

**UPPER SNAKE RIVER COOPERATIVE WEED  
MANAGEMENT AREA  
ANNUAL REPORT YEAR 2000**

## **I - INTRODUCTION**

### **Who we are**

The partnership that would eventually become the Upper Snake River Cooperative Weed Management Area (USRCWMA ) started in 1993 with a small coordinated biological weed control experiment along the South Fork of the Snake River in Bonneville County. Initially three partners pooled \$800 to purchase 4 colonies of Apthona nigriscutus which for release on Leafy Spurge near Pine Creek. This initial cooperative project was followed by the formation of a larger partnership called the **South Fork Biological Control Steering Committee**. Between 1994 and 1996 many additional partners joined our effort by providing both technical and financial assistance to the Steering Committee. Our goal was simple. We wanted to introduce and evaluate the effectiveness of biological control agents as a component of an IPM program. We established long term monitoring sites where bio-agents were released on Leafy Spurge and Knapweed 1994. These would later give us the opportunity to scientifically evaluate and quantify the impacts of bio-agents in environmentally sensitive areas. (See attached story Appendix III). Another important early success was in local fund raising. The BLM, Forest Service, High Country RC&D Council, Eastside and West Side Conservation Districts, Bonneville County Commission and Weed Department, Idaho Fish and Game, Idaho Community Foundation, and the Butte Market Lake Canal Company all responded to our challenge for funds to implement our programs. The Steering Committee raised about \$4,000 per year to operate to program. We also started an information and education program that included, training workshops, and articles in SCD newsletters, involved TV and newspaper coverage during bio releases.

In 1997 the Steering Committee secured an \$80,000 grant from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) to mitigate wildlife habitat losses that occurred following the construction of Palisades Dam. Almost overnight our small South Fork project became a multi-county multi-agency program called the **Palisades Mitigation Project (PMP)**. Our goal was aimed at protecting and enhancing critical wildlife habitats through noxious weed control. Many of these habitats are in remote, inaccessible, and ecologically sensitive sites where herbicides are difficult to use. The focus of the PMP is to assist our partners to implement the biological component of their IPM programs and to establish insectaries throughout the watershed on several species of noxious weeds. We've established and administer a cost share program, developed our own project evaluation process, and continue to monitor release sites. The partnership has placed over 2000 colonies of plant specific biological control agents to attack Spotted Knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Canada Thistle, Musk Thistle, and Dalmation Toadflax. In 2000 we grew from a small idea into a five county weed fighting partnership called the **Upper Snake River Cooperative Weed Management Area (USRCWMA)**.

Weed control programs, administered by local counties and land managing agencies, often end up under funded and under staffed. In the USRCWMA we believe that sharing funds, equipment, staff, and ideas across jurisdictional boundaries in a coordinated and cooperative weed fighting strategy will result in more effective on-the-ground weed control.

## Area involved

The USRCWMA covers Teton County, Madison County, Bonneville County, a portion of Jefferson County, and a portion of Bingham County. (See maps in Appendix 2)

Table 1: Acres - USRCWMA

COUNTY	Bonneville	Bingham	Jefferson	Madison	Teton	TOTAL
ACRES	1,211,405	113,000	363,761	306,000	294,012	2,288,178

## Goals and Mission

The USRCWMA was established to coordinate area wide activities to prevent, contain, and control non-native invasive plants and noxious weeds on public and private lands within the area. The CWMA provides a forum for partners to pool technical and financial resources, staff, and equipment where appropriate to achieve better control and containment of weeds. It was established under the direction and resolution of Bonneville, Teton, Madison, Jefferson and Bingham County Commissioners and the state and federal agencies managing lands within those counties.

The Year 2000 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) places a high priority on four major strategic areas. They are:

- 1) Developing a coordinated area wide information and education program.
- 2) Initiating a noxious weed-mapping program using GPS and GIS technology.
- 3) Targeting and funding large scale weed treatment projects.
- 4) Implementing a research and monitoring program to locally evaluate the effectiveness of weed fighting techniques.

The Steering Committee has identified priority noxious weed infestations that pose the highest threat to the entire USRCWMA. Additionally, they have developed priority initiatives that target resources to address those concerns during Year 2000.

