

Noxious Weed Report for September 18th

We are almost through September, the weather is starting to cool down, and we are finally getting some moisture. With that being said, it's a great time to get started on fall weed control projects.

During the fall season, many perennials, like Canada Thistle and Russian Knapweed divert their energy to create underground vegetative parts. These parts are where energy is stored for winter, keeping the plant alive through the harsh cold temperatures. If using the correct herbicide, these perennials are most susceptible to treatment in the fall, because like the plant's energy, the herbicide will move down to the underground vegetative parts.

Also, keep an eye out for fall rosettes. The seeds from this year's biennial and winter annual plants can germinate before winter, creating a low-growing whorl of leaves. These rosettes form taproots and can survive the winter even under a blanket of snow. The following spring, the rosettes get the first chance at the snowmelt water, allowing them to send up flowering shoots by early summer. These plants can also produce a lot of seed, so the best time to control them is before they flower, while they're still rosettes.

Only a small amount of herbicide is needed to effectively control rosettes compared to their later flowering form. They can also easily be removed by hand as a rosette, whereas pulling or digging can be much more difficult after a flowering stalk is sent up. Some common plants whose rosettes you may find this fall include Hoary Alyssum, Musk Thistle, Scotch Thistle, Diffuse Knapweed, Dalmatian Toadflax, and St. Johnswort.

Remember that prevention is much less expensive than control! These weeds produce large amounts of seed and can create dense infestations within 2-3 growing seasons. Keeping your eye out for rosettes will greatly reduce your control costs in the future. Also remember that where you find a weed it's likely that there are more weed seeds in the soil. Replant any recently controlled areas with non-invasive plants to reduce the amount of weed seeds that germinate. Flood the soil with desirable seeds to compete with the weeds.

I also want to let everyone know that December 5th the Noxious Weed Office will be having our Pesticide Recertification Class. We will have a schedule for the class out soon.

If you have any questions or concerns about fall treatments please give the Noxious Weed Office a call at 509-422-7165, you can also email the office at noxiousweeds@co.okanogan.wa.us, or stop into our office at 1234 S 2nd Ave Okanogan.