

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
February 8, 1983

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education met at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 8, 1983 in Room 104 of the State Capitol. With Chairman Rep. Esther G. Bengtson presiding, all members were present. The budget for the Agricultural Experiment Station was heard.

Tom Crosser, OBPP, gave his analysis of the Agricultural Experiment Station budget. He referred the Committee to Program 14; see Exhibit "A." He explained the reasons some of the figures had been adjusted in the budget. The LFA figures are higher in several of the operations categories because the OBPP took out some of the expenditures. The amounts were related to moving of the Seed Testing Lab, Soils Lab, and Foundation Seed Service Laboratories into designated accounts. The difference in travel between OBPP and the LFA was mainly related to out-of-State travel; the primary difference in Other Expenses is in the recharges. Regarding Equipment, OBPP inflated the 1982 actual expenditure base to fiscal 1984 and 1985. Inflated amounts were then reduced 10 percent.

Program 15 - U.S. Range Station. Mr. Crosser said this program was funded at current level.

Bill Sykes, LFA, stated that the LFA budget for the Ag. Experiment Station provided for current level services, with an 8.7% increase over the 1983 biennium. He referred the Committee to P. 674 of the LFA narrative. In Program 14, he adjusted out-of-State travel by taking a four-year average of expenditures and carrying it forward. He pointed out that out-of-State travel expenditures increased by over 49% from FY 1981 to FY 1982. The LFA budget does not contain any funding for the renovation of buildings because there was no justification supplied with the budget. In the Equipment category, he took a five-year average of the equipment expenditures (1979-83). An equipment listing was not available before the budget analysis was done. In response to Rep. Bengtson, he said he had received an equipment inventory list the previous week, but the listing was not a capital request, it was an inventory. He added that the Station did submit a capital equipment request, but it did not tie in with the amount presented in their budget request.

Mr. Sykes said the reason he kept the Seed Testing Lab, the Soils Lab, and the Foundation Seed Service Lab in the current level was because the Service wanted to leave some of the personal services in the unrestricted budget. This was because the Lab couldn't be supported by the current fee structure in the statutes. He added, however, that all of the earmarked revenue earned from the three labs was being transferred to the designated side. This would cause an impact on the General fund.

In response to Rep. Bengtson, Mr. Crosser said he had received a listing of what the Station's equipment needs were system-wide, but it didn't tie to the dollar amount in the original budget request. The list was not prioritized.

Dr. William Tietz, President of Montana State University, then gave his presentation. He gave a short history of the Agricultural Experiment Station. He expressed concern that the inflation rates used for the current year were significantly under those provided in 1981. This will force the Station to curtail activities. He pointed out that the 6.2% vacancy savings that was imposed on the Experiment Station during the 1983 biennium was a hardship, and expressed concern that the fact that this \$700,000 reduction in personal services was an error be taken into consideration.

Dr. J. R. Welsh, Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, then spoke. He drew the Committee's attention to a booklet entitled, "Montana Agricultural Experiment Station 1985 Biennium Budget Request;" see Exhibit "B," bulk testimony file. The contents of the booklet were then reviewed. He stressed the importance of considering the development of the Ag. Experiment Station budget as an investment in the State's largest industry, with a proven track record of return to the agricultural sector as well as the State economy in general. He pointed out that for every dollar of general fund invested, the State received about \$1.50 worth of research program. He suggested replacing and updating Ag. Experiment Station inventory at approximately a 10% rate based on current purchasing power. He stated that the problem in developing a replacement list is that the list becomes obsolete rapidly. Some things on the list may not need replacing when they are scheduled for replacement, and some things not on the list may break down and need to be replaced before the scheduled time. Their schedule proposes the utilization of equipment replacement at the time the program is operational rather than making replacement lists.

Sen. Haffey wanted to know why adjustments hadn't been made for exceptional items on the inventory list. Dr. Welsh said that taking out the exceptional items from the list was one way to address the issue. He added, however, that the research community was sometimes thought of as a static system in terms of equipment, and factors such as the technology explosion in the electronics industry changes inventory compositions. Such items as the electron microscope might be treated separately. The Station's mechanism of dealing with the dynamic nature of the issue was to change the purchase requirements to meet the demands of the day. Regarding the fund source information on P. 29, he notified the Committee

that he had received the first federal cut on the FY 1984 budget. There will be no increase for the Dept. of State Research Service. Regarding Earmarked Revenue, he pointed out that the LFA recommended that the Station's carryover funds be included in the 1984 appropriations. He submitted that this would strip the Station clean of any management options as far as carryover funds went. The Station uses five-year averages when calculating their earmarked revenue estimates.

Dr. Welch then addressed their Weed Research Modified Request. The infringement of perennial weeds on rangeland is a problem that goes far beyond agriculture. A number of people have worked together to formulate the Weed Management Plan, which encompasses the Ag. Experiment Station as the research component, the Cooperative Extension Service as an information mechanism, and the State Dept. of Agriculture as the coordinating agency. The request is for 4.5 FTE each year of the biennium, to address the need to reinforce the existing weed research team.

Dr. Welsh called the Committee's attention to a change the Station wished to make in the budget request. There were some capital equipment problems at the Miles City Experiment Station. In 1984 they are requesting about \$85,000 worth of capital equipment, and then dropping back to about \$6,300 for 1985. They feel that without any draw on State general funds, but maintaining a carryover, they can accommodate the request. The \$85,000 will be used to replace farm equipment.

Dr. Welsh then concluded his review of the contents of Exhibit "B."

Questions were then asked. Rep. Donaldson wanted to know if the Miles City Experiment Station was expected to become self-sustaining. Dr. Welsh said they were predicting genetic livestock sales revenues, which was difficult to do, and thus income estimates were hard to make. The change from the potential request for general fund money to the ability to manage on earmarked revenue is a combination of a number of factors, including additional sales beyond what they projected. The projected sales estimates were conservative. They project that at the end of the 1985 biennium they will have about \$400,000 in carryover funds.

Rep. Donaldson wanted to know why Miles City would generate about 50% of its income from sales, while the rest of the stations only generated about 10%. Dr. Welsh said one reason was because the station was in the business of selling livestock seed stock, which commands a higher price than normal research stock.

Regarding the problem dealing with the North Experiment Station and a new power line coming into Havre, Dr. Welsh said the situation hadn't been resolved yet. Discussion took place regarding the issue.

