



2025 PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Doug Chan

Doug worked as a farm manager for 15 years in California. Moved to Idaho in 2014, and worked for Ada county Noxious weed as a field technician for 3 years. Hired on with ISDA as an Agricultural Investigator in 2017, promoted to Pesticide Registrations Program Specialist in 2018, and just this past November promoted to Certification and Training Program Manager.

David Collins

David Collins is the Area Sales Manager for Envu in western Montana, western Wyoming, Idaho, and Utah with responsibilities in both range and pasture and vegetation management. For 14 years David has managed customer relations and expectations through education, research, and product support within agriculture and industrial vegetation management.

Jud Elkington

Jud Elkington is the Bonneville County Superintendent for Idaho Falls and Swan Valley, starting his role in 2020. In 2022, he launched the Bonneville County Noxious Weed Drone Program to help control invasive plant species using drone technology. He also works with the Highlands and Headwaters Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA) to protect local lands. Jud grew up on a horse ranch and helped on his grandparents' farm and dairy, giving him a strong background in agriculture. He is also an experienced team roper and horse breeder. Jud is dedicated to improving land management, supporting local farmers and Landowners to promote sustainability in Bonneville County. His work continues to have a positive impact on the community.

Lydia Fields

Lydia is a Wilbur-Ellis Sales Agronomist located in Spokane, WA where she covers Eastern, WA, Norh, ID, and Western, MT sales territory. Lydia earned her B.S. in Horticulture from Washington State University (WSU) in 2019 and received her M.S. in Weed Science from WSU in 2021. Lydia's diverse education background allows her to cover multiple markets in her current role including Nursery & Greenhouse, Lawncare, and Vegetation Management.

Don Frantz

Don has over 23 years of turf and ornamental experience. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Colorado State University majoring in landscape horticulture: turf management. His professional experience brings all aspects of the industry, including end user roles, plus distribution and manufacturer sales. Don lives with his wife and identical twin daughters in Star, Idaho.

Danielle Gunn

Danielle Gunn is a full professor with the University of Idaho and the agricultural Extension Educator for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes in Fort Hall, Idaho. She serves as the program director for the Fort Hall Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program. Danielle has a Master of Science in Animal Science with an emphasis in Range Management. Danielle works extensively with cattle reproduction, ultrasound technology, noxious weeds and range management, and gopher and vole control. She has presented some of her work nationally and internationally. Danielle also owns and operates a small range cattle operation in Southeastern Idaho. She resides in Blackfoot with three horses, two dogs, and a number of cattle.

Lonnie Huter

Lonnie Huter is the Weed Management Specialist for the Boise District BLM with 20 years of experience in chemical, mechanical and biological control of Idaho's noxious weeds. Lonnie is a lifelong resident of southwest Idaho with a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Idaho. When not at work, Lonnie is outdoors, hiking, fishing and traveling with his wife and two teenage children.

James Jackson

James Jackson serves as the Range and Pasture Market Development Specialist for Alligare herbicide company, a position that he has held since November of 2020. In this position his job is to provide technical expertise to the sales reps and customers regarding the range and pasture products throughout the country as well as overseeing any product development for range and pasture. Prior to coming to Alligare James worked as an Extension Program Specialist for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension based out of Stephenville, Texas for 8 years. James's primary job was to provide range management knowledge and expertise to county extension agents and landowners throughout Texas. His interests lie in weed and brush management and applied herbicide science on rangelands. He has worked on rangelands throughout the United States helping rangeland managers with invasive weed and brush management as well as maximizing their forage production. James currently lives in Weatherford, Texas with his wife Everly and three children Macy, Madison and Cade.

Carl Jorgensen

Carl Jorgensen is Group Leader for the USDA Forest Service; Intermountain Region; State, Private, and Tribal Forestry; Forest Health Protection (i.e. bugs 'n crud) in Boise since 2019. Carl leads a team of entomologists, plant pathologists, GIS specialists, aerial survey specialists, and biological technicians who monitor forest pests and provide project assistance to federal, state and private land management agencies in Idaho, Nevada and Utah. Prior to this role, Carl was a field-going entomologist in southern Idaho for 16 years supporting land managers and collaborating with researchers to improve forest pest and invasive weed management tools. Carl earned a Master of Science degree from North Dakota State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Gustavus Adolphus College.

Matt Kern

Matt is an ecological risk assessor and ecotoxicologist with over 25 years of experience in the pesticide industry. He has extensive expertise in Endangered Species Act (ESA) policy and implementation, focusing on developing practical and effective protection strategies for listed species. His work emphasizes optimizing resources to streamline future ESA assessments while maintaining strong conservation outcomes. Matt enjoys collaborating with internal and external experts across agencies and organizations to address complex ecological risk concerns. He holds a bachelor's degree and two master's degrees, further enhancing his comprehensive knowledge in this specialized field.

Annie Krueger

Annie is a senior consultant with Compliance Services International (CSI) working remotely from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Annie works with pesticide registrants to help prepare them for EPA's endangered species assessments and USFWS and NMFS biological opinions. CSI also manages the FIFRA Endangered Species Task Force (FESTF), a consortium of pesticide registrants focused on data aggregation to assist EPA's endangered species assessments. Since 2022, Annie has supported FESTF in documenting implementation challenges for endangered species pesticide mitigations through regional workshops gathering agriculture and conservation communities to identify opportunities for workable solutions. In 2023 Annie led a workshop in Nebraska gathering soybean growers and conservationists across Nebraska and Iowa to identify potential interactions of a newly emerging pest with runoff mitigations EPA required for the EnlistOne and EnlistDuo labels. In 2024, Annie led a workshop series in Oregon and Washington to document challenges implementing mitigations for NMFS species. Prior to starting with CSI, she earned her PhD in Entomology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where she researched the relationship between monarchs and milkweed to find solutions for conservation around agriculture. Annie has foundational and applied experience with pollination services, honeybee and bumble bee research, non-target arthropod toxicity studies, non-target plant studies and pollinator risk assessment.

