



Cartier Slough – Combination of goats and leafy spurge biological controls help to manage USRCWMA noxious weeds.



Upper Snake River Cooperative Weed Management Area 2008 Final Report



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Project Progress	1-7
Herbicide Treatments	2
Herbicide/Biological Treatments	4
Goat Grazing Treatments	5
Mapping and Inventory Projects	6
Other Projects	7
Goals for 2009	7
Contributions to the CWMA	8
Appendix 1 – Steering Committee	9
Appendix 2 – AOP Accomplishments	10
Appendix 3 – Area Description	11

Introduction

The Upper Snake River Cooperative Weed Management Area (USRCWMA) was established by the Bonneville, Teton, Madison, Jefferson and Bingham County Commissioners in partnership with state and federal agencies which manage lands within those counties. The USRCWMA provides a forum to coordinate area-wide activities to detect, prevent, contain, control, and eradicate noxious weeds on public and private lands.

The USRCWMA believes 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. The USRCWMA supports an area wide integrated noxious weed control program that uses all available tools and techniques to combat noxious weeds. A steering committee provides local leadership and meets monthly to plan and implement its programs. The steering committee membership is detailed in Appendix 1. The committee met six times during 2008.

The USRCWMA covers Bingham County, Teton County, Madison County, Bonneville County, and a portion of Jefferson County. Noxious weeds of major concern include: Leafy Spurge, Spotted Knapweed, Diffuse knapweed, Russian knapweed, Canada thistle, Musk thistle, Plumeless thistle, Hoary Cress, Dalmation and Yellow Toadflax, Purple Loosestrife, Dyer’s Woad, Rush skeletonweed, Houndstounge and Tamarisk. The rapid spread of these noxious weeds is a serious threat to the ecology and economy of eastern Idaho.

Project Progress

Fifteen cost-share projects were implemented during 2008. Projects included herbicide treatments, herbicide/biological treatments, grazing treatments, mapping and inventory projects, and other projects. Some of the projects have been underway for several years and are yielding very success.

Herbicide Treatments

Swan Valley Project finished its 8th year of very successful treatment efforts covering a total of 2,656.45 acres. Noxious weed control is promoted by cost sharing with private landowners. A total of 400 contacts were made. Local landowners are notified about noxious weeds on their lands. Once a management plan is developed, and if herbicides were determined to be the best option, then Bonneville County Weed would treat the property. Landowners split the cost of the herbicide 50/50 with the CWMA. Weeds treated include: Spotted knapweed, Canada thistle, Musk thistle, Diffuse knapweed, Leafy spurge, Houndstongue, and Field bindweed.



Treatments in Swan Valley were posted and photographed.

The **Dan Creek project** is also in its eighth year. This project is in the heart of Bonneville counties valuable rangeland. Numerous ranchers free-range their cattle in the area and see the importance of protecting the land especially in riparian areas against Musk thistle, Canada thistle, Houndstongue, Black henbane, Leafy spurge, and/or Skeletonleaf bursage. This project cost shares 50/50 of the total cost of weed control with the landowner. A large portion of the work effort uses backpacker sprayers with a seek and destroy attitude. A total of 158 acres were treated. These continued efforts have enabled us to keep the majority of the noxious weeds contained. However, Houndstongue will require many years of treatment to control.



Local Farmers and Ranchers got involved in the fight against Noxious weeds in Eastern Idaho.

The **Hudman Project** was implemented to protect Idaho Fish and Game properties on the Tex Creek WMA. This year a total of 93 acres were treated for noxious weeds. The project has been successful in reducing a large amount of the following noxious weeds: Musk thistle, Canada thistle, Black henbane, and Leafy spurge. Adjacent landowners are also continually getting involved and project is making significant progress.