The Committee took a five-minute recess.

Keith Kelly, Director of the Montana Dept. of Agriculture, then spoke. The Dept. of Agriculture is very supportive of the entire weed control effort. They have more than \$100,000 in losses annually due to weed control problems. The Dept. of Agriculture part of the weed control proposal is in the form of a bill rather than in their budget because they didn't get it in the budget in time. It is a high priority. The cost of the Dept. of Agriculture's part in the program would be \$46,000 per year, and they have the statutory authority to do some of the weed coordination efforts, although they have not to date had the money to conduct this activity.

Larry Johnson, a farmer from Hill County representing the Advisory Council to the Research Station, spoke. The Council is comprised of representatives from each Experiment Station across the State. He outlined the activities of the Council. At present, persons wanting to get their soil tested often send the samples out of State because of the problems with the present structuring of the Soils Testing Lab. Creating a designated account for the Lab would alleviate many of the problems. He was also in support of establishing designated accounts for the other two labs, as per the Station's request. The Council has spent a great deal of time addressing the subject of capital equipment. A system needs to be set up whereby factors of ten years and 10% are used in conjunction with an inflation factor to determine the replacement of equipment. He stressed that some flexibility was needed, also. Because of the Vacancy savings imposed during the 1983 biennium, his Experiment Station had \$13,000 less to operate on.

Pat Underwood, Montana Farm Bureau Federation, wished to go on record in support of the appropriations for the Experiment Station.

Jo Brunner, Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE), spoke; see written testimony Exhibit "C."

Bill Riley, Stanford, Chairman of the Weed Subcommittee of the Executive Committee of the Rural Area Development Committee, wished to go on record in support of the Agricultural Experiment Station and the work it had done.

Mons Tiegen, representing the Montana Stockgrowers Association, the Montana Woolgrowers Association, and the Montana Cowbells, spoke. The Stockgrowers convention in Missoula passed a number of resolutions pertaining to weeds; see Exhibit "D." Weed control is the responsibility of everyone in society and not just farmers.

Steve Meyer, Montana Association of Conservation Districts, spoke. See written testimony Exhibit "E."

Chuck Jarecki, a rancher from Polson, testified. See Exhibit "F." He spoke on behalf of the Montana Knapweed Action Committee.

Bob Stevens, Montana Grain Growers Association, spoke. He was in support of the testimony given by the rest of the organizations.

Garth Good, Chester, rose in support of the budget as presented by the Agricultural Experiment Station. In the recent past, farming has become much more capital intensive and more technical. This coupled with low commodity prices makes the right choices essential to ensure a long-term economically viable operation. The Ag. Experiment Station's work has benefitted his operation in a number of areas. He rose in support of full staffing and equipping of the Experiment Stations.

Dennis Wagner, Associate students of Montana State University, spoke; see Exhibit "G."

Gordon McOmber, a former State Senator, spoke. Mr. Taft, Secretary of the Miles City Chamber of Commerce, was in support of the recommendations made by the Ag. Experiment Station, and Mr. McOmber relayed the message. He presented a letter of support for the Station from Dey Schlapia, a Wibaux County Commissioner; see Exhibit "H." He submitted that agriculture and the resources would always be the backbone of Montana's economy.

Frank Loch, Dutton, spoke. He is a producer and co-operator with the Triangle Experiment Station in Conrad. He rose in support of the Ag. Experiment Station's proposal. He asked the Committee's consideration to preserve the funding for the fledgling Triangle Experiment Station.

Bill Pruitt, representing the Citizens for Agricultural Research and Extension in Sweetgrass County, spoke. He stressed the importance of Research in relation to the quantity and quality of food production. He rose in support of finding a way to fight the weed problems in the State.

Ross Fitzgerald, also a member of the care group from Teton County, spoke. The methodology used in agriculture in the past 20 years is in a rut. Farmers have a number of concerns, and research and development are the tools to deal with them and to keep up with the changes taking place in agriculture.

Bruce Benson, a grower of fresh produce from Missoula, spoke; see Exhibit "I."

Pete Jackson, a Harrison, Mt. owner of a livestock and small grain operation, spoke. He reminded the Committee that 2/3 of the area in Montana is rangeland. It needs to be well cared for.

Pat Iman, a member of the Montana Grange of the Montana Extension Advisory Council, spoke; see Exhibit "J."

The Agricultural Experiment Station had a short film-strip dealing with pathogens, biological control, etc., which due to the lack of time left, was not viewed. In addition, two documents were left with the Committee members: "Montana Agricultural Experiment Station - Use of Program Modification Funds;" see Exhibit "K," bulk testimony file, and a paper entitled, "Noxious Weeds in Montana;" see Exhibit "L."

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Rep. Esther G. Bengtson, Ch.
Rep. Esther G. Bengtson - Chairman

VISITORS' REGISTER

HOUSE EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE~~BILL~~ AG. Experiment Station BudgetDate 2/8/83

SPONSOR _____

| NAME | RESIDENCE | REPRESENTING | SUP- PORT | OP- POSE |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|--------------|-------------|
| Larry Johnson | Kremlo, MT. | Ad advisors Council | - | |
| Clyde CARROLL | MSU | MSU | ✓ | |
| John Cromer | 3025 Moulton Butte, MT. | Self- | ✓ | |
| Betty Jackson | Hammon Mont | Self | ✓ | |
| J. J. Namm | East Helena | Met immediate case | | |
| Pat Aman | Victor MT | Self | ✓ | |
| Chuck Jarecki | Polson, MT. | Knipweed action com | ✓ | |
| GARY P BOON | CHESLEY, MT | SELF | ✓ | |
| BRUCE A. BENSON | MISSOULA, MONTANA | SELF | ✓ | |
| Jack Noble | HELENA | UNIVERSITY SYSTEM | ✓ | |
| David Williams | | | - | |
| Melba Hedrick | Bozeman | ELC | ✓ | |
| Frankie Hatt | Big Timber | Self | ✓ | |
| BILL PRUITT | Big Timber (michod) | self and Sweet Grass county SARE committee | ✓ | |
| Cindy Stortahl | GLASGOW | EASTERN MT CITIZENS | ✓ | |
| Johnna Halmar | Baker | self | ✓ | |
| John Halmar | Baker | self | | |
| Don Wagner | HELENA | Students of MSU | ✓ | |
| Steve Dunham | Baker | self | | |

IF YOU CARE TO WRITE COMMENTS, ASK SECRETARY FOR LONGER FORM.

