

## THE MONTANA WEED MANAGEMENT PLAN – PLAN OF ACTION

### IWM Committee Assignment

- 1) Need For Action and ideas on how to meet need.
- 2) If need has already been met: contact information and short synopsis of what has/is being done.
- 3) Other needs not addressed.

Some general ideas to facilitate IWM success.

- MWCA Partnering memberships with other organizations to help facilitate sharing of information and expertise.
- Need to more aggressively “court” Montana Stock Growers Association, MT Cattlemen Assoc., MT Cattlewomen Assoc., Farm Bureau, MT Wool Growers Assoc., RMEF, Walleye Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, etc. to get them all on board to facilitate outreach, education, and IWM...Weed Prevention #1.

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## CHAPTER 3 PLAN OF ACTION

### RISK ANALYSIS AND PREVENTION

Page 3-2

An equal if not greater effort should be made to prevent their spread into lands that remain non-infested. Preventing weed invasion is the most ecologically sound and economical land management strategy.

5) promote and implement proper ecosystem management to encourage desirable plant communities and minimize weed invasion;

Managing for healthy rangelands and plant communities is essential. Nothing is gained from a biological desert resulting from range abuse or improper weed management.

6) refine management strategies to meet the specific needs of landowners.

Also, conversely, refine landowners to meet the specific needs of management strategies.

Page 3-3

5) Certified weed seed free forage is required on Montana’s federal land. (Also required on FWP lands) Facilitate more signing and education regarding use on Certified weed seed free forage on all Montana lands...not just state or federal. Also, need to emphasize use and enforcement on state owned lands.

10) The NWTF also allows for emergency funding approved by the Governor, for noxious weed emergencies including new invaders (utilizes principle from the permanent weed trust). Develop

a step-by-step guide on how to address emergencies and what qualifies. Need to be able to act and react quickly and effectively. The newly formed sub-committee of the Weed Summit Advisory Council, the Invasive Species Council has also identified this as a priority need.

## MANAGEMENT

An integrated weed management approach will be implemented in all weed management programs. Facilitate widespread acceptance of alternative weed management options and reduce reliance on chemical herbicide where appropriate. Emphasize proper vegetation management to prevent establishment of noxious weeds.

Page 3-4

## NON-ESTABLISHED NEW INVADERS

5) Specific management plans written for dyers woad and yellow starthistle;

I was unaware of the existence of