## Major concerns

The noxious weed species of most concern within the USRCWMA include Leafy Spurge, Spotted Knapweed, Diffuse Knapweed, Russian Knapweed, Canada Thistle, Musk Thistle, Hoary Cress, Toadflax, and Purple Loosestrife. The rapid spread of these noxious weeds is a serious threat to the ecology and economy of Eastern Idaho.

Leafy spurge has gained a strong foothold in a wide range of habitats across the USRCWMA including arid rangelands, dry canyons, riparian zones, and wetland habitats along the Teton and Snake River. Leafy Spurge has displaced native vegetation severely degrading the wildlife and grazing values of these lands. Purple Loosestrife threatens the diverse habitats along the Henry's Fork of the Snake River in Madison and Jefferson County. In recent years Spotted Knapweed, Diffuse Knapweed, and Russian Knapweed have been spreading, especially along the regions road systems, and pose a huge threat to the regions rangelands.

## Who is involved

Active partners in the USRCWMA include local County Commissions, County Weed Departments, High Country RC&D Council, five Soil and Water Conservation Districts, private landowners, USDA-Forest Service; USDI-Bureau of Land Management, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA-Cooperative Extension Service, USDI-Bureau of

Reclamation, Idaho Department of Lands, Idaho State Department of Agriculture, Idaho Department of Highways, Idaho Department of Fish & Game, and Bonneville Power Administration.

## **II- WHAT'S BEING DONE**

### *Inventory / Mapping*

Grant funds received during August 2000 from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture allowed for the purchase of two Trimble GeoExplorer GPS units for noxious weed inventory and mapping. Additional local financial contributions from Bonneville, Jefferson, and Madison County doubled that amount allowing a total of four units to be purchased. The GPS units were received in late November. The CWMA has scheduled GPS mapping training in March, 2001 and has extensive coordinated mapping activities planned for the 2001 field season.

### *Information/Education*

During March 2000 the CWMA sponsored an Integrated Weed Control Workshop in Idaho Falls. The workshop was attended by 70 students. Also during March, a Jefferson County Weed Awareness Workshop was held in Rigby and was attended by 40. Additionally, a field training session on using goats to graze leafy spurge was held during September. Numerous articles have been written by USRCWMA partners during the year. See Appendix III.

### *Eradication*

Three cooperative spray days were initiated during 2000. Each was in one of the targeted strategic initiative areas identified by the CWMA. Staff and equipment from all the cooperating agencies joined forces to cooperatively attack specific weeds.

The Jefferson County Weed Department coordinated with the IDF&G, BLM, and Madison County to organize a Spotted Knapweed Spray Day in the Highway 33 Corridor Initiative area.

The Bonneville County Weed Department coordinated with the BLM, USFS, IDF&G, and NRCS to organize a Leafy Spurge Spray Day in the Pine Creek / Dry Creek Watersheds.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game coordinated with the BLM, NRCS, Madison County, and private landowners to initiate a Spray Day that targeted Purple Loosestrife along the Henry's Fork of the Snake River.

### *Containment*

The Palisades Mitigation Project (PMP) boundaries were expanded in Year 2000 to match the boundaries of the USRCWMA. Since 1994 the focus of the PMP has been to increase the presence of biological weed control agents in the region. During Year 2000 seventeen species of biological agents, (395 colonies), were released on Leafy Spurge, Spotted Knapweed, Canada Thistle, Musk Thistle, and Yellow Toadflax. The project cost-shares directly with landowners and agencies. By coordinating bio agent purchases we have negotiated significant cost savings which are passed on to our partners. Neighboring CWMA's have benefited by combining their bio-orders with the USRCWMA. Since 1998 Palisades Mitigation Project participants have saved \$82,141 by combining orders in the project.

### III- CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CWMA

Every County along with the state and federal land managing agencies annually set budgets for integrated noxious weed control programs. Other USRCWMA partners provide technical assistance, equipment, services, and dollars in support of integrated noxious weed programs. For example, the Palisades Mitigation Project (PMP), administered by the High Country RC&D Council, Inc., budgeted up to \$20,000 cash match for approved IPM projects during 2000. Table 2 displays the estimated contribution from partners in the USRCWMA for year 2000.