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.

VISITORS' REGISTER

HOUSE _____ COMMITTEE

BILL _____

Date _____

SPONSOR _____

| NAME | RESIDENCE | REPRESENTING | SUP- PORT | OP- POSE |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Frank Lohr | Dutton MT | self - CARE | X | |
| KETH KEMP | WEEKS | DEPT. OF AG. | ✓ | |
| Willie Williams | Glendine | self | | |
| Wong Tegen | Helena MT | Wodgerson, Statger, Gontella | X | |
| J. Brennan | Helena | W. I. F. F. | X | |
| Joss H. Fitzgerald | Power | self - farmer | X | |
| Patricia | Bozeman | Mont Farm Bureau | X | |
| John May | Helena | M.A.C.D. | X | |
| Bob Stephens | Dutton | M.C.G.A. | X | |

IF YOU CARE TO WRITE COMMENTS, ASK SECRETARY FOR LONGER FORM.

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.

NAME: AT Underwood DATE: FEB 8, 83

ADDRESS: 502 S 19th Ave, Suite 100, 57715

PHONE: 587-3153

REPRESENTING WHOM? Montana Farm Bureau

APPEARING ON WHICH PROPOSAL: AC Ex Amendment 21971005

DO YOU: SUPPORT? ✓ AMEND? OPPOSE?

COMMENTS: The Montana Farm Bureau
only supports the request for funding
for MSU's AC Ex Amendment
21971005.

PLEASE LEAVE ANY PREPARED STATEMENTS WITH THE COMMITTEE SECRETARY.

REPORT EBSR...
DATE : 01/08/83
TIME : 16/25/25

OFFICE OF BUDGET PROGRAM PLANNING
EXECUTIVE BUDGET SYSTEM
AGENCY/PROGRAM/CONTROL --- BUDGET WORKSHEET

PAGE 203

AGENCY : 5109 AGRICULTURAL EXPER STATION
PROGRAM : 14 AG EXPERIMENT STATION
CONTROL : 000000 AG. EXPERIMENT STA.

CURRENT LEVEL SERVICES ONLY

| AF/OF | DESCRIPTION | OBPP FY 84 | LFA FY 84 | DIFF. FY 84 | SUB-CMT. FY 84 | OBPP FY 85 | LFA FY 85 | DIFF. FY 85 | SUB-CMT. FY 85 |
|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 0000 | FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) | 258.16 | 264.01 | 5.85 | | 258.16 | 264.01 | 5.85 | |
| 1100 | SALARIES | 5,094,155 | 5,166,678 | 72,523 | | 5,094,155 | 5,166,678 | 72,523 | |
| 1400 | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS | 950,083 | 763,343 | 13,260 | | 754,444 | 776,777 | 32,333 | |
| 1500 | HEALTH INSURANCE | 247,834 | 220,646 | -27,188 | | 247,834 | 220,646 | -27,188 | |
| | TOTAL LEVEL | 6,092,072 | 6,150,667 | 58,595 | | 6,096,433 | 6,164,101 | 67,668 | |
| 2100 | CONTRACTED SERVICES | 225,967 | 229,550 | 3,583 | | 238,509 | 242,306 | 3,797 | |
| 2200 | SUPPLIES & MATERIALS | 661,055 | 670,264 | 9,209 | | 704,342 | 714,099 | 9,757 | |
| 2300 | COMMUNICATIONS | 130,310 | 128,224 | -1,989 | | 150,512 | 148,299 | -2,213 | |
| 2400 | TRAVEL | 205,395 | 175,378 | -30,017 | | 217,718 | 182,274 | -35,444 | |
| 2500 | RENT | 71,650 | 71,722 | 72 | | 75,949 | 76,024 | 75 | |
| 2600 | UTILITIES | 200,093 | 200,091 | -2 | | 233,770 | 233,766 | -4 | |
| 2700 | REPAIR & MAINTENANCE | 172,051 | 177,077 | 5,026 | | 182,375 | 187,701 | 5,326 | |
| 2800 | OTHER EXPENSES | 116,899 | 81,876 | -35,023 | | 114,559 | 86,786 | -27,773 | |
| 2900 | GOODS PURCHASED FOR RESALE | 14 | 12 | -2 | | 15 | 12 | -3 | |
| | TOTAL LEVEL | 1,783,334 | 1,734,194 | -49,140 | | 1,917,719 | 1,871,267 | -46,482 | |
| 3100 | EQUIPMENT | 333,889 | 247,721 | -86,168 | | 353,922 | 247,721 | -106,201 | |
| | TOTAL LEVEL | 333,889 | 247,721 | -86,168 | | 353,922 | 247,721 | -106,201 | |
| 4200 | BUILDINGS | 17,628 | | -17,628 | | 18,686 | | -18,686 | |
| | TOTAL LEVEL | 17,628 | | -17,628 | | 18,686 | | -18,686 | |
| | TOTAL PROGRAM | 8,226,923 | 8,132,582 | -94,341 | | 8,386,790 | 8,283,089 | -103,701 | |
| 31801 | AES UNKST GENERAL OPER ACCT | 5,863,711 | 5,592,194 | 271,517 | | 5,957,050 | 5,744,653 | 212,397 | |
| 31802 | AES UNKST IRA OPER ACCT | 700,000 | 871,176 | 177,176 | | 700,000 | 808,696 | 108,696 | |
| 31803 | AES REGIONAL RES ACCT | 535,381 | 535,381 | | | 556,796 | 556,796 | | |
| 31804 | AES HATCH ACCT | 1,127,831 | 1,127,831 | | | 1,172,944 | 1,172,944 | | |
| | TOTAL PROGRAM | 8,226,923 | 8,132,582 | 94,341 | | 8,386,790 | 8,283,089 | 103,701 | |

REPORT EX 00
DATE : 01/28/83
TIME : 16/25/25

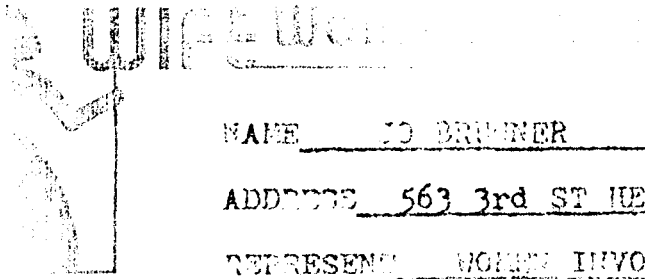
OFFICE OF BUDGET PROGRAM PLANNING
EXECUTIVE BUDGET SYSTEM
AGENCY/PROGRAM/CONTROL --- BUDGET WORKSHEET

