

Okanogon County's 2015 Fall Noxious Weed News Bulletin

Coming Events

October Events

October 14: Ferry County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding its monthly board meeting. (For more information please contact Ferry County Noxious Weed Office (509) 775-5225 Ext: 1111.)

October 28: Okanogon County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding its Annual Assessment Hearing in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at the Virginia Grainger Building in Okanogon at 4:00 pm. The Board may propose to increase the assessment rate.

October 28: Okanogon County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding its monthly board meeting in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at the Virginia Grainger Building in Okanogon at 4:00 pm, following the Annual Assessment Hearing. (Note: You will receive 1 pesticide license recertification credit for every board meeting that you attend.)

November Events

November 3: Ferry County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding a noxious weed workshop (from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm in the Ferry County Commissioner's Office. Pesticide license recertification credits may be available. (For more information please contact the Ferry County Noxious Weed Office at (509) 775-5225 Ext: 1111.)

November 10: Ferry County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding its monthly board meeting. (For more information please contact Ferry County Noxious Weed Office.)

November 4-6: Washington State Weed Conference in Wenatchee. The Washington State Weed Association will be holding its annual conference. (For more info go to www.weedconference.org.)

November 18: Okanogon County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding its monthly board meeting at 4:00 pm in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

December Events

December 3: Okanogon County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding the Fall Pesticide License Recertification Class in the Commissioners' Hearing Room of the Virginia Grainger Building. (Please contact us in November for more information.)

December 9: Ferry County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding its monthly board meeting. (For more information please contact Ferry County Noxious Weed Office (509) 775-5225 Ext: 1111.)

December 16: Okanogon County Noxious Weed Control Board will be holding its monthly board meeting at 4:00 pm in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Hoary alyssum update



This is the first year that Hoary alyssum has been mandatory control throughout Okanogon county.

The previous buffer area was removed at the request of the Okanogon County Noxious Weed Control Board. With the rapid expansion of this species it just made sense to reduce spread from this infested area.

Surveys for Hoary alyssum occurred throughout the county and when landowners were contacted to do the required control, we were very happy to achieve voluntary compliance for the most part. We did have to perform a few enforcement actions and as always, it was after numerous attempts to work with the landowner and failing to achieve the control required by RCW 17.10.

If you know of sites that may have been missed through our survey process, please let us know and we can get them added to our list for next year. We need your help to stop the spread of this invasive plant!

Okanogon Fires and Noxious Weeds



As we all know, the multiple wildfires that burned throughout Okanogon County, both this year and last, (some of which are still burning) have had devastating impacts on a large number of us who were in their paths.

We have already had multiple landowners stopping by the Noxious Weed Office with questions about what to expect with noxious weeds on their property, reseeding burned areas, and availability of funding to assist with restoration efforts. To answer these questions, we have been telling folks this:

Landowners should expect to see an increase in the size and extent of noxious weed infestations in those areas that were already infested before the fire. However, landowners should look at this as an opportunity to control weeds on their property, rather than a hindrance. Yes, there may be more weeds to control, but, there will also be less other vegetation to reduce access to weed sites and hinder herbicide contact with treated plants.

When it comes to reseeding, for now, we are recommending only reseeding disturbed areas (such as fire lines), and waiting to see what comes back next year in other areas before spending the money to reseed.

As far as restoration funding goes, we have put in for multiple funding sources to assist landowners. But, for now, it is a waiting game to see if we will receive any.

Happy Halloween

Feed For Animals After The Fire

Use Caution When Purchasing Feed For Livestock And Wildlife



With the multiple fires this summer and the consequent lack of grazing ground, many producers have begun to feed early and the scramble to get good quality hay is on.

We have already received a few calls from folks who have questions about purchasing hay from unknown sources and of unknown quality. Basically, we never recommend using hay that may be contaminated with noxious weed seed. However, that being said, we also realize that this is not a normal situation and animals must be fed.

So, if you are getting hay from out of the area, we ask that you take a bit of care and caution. Be sure to ask what weeds may be in the hay that you are getting, don't be shy; just explain that it will change how you feed it, and where you put it out. If the hay contains weeds that were already on the site where you intend to feed, no problem, feed away. However, if it contains plants that are not already present, or if the supplier does not know what may be in the hay, try to feed it out in a contained area, such as a feed lot. But, if that is not at all possible, you must first and foremost make sure that your animals are being fed; we can deal with the issue of new noxious weeds when it happens.

Noxious Weed Assessment Hearing

On October 28th, at 4:00 in the Commissioners Hearing Room, the Weed Board will hold its annual Assessment Hearing. Our noxious weed assessment funds: Weed Office projects, education, staff, and programs.

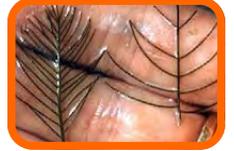
At this Hearing, after listening to your input and discussion, the Weed Board may propose to increase the assessment by \$1.00 per parcel. If that is the case, the Board will forward the proposal to the County Commissioners and it will ultimately be their decision. The current assessment, which is \$4.74 per parcel and \$0.01 per acre has been in place since established in 1992. While we are very proud of our ability to stretch our funding, we find that it is no longer sufficient to maintain our remaining programs and ensure our mandate under RCW 17.10.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the assessment, please let us know.

Aquatic Noxious Weed Information

Aquatic Classes to be Scheduled

Because of the increasing interest in aquatic weeds we will be adding several aquatic noxious weeds talks to our fall recertification class schedule.



The 2014 / 2015 surveys of some of our lakes and rivers found several large infestations of Eurasian watermilfoil in the water and frequent sites of Yellow flag iris and Purple loosestrife along the shorelines.

While the primary concern is recreational safety and limiting the spread of these aquatic weeds, we need to be aware of the impacts that they can have to both water quality and wildlife habitat. To increase awareness of these issues, we hope to have talks regarding identification, control, and species specifics.

All license categories should be able to receive credits for these talks so please help us spread the word, both with those that need pesticide credits and those who may own property around these valuable resources. The Fall Recertification class will be held Dec 3, 2015. Space is limited so be sure to pre-register!

Fall Recreation & Noxious Weeds

Autumn is a wonderful time of the year to be out recreating throughout Okanogan County: all of the leaves are changing colors, the temperature has finally started cooling down, and even the air seems to be a bit more refreshing, but, did you know that fall is also the time of year when you are most likely to spread weeds to new areas? That is because fall is when almost all of our noxious weed species are setting seed. In fact, a recent study conducted by Montana State University showed that vehicles traveling in the fall tend to pick up more than 3 times the number of seeds when traveling in the fall than they will traveling in the same area in the spring.

We are not suggesting that folks should simply stay home from October through December to reduce the risk of spreading noxious weeds to new areas, rather, that folks need to take care while out enjoying the great fall recreational opportunities that Okanogan County has to offer. While out this fall, you need to be sure that you are only traveling on maintained roads to avoid driving through noxious weed sites. You should also be regularly checking and cleaning the undercarriage of your vehicle; this is especially true if you do have to drive through an overgrown stretch of road.

Whether hunting, hiking, or just enjoying a fall drive, we all need to do our part to stop the spread of Weeds.