

## **Noxious Weed Report for July 11**

Hi, this is the noxious weed report for July 11.

With the warm summer weather finally here, and everybody heading out to have fun on our lakes, rivers, mountains and fields, this week, I thought I would take a little time to discuss a few invasive species decontamination protocols that you can and should use while out having fun this summer. With a little bit of help from you, we can all help to reduce the spread of invasive species and protect our areas natural resources.

The first step before you head out is to plan. Many areas have different restrictions. For instance, federal lands such as the Forest Service require the use of noxious weed free forage for any livestock that you plan to take. If you plan to have a campfire, be sure to purchase firewood near where you plan to camp to avoid introducing any non-native pests. If you are traveling to an area to see some threatened or endangered species, make sure that you are not taking anything with you that could potentially cause harm.

Now that you have planned out your trip, it's time to address driving to the area where you plan to have your fun. While driving, be sure to avoid driving in areas where noxious weeds may be present. It sounds so simple, but whether you are recreating here, another county, state, or country, it is important to recognize what invasive species may be in the area. You do not want to inadvertently take a noxious weed home with you on the undercarriage or tires of your vehicle. And, equally important, you do not want to spread weeds that may be growing along your driveway out into our natural areas; the roads go both ways.

Finally, once you have arrived at the fun stage of your vacation and you are heading out hiking, riding, boating or whatever other fun activity you have planned, it is important to remember that invasive species can be anywhere. You can't always avoid noxious weeds and other invasive species while out recreating, but, you can help to prevent their spread by visually inspecting and cleaning your animals, clothing, and equipment on a regular basis. Weeds like Houndstongue can easily stick to fur and clothing and are not necessarily easy to remove, but again, you don't want it growing in your yard. Puncturevine can stick to shoe tread and fall off in the carpet of your home, and you really don't want to step on that! Even aquatic weeds can follow you home and impact your pond or creek, or you could possibly start new infestations in the next water body that you visit.

We all need to be doing our part to stop the spread of invasive species while out recreating this summer and throughout the rest of the year.