PAGE 205

AGENCY : 5109 AGRICULTURAL EXPR STATION
PROGRAM : 15 US RANGE STATION
CONTROL : 00000

| AE/OE | DESCRIPTION | OBPP FY 84 | LFA FY 84 | DIFF. FY 84 | SUB-CMT. FY 84 | OBPP FY 85 | LFA FY 85 | DIFF. FY 85 | SUB-CMT. FY 85 |
|-------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 0000 | FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) | 40.13 | 40.13 | | | 40.13 | 40.13 | | |
| 1100 | SALARIES | 621,357 | 621,360 | 3 | | 621,357 | 621,360 | 3 | |
| 1400 | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS | 91,091 | 94,967 | 3,876 | | 92,023 | 96,583 | 4,560 | |
| 1500 | HEALTH INSURANCE | 38,525 | 36,989 | -1,536 | | 38,525 | 36,989 | -1,536 | |
| | TOTAL LEVEL | 750,973 | 753,316 | 2,343 | | 751,905 | 754,932 | 3,027 | |
| 2100 | CONTRACTED SERVICES | 8,442 | 8,442 | | | 8,949 | 8,948 | -1 | |
| 2200 | SUPPLIES & MATERIALS | 140,384 | 140,384 | | | 150,947 | 150,945 | -2 | |
| 2300 | COMMUNICATIONS | 28,291 | 26,610 | -1,681 | | 32,574 | 30,053 | -2,521 | |
| 2400 | TRAVEL | 5,766 | 5,765 | -1 | | 6,113 | 6,111 | -2 | |
| 2500 | RENT | 10,787 | 10,787 | | | 11,434 | 11,434 | | |
| 2600 | UTILITIES | 82,408 | 82,444 | 36 | | 102,430 | 102,475 | 45 | |
| 2700 | REPAIR & MAINTENANCE | 6,050 | 6,051 | 1 | | 6,413 | 6,414 | 1 | |
| 2800 | OTHER EXPENSES | 530 | 532 | 2 | | 562 | 563 | 1 | |
| | TOTAL LEVEL | 282,658 | 281,015 | -1,643 | | 319,422 | 316,943 | -2,479 | |
| 3200 | LIVESTOCK | 13,606 | 13,606 | | | 14,422 | 14,422 | | |
| | TOTAL LEVEL | 13,606 | 13,606 | | | 14,422 | 14,422 | | |
| | TOTAL PROGRAM | 1,047,237 | 1,047,937 | 700 | | 1,085,749 | 1,086,297 | 548 | |
| 31805 | AES-U S RANGE | 1,047,237 | 1,047,937 | 700 | | 1,085,749 | 1,086,297 | 548 | |
| | TOTAL PROGRAM | 1,047,237 | 1,047,937 | 700 | | 1,085,749 | 1,086,297 | 548 | |

Carried over



NAME JO BRUNNER BILL NO. _____
ADDRESS 563 3rd ST HELENA DATE Feb. 8, 1983
REPRESENT WOMEN INVOLVED IN FARM ECONOMICS
SUPPORT X OPPOSE _____ AMEND _____

COMMENTS:

My name is Jo Brunner and I am speaking today for the members of the Women Involved in Farm Economics organization.

W.I.F.E. considers the weed problem one of our agriculture communities most costly problems. And while the majority of the expense is paid for by agriculture, we do not consider it our problem alone. We believe that it, one way or the other is contributed to by all segments of our state citizens and that a portion of the control should be funded by the overall population of the state.

As to an inclination of its seriousness, I would refer you to a study made by Howard Johnson of the Environmental Quality Council in August 1982. Some of the conclusions drawn are: the need for the use of chemicals, tillage practices, plant and crop management, biocontrol and that there are different needs for control in different areas and thus diverse methods of control should be used.. The study states that noxious weeds are a significant environmental and economic problem in Montana and surrounding states: that weed control requires intensified efforts and the participation by all landowners, especially along the roadways and construction sights, to name a couple not directly associated with agriculture. It also states that noxious weeds should be an important factor in Environmental Impact statements and environmental assessments.

SB 4

After our disastrous effort in the 1981 legislature to put through a weed program, the agriculture community decided we'd better get our house in order if we were to get an effective weed program. The RAD committee, in cooperation with ISU, its research stations and personnel, the Department of Agriculture, county and district weed people, along with a lot of interested citizens have so far held 2 weed fairs with another scheduled this summer. We have held weed seminars, and have made conscious efforts to include legislators in these endeavors with very little success.

Report to Farm Economics

Through voluntary contributions from the agriculture organizations, from the weed districts and county weed people and again from the concerned individual citizens we raised over \$4,000 to send Bob Thoft to Europe on an extensive tour of the various research facilities doing our biological research. He brought back a lot of helpful information and much of that will be utilized in the program we are requesting now.

High on our list is an adequate greenhouse facility to hasten the procedure for introduction of the bio control species into our weed infestations. The length of time needed to prove each program varies but it ranges up to several years and each year lost adds greatly to our weed infestations.

We need further consideration in barley and wheat breeding; pasture grass research. Montana's climatic conditions require breeds of grain able to survive our bad winters, our late springs and the ability to resist the diseases that can take a years work. Our livestock industry benefits from research done and which will be continued with this overall program.

W.I.F.E. has a top priority to try to eliminate unnecessary duplication not only in the individual departments, but at the state and national level where research is concerned.

And I would conclude with this observation; that the number of those of us alive in Agriculture today would be considerable less, had we not had the help and the benefit of such research and applications of that research available as we are discussing today and tomorrow and in the long range building committee---and that our "cheap" food policy would not be so cheap, or so plentiful without such research and its application methods by the agriculture community.

Thank You.

Resolutions Passed By The Montana Stockgrowers Association - May 29, 1982

1. WEED LEVY

WHEREAS the spread of noxious weeds in Montana is a statewide problem of Monumental economic importance, and

WHEREAS the county weed boards are responsible for the control of noxious weeds in Montana, and

WHEREAS the county weed boards are presently funded with a two-mill levy which raises insufficient funds to effectively control the noxious weeds;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association request the state Legislature to raise the two-mill levy to a four-mill levy county permissive levy which will provide additional funding for the control of noxious weeds.

