



Idaho State Department of Agriculture

Grasshopper and Mormon Cricket Program

2008 Activity

Introduction

Grasshoppers and Mormon crickets continue to be one of the most serious pest problems in Idaho rangelands and adjacent croplands. Based on annual surveys conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), Idaho has experienced serious outbreaks in certain counties during the last two years. The management and the timely control of grasshopper and Mormon cricket populations are high priorities for the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and our cooperators at USDA, APHIS. Congress has addressed this environmental crisis with special funding to the impacted states of Idaho, Utah, and Nevada.

Background

Sixty-four percent of Idaho lands are administered by the Federal Government and 43% percent of the state (21.8 million acres) are classified as rangelands. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers 11.8 million acres in Idaho, much of it prime grasshopper/Mormon cricket habitat. There is a significant area of grasshopper and Mormon cricket habitat on federal lands that borders private rangelands and irrigated croplands in the state. Mormon crickets and grasshoppers (primarily about six species) are cyclical economic pest problems, particularly in southern Idaho.

Links:

For additional information and the life cycle of grasshoppers, you can go to a report called "USDA Agricultural Resources Service Grasshopper Web Site" located on the ISDA website at the following address:

<http://www.sidney.ars.usda.gov/grasshopper/index.htm>.

For additional information and the life cycle of Mormon crickets, you can go to a report called "Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 912 Mormon Cricket Fact Sheet" located on the ISDA website at the following address:

http://www.agri.idaho.gov/Categories/PlantsInsects/GrasshopperMormonCricketControlProgram/ghprogramenvirodocs_pubs_reports.php

ISDA reports are posted on our website with an annual summary of each year's activity in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. USDA, APHIS reports are also posted on our website with an annual summaries of each year's activity in 2005, 2006 and 2007. You can access these reports at the following address:

http://www.agri.idaho.gov/Categories/PlantsInsects/GrasshopperMormonCricketControlProgram/ghprogramenvirodocs_pubs_reports.php.

2008 Activity

From March 6th through May 2nd

Scouting:

The Pest Survey Detection Specialists for 2008 have been hired for the season. All specialist hired to date attended the Grasshopper and Mormon Cricket Management Workshop held on April 22nd as a review or introduction to the Integrated Pest Management approach to control principles. Seasonal Employee Handbooks, updated with the latest version of ISDA policies and authorized use of grant equipment were discussed. A copy of the Seasonal Employee Handbook is available in Richard Lawson's office.

One ISDA specialist from Boise will work directly with USDA, APHIS field crews throughout the summer for a combined state and federal presence in scouting the range lands of southern Idaho. One specialist will be working out of Emmett and has the responsibility to maintain a presence in Adams, Boise, Gem, Payette, Washington and Valley Counties. One specialist will be working in north central Idaho and has the responsibility to maintain a presence in Benewah, Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce Counties. One specialist will be working out of Idaho Falls and have responsibility to maintain a presence in the southeastern counties.

State vehicles used by ISDA specialist for scouting will include:

GMC 3500 Diesel Flat Bed – X3473, stationed in Boise;

GMC Sierra 2500 HD – X3780, stationed in Boise, shared with the CAPS Program

GMC Sierra 2500 HD – X3606, assigned to Emmett; shared with the CAPS Program

Ford F-250 – X3439, stationed in Boise;

GMC 3500 Diesel Flat Bed – X3472, stationed in Twin Falls

GMC Sierra 2500 HD – X3798, stationed in Twin Falls

One of the Boise vehicles will be used in the Emmett area and one of the Boise vehicles will be used in the north central area as needed during the months of May through August to respond to requests for assistance in the different counties as listed above. All scouting vehicles and equipment are stored in Boise or Twin Falls, except as noted above.

All specialist driving the state vehicles have received all the appropriate safety training, will maintain daily logs of locations and scouting activity and certify that the state vehicles are being used strictly for official business according to state and department policy.

In the past two seasons the scouting results were more active with Mormon cricket infestations found and requests from private landowners for help in the treatment of Mormon crickets in southern Idaho. In 2008, our scouting activity has found very limited emergence of Mormon crickets and grasshoppers.

To date for 2008, Mormon crickets have been found in the Wilson Creek drainage of the Owyhee Mountains. Additional scouting will be necessary in the higher elevations to determine the full extent of this infestation.

The USDA, APHIS received a report from the Shoshone Paiute Tribe of Mormon crickets emerging on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.

Treatments:

None to date.

