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Jordan Valley Cooperative Weed Management Area  
*People Working Together Toward a Common Goal*

February 10, 2006

Brian Amme, Project Manager, BLM  
P.O. Box 12000  
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Dear Mr. Amme,

1 The Jordan Valley Cooperative Weed Management Area is comprised of lands that overlap the border of Eastern Oregon and Western Idaho. It encompasses over 4.5 million acres of state, private, and BLM lands within Malheur and Owyhee Counties. The people who reside in this pristine high desert region share a common watershed and a common way of life - close to the land and in a symbiotic relationship with the natural resources.

2 The Jordan Valley CWMA was organized by concerned citizens who saw a need to take an aggressive and proactive approach to toward controlling noxious weeds in order to protect these valuable lands and resources. A truly cooperative effort exists between the more than fifty active members who represent a variety of interests, including those of private landowners and ranchers, county, state and federal agencies, local students and conservation groups. These individuals work together to make decisions at monthly meetings, implement spray projects, apply bio-control methods, conduct field research, attend seminars and organize educational opportunities for the community. Typical geologic and social boundaries have given way to people who share a common vision of managing a common problem – invasive weeds.

3 The JVCWMA has been in place and funded for three years and is successfully treating a number of invasive weeds including, but not limited to: leafy spurge, whitetop, scotch thistle, perennial pepperweed, and rush skeletonweed. One invasive species which is a serious threat, but that is not listed as a noxious weed in Idaho or Oregon, is medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*). This plant is an aggressive invader that has the potential to destroy rangelands and wildlife habitat. Interest in controlling this noxious weed within the Jordan Valley CWMA is extremely high. Due to this interest, Dr. Roger Sheley, weed ecologist at the USDA's Range and Meadow Forage management Research Unit of the Agricultural Research Service in Burns, Oregon has worked with the CWMA to formalize a *Medusahead Challenge* program to deal with this invasive plant. The JVCWMA is one of many groups in the region who have joined forces to combat this weed while there is still an opportunity to prevent it from irreversibly taking over the lands; a devastating condition which would not only impact the economic and environmental stability of this region, but that of the entire nation.

The Jordan Valley CWMA has participated in a multi-state effort to secure Federal funding in the battle against medusahead. However, it has become clear to us that the magnitude of this problem cannot be addressed by individual landowners or the CWMA's to which they belong.

4 The ranchers in the Jordan Valley area utilize BLM lands along with their private lands in their cattle operations. Medusahead along with other noxious weeds such as leafy spurge and whitetop run rampant on the BLM lands that border our private acreage and through which ranchers, cattle, horses and sportsmen pass regularly. As serious and committed as we are in our work to control these invasive weeds, we feel that our efforts are futile without also knowing that they will be managed on the BLM allotments which we utilize. Therefore, we are in support of Alternative B which expands herbicide use and allows for the use of new herbicides.

5 We hope that we have impressed upon you the magnitude of this problem, the rationale of our support for Alternative B, and our commitment to keeping our lands healthy, productive and weed free. Please feel free to contact us for clarification or further information.

Respectfully yours,

*Jordan Valley Cooperative Weed Management Area*

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