2. WEED RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

WHEREAS the spread of noxious weeds in Montana is causing a severe economic burden on many farms and ranches, and

WHEREAS on many weed-infested areas of Montana chemical control is not feasible due to sociological, political or economic reasons, and

WHEREAS chemical control involves repeated treatments to keep weeds under control, now the only solution to the noxious weed epidemic in Montana:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association urge the Montana Experiment Station and Extension Service to make noxious weed control research and education a top priority need in future years, with special emphasis on the biological aspects of weed control, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association support adequate state legislative funding of such research and education programs on a continuing basis.

3. COORDINATION ON WEED CONTROL

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association encourages the passage of legislation to coordinate all state and county agency activities addressing weed control and elimination to avoid the duplication of effort and the diversion of funds from the activity of weed control;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this legislation should consider creation of a statewide weed control board consisting of not more than five elected members and located within the State Department of Agriculture or other appropriate department, further that such board should utilize the research activities of Montana State University and other schools in all weed control programs, and

THAT further the Weed Control Board should have control over all funding raised for weed control regardless of whether such funds come from county, state or federal sources, except money raised through the county permissive levies.

4. APPRECIATION FOR GROUND SQUIRREL CONTROL

WHEREAS the Columbian squirrel problem has been getting worse and worse for many years since the original 1080 poison program was stopped, and

WHEREAS the Montana Department of Agriculture under the direction of Montana Agriculture Commissioner, Gordon McOmber and the Montana Department of Livestock under the direction of Dr. James Glosser and their excellent staff, worked diligently to get the 1080 program restored, and

WHEREAS the program is being expanded and is effective;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association extend a vote of sincere appreciation for the efforts and work that these departments have done in reinstituting this program.

5. PLOW-OUT BILL

WHEREAS an increasing amount of rangeland is being plowed under for use as farmland, and

WHEREAS many of these exposed soils are highly susceptible to wind and water erosion,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association support Colorado Senator Bill Armstrong's Plow-out bill which states that breaking of Class 4E, 6E, 7E and 8E lands would be ineligible for federal subsidies unless the land has a conservation plan that has been certified by the local conservation district;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association contact the state's Congressional Delegation and other key congressional figures to express support of this bill.

6. STATE GOALS FOR GRAZING

WHEREAS one third of all land in Montana is federal land which several thousand ranch families depend upon for the grazing of their livestock, and

WHEREAS the Forest Service and BLM are presently developing plans for the use of resources on these federal lands, and

WHEREAS the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has submitted state goals for the increased production of wildlife and fish, and

WHEREAS other amenities such as wilderness and wildlife are given more emphasis in the Forest Service or BLM plans than taxable, multiple use activities such as grazing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association request the Governor of the State of Montana to develop state goals for grazing on Forest Service and BLM land and to this end the Governor direct the appropriate state agency to review Forest Service and BLM plans to insure that

grazing is given consideration and that the livestock industry is fully represented in this process.

7. UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE GRAZING PERMITS

WHEREAS the United States Forest Service is proposing to place outfitters grazing permits up for bid;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Montana Stockgrowers Association discourage the Forest Service from entering into competitive bidding for any grazing permits.

8. WOLF TRANSPLANT

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association opposes the release of all wolf or wolf-cross animals within the State of Montana.

9. STREAM ACCESS

WHEREAS the privilege of landowners to regulate access to his private property has been a fundamental right, and

WHEREAS the purpose of fencing private property is for control of livestock and is a necessity in a responsible livestock breeding program, and

WHEREAS the decision of a District Judge prohibiting a private landowner from fencing and regulating traffic on and adjacent to a waterway that has never been declared navigable would establish a tragic and disturbing precedent,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association support the efforts of private landowners to manage access and control private property including stream beds, stream banks, and adjacent private lands.

10. NATURAL STREAMBED ACT AMENDMENTS

WHEREAS the proposals advanced by the Montana Association of Conservation Districts regarding amendments to the minimum standards as published in the Administrative Rules and proposals to the model rules affecting the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Acts of 1975 exceed the minimum standards established by the 1975 Act; and

WHEREAS it is the policy of the State of Montana to recognize the needs of irrigation and agricultural use of the rivers and streams and to protect the use of water by Montana citizens for all beneficial purposes;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association unalterably oppose the proposed amendments by the supervisors of conservation districts in the form of "Model Rules" or "Ordinances" which would create hardship for the agricultural industry or which in any way would curtail the present state surface water users;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association members who ranch in conservation districts within the State of Montana take an active part in their respective districts to protect the rights of water users as guaranteed by the constitution of the State of Montana.

11. RANGELAND RESOURCE LOAN PROGRAM

WHEREAS approximately 65 million acres in Montana is rangeland or forest suitable for grazing, and

WHEREAS this rangeland is the main resource for Montana's livestock production while also providing important contributions to the state's well-being through water production, recreation areas, wildlife and fish habitat, and

WHEREAS it is estimated that 41 percent of Montana's rangeland is in less than good condition, and producing less than its potential, and

WHEREAS the Rangeland Resource Loan Program administered by the Conservation Districts Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has proven to be an effective and important tool in improving rangeland conditions in Montana;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association go on record in support of a continued and reliable funding source which will allow the Rangeland Resource Loan Program to become self-sustaining.

12. CONSOLIDATION OF AGRICULTURE AND FISH AND GAME COMMITTEE OPPOSED

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association opposes the consolidation of the Agriculture Committee of the Montana House of Representatives with the Fish and Game and Natural Resources Committees.

13. BIENNIAL SESSION SUPPORTED

BE IT RESOLVED by the Montana Stockgrowers Association that the State of Montana legislative sessions, which now convene on a biennial basis, continue as biennial sessions and not be changed to annual legislative sessions.

14. ALTERNATIVE TAX

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association is in favor of an alternative tax to relieve the ever increasing property tax.

15. UTILITY LINES

BE IT RESOLVED by the Montana Stockgrowers Association that wherever utility lines are located within the state, the utility company owning the lines be required to comply with minimum height requirements;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT whenever material or equipment is moved on any highway within the state which due to its height requires the raising or removal of utility lines, that the mover be required to pay such costs.

16. BRUCELLOSIS

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association supports the National Cattlemen's Association's Brucellosis Regulatory Program and its other activities concerning Brucellosis control and eradication.

