

Nominee: Amy DeLaRoche
Title: IPM Division Leader
Company: MHI



Nomination Statement – NPMA 2026 Women’s Forum

Amy DeLaRoche has redefined what Integrated Pest Management means within the solar vegetation industry by bringing together field expertise, environmental stewardship, and a rare strength: the ability to translate vegetation strategy into clear financial value for clients.

When Amy joined MHI in 2022, she brought more than 25 years of experience in sales, revenue strategy, and financial leadership. Rather than applying a traditional management approach from behind a desk, she made a deliberate decision to spend her first seasons in the field working alongside crews mowing, performing hand work, studying growth patterns, and learning firsthand the operational challenges of solar vegetation management. She evaluated invasive species pressure, access limitations, terrain issues, and the ways vegetation directly affects solar production and infrastructure.

Through this experience, Amy recognized a consistent industry challenge: mowing is viewed as a routine operational necessity, while herbicide and IPM programs despite their long-term value are often deferred, underfunded, or misunderstood. Clients frequently see mowing as predictable and familiar, but without proper education and financial context, they struggle to recognize that strategic herbicide use can significantly reduce labor costs, improve efficiency, and deliver measurable long-term savings.

Amy’s greatest impact has been her ability to bridge this gap.

Drawing on her financial and client-relations background, she reshaped how vegetation management is communicated and positioned. Rather than presenting pesticide services as an added expense, she developed a consultative approach that aligns vegetation strategy with each client’s operational and financial goals. She is always eager to work with asset owners and managers to evaluate multi-year cost projections, labor trends, invasive species escalation risks, and operational inefficiencies caused by reactive maintenance.

To support this work, Amy developed quantitative tracking tools and analysis methods that measure invasive pressure, treatment effectiveness, and cost avoidance over time. These models demonstrate how targeted herbicide applications reduce repetitive mowing, minimize intensive hand work, and stabilize sites turning vegetation management from a reactive service into a strategic asset protection program.

By pairing data with clear, business-focused communication, Amy has helped clients understand the true return on investment of IPM. As a result, organizations that previously relied on mowing alone are now expanding their programs to include proactive herbicide strategies, Improving site performance while lowering long-term operating costs.



To deliver these programs directly and ensure regulatory excellence, Amy pursued multi-state pesticide licensure, earning credentials in Vermont, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. She sought mentorship, completed extensive regulatory training, participated in calibration clinics and continuing education, and expanded her technical knowledge through specialized industry learning.



Today, Amy leads Integrated Pest Management across a multi-state portfolio, designing programs that:

- Reduce overall maintenance costs through targeted treatment strategies
- Protect pollinators and sensitive habitats
- Improve long-term vegetation stability and site performance
- Maintain full compliance across multiple regulatory jurisdictions

Amy also led the development of MHI's comprehensive Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) framework, guided by the principle: ***"If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."*** These plans are designed to serve multiple audiences simultaneously field crews, regulators, asset managers, and stakeholders combining yearly operational planning, treatment timing, environmental considerations, and long-term performance strategy into one unified document.

Unlike traditional plans that are created for compliance and then set aside, Amy's VMPs are living management tools. They tell the full story of each site, documenting conditions, tracking progress, and demonstrating how a planned, monitored, and adaptive IPM program delivers measurable financial and environmental results. This integrated approach has strengthened client confidence, improved regulatory communication, and elevated the professionalism of vegetation management across MHI's portfolio.

In addition, Amy has recognized the need to build internal and industry capacity, so she took the initiative to develop and teach a Vegetation Management Plan Development seminar, drawing on her experience as a former certified corporate instructor. This program equips others to create meaningful, results-driven plans that communicate value and support long-term client success.

Fail to plan. Plan to fail.

Build a vegetation management plan that works where it matters most: in the field.



By the end of this training, participants will be able to develop a comprehensive vegetation management plan that identifies site-specific risks, sets maintenance priorities, and supports safety, access, environmental stewardship, and long-term site performance. Team members will create an effective vegetation management plan that is realistic, compliant, and easy to implement in the field.

In response to increasing operational challenges across New England including low panel heights, steep and rocky terrain, restricted equipment access, and rising labor demands Amy developed MHI's Ground Cover Pilot Program. Recognizing that traditional mowing alone was becoming inefficient and cost-prohibitive on certain solar sites, she challenged the status quo and introduced an alternative approach focused on long-term performance rather than repetitive maintenance.