Table 2: Partners Year 2000 Estimated Budgets – USRCWMA

<b>PARTNER</b>	<b>Chemical \$</b>	<b>Biological \$</b>	<b>Equipment \$</b>	<b>Labor \$</b>	<b>Info/Ed u \$</b>	<b>Other \$</b>	<b>Tech. Assist (in-kind match)</b>	<b>TOTAL \$</b>
Teton County	9,000	0	0	11,065	0	800	0	20,865
Madison County	9,250	0	10,000	17,665	1,650	6,700	0	45,265
Jefferson County	25,000	0	13,400	30,778	2,850	19,625	0	91,653
Bonneville County	45,000	200	53,900	133,843	1,000	10,600	0	244,543
Bingham County	1,000	0	2,000	2,000	80	0	0	5,080
USDA-FS (Teton RD)	500	0	1,000	12,000	5000	0	0	18,500
USDA-FS Palisades RD)	2,409	0	3,423	27,786	0	0	0	31,209
USDI –BLM	800	4,000	2,400	6,000	0	2,000	0	15,200
USDA –NRCS	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	20,000
USDA –CES	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000	30,000
Idaho Dept. Fish and Game	2,104	1,939	1,000	12,761	500	0	0	18,304
Idaho Dept. of Lands	600	0	1,600	1,440	0	0	0	3,040
High Country RC&D Council	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	35,000	55,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95,663</b>	<b>26,139</b>	<b>88,723</b>	<b>255,338</b>	<b>11,080</b>	<b>39,725</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>\$601,668</b>

#### **IV- PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR**

The USRCWMA plans to continue the programs it started in Year 2000 and take on several new challenges.

Our Information and Education Committee has identified workshops and tours as a high priority to implement during 2001. We are cooperating in the planning of the Weed Summit scheduled in Idaho Falls during March. Additionally the will develop and produce pamphlets and brochures addressing the CWMA major noxious weed issues and coordinate displays at county fairs.

Coordinated weed inventory and mapping will be a major activity during 2001. With the aquisition of 4 GPS units within the CWMA last fall we planning to share staff and equipment in several cooperative mapping projects. The CWMA has arranged for GPS training to be conducted during March.

Aggressive noxious weed treatment projects are planned and funded in the Priority Initiatives areas identified by the CWMA including:

- Snake River, Purple Loosestrife Control Initiative
- Highway 33 Spotted Knapweed Control Initiative
- Menan Area Leafy Spurge/Spotted Knapweed Control Initiative
- Dry Creek/Pine Creek Leafy Spurge Control Initiative
- Bitch Creek Leafy Spurge Control Initiative
- Swan Valley Weed Control Initiative

The Palisades Mitigation Project will continue to plan, fund, and implement the biological control component of IPM projects in the USRCWMA . Several *Aphthona nigricutis* insectaries will be harvested this summer and insects move to new sites. Considerable time will be spent cataloging previous bio release sites with GPS equipment. The Leafy Spurge Goat Control project on Henry's Fork of the Snake River will be continued.

**Appendix I -**

**STEERING**

**COMMITTEE**

**APPENDIX 1**

***Chairman***

Paul Faulkner  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Marie Snyder  
Weed Supervisor  
Jefferson County, Idaho

***Vice Chairman***

Jeff Pettingill  
Weed Supervisor  
Bonneville County, Idaho

Delbert Winterfeld  
Landowner / SCD Supervisor  
Bonneville County

***Secretary***

Kim Rogotzkie  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Paul Muirbrook  
Weed Supervisor  
Bingham County, Idaho

Richard Beesley  
Landowner / SCD Supervisor  
Madison County

Steve Smart  
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation  
Service

Gerald Jeppesen  
Landowner /RC&D Chairman  
Madison County

Heath Hancock  
State of Idaho, Department of Lands

Dusty Hincks  
Targhee National Forest  
Palisades Ranger District

Jay Hansen USDA-Cooperative  
Extension Service

JC Stimpson  
Targhee National Forest  
Teton Ranger District

Mike Stoddard  
USDI-Bureau of Land Management

Vern Woolstenhulme  
Weed Supervisor  
Teton County, Idaho

Brent Mendenhall  
USDA - Farm Services Agency

Gale Harding  
Weed Supervisor  
Madison County, Idaho

# **Appendix I I-**

## **MAPS**

**Appendix I I I-**  
**PRESS RELEASES**

**Appendix I V-**  
**PUBLICATIONS ,**  
**REPORTS , &**  
**PAPERS**