17. NCA FUTURES TRADING STUDY

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association supports the investigation of the cattle futures market being conducted by the NCA, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the investigation must demonstrate the futures market will not have an adverse effect upon the cattle industry.

18. WHEREAS no large beef packing plants now exist in Montana, and

WHEREAS transportation costs reduce the amounts paid for Montana slaughter cattle putting Montana ranches at a competitive disadvantage; and

WHEREAS Montana consumers pay more for beef transported back to Montana,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association support the packing and feeding industry in Montana.

19. FARM CREDIT SYSTEM

WHEREAS the Office of Management and Budget has raised eleven points in the form of proposal that could seriously damage the Farm Credit System's competitive position in the market place for funds, and

WHEREAS this would destroy the viability of the Farm Credit System to fund agriculture at a rate of interest at which agriculture can survive;

Recommendations Passed By The Montana Stockgrowers Association-May 29, 1982

1. CANADIAN RELATIONS

WHEREAS Montana stockgrowers realize the importance of livestock transactions between individual American and Canadian breeders, but

WHEREAS Canadian health laws are restrictive and prevent the free flow of breeding cattle between the United States and Canada;

THEREFORE BE IT RECOMMENDED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association oppose the importation of herds of breeding cattle to be sold in Montana markets until such time as Canadian laws are revised to allow for the free flow of trade between our countries.

2. RIGHT OF ENTRY TAX

BE IT RECOMMENDED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association make an in-depth study of the right-of-entry tax, which study should include the present effect of the tax and the effect such tax has upon preserving mineral estates for inheritance succession considering the application of the penalty of 12% per annum in the event the tax is delinquent.

3. BRUCELLOSIS PUBLICITY

WHEREAS in light of the proposed cuts of federal government programs for Brucellosis control and eradication, the small number of infected cattle in Montana and the ideas submitted to the National Cattlemen's Association to replace government regulation with cattle owners accountability;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RECOMMENDED THE FOLLOWING:

1. The vaccination of female calves prior to 12 months of age is strongly urged.
2. Depopulation of herds with infected cattle at the earliest possible time.
3. Increased research and testing of Brucellosis infections in game animals.
4. Initiation of a publicity campaign of these recommendations which emphasizes the need for individual cattle owners to produce a healthy product which does not threaten the health of other cattle or humans and which will stimulate an environment of trust in the health of our cattle which is needed to ease marketing restrictions due to health regulations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association strongly oppose any change in the Farm Credit System as it now is administered.

20. RATIFICATION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Montana Stockgrowers Association that the actions of the officers and executive committee of the association during the period April 30, 1981 to and including April 30, 1982, in administering the affairs of the association and official acts of said officers and executive committee insofar as said activities are within the scope of their authorized activities, are hereby approved and ratified.

21. APPRECIATION

WHEREAS the Montana Stockgrowers Association has been privileged to enjoy the hospitality of Missoula, Montana we wish to express our appreciation to all who did so much to make this our 98th Annual Convention, a successful meeting;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association hereby expresses its sincere thanks to the Montana CowBelles, the Missoula Chamber of Commerce, our Allied Industry Committee and the staff of the Village Red Lion Motor Inn and to all those who contributed to the success of this convention.

4. CATTLE FUTURES

BE IT RECOMMENDED by the Montana Stockgrowers Association that the future delivery weight be increased to 50,000 pounds.

5. CATTLE FUTURES

BE IT RECOMMENDED by the Montana Stockgrowers Association that a lighter class of feeder cattle should be added to the cattle classifications.

6. BUY AMERICAN

WHEREAS the United States is at this time in the throes of the most severe recession since the 1920's, and

WHEREAS as a result of the recession the unemployment rate in the United States has reached almost all-time levels, and

WHEREAS a good share of the unemployment problem can be traced to U.S. imports of foreign manufactured products which have the effect of exporting U.S. jobs and prosperity to the exporting countries, and

WHEREAS in many instances the exporting countries enjoy a trade balance with the U.S. which is out of proportion with trade done with the U.S.; in other words, a serious imbalance;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RECOMMENDED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association urge its members wherever possible to "BUY AMERICAN" thereby helping provide more jobs for Americans who, after all, purchase the great preponderance of American produced meat.

7. NATIONAL COW HERD

BE IT RECOMMENDED THAT the Montana Stockgrowers Association support every effort to limit the size of the national cow herd, which efforts should include education into the benefits of spaying of heifers, since only through maintaining a stable size of the national cow herd will economic stability of cattle prices develop.

8. BRANDING IRON SIZE

BE IT RECOMMENDED by the Montana Stockgrowers Association that the Department of Livestock recommend a 3/8 inch face on four-inch branding irons.

2/8/82
EXHIBIT "E"

7 Edwards
Helena, Montana 59601
Ph. 406-443-5711



Montana Association Of Conservation Districts

Madame Chairman; members of the committee:

For the record I am Steve Meyer, representing the Montana Association of Conservation Districts.

The conservation districts would like to go on record as supporting the budget request of the Agricultural Experiment Station. We feel that research is necessary to provide for a world that grows faster than its food supply. The station is providing valuable information to the farmer and rancher so that he may produce the needed food and fiber while at the same time protect the resource base that guarantees the production needs of future generations.

I would like to address the modification for increased weed control research for a moment. Our supervisors passed a resolution supporting the three pronged effort of the Station, the Cooperative Extension Service, and the Department of Agriculture to bring about a renewed effort to control the spread of noxious weeds. This effort will be accomplished by developing new control methods, disseminating this knowledge, and coordinating the efforts of the public and private sector to ensure efficiency.

Again, we would urge you to grant the Experiment Station's budget request.

Thank you.


Steven R. Meyer

2/8/83

EXHIBIT "F"

AG. EXP. STATION BUDGET REQUEST

HEARING FEBRUARY 8, 1983

MY NAME IS CHUCK JARECKI. MY WIFE AND I OPERATE A RANGE LIVESTOCK RANCH WEST OF POLSON. I AM A PAST DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT AND HAVE RECEIVED THE FELLOW AWARD FROM THAT SOCIETY FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ART AND SCIENCE OF RANGE MANAGEMENT. I AM HERE TODAY REPRESENTING THE MONTANA Knapweed ACTION COMMITTEE, WHICH STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST OF THE MONTANA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION FOR EXPANDED RESEARCH IN WEED CONTROL.

