



# COUNTIES OF INYO AND MONO



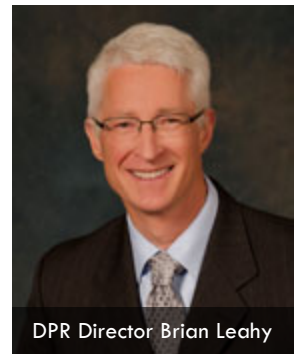
AGRICULTURE • WEIGHTS & MEASURES • OWENS VALLEY MOSQUITO ABATEMENT PROGRAM • MAMMOTH LAKES MOSQUITO ABATEMENT DISTRICT  
EASTERN SIERRA WEED MANAGEMENT AREA • INYO COUNTY COMMERCIAL CANNABIS PERMIT OFFICE

## DEPARTMENT REPORT

March 2018

### Agriculture

The Agriculture Department will be hosting our annual pesticide spray safe events in Coleville and Bishop this month. This year, we will be joined at the Bishop class by California Department of Pesticide Regulation Director [Brian Leahy](#)! The [Coleville](#) class will be held on March 14 at the Antelope Valley Fire Station at 1166 Larson Lane, 8:00 a.m. until noon. Lunch will be provided after the seminar. The [Bishop](#) seminar will be held in the Tallman Pavilion at the Tri-County Fairgrounds, 1234 Fair Street, 8:00 a.m. until 4:15 p.m. Lunch will also be served during the Bishop seminar, and attendance is FREE this year. A very special thanks goes out to the California Department of Pesticide Regulation and the Inyo/Mono Farm Bureau for sponsoring this year's event!



DPR Director Brian Leahy

North American Invasive Species Association ([NAISMA](#)) weed free certification inspection should be available for our area growers in time for first cutting this spring. The special twine that designated NAISMA certification has been ordered and a letter will be sent to area growers shortly advising them of this new opportunity. We will be bringing a resolution authorizing an inspection fee to both Boards of Supervisors shortly. In 2017, only 17 acres of hay was NAISMA certified in the entire state of California. Due to the absence of many of the weed species on the NAISMA list in our area, Inyo and Mono Counties may be poised to produce the vast majority of hay qualifying as NAISMA weed free in 2018.



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FEDERATION

### Weights and Measures

When the weather turns cold we usually receive some calls from residents disputing heating fuel bills. Not only does our office check the propane and kerosene delivery truck meters, but we also check propane vapor submeters. Submeter applications include any situation where propane flows from a main tank to several different residences, such as in apartment buildings or trailer parks. Whenever we receive a complaint (or a new submeter installation occurs) we are required to check the meter for accuracy, and provide enforcement actions when necessary.

Submeter accuracy is tested by way of a bell prover. This specialized equipment (pictured to the right) includes a "bell", or hollow metal housing, that floats in an oil bath. A pipe that is elevated above the oil level inside the bell allows air to pass in and out of the area within the bell. The bell itself is very precisely built to contain a measured amount of gas, which in this scenario is air. An inspector raises the bell to a certain height that corresponds with a specific volume of air (measured with a gauge attached to the side of the bell), and then allows the bell to sink into the oil, displacing this air which is emitted through a hose and into a vapor meter. If accurate, the meter should read that same volume of air as was displaced from the bell sinking into the oil.



Dave Miller testing vapor submeters

Our bell prover is certified from time to time to ensure its readings match the state standards, which are in turn verified against the national standards, which are checked against international standards. Because of this process, we know that a cubic foot of propane in Bishop or Mammoth Lakes is the same as a cubic foot of propane in any other city in The United States and most countries of the world, although other countries most likely measure propane by the cubic meter. This process is the same for all of our standards we use to test weighing and measuring devices.

### Mosquito Abatement

Our program received notification that we have been awarded \$10,000 this year to enhance trapping activities for exotic mosquito species. We have been conducting a low level of exotic mosquito surveillance for several years, targeting Zika carrying Aedes species mosquitoes but have not yet detected these mosquitoes. With several neighboring counties [recording](#) these mosquitoes in the last few years, and the [CDC mosquito range map](#) showing these Zika carrying mosquitoes could survive in our area, we decided it was time to expand our efforts.

One good bit of news from the Pleasant Fire is that it destroyed any floodwater mosquito eggs where it burned. When a similar area burned almost a decade ago, we didn't observe a floodwater mosquito hatch of significance in that area for five years!

We observed low levels of mosquito activity in February consistent with what we see most years as the weather warms a bit. These mosquitoes are adults from the previous year that overwinter in vegetation and in structures. These mosquitoes are the species that can carry malaria, and our typical adulticide treatments are not effective in February due to weather conditions. Luckily for us, malaria hasn't been observed in indigenous mosquito populations in California since 1989.

Final preparations will be made this month for our upcoming mosquito season. Seasonal employees will start in the beginning of April and will work through September. We are happy to welcome our entire 2017 seasonal mosquito crew back for 2018. Our mosquito abatement program benefits greatly when we can bring back seasonal employees with prior experience, and the returning employees come with experience from the busiest mosquito season recorded!

### Invasive Plant Management Program

The recent Pleasant Fire burned a very significant portion of the Wildlife Conservation Board funded Middle Owens and Fish Slough Perennial Pepperweed Removal Project. This is unfortunate as past experience has shown that Perennial pepperweed recovers far faster than our native plants, which means that it will displace other vegetation as fire-scarred areas recover. This will put quite a strain on our small staffing, as we already anticipate increased weed recruitment following last year's high water conditions.

Interviews were conducted last month to fill a vacant seasonal employee spot for the 2018 management season. This year, we should have a crew of 3 1/2 employees, with one employee being shared with the mosquito abatement program. Our invasive plant management seasonal staff is set to begin work at the beginning of May.

## March 2018 Calendar

March 14  
Coleville SpraySafe Event

March 15  
Bishop SpraySafe Event

March 15  
Southern California Agricultural Commissioner and Sealer's  
Association Meeting (Webinar)

March 28  
Bishop Sunrise Rotary Inyo Cannabis Presentation