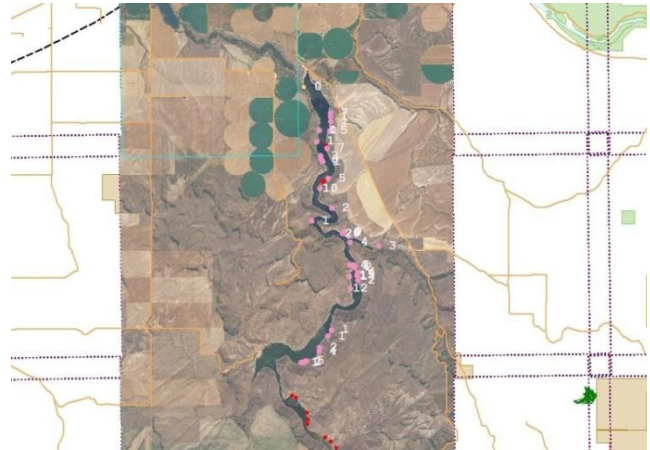


The railways in Bonneville, Jefferson, and Madison Counties were sprayed with

The **Rail Dogs Project** involves Bonneville, Jefferson, and Madison Counties. It focuses on the Eastern Idaho Railroad (RAILDOGS) which is a short line railroad that runs throughout Southern Idaho. Treatment consisted of handgun spraying areas from the rail to the fence/property line. Weeds controlled included Musk thistle, Canada thistle, Leafy spurge, Field bindweed, Houndstongue, plumeless thistle, Puncturevine, Spotted

knapweed, and even a little Yellow toadflax. \$1,500.00 was used to purchase herbicide with the Raildogs contributing \$3187.00 cash match for additional herbicide and for the labor contracted with DeAngelo Brothers. Each county worked one day on the project and treated 87 acres.

This was the first year for the **Ririe Reservoir Salt Cedar** project. This reservoir is owned and managed by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). Salt Cedar was found at the reservoir while surveying for Rush Skeletonweed. It was determined that a considerable number of Salt Cedars inhabited the shoreline of the reservoir. Bonneville County Weed Control surveyed, mapped, and treated the Salt Cedars with the help of 36 people from two counties, USFS, Idaho Fish and Game, and others. Seven boats and four GPS units were also used for this project. A total of 727 acres were surveyed and mapped, of which roughly 30 acres were treated with herbicides and around 215 Salt Cedar's eradicated from 47 different places along the shoreline of the reservoir.



GPS/GIS Locations of Saltcedar trees treated along the Ririe Reservoir in Idaho.

The Teton County Spotted Knapweed Control Project was very successful in combating the spread of Spotted Knapweed throughout the County. This year twenty private landowners participated in the cost-share program. Most of the landowners that participated live on lots between ¼ and 5 acres in size. The cities of Driggs and Victor, and several farmers were also involved. The county treated over 35 miles of critical roadside and bike-pathways with an estimated 303 acres area treated to help prevent the spread of Spotted Knapweed by vehicles. This project also included a spray day along Highway 33 to contain several relatively small Spotted Knapweed infestations along the highway corridor. There were over 30 county and federal representatives that participated in the spray day, and there was over \$15,000 on in-kind match.



Backpack sprayers aid in targeting hard to reach noxious weed areas.

The **Snake River Corridor Project** offers a good opportunity for the Upper Snake Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) and Henrys Fork CWMA to join forces on high priority noxious weed issues. On September 18th several agencies representing Bonneville, Clark, Fremont, Jefferson, and Teton counties, the US Forest Service, and Idaho Fish and Game combined in a spray day covering 215 acres in Jefferson County. Most of the area sprayed was along the dike and riparian areas near Lorenzo Bridge. Jefferson County Sherriff Department provided a jet boat, and Officer Fullmer shuttled applicators with

backpack sprayers to the islands which would otherwise be inaccessible.

Teton County Gravel Pits & Landfill Project This project enabled the county to specifically direct weed control efforts at gravel pits which are often the source of spreading noxious weeds. Resources were targeted toward noxious weed control on county and privately owned gravel pits. Five different gravel pits were treated as well as the former landfill and the new transfer station. Two privately owned gravel pits were treated, inspected, and certified for use by Forest Service road maintenance projects. An estimated 171 acres were treated for Musk thistle, Canada thistle, and Leafy Spurge.