Bait:

ISDA has a carryover of bait from 2007 of 173,388 pounds to start the 2008 season. This inventory represents 40,000 pounds more than in the spring of 2007 and 62,000 pounds more than in the spring of 2006 to start the summer suppression program. Due to this inventory on hand and cooler weather this spring, it is likely that less bait will be purchased this year than in past years. Details of the bait movement in 2006 and 2007 can be found on the yearly reports available through the links given on page 1.

Outreach:

March 6th – Ben Simko and Dick Lawson gave a recap of the 2007 activity to the House Agricultural Committee.

March 13th - Ben Simko and Dick Lawson gave a recap of the 2007 activity to the Senate Agricultural Committee.

April 7th – Shoshone Paiute Tribe, APHIS and ISDA Boise field crew met to discuss the current infestation of Mormon crickets on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation

April 9th – Ben Simko, Dick Lawson and Boise field crew held an afternoon meeting in Cascade for the Valley County Commissioners and ranchers to explain the program.

April 22nd - A Grasshopper and Mormon Cricket Management Workshop was held to train interested individuals on the IPM approach to grasshopper and Mormon cricket control. The speakers included Dr. Alex Latchininsky and Dr. Schell from the Univ. of Wyoming, Rob McChesney from PPQ, Ben Simko and Dick Lawson from ISDA. Attendees included representation from the BLM, USFS, USDA, U of I Extension, Shoshone Paiute Tribe and ISDA.

From May 2nd to June 1st

Scouting:

ISDA scouts found Mormon crickets at the 3rd and 4th instars in the upper Mann Creek area of Washington County in the Payette National Forest. At the request of USDA, additional scouting was done in the Adams Creek and Keithly Creek drainages. Mormon crickets were found in these areas but along the creek beds and in an area not accessible for treatment.

Mormon crickets were found in the Cow Creek and Squaw Creek area of Owyhee County. The Squaw Creek area was treated by USDA.

ISDA scouts responded to help treat with USDA personnel along Hwy 95 in Owyhee County but could not treat due to standing water along the road way.

The state land and private land area north of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation was not scouted due to rain delays. We will try again in June to thoroughly scout that area.

A request for assistance due to grasshoppers was received from Valley County. ISDA did not find a grasshopper infestation when investigating but did plan on returning in June for a second look in their area.

ISDA scouts did thoroughly scout the south side of Whiskey Mountain, Diamond Basin, Black Mountain, and east of Silver City in Owyhee County and did not find any Mormon cricket bans in these areas. They road were closed west of Silver City at the time.

The area between the Danskin Mountains, south to Mountain Home and west to Mayfield was scouted and no Mormon crickets were found. In past years, this area of Elmore County was routinely found to have Mormon cricket bans throughout that area.

The Boise foothills were scouted in response to two possible Mormon cricket sighting and none were found.

A request for assistance due to grasshoppers was received from Boise County along Hwy 21 toward Idaho City. ISDA scouts found a significant infestation of grasshoppers at the 1st and 2nd instars. The landowner had scheduled an aerial applicator to treat their land the following week.

Further details of the scouting activity in Southeastern Idaho will be given in the June activity report.

Treatments:

None to date.

Bait:

A sixteen foot enclosed trailer was purchased to haul bait while protecting it from the weather and on projects when the weather disrupts the spreading of bait on larger treatments. The trailer has a 10,000 pound hauling capacity to allow us to haul up to 7,500 pounds of bait plus added equipment for a given project.

Bait distributors were established in Moscow for Latah County and in St. Maries for Benewah County through the County Extension Service in response to the infestations found that far north in 2007.

Latah County received 5,000 pounds of bait in Moscow, Idaho.

Benewah County received 2,500 pounds of bait in St. Maries, Idaho.

Nez Perce County received 10,000 pounds of bait in Lewiston, Idaho.

Washington County received 2,500 pounds of bait in Midvale, Idaho.

Adams County received 2,500 pounds of bait in Council, Idaho.

USDA has received 22,500 pounds of bait from the ISDA, Boise storage facility.

A revised bait form was printed following a legal review and distributed to the bait distributors to replace the previous bait form.

Outreach:

May 20th – Ben Simko, Dick Lawson and LeRoy McDonough held town meetings in Princeton, Idaho and Plummer, Idaho, to explain the program to interested residents.

May 28th – Ben Simko, Dick Lawson, Garry West and Lee Thomas participated in a presentation on the program in Twin Falls at the special request of county extension educators that could not attend the workshop in April, 2008.