THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

WAGING WAR ON INVASIVE GRASSES

_Preventing—Not Just Controlling—_ Rangeland Fires in the West

February 28, 2011
PROGRAM

Welcome and Introduction

DR. LEE VAN WYCHEN
NATIONAL C-FAR BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

Distinguished Speaker

DR. RICHARD N. MACK
Washington State University
Pullman, Washington

Open Forum

Closing

DR. LEE VAN WYCHEN

NATIONAL C-FAR IS a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based and customer-led coalition that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation and natural resource stakeholders together with the food and agriculture research and extension community, serving as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension and education. For additional information, go to www.ncfar.org; or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director at tom@vanarsdall.com.
ABSTRACT

Wildfires in the West’s grasslands are becoming increasingly large and costly to fight. Costs to restore (“patch up”) these grasslands are also accelerating in addition to the costs of property loss. Three non-native, highly invasive grasses cause much of this damage: cheatgrass, medusahead and buffel grass. Instead of continuing to spend public funds indefinitely to clean up after the last fire and brace ourselves for the next one, a concerted effort is needed to radically change much of our research and restoration efforts so that we can permanently reduce the role of these devastating invaders. Although scientific research can never guarantee a successful solution, identification of a clearly defined strategy (true restoration of these grasslands), tested, flexible tactics (thorough reclamation of each site targeted for management), and new tools (e.g. exploration of microbial biological control agents coupled with detailed genetic characterization of the invaders and their pathogens) seems apparent. The western grasslands form a huge legacy of the Nation’s natural resources, and their value needs to be restored and maintained through successful, sustained campaigns against these invasive grasses.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

Richard N. Mack (Ph.D, Washington State University, 1971) is a Professor of Biological Sciences at Washington State University. Much of his research has dealt with the aggressive invader, Bromus tectorum (cheatgrass) in the Intermountain West. In addition he investigates the population biology of plant invaders as well as predicting future invasive species and devising strategies for their early detection and eradication.

He served as Chair of the Department of Botany at Washington State University from 1986-1999 and then as Chair of the National Research Council's Committee for "Predicting the Invasive Potential of Non-indigenous Plants and Plant Pests in the United States from 1999-2001.
SEMINAR SERIES DESCRIPTION

National C-FAR’s Seminar Series regularly presents leading-edge researchers to address pressing issues confronting the public and Congress. National C-FAR and the Seminar Series serve as a resource to policymakers and all congressional staff.

Seminar Series Contributing Sponsors

Agronomy, Crop and Soil Science Societies
American Dietetic Association
American Society for Nutrition
Bayer CropScience
CHS Foundation
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)
Council on Food, Agricultural & Resource Economics (C-FARE)
CropLife Foundation
Dr. William Danforth
Elanco Animal Health
Institute of Food Technologists
Syngenta
United Soybean Board
University of Wyoming
Weed Science Society of America

THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
http://www.ncfar.org

R. Thomas Van Arsdall, Executive Director
Phone: (703) 509-4746
E-mail: tom@vanarsdall.com