

2009 Noxious Weed Control Strategy

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board

Previous Approach

Most weeds had equal status. Actions taken for Class A, Class B Designates, Class B Non-designates and Class C weeds were treated fairly equally. Property owners were contacted, letters sent, and follow-up became difficult due the number of properties involved. There have been a few threats of enforcement, but primarily the program has been voluntary and for the most part, relied on good will and education.

Exceptions to this are when the control efforts were funded by grants or contracts for control of specific noxious and invasive weeds. Over the years we have become more involved in control work. The Board has taken on Spartina, knotweed, purple loosestrife, reed sweetgrass, and giant hogweed. Roadside control work has always been part the program and for the past 4 years mitigation site weed control has been added to the Boards on the ground control efforts. All of these programs have been successful and a series of successes are in the wings. For the most part these programs have been funded by grants or contracts.

In 2008 the Weed Board attempted to remove Canada thistle, bull thistle and some non-native hawkweeds from the County Noxious Weed List in an attempt to prioritize weeds being listed. The County Council would not approve the change and attempted to find additional funding to keep the weed list intact. The funding never appeared.

New Strategy

- 1) Prioritize noxious weeds by possibility of success in removing known sites of Class A and Class B noxious weeds from the County. The current list of noxious weeds would be ranked by Class and population. Class A weeds taking priority over Class B weeds. All below listed weeds have populations of which all known populations could be eradicated.
 - a. Class A List
 - i. Giant hogweed
 - ii. Spartina - all
 - iii. Reed sweetgrass
 - iv. All new discoveries
 - b. Class B Designates
 - i. Common Reed
 - ii. Common fennel
 - iii. Policeman's helmet
 - iv. Diffuse knapweed
 - v. Meadow knapweed
 - vi. Spotted knapweed
 - vii. Parrotfeather
 - viii. Perennial pepperweed
 - c. Class B Non-designates
 - i. Gorse

- 2) Attempt to broaden on the ground control work for specific species with emphasis on the Priority List to enhance eradication efforts:
 - a. Offer services to municipalities
 - b. Expand work with the County for mitigation
 - c. Expand effort when populations are close to eradication by giving owners assistance in eradicating last known populations

- 3) Continue to pursue grant funding to work on controlling wide spread problems beyond the Boards capacity to fund internally. (i.e. knotweed, Spartina):
 - a. Continue Spartina, knotweed, purple loosestrife, roadside and mitigation projects as long as funding is available

- 4) Move to enforcement on long term infestations of tansy ragwort:
 - a. Revise our annual letter informing the owners of their tansy problem. The new letter will explain that chronic infestations that have been on our contact list for years will be subject to enforcement.
 - b. An initial list will be developed and these owners will be contacted in person early in the season.
 - c. Contact will be made by the Coordinator or a designated technician tasked with the job of assessing, recording, and tracking progress or the lack of it by property owners.
 - i. One seasonal staff member will be assigned the duties of tracking designated owners 50% of their time or as budget allows.
 - d. After proper documentation, contact, and the evidence of violation are compiled the Coordinator will institute enforcement action.

- 5) Increase survey for new invaders and sites previously unknown for noxious weeds on the Priority List:
 - a. Map locations, contact owners, start control projects if necessary
 - b. Share survey information with the State Noxious Weed Control Board

- 6) Increase productivity by using the technology that has been accumulated:
 - a. Laptop and GPS in survey/owner contact/enforcement vehicle
 - b. Upgrade GIS mapping to ArcView 9.3
 - c. Utilize fully the 4 Trimble GPS units
 - d. Work to integrate the technology into our record keeping system

Approved by the Board 2/12/2009