . *Oregon State University Press , Corvallis , OR .*