Mirella Ortiz

Mirella is an Assistant Professor in Weed Science at Utah State University and has been conducting research on aquatic invasive plants for the past 10 years. She is a member of the Weed Science Society of America and the Western Society of Weed Science. Mirella received her bachelor's degree in Agronomy in 2015, followed by her master's and Ph.D. degrees in Weed Science in 2018 and 2021, respectively, from Colorado State University.

Dustin Polasek

Dustin was raised in West Texas cattle ranching. Shortly after turning 17, he joined the United States Marine Corps as an 0351-infantry assault man, stationed with 3/4 Weapons Company out of Twentynine Palms, California. He served on several combat tours, earning numerous accommodation and medals along the way. After being medically retired from the military, Dustin explored several unique opportunities including certified gunsmithing in Texas, wildland/structural firefighting in Northern Colorado, and eventually found his way to Colorado State University where he earned his bachelor's degree in forestry management and master's degree in Natural Resources and Sustainability with a concentration in Ecological Restoration. While at CSU, Dustin worked as an industrial vegetation management (IVM) specialist and conducted undergraduate research with Dr. Derek Sebastian (Envu-former Bayer Crop Sciences), focusing on cheat grass mitigation and management. Following graduation, Dustin managed lawn and vegetation management departments in Western Colorado. While working for Nutrien Solutions Dustin has held several positions; IVM Territory manager for CO/KS, and most recently developed the first nationwide UAV/UAS program for Nutrien Ag Solutions as the Chief UAV Pilot. This has led him to his current position as the Eastern Regional Manager for IVM with Nutrien Solutions. Dustin's passions for natural resources and noxious weed management is continuously growing and expanding as he does within the industry.

Dr. Tim Prather

Timothy Prather has been at University of Idaho since 2000 and now is a professor in the Department of Plant Sciences, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences where he is involved in teaching, research and extension. Tim teaches three classes, Invasive Plant Biology, Plant Community Restoration Methods, and Introduction to Plant Sciences. His areas of research include use of remote sensing data to define ecological limits to an invasive plant species' distribution, plant dispersal modeling across canyon grassland landscapes, annual grass management, and fire risk associated with annual grasses in sagebrush grasslands. He conducts IPM research to develop decision tools for wildland and forage systems. Tim participates in workshops in Idaho and surrounding states to communicate understanding of weedy plants and their management. When time permits, Tim enjoys fly fishing, woodworking, playing guitar and ukulele, and singing in a chorale.

Adam Schoeder

Adam Schroeder is the Director at Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement in Meridian, Idaho. Since 2017, he has been primarily responsible for the enforcement of noxious weed law, and the administration of two special taxing districts in Ada County.

Diane Schuldt

Diane is a wildlife biologist and plant ecologist with the Forest Service. She is a Botany, Invasive Species, and Pollinators program manager for the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Diane was raised by a farm boy who turned wildlife biologist and a daughter of a south Idaho rancher who didn't burn brush piles or clean his fence lines because he loved the pheasants and the quail. So, it was inevitable that Diane would study natural resources. She has been working with hands-on restoration her entire career and often reminds herself that "Nature is not only more complicated than you think, it is more complicated than you can think" (Frank Egler). Diane wants you to know that you can avoid housework by living your life outdoors!

Beckijo Smergut-Wall

Beckijo Smergut-Wall is a Wallowa County Native and started her Forest Service Career for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest in 2000 on a trail crew. After graduating with a Range degree from Oregon State University in 2005, she started her career with invasive plants on the Wallowa-Whitman. Fortunate to have been born and raised locally, it has been a privilege to work across such a diverse landscape ranging from 600ft to 13,000ft in elevations. Also a privilege, is the support from the Agency, State, County, private landowners, and partners on invasive plant control throughout Wallowa County. With over 20 years of experience, it is rewarding to see the positive changes across the landscape when invasive plants are actively managed. Outside her job, you will find Beckijo spending time with her husband, 2 kids, and many animals on their property in Wallowa.

Tanner Smith

Tanner Smith graduated from Brigham Young University in 2018 with a degree in Chemical Engineering. After gaining experience as a process engineer at Dow Chemical, Tanner transitioned to a role at Corteva Agriscience, focusing on herbicide-based vegetation solutions and the management of range and pasture lands. Raised on a cow-calf ranch in Utah, Tanner combines his technical expertise with a lifelong connection to agriculture, helping land managers and producers effectively manage vegetation while promoting sustainable practices. Outside of work, Tanner enjoys traveling, hunting, and spending time with his wife, two kids, and two dogs.

Jon Storr

Jon has been involved in the Vegetation Management industry since 1979 when he began his career as a custom applicator. During those years he applied herbicides in 40 states to all IVM markets. He spent 12 years as a sales rep for several distributors.

For the past 11 years Jon has been the IVM Lead for Nufarm providing IVM products and support for the Roadside, Aquatics, Forestry and Range & Pasture markets and covers the western US. Jon holds a degree in Agronomy from Iowa State University and resides in Greenacres, WA.

Jeremy Varley

Jeremy Varley is a Section Manager of the Noxious Weeds Section in the Plants Division. Jeremy has been in this position for six years. As a part of his position, Jeremy manages the noxious weed program and grants associated, as well as all aquatic treatments performed by the State.