Knapweed PRESENTLY INFESTS 2,000,000 ACRES OF MONTANA RANGELAND. FROM ITS START IN RAVALII COUNTY IN THE 1920'S, Knapweed IS NOW FOUND IN ALL 56 COUNTIES. IT REDUCES FORAGE PRODUCTION BY 60 TO 65 % ON GOOD RANGELAND, WHICH TRANSLATES TO A FORAGE LOSS ALONE OF 4½ MILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY, IF FORAGE IS VALUED AT \$10.00 PER ANIMAL UNIT MONTH.

PRELIMINARY DATA INDICATES THAT 75% OF MONTANA'S RANGELAND WILL BECOME INFESTED BY Knapweed IF THE SPREAD IS NOT STOPPED. THUS, ABOUT 45,000,000 ACRES OF RANGE WOULD HAVE A FORAGE LOSS OF 60% AMOUNTING TO A VALUE OF OVER ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY.

MUCH BASIC RESEARCH IS NEEDED IN WEED CONTROL IN MONTANA. Knapweed IS BUT ONE OF SEVERAL WEEDS THAT THREATEN THE VERY EXISTENCE OF MONTANA'S RANGELAND. WE CAN ILL AFFORD TO DELAY, OR PINCH PENNIES. WE MUST GET ON WITH THE TASK OF HALTING THIS CANCER OF THE RANGE BEFORE THE PATIENT IS DEAD.



2/8/83

EXHIBIT "G"

ASMSU

02-08-83

Madam Chairman, Committee members,

My name is Dennis Wagner, I represent the Associated Students of Montana State University. We would like to go on record as supporters of the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station's Budget request.

Students at MSU, particularly those, like myself, who are enrolled in the College of Agriculture, benefit from the presence of the Experiment Station. The research activity that the Experiment Station conducts, allows and helps our instructors and teaching assistants to provide information & instruction that is some of the most advanced and up-to-date as is possible. The Montana Agricultural Experiment Station enhances the education of students at Montana State University.

Thank - you

Education Subcom.
2/8/83

EXHIBIT "H"

Wibaux, MT
February 3, 1983

Mr. Gordon McGowan
Highwood, MT 59450

Dear Mr. McGowan:

I regretfully will not be able to attend the Budget hearings scheduled by the Education Subcommittee for the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service.

My commitments as Wibaux County Commissioner and livestock producer prevent me from attending these meetings in Helena.

However, I would like to send along my support for you and the CARE organization. These are very critical times for livestock and farm producers in this state. It is of the utmost importance that both the Agricultural Experiment Stations and the Cooperative Extension Service are adequately funded or the producers could lose the competitive edge that has been provided by these two fine organizations.

Again, my apologies for not being able to attend the Committee hearings and voicing my support.

Sincerely,



Dey Schlapia
Wibaux, MT 59353

2/8/83

To: Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
RE: Agricultural Experiment Station Budget Proposal

EXHIBIT I

As a grower of fresh produce in Missoula County I receive many questions regarding commercial horticulture in Western Montana. I feel there is a serious interest by the people who ask me these horticulture questions. Western Montana has many irrigated small acreage tracts which would be ideal for speciality crop production. Some horticultural items could and are being grown by larger farmers who want to diversify.

In the past few years the Agricultural Experiment Station has realized there is potential for horticultural crops in Western Montana. They are now doing some work on horticultural and speciality crops. The Western Research Center in Corvallis now has a staff which has the interest and skill to do horticultural research.

These professionals are capable of doing research which is beyond the skills of most producers. Their work, which is public, can help eliminate wasteful duplication where individuals each try out new ideas and products. The experiment staff can also screen through information from other states and Canada for ideas which may be adaptable to our condition.

Some types of horticultural research will take many years before the results pay off. A continuous program is necessary or previous money spent will be wasted.

Horticultural research is just one small area which the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station works in. With seven centers scattered through the state each station should be capable in concentrating on what is best for its area.

I realize this year's budget does not permit all those requesting funds to what they want. I hope that when you do look at the Experiment Station budget that you consider it is a long range program which I think can do more to encourage agriculture than any thing else the state of Montana can do.

Bruce A. Benson
2418 So. 7th West
Missoula, Montana

2/8/83

EXHIBIT "J"

To The Members of the Joint Appropriations Sub-Committee on Education

My name is Pat Iman. I am a member of the Montana Grange of the Montana Extension Advisory Council, a delegate from this state to the National Council on Agricultural Research Extension and Teaching; and I have served for the past year on Secretary of Agriculture, John Block's Committee on Extension in the 80's.

The important thing for what I have to say here is that I am a member of a four generation family farm in Ravalli County. We presently raise beef cattle, hogs, grain and hay. Like a lot of other farmers and ranchers in the state, we are looking for ways to survive in the present economic climate.

If we, and many others in Montana, are able to survive it will be, in large part, because of continuing research at MSU and the Agricultural Experiment Stations around the state finding better answers to our production problems.

Let me give you an example. The annual moisture fall on the floor of the Bitterroot valley is 11 to 12 inches—not enough to sustain dryland farming. We have to irrigate, but electric power rates to run our sprinkler systems have sky rocketted. The research that the Agricultural Experiment Stations are doing on irrigation systems on the timing of applying water to crops and pastures, may well be what allows us to survive.

Dr. Gary Strobel of MSU has discovered 'something' that prompts plants to send out a much larger root system. Further, he has been able to make that 'something' plant specific for some plants. His continued work with that 'something' may give us a substance to apply to a crop that will prompt it to put out a root system that can reach farther - deeper, for water and then for produce under droughty conditions.

Our whole valley is heavily infected with knapweed, which is a plant that puts out a substance that discourages other plants from growing near it, and knapweed can survive on very little moisture. Will Dr Strobel's 'something' enable desirable plants to compete with knapweed when the power prices force us to cut down severely on irrigating?

Survival on farms and ranches is dependent on research. Knapweed is spreading over the entire state. The yearly crop and range loss caused by this weed is between 30 to 40 million now and is expected to go to 100 million if the weed is allowed to continue its spread until it has blanketed the state. As yet we don't have leafy spurge on our place, but it too is spreading, and where it has taken over, it has completely destroyed the value of the range land. If it is allowed to spread widely into the mountain areas, it will be next to impossible to control in places like our valley. We have to have weed control to survive.

