



Bitch Creek Spray Day - CWMA members and volunteers met with spray equipment to treat Bitch Creek area for noxious weeds.

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# Henrys Fork Cooperative Weed Management Area 2008 Final Report

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## Introduction

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The Henry’s Fork Cooperative Weed Management Area (HFCWMA) is a partnership collaborated to manage, contain, control, and eradicate noxious weeds in Fremont County, Idaho, the southwest portion of Yellowstone National Park and a portion of Ashton Ranger District within Teton County, Wyoming. The HFCWMA covers 1.5 million acres that vary from desert to high alpine forest. Only 25% of the HFCWMA area is in private ownership.

The HFCWMA cooperators include: Fremont County, Targhee National Forest, Yellowstone National Park, Idaho Department of Lands, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Transportation, Bureau of Land management, Teton County Wyoming, Natural Resource and Conservation Service and several private land owners.

The HFCWMA uses integrated weed management techniques including biological and chemical methods to contain, control and eradicate noxious weeds. The two major problem weeds in the HFCWMA are Leafy Spurge and Spotted Knapweed. Leafy Spurge is a deep-rooted perennial toxic to both humans and livestock. Spotted Knapweed is occurring along the highways and towns in the area; major infestations are occurring in the arid desert to the higher elevations and are increasing in the area. Of special concern are those species which pose a high risk to invade the HFCWMA area or will expand from their current limited range. These species include: Dyer’s Woad, Rush Skeletonweed, Tamarisk, and Purple Loosestrife. These noxious weeds are treated as early detection rapid responses (EDRR) situations in the CWMA.

During 2008 the HFCWMA steering committee met five times. They continued their several initiatives aimed at increasing landowner participation in weed control within the area, and pushed their aggressive EDRR response to Dyer’s Woad with a private contractor.

## Project Progress

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Six cost-share projects were implemented during 2008. Projects included information and Herbicide Treatments, Biological Treatments, EDRR, and other CWMA projects with alternate funding. Some of the projects have been underway for several years and are yielding high success.

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## Herbicide Treatments



20 acres of noxious seeds were sprayed on the cooperative Bitch Creek Spray Day.

**Bitch Creek Spray Day** began last year as a cooperative effort with the Henrys Fork CWMA and the Upper Snake River CWMA. This year the CWMA's did a follow-up spray day on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July along the border of Teton and Fremont Counties. It involved landowners with State, County, Federal and Private agencies in a joined effort to battle noxious weeds in local problem areas. Bitch creek Spray Day covered rugged terrain near the head waters of the Teton River which is a major water source for lower Fremont County famers. By spraying the headway of rivers for noxious weeds we

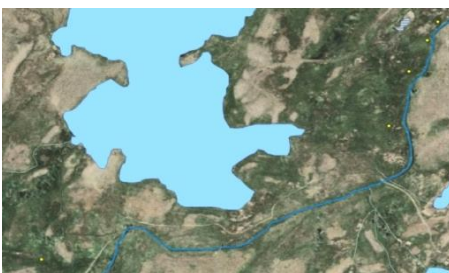
are able to eliminate the spread of the majority of seeds spreading and rooting downstream. Leafy spurge and Musk Thistle were the main noxious weeds treated during this cooperative spray day. The funding for this project helped to purchase ten gallons of both Tordon and HiDep herbicides used to treat 20 acres of Fremont and Teton Counties. This project proved to be highly beneficial and couldn't have happened without the help of people and man power involved.

**Island Park/ North Fork Initiative** enabled landowners in the upper and lower valleys to spray property infected with Leafy Spurge, Canada thistle, and Spotted Knapweed. Grant money helped the CWMA to purchase 40 gallons of Milestone for Canada thistle and Knapweed treatments. Also, 70 gallons of Tordon, 70 gallons of HiDep and 10 gallons of Plateau were purchased for the treatment of Leafy Spurge. This year the CWMA sprayed 1,150 acres of noxious weed infested land. Most of the landowners asked for the county to provide the labor rather than doing it themselves. The land owners were excited when weed density decreased and vegetation returned because the right product was sprayed at the right time. The people who entered this project are dedicated to weed control and are going to continue spraying their ground in following years. This project is also helping to cleaned up the landscape and pushing it back to its natural state.



Hand spraying is required for targeting noxious weeds on rough terrain.

## Biological Treatments



Bio-control site locations at Mallard Pond are shown by yellow dots.

**Chester Wetlands Bio-Control** project was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of July. Idaho Fish & Game employees released 10 colonies of *Urophora carduii* at the six selected sites located on the map show to the left. Mallard Pond was selected as the main bio-release site due to the large amounts of Canada Thistle surrounding the pond. This pond is a major growing area for the native Ute Ladies Tresses which is a threatened species of

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orchid. Herbicide cannot be sprayed in these growing areas which is why bio-control are the safest way to ensure that the orchids are not disturbed. *Ceutorhynchus litura* were not able to be released until this fall because they were unavailable when prime release conditions were present. Future releases of bio-control will continue around Mallard Pond and in other areas where orchids are present.