Herbicide/Biological Treatments

The Forest Weed Control Project had another successful season of weed control. The project area includes National Forest System lands located in Idaho on the Teton Basin and Palisades Ranger Districts of the Caribou- Targhee National Forest. In the project area, 2,561 acres of noxious weeds were treated with herbicides or mechanical treatments. 60,000 *Aphthona* beetles were released at 7 leafy spurge sites. Crews made contact with over 100 forest visitors while treating weeds and informed them about weed management. This ongoing project has had long lasting effects. Areas with persistent problems have been brought under control and are at manageable levels but must be maintained as eradication is not feasible. Infestations in the project area that have been previously treated during spray days are now at manageable levels where the forest weed crews can maintain them without additional help. This year a spray day was held in the Indian Creek Drainage near Swan Valley Idaho. Crews from two counties and the Idaho Fish and Game aided the Forest Service crew in treating this area. A total of 16 people attacked the weed problem that consists of Musk thistle, Canada thistle, hounds tongue, leafy Spurge, and spotted knapweed.



Aphthona beetles help control Leafy Spurge in the Forest Regions.



Canada thistle Bio-controls are released to protect rare plants.

The **Teton River Corridor Integrated Weed Management Project** helped private landowner efforts to control Canada thistle along the Teton River corridor and adjacent lands in Teton Valley, Idaho. Teton Regional Land Trust (TRLT), based in Driggs, Idaho, initiated the project because of the negative impacts Canada thistle can have on wildlife habitat and the productivity of agricultural lands. The project took an integrated approach by using biological control insects and herbicide. The Land Trust released two colonies of *Urophora cardui* (stem gall fly) in one location in the Woods Creek Fen, an area known to harbor rare plants. In addition to bio-control

releases, TRLT distributed 42 quarts of the herbicide Milestone to 15 private landowners in Teton Valley. Approximately 750 acres along the Teton River corridor were treated for Canada thistle through this project. The project resulted in approximately 20 public contacts. Additionally, an article about the project was included in the Land Trust's winter newsletter, which is distributed to approximately 2,500 people.

The **Bitch Creek Leafy Spurge Spray Day** objective was to prevent the spread of Leafy Spurge into Grand Targhee National Forest and Yellowstone National Park. This project was a cooperative effort with Fremont County in the Henrys Fork CWMA. The goal is to eradicate and contain Leafy Spurge in the area near Bitch Creek, which is the border between Fremont and Teton Counties. Most of the land treated was privately owned pasture recently taken out of CRP, land bordering the forest, roadsides, or land along the Bitch Creek drainage. Twenty-three people representing private landowners, surrounding counties, BLM, Forest Service, and Fish and Game came to support the spray day. The spray day was extremely successful and as part of the project we also released 20 colonies of *Oberea* bio-controls. An estimated 100 acres were treated with biological releases and 190 acres was treated with herbicide. There were eight public contacts, and over \$7,000 of in-kind match in the form of labor, equipment, materials, and cash match.



Henrys Fork CWMA and Upper Snake River CWMA join in a cooperative spray day.

Grazing Treatments



Each pasture was grazed intensely to remove density for bio controls to work more efficiently.

The **Leafy Spurge Goat Grazing Project** went very well again this year. The project start was delayed by high spring runoff in the Henry's Fork Snake River, flooding the entire Cartier Slough from early May through early July. When the water did go down, there were several road washouts that needed to be repaired, preventing access into most of the Wildlife Management Area until mid-July. The goats were on the project area from July 16 through September 16, 2008. All five pastures were briefly grazed early in the project to remove the flowers on the larger

plants. Then, each pasture was re-grazed more intensely to remove the remaining growth. Overall leafy spurge density was significantly reduced in all the long-term photo-monitoring points. One observation of note was the significant reduction in the bio-control insect populations. Both *Aphthona spp.* and *Oberea* were still present on the area, but sweep net checks throughout the summer indicated the populations had been severely reduced, most likely due to the two months of flooding in spring. We

economic losses due to leafy spurge infestation are estimated to exceed \$120 million in the Northwestern states. Leafy spurge has a number of biological characteristics that have caused it to be difficult to control with herbicides. Thus, classical biological control is a valuable spurge management tool.