In these difficult times, we in agriculture are more in need of help from agricultural research, particularly in weed control, than we have ever been and are looking more urgently to the Agricultural Experiment Stations and MSU for answers that will enable us to survive financially.

Unless the people of this state are willing to give up the agricultural industry as a source of income, (and understand that 30-35% of the state's gross revenue come from agriculture, which we are presently investing 1.65% of the general fund in research) the state must invest in the Experiment Station research and weed control necessary to the survival of those of us in agriculture.

The 1981 legislature started the state back on the road toward an adequate Agricultural Experiment Station research system. But, research isn't something that can be turned on and off. It has to be on going or the results obtained are always to late.

I urge your support of the budget for the Agricultural Experiment Station as approved by the Board of Regents.

NOXIOUS WEEDS IN MONTANA

INTRODUCTION

The spread of noxious weeds across Montana and the surrounding states is a significant environmental problem. More than 250 alien weed species have been identified in this region and approximately 100 of these may be continuing to expand their range. Although weed problems are not new, their impact on nearly all types of lands is increasing. Weeds are causing an increasing loss of agricultural productivity while at the same time the costs and difficulty of weed control are accelerating. Some noxious weeds are spreading into wildlands where they have an impact on the productivity of forage for wildlife. In other localities weed growth has interfered with the use of parks and other recreational lands. Noxious weeds cause a multi-million dollar loss to Montana's agriculture each year. This does not include the costs of herbicides, time, labor, and fuel expended in their control. The situation in this State is particularly difficult due to the large acreage that must be managed for weeds. The cost of weed control can sometimes exceed the productive value of the land.

Weeds normally serve a useful role in the natural succession of disturbed plant communities. Native weed species are generally the first plants to cover disturbed soil surfaces and to stabilize soil and moisture conditions. These plants are eventually replaced by desirable grasses or other more valuable forage species. However, many of the weeds that are currently a problem are exotic species introduced from other regions of the world. Natural controls (eg. insects) are not present to limit their growth. Thus many of the exotic noxious weeds are able to expand their range even into well-established stands of vegetation.

SPECIFIC WEED PROBLEMS

Although there are a large number of weed species present in the State, the most prevalent problems are caused by only a few species.

1. Leafy Spurge (Euphorbia esula)

This species which was first identified in Montana between 1911 and 1920 has now spread to nearly every county in the State. It has infested approximately 500,000 acres in Montana and approximately two and one-half million acres in 25 other states and several Canadian provinces. Livestock, except sheep, will avoid leafy spurge and hay crops containing this weed are of reduced value. Once established, the stands of leafy spurge are particularly difficult to control and they require repeated treatment over several years.

2. Knapweeds (Diffuse knapweed, Centaurea diffusa; spotted knapweed, C. maculosa; and Russian knapweed, C. repens)

The spotted knapweed is the most prevalent species throughout western and central Montana, but stands have been found as far east as Glendive. This weed has infested nearly 1.6 million acres ranging from prime farm land in the valleys to marginally productive lands in the high mountain areas. It is especially a threat to rangeland and livestock producers. Knapweed invades nearly any disturbed soil area but it will also invade established range lands especially during draught conditions. Once established, knapweed crowds out native species due to superior early-spring growth, and its avoidance by foraging livestock.

Experimentation with knapweed control by range specialists at Montana State University indicates that knapweed can reduce the carrying capacity of a range by more than 50 percent. These projections indicate that knapweeds are costing Montana ranchers approximately 640,000 animal unit months per year or approximately \$7,680,000 annually. This figure does not include the costs expended in control efforts.

OTHER WEED SPECIES

In addition to leafy spurge and the knapweeds, infestations of the following weeds are also serious in many locations: Canadian thistle, musk thistle, field bindweed, and kochia. Each of these species presents special problems and require special control efforts.

CONTROL

1. Prevention - Like most other environmental problems, the cost of preventing adverse conditions is much less than providing a cure. It is possible to minimize weed infestations by management practices that maintain vigorous competitive range plants and by using weed-free feed and clean crop seed. Proper cleaning of heavy equipment and farm machinery will also minimize the spread to other locations.

2. Chemical - Chemical controls are the most effective means for eliminating or reducing existing stands of weeds. However, the appropriate chemical, application rate, and time of application all influence the success of treatment. Herbicides, like any other pesticide, can have serious side effects on non-target plants or other organisms if not used properly. Both because of cost and hazard, it is extremely important that herbicide applicators have a thorough training.

BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

Because many of the weed species of concern were introduced from other regions of the world, they do not have natural controls (parasites,

predators, or pathogens). Biological control is a deliberate use of natural enemies of the plants to reduce weed populations to tolerable levels.

A biological control program was initiated in Montana in 1976 to identify useful control agents and to introduce them into infested regions. Under the present program, 13 insect species have been introduced against seven species of weeds. Three of these insects are increasing and spreading while the fate of the others is not certain. The most successful introductions are insects that stress the spotted knapweed and the musk thistle. There is some evidence that these introductions are having an impact on weeds in some local areas. However, it should be emphasized that biological control only serves to weaken the weed and supplemental control practices are necessary to be effective. For example, musk thistle may be weakened by a biological control agent but grass or other competing plants must be established at the same time to crowd out the weakened plants. If used appropriately, these efforts may reduce the weed stands to non-economic levels.

Biological controls also offer a method for weed control in environmentally sensitive areas. Established stands of weeds in these areas may be significantly reduced and their spread held in check by the use of biological control.

Although development of biological controls is a long-term process, investment in research and demonstration projects on biological control appears to offer long-term economic and environmental benefits.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Noxious weeds are a significant environmental and economic problem in Montana and surrounding states.
2. Past and current efforts have not been adequate to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.
3. Effective weed control will require an intensified effort and participation by all land managers. These may be most effective if organized on a regional basis.
4. New and innovative methods are probably necessary to alert landowners to the problem and to insure their effective participation in weed control programs.
5. Increased efforts are needed to minimize the spread of weeds into new areas, especially along roadways, construction sites, or any other location where existing vegetation is temporarily disturbed.

6. Noxious weeds should be an important consideration in developing Environmental Impact Statements and environmental assessments.

7. There is a need to improve and increase educational programs on weeds and weed control at all levels.

Prepared By:

HOWARD E. JOHNSON
Environmental Scientist
Environmental Quality Council
August 30, 1982