

# IMCWMA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

## MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

among the

Partners of the Inland Mendocino Cooperative Weed Management Area

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is to promote and formalize the cooperative relationship necessary for the effective planning, coordination, and implementation of weed management programs among the signatories (partners).

### II. DEFINITIONS

- (a) An "ecosystem" is comprised of all the biological and physical elements in a physically defined area, including all processes and interactions among those elements.
- (b) A "native plant species" is constituted by a population of potentially interbreeding plants that have evolved within a given ecosystem over many generations in popular terms. For ecosystems in California, this generally includes all plants present prior to European contact.
- (c) "Non-native plant species" means, with respect to a particular ecosystem, any species, including its seeds, spores, or other plant material capable of propagating that species, that is not a native species of that ecosystem.
- (d) "Introduction" means the deliberate or unintentional escape, release, dissemination, or placement of a species into an ecosystem in which that species has not evolved. Such introductions are generally, either directly or indirectly, a result of human activities.
- (e) An "invasive plant species" is a non-native plant whose introduction has the potential to cause deleterious economic or environmental impacts.
- (f) For the purpose of this agreement, a "weed" is equivalent to an invasive plant species.
- (g) "Integrated Pest Management" (IPM) is a strategy that focuses on long-term prevention or suppression of pest problems with minimum impact on human health, the environment, and nontarget organisms. With regard to invasive weeds, IPM emphasizes preventative measures, biological control, adoption of cultural practices that reduce weed invasion, and cost-effective manual, mechanical, or cultural treatments. Herbicides are used as a transitional measure, or after monitoring indicates they are needed to achieve management objectives, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism(s). Control measures are selected and implemented in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment (adapted from [2]).

### III. BACKGROUND

A number of non-native plant species have been introduced to inland Mendocino County. Some of these non-native species have altered plant community composition and vegetation structure, and disrupted ecosystem processes and functions. Many of these

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invasive plants continue to spread throughout this region, outcompeting native plants. Some invasive weeds constitute a threat to human health through toxicity or increase of fire hazard. Invasive weeds also represent an economic burden, impairing agriculture, forestry, transportation, and aesthetics. These invasive species collectively constitute a serious liability for the future of both the inland ecology and the regional economy.

The Guidelines for the Coordinated Management of Noxious Weeds<sup>1</sup> is an appropriate model for collaborative efforts that can reduce and prevent the negative impacts of invasive weeds in the Inland Mendocino region. The Guidelines provide information on the administrative structure of weed management areas and examples of cooperative activities that can be employed to develop programs and projects.

The geographic area adopted for this weed management area consists of all lands and waters in Mendocino County within the area bounded as follows, and as shown on the attached map:

- on the west, the watershed boundaries dividing the Russian, Eel and Mattole River basins from the basins of the coastal rivers of the Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit;
- on the north, the Humboldt-Mendocino county line;
- on the east, the Mendocino county line with adjacent counties Tehama, Glenn and Lake;
- on the south the Sonoma-Mendocino county line.

Headwaters and upper portions of the Russian, Eel and Mattole River basins are included in the area. This geographic region will be referred to as the Inland Mendocino Cooperative Weed Management Area (IMCWMA).

The intent of this MOA is to enhance the potential for success of a Cooperative Weed Management Program on all public and private lands managed by its signatories. This agreement's focus is to educate the public about the collective, cooperative effort needed to manage invasive weeds.

#### IV. THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES MUTUALLY AGREE:

1. To develop and write, by January 1, 2008, a Strategic Weed Management Plan with short-term and long-term goals designed to prevent and control weed infestations in the region designated as the Inland Mendocino Cooperative Weed Management Area through Integrated Pest Management (IPM);
2. To identify and pursue opportunities for cooperative actions, as requested by any of the signatories, including but not limited to those for technical assistance, sharing information on techniques and success regarding weed prevention, eradication, sharing of equipment, development of funding proposals, educational outreach, native plant community conservation or restoration on the lands managed by each respective signatory, and conducting cooperative weed management actions on lands adjacent to

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lands managed by the signatories with the signatories' and landowner's approval;

3. To provide opportunities to non-signatory groups and individuals for involvement in carrying out the Strategic Weed Management Plan on lands within the IMCWMA;
4. To review this MOA periodically and make revisions as needed to meet the purpose of this agreement, subject to agreement by all signatories;
5. To welcome new signatories who agree to the principles of integrated weed management and the Strategic Weed Management Plan, and the intent of this agreement.

### IV. THE SIGNATORY PARTIES MUTUALLY AGREE AND UNDERSTAND THAT:

1. This agreement is a voluntary commitment to cooperation and is legally and financially non-binding;
2. Amendments to this document shall become effective upon written approval by all parties;
3. This memorandum will become effective for each signatory once signed by that signatory, and shall continue in effect for each signatory unless terminated by written notice to the Coordinator of the IMCWMA\*, P.O. Box 415, Redwood Valley, CA 95470;
4. This MOA does not restrict any of the signatories from participating in related activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals;
5. Additional signatories may be added to the MOA by appending an additional signature page to the MOA.

<sup>1</sup>*Guidelines for Coordinated Management of Noxious Weeds: Development of Weed Management Areas.* (2000?). Retrieved 15 Oct, 2004, from <http://www.weedcenter.org/management/guidelines/tableofcontents.html>

<sup>2</sup>*About UC IPM*, obtained 1/16/06 from <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/IPMPROJECT/about.html>

\*The "Coordinator of the IMCWMA" was initially selected by mutual agreement of potential signatories. The IMCWMA bylaws, which are expected to be developed by July 1, 2008, will describe the process for future selections of the Coordinator of the IMCWMA.