**Fremont County Bio-Control** project was able to release 56 colonies of biological agents and treat 280 areas. The bio-control efforts have proven to have a great reduction on Leafy Spurge and Spotted Knapweed in Fremont County. In areas with rough terrain and places where herbicides are not allowed or economically logical we were able to put bio-control agents. This year new colonies were placed in deep canyons above the Snake River in Ashton. We hope that these insects will aid in controlling countless patches of leafy spurge. The Spotted Knapweed insects were placed in the desert along the edges of potato fields specifically in areas where we can't spray. Without this project we would have many acres with no treatment at all. Predictions are good that at these new release sites have the location and the amounts of spurge to produce vastly productive future insectaries.



Leafy Spurge bio-controls have proven great results in Eastern Idaho.

## Early Detection Rapid Response



BYU-Idaho Volunteers aid in Dyer's Woad control project.

**Dyer's Woad Control project** was contracted to Jereme Sommers. Jereme was able to conduct five walking surveys for Dyer's woad at 12 mapped locations in 5 general areas of Fremont County, Idaho between May 26 and August 15, 2008. Jereme was responsible to manually treat any infestation with fewer than 100 plants, and new infestations would be reported to the Fremont County Weed Supervisor within three days. Efforts were made to count the number of individual Dyer's woad plants, the number of rosettes and number of bolted plants. Jereme coordinated two weed pulling work days with student volunteers from BYU-Idaho, and pulled

over 9,000 plants at the gravel pit site. Since there was a bounty program this year, Jereme set up posters with this information in public places throughout Fremont County. A total of 16 posters were put up; 6 in Island Park, 5 in Ashton, and 5 in St. Anthony. He also distributed a total of 35 "Why Should I Care" pamphlets, 63 postcards, and 15 "Ecology and Management of Dyer's Woad" pamphlets along with 23 "Weed Pocket Guide" booklets. It is important to continue treatment of Dyer's Woad in Fremont County to prevent further spreading and possibly reduce it significantly.

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## Other Projects

The **Rattle Snake project** is located on the West end of the Ashton reservoir. It consisted of 5,000 BLM acres and 1,620 private acres owned by Clen Atchley. Topography ranged from willow choked creek bottoms filled with spurge and steep walled basalt canyons, to desert filled with sage and juniper. The project started on July 1 and ended August 13. We grazed 450 goats with 99% defoliation for leafy spurge of about 1,450 acres. Rattle Snake and Box canyons were completely choked out by spurge, Canadian thistle, mullein, and golden rod. Due to the very rough terrain, the goats were only able to advance a limited distance up each canyon. Still, we were able to release 30 colonies of leafy spurge bio-control. The acreage covered only confirmed this project was much bigger than anyone thought and will need to be a multi-year project encompassing private, BLM, NRCS, Forest service, and the state for effective control.



The main invader in the treated acres was Leafy Spurge, choking out native vegetation.

The **Henry's Lake Eurasian watermilfoil Prevention project** was funded by a separate ISDA grant, yet consumed much of the CWMA's time and attention. Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM), an invasive aquatic noxious weed, forms dense thick mats of vegetation on the water's surface



Free boat washes from high pressure washer helped to prevent EWM from entering Henry's.

greatly interfering with water-based recreation such as fishing, boating, water skiing and swimming. In addition, the dense mats increase the pH of the water. In Idaho, today, there has been approximately 4,000 surface acres of EWM identified in the state. At this time it has not been confirmed in Eastern Idaho, however, several bodies of water including Henry's Lake have been identified as "highly susceptible water" for EWM. Eurasian watermilfoil primarily spreads through fragments carried by boats, motors, trailers, bait buckets, and fishing gear. Fremont County Weed Control partnered with the Idaho Fish and Game and High Country RC&D to create a prevention program for Henry's Lake. Their project was awarded a \$160,000 grant from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. To prevent fragments from incoming boats there were free boat washes offered daily staffed from 7a.m. to 1p.m. at the Henry's Lake State Park and Bill Frome Park on the Lake, and four additional high pressure washers provided for private and public use if boats are entering from another point on the lake. Funds were also used for information and education materials such as brochures, signs, and boat tags.

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## Goals for 2009

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2008 proved to be a banner year for the Henry's Fork CWMA and 2009 promises to bring more successes. Goals for 2009 include:

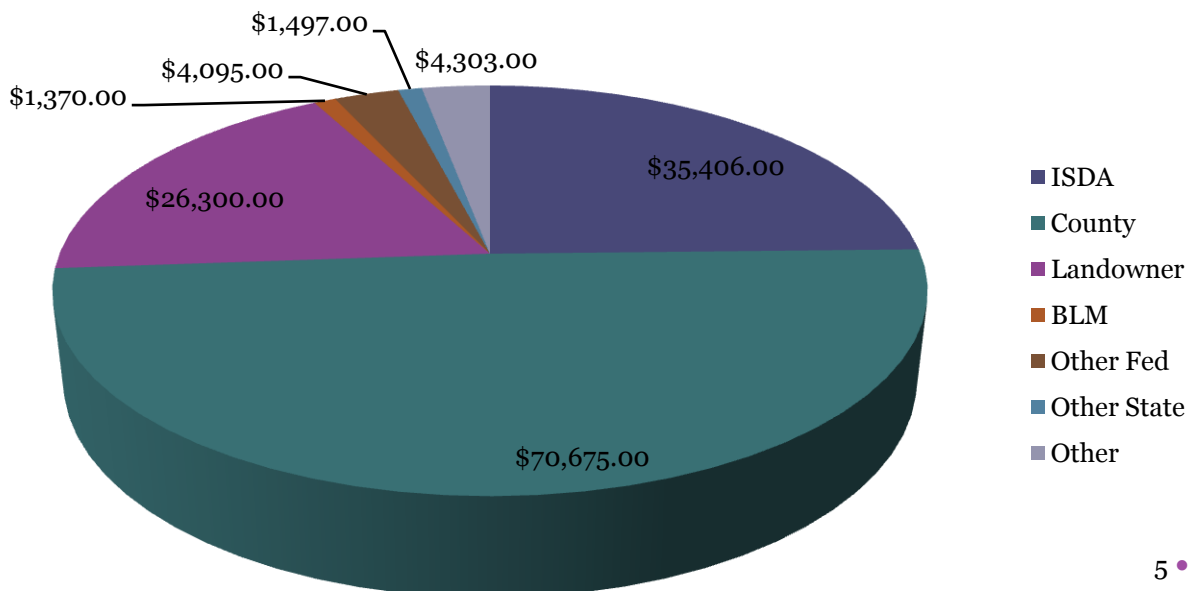
- Expanding the landscape scale special initiatives started in 2008 to treat more acres.
- Continue the efforts targeting new invaders towards Dyer's Woad and Rush skeletonweed.
- Plan, fund, implement, and monitor biological weed control projects in the HFCWMA. Several insectaries will be harvested during 2009 and these insects will be moved to new sites. We will continue to involve students in the harvest and monitoring of Bio-agents,
- Expand the use of goats as an effective tool to combat noxious weeds.
- Initiate cooperative "spray days" and "mapping Days"
- Launch a CWMA wide information and education initiative including the new educational trailer piloting information and education efforts throughout Idaho.

## Contributions to the CWMA

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Fremont County as well as state and federal land managing agencies within the HFCWMA annually set budgets for integrated noxious weed control programs. Other HFCWMA partners provide technical assistance, equipment, services, and dollars in support of integrated noxious weed programs. Grant dollars received from the Idaho Department of Agriculture (ISDA) totaling \$35,720.00 have been matched with local cash and services totaling \$108,240.00. Collectively, these partners provide the resources needed to implement the programs of the HFCWMA. During 2008, a total of \$143,960.00 in cash and in-kind services were contributed in direct support of HFCWMA project implementation.

**2008 Henry's Fork CWMA Sources of Contributions**



## Appendix 1- Steering Committee

Henry's Fork CWMA Steering Committee		
Name	Title	Phone
Bryce Fowler	Chairman & Fremont Weed Supervisor	624-3102
Tammy Egbert	Secretary & RC&D Program Asst.	356-5213 x104
Kyle Moore	Vice Chairman & Range Conservationist	652-7442
Craig McClure	National Parks Service	(307)344-2168
Keith Hobbs	Idaho Parks and Recreation	558-7368
Kirk Finn	Maintenance Coordinator	745-7781
Kim Ragotzkie	Idaho Fish and Game	525-7290
Steve Smart	RC&D Coordinator	356-5213 x117
Mark Harbaugh	Landowner	652-7070
Reed Sommer	Landowner	356-6548
Scott Neville	Landowner	356-4130
Scott Minnie	Bureau of Land Management	524-7553
Adrienne Keller	US Forest Service	652-7442
Jodi Vincent	Idaho Parks and Recreation	558-7368
Josh Rydalch	Idaho Fish and Game	624-7065
Tracy Behrens	Idaho Department of Lands	525-7167
Ryan Newman	US Bureau of Reclamation	678-0461
Paul Romrell	Fremont County Commissioner	624-4304
Dustin Cureton	Idaho Fish and Game	624-7065

## Appendix 2 - AOP Accomplishments

Project name	Weed Species	Acres treated
Biological Releases	Canada thistle	50
	Spotted Knapweed	70
	Leafy Spurge	210
Herbicide treatment	Canada thistle	531
	Dyer's Woad	5
	Leafy Spurge	408
	Spotted Knapweed	200
	Plumeless Thistle	10
Noxious Weeds Mapped	Canada thistle	1500
	Dyer's Woad	5

## Appendix 3 - Area Description

The HFCWMA includes all the land in Fremont County Idaho plus the south west portion of Yellowstone National Park that drains into the Henrys Fork, (the Bechler Subdistrict) and that portion of Teton County Wyoming that lies within the Ashton District of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. The HFCWMA comprises 1.5 Million acres of which twenty five percent is in private ownership. (See attached Map)