The **Madison County Fair Booth** highlighted information and education about the problems Madison is facing with noxious weeds. Informing the community about spray days, Leafy spurge bio-control insectories, and other weed problems that local landowners were facing was beneficial. Many landowners came over with question and were curious who to contact for their weed problems. The booth also spotlighted Steve Holey the new Madison County Weed Superintendent. We were able to contact roughly 100 adults and 50 children from Madison County. A sign-up list for Leafy spurge bio-controls in 2009 was set up and filled with 17 interested individuals. Overall the project proved valuable for all involved.



Kids enjoyed the flea beetles, while adults were interested removing weeds

Goals for 2009

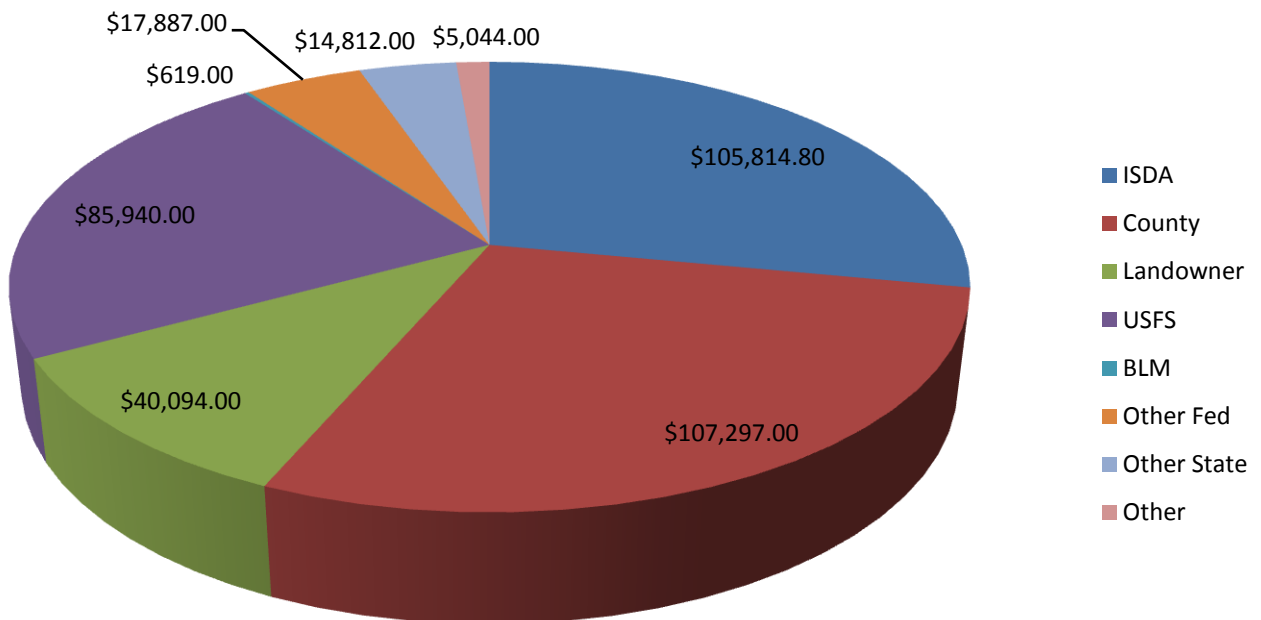
The USRCWMA will continue to implement the strategic plan it developed in 2008. Goals include:

- Focus on new invaders such as Rush skeletonweed and Dyer's Woad.
- Plan, fund, implement, monitor, harvest and redistribute biological weed control agents.
- Continue cooperative successful "spray days".
- Expand the use of student mapping teams.
- Targeted noxious weed treatment projects with private landowners.
- Create a cooperative planning map using previously mapped areas of each county.

Contributions to the CWMA

Grant dollars received from the Idaho Department of Agriculture (ISDA) totaling \$105,814.80 have been matched with local cash and services totaling \$271,693.00. Collectively, these partners provide the resources needed to implement the programs of the USRCWMA. During 2008, a total of \$377,507.80 in cash, in-kind services, and grant money were contributed in direct support of USRCWMA project implementation.

