

Costilla County Noxious Weed Management **Plan**

I. Introduction

A. Reason for Plan

1. Noxious Weeds are a growing threat to Costilla County and can cause problems to the agricultural value of land and the aesthetic and economic threshold of the County. Managing the noxious weed infestations will not only help increase the value of land and restore those thresholds but it will also help native plants and wildlife maintain a healthy habitat.

2. Compliance with the Colorado Noxious Weed Act (Article 5.5 of Title 35, Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S))

B. Goals

1. Implementation of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act

2. Public Education

3. Implementing a Strategic Management Plan for all noxious weeds in the county.

4. Mapping and Planning on a regular basis

5. Funding through various State and Local Grants whenever possible.

II. Statement of Weed Problem

A. Costilla County will manage for all weeds on the Colorado Noxious Weed List (Colorado Code of Regulations (CCR): 8 CCR 1203-15). Costilla County, the local governing body shall initiate and maintain communications with landowners who are affected by list A species and populations of list B species designated for eradication by the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture. The following weeds are judged to be undesirable in Costilla County and are also found on the Colorado Department of Agriculture's Noxious Weed List.

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| 1. | Black Henbane | (Hyoscyamus niger) |
| 2. | Canada Thistle | (Cirsium arvense) |
| 3. | Field Bindweed | (Convolvulus arvensis) |
| 4. | Houndstongue | (Cynoglossum officinale) |
| 5. | Cypress Spurge | (Euphorbia cyparissias) |
| 6. | Musk Thistle | (Carduus nutans) |
| 7. | Russian Knapweed | (Centaurea repens) |
| 8. | Perennial Pepperweed | (Lepidium latifolium) |
| 9. | Hoary Cress | (Cardaria draba) |
| 10. | Leafy Spurge | (Euphorbia esula) |
| 11. | Tamarisk | (Tamarix ramosissima Ledeb)
(Tamarix parviflora DC.) |
| 12. | Bull Thistle | (Cirsium vulgare) |
| 13. | Plumeless Thistle | (Carduus acanthoides L.) |

B. Problem areas include roadsides, drainage areas, private property, parks and railroad right-of-ways, as well as other county, state, and federal lands.

C. Management of noxious weeds with problem areas is the responsibility of the landowner. Cooperative agreements may be drawn between the county and the landowner to assist in weed management resolution.

III. Plan of Work: Objectives and Implementation

A. Short Term Goals (1-5 Years)

1. Introduce the education of Costilla County residents and County Road & Bridge Staff, local landowners, and local organizations regarding the named noxious weed species and the problems caused by those weeds and the benefits of managing them.
2. Begin updating of maps of noxious weeds on county roads and county properties.
3. Begin cooperative agreements with Costilla County Conservation District to encourage and assist private landowners in developing weed management plans
4. Increase funding for all noxious weed activities by applying for grants offered through state and local agencies.

B. Long Term Goals

1. Continue the education of Costilla County residents and Road and Bridge Staff regarding all matters connected with noxious weed infestations and the benefits of managing said infestations.
2. Continue to establish reliable and understandable maps showing noxious weed populations throughout the county and update all maps required by the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

3. Update county noxious weed list when a new noxious weed species is identified within the county and is deemed to be undesirable
4. Continue the cooperative agreements that are established between local and state agencies, i.e., the Costilla County Conservation District, Colorado Department of Ag, and the San Luis Valley Noxious Weed Management Association. Also become willing to establish a willingness to work across state boundaries and into federal lands.

IV. **Implementation of Plan**

A. Public Education

1. Provide information concerning noxious weeds i.e. noxious weed species, treatment and management, to all residents of Costilla County
2. Provide information on all management techniques performed on targeted weeds.
3. Develop education materials to assist in the education of noxious weed management i.e. brochures, flyers, displays and pamphlets.

B. Weed Control Methods

1. Set criteria for control of each noxious weed species identified on the county noxious weed list. The State of Colorado requires eradication of any List A species and the management of List B

species. The county will deem the importance of managing any List C species. These requirements are outlined in the Rules of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act.

- a. Preventative measures for example whether the species can be eliminated or suppressed
- b. Establishing an integrated weed management plan which will include chemical, biological, mechanical and cultural control methods and selecting the best method for a given situation will be important.
- c. Conduct chemical applications when deemed appropriate on all species listed on noxious weed list.
- d. Begin to establish and introduce biological controls i.e, weevil bugs for Canada thistle.
- e. Conduct mechanical control on noxious weed species.

2. Cooperative Agreements

- a. Private landowner agreements established with the help of Costilla County Conservation District
- b. State and Federal land agreements whenever possible
- c. Business owners whenever possible

3. Level of Enforcement

- a. The level of enforcement will be determined by the County Commissioners with the assistance of the County Noxious Weed Coordinator and County Weed Advisory Board
- b. As per the Colorado Noxious Weed Act (Section 35-5.5-108.5) The local governing body has the duty to carry out sufficient measures including enforcement as may be necessary to ensure the eradication of List A species and

populations of List B species that are designated for eradication by the Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture.

V. Conclusion

The plan outlined is subject to change and will be reviewed by the Board of County Commissioners and County Weed Advisory Board. This plan is designed to be a guideline for implementing all aspects of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act and to encourage cooperation to achieve the best possible weed management results.