True to the company's commitment to delivering solutions not just services Amy designed this program to help clients think beyond short-term operational cycles and consider vegetation management as a strategic investment. The pilot introduces managed, low-growth ground cover systems specifically selected for solar environments. These systems are designed to minimize trimming requirements, improve worker safety and accessibility, stabilize soil, and create a more predictable, manageable landscape while supporting pollinator-friendly habitat aligned with sustainability goals.

A key component of the program is setting realistic expectations and building a clear financial roadmap for clients. Amy developed transition models that outline the establishment period, which typically takes one to two growing seasons depending on species selection and regional climate conditions. During this time, sites require initial seeding, soil preparation, and periodic monitoring to ensure successful establishment, with full performance typically achieved by the second year.

She also created detailed cost projections to support decision-making. Initial investment considerations include seed or plant material, soil preparation, and installation labor, with estimated establishment costs generally ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000 per acre depending on site conditions, species selection, and accessibility. The program outlines the labor required during the transition period, including several weeks of initial installation and active monitoring during the first one to two years.

Most importantly, Amy structured the program to clearly demonstrate long-term operational benefits. Once established, low-growth ground cover significantly reduces ongoing maintenance needs, often requiring only one to two mowing cycles per year along with minimal trimming and targeted weed management. This reduction in repetitive labor lowers annual O&M costs, improves efficiency, and provides a more stable and predictable maintenance budget over the life of the asset.

By presenting both the upfront investment and the multi-year cost savings, Amy helps clients evaluate the full lifecycle value of the approach. The Ground Cover Pilot Program reflects her broader philosophy: innovative vegetation management requires forward thinking, data-driven planning, and the willingness to move beyond traditional practices to deliver smarter, more sustainable solutions for clients and their renewable energy assets.

Transforming Solar Field Management Transition Timeline Estimated Costs



Estimate of ROI



Year 1:

Costs: Initial seeding, labor for planting, soil preparation.

Savings: Reduced mowing labor, fewer resources (fuel, fertilizer, pesticides).

Net Impact: Minimal return, as the cover is still establishing.



Year 2:

Costs: Continued maintenance (less frequent mowing, light trimming).

Savings: 10-20% reduction in annual maintenance costs compared to grass.

Net Impact: Low ROI, but signs of future cost reduction are evident.



Year 3:

Costs: Minimal ongoing maintenance (bi-annual mowing or light trimming).

Savings: 30-40% reduction in mowing and maintenance costs. Possible additional revenue from local environmental certification or tax incentives.

Net Impact: ROI 20-30%, with clear savings on operational costs.



Year 5:

Costs: Almost no ongoing labor required beyond occasional maintenance.

Savings: 50-70% reduction in labor and maintenance costs.

Net Impact: Full ROI, with substantial savings from reduced mowing, better soil health, and potential new environmental incentives.

Beyond her technical expertise and operational leadership, Amy DeLaRoche is deeply committed to advancing the role of women in the pesticide, vegetation management, and solar O&M industries. She leads by example every day, demonstrating that women not only belong in these traditionally male dominated fields, but that their strengths bring measurable value to operational success.

Amy believes that attention to detail, strong organizational skills, and the ability to manage multiple priorities simultaneously are critical to effective vegetation management. She regularly oversees complex responsibilities that include coordinating field crews, managing regulatory compliance and reporting, analyzing site data, and communicating clearly with audiences at every level from field technicians to asset managers, regulators, and executive stakeholders.



Her leadership philosophy centers on development and opportunity. Amy actively mentors and supports young women entering the industry, helping them build confidence, technical knowledge, and professional skills. She is committed to providing practical tools, field exposure, and real growth opportunities so that the next generation of women can see a clear path forward in vegetation management careers.

Amy's presence in the field also sends a powerful message. Known for wearing her signature all pink PPE from safety vest and hard hat to boot laces, she brings visibility, confidence, and authenticity to her role. Her personal motto reflects both her personality and her purpose: ***"Pink is Power."***

Across all of her work, Amy's unique contribution is her ability to connect operations, ecology, and economics. She helps clients see vegetation management not as a routine maintenance expense, but as a strategic investment in asset performance, risk reduction, and long-term cost control.

Her leadership has expanded service capabilities, strengthened client partnerships, increased adoption of proactive IPM programs, and demonstrated that when clients understand the financial and operational value of herbicide and integrated management, they are willing to invest in smarter, more sustainable solutions.

Amy DeLaRoche is advancing the pest management profession within one of the fastest-growing sectors of the energy industry proving that strong technical knowledge, financial insight, and client education can transform both business outcomes and environmental stewardship. She represents the innovation, leadership, and impact this award was created to recognize. It is my honor to nominate and fully support Amy DeLaRoche for this recognition.

Sincerely,

Andre Provencal

Chief Executive Officer

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