2008 Upper Snake River CWMA Sources of Contribution



Appendix 1- Steering Committee

USRCWMA Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Number</u>
Kim Ragotzkie	Chairman	525-7290
Paul Muirbrook	Vice-Chairman	785-8066
Tammy Egbert	Secretary	356-5213

Steering Committee

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Number</u>
Bonneville County Commissioner	Dave Radford	529-1360
Bonneville County Extension Educator	Wayne Jones	785-8060
Bonneville County Weed Superintendent	Jeffery Pettingill	529-1397
Bureau of Land Management	Scott Minnie	524-7535
City of Ammon Parks Director	Ken Knoch	529-4211
Idaho Department of Lands	Krystle Wengreen	525-7167
Idaho Department of Transportation	Kirk Finn	745-7781
Idaho Fish and Game	Kim Ragotzkie	525-7290
Idaho Fish and Game	Paul Faulkner	525-7290
Idaho National Laboratory	Brock Bassett	526-9169
Jefferson County Extension Educator	Brian McLain	745-6685
Jefferson Soil Water Conservation District Administrative Assistant	Amanda Hickman	745-6664
Jefferson County Weed Superintendent	Mitch Whitmill	745-9221
Madison County Extension Educator	Gale Harding	356-3191
Madison County Weed Department	Blaine Smith	356-3191
Madison County Weed Superintendent	Steve Hobley	317-6013
Madison County Natural Resource Conservation Service	Cleve Bagley	356-6931
Jefferson County Natural Resource Conservation Service	Howard Johnson	745-6664
Bonneville County Natural Resource Conservation Service	Debra Nace	522-5137
NRCS & High Country RC&D Coordinator	Steve Smart	356-5213
Teton County Weed Superintendent/ Teton County Extension Educator	Ben Eborn	354-2961
Teton Regional Land Trust	Tamara Sperber	354-8939
US Bureau of Reclamation	Mark Arana	756-2271
US Forest Service	Greg Hanson	523-1412
US Forest Service	Jim Robertson	354-2312

Appendix 2 – AOP Accomplishments

Biological Releases	
Weed Species	Acres treated
Canada thistle	80.00
Spotted Knapweed	10.00
Leafy Spurge	945.00

Herbicide Treatment	
Black Henbane	18.00
Canada thistle	48.00
Diffuse Knapweed	1.00
Dyer's Woad	1.00
Field Bindweed	68.00
Leafy Spurge	533.00
Musk Thistle	1678.00
Perennial Pepperweed	2.50
Perennial Sowthistle	1.00
Puncturevine	5.20
Rush Skeletonweed	0.25
Russian Knapweed	109.00
Scoth Thistle	2.00
Spotted Knapweed	946.00
Yellow Toadflax	210.75
Houndstongue	1260.50
Japanese Knotweed	1.00
Saltcedar	30.00
Small Bugloss	2.00
Plumeless Thistle	8.00

Noxious Weeds Mapped	
Weed Species	Acres treated
Black Henbane	13.6
Buffalobur	1
Canada thistle	186.30
Diffuse Knapweed	12.50
Field Bindweed	10.70
Leafy Spurge	36.00
Musk Thistle	236.70
Spotted Knapweed	1500.00
Orange Hawkweed	1.00
Perennial Sowthistle	5.00
Poison Hemlock	1.20
Russian Knapweed	658.80
Scoth Thistle	5.00
Skeletonleaf Bursage	2.00
Spotted Knapweed	8.00
Yellow Toadflax	3.00
Houndstongue	72.80
Japanese Knotweed	1.70
Oxeye Daisy	0.03
Saltcedar	730.06
White Bryony	13.40
Plumeless Thistle	1.10
Small Bugloss	0.30
Whitetop	3.00
Flowering Rush	70.00
Brazilian Elodea	1.00
Bohemian Knotweed	1.00

Appendix 3 – Area Description

The area covered by Upper Snake River Cooperative Weed Management Area (USRCWMA) includes all lands within Bingham, Teton, and Madison County, Idaho. It includes all lands to the south of Highway 33 in Jefferson County except the cropland area around Mud Lake and Terreton. It includes all lands within Bonneville County that are north of the Palisades Ranger District's southern boundary. Land ownership is inter-mingled federal, state, county, and private holdings. The USRCWMA is bordered by the Henry's Fork, Jackson Hole, Wyoming , Highlands, Utah/Idaho, Power County, Blaine County, Lost River, and the Continental Divide CWMA's. The CWMA contains approximately 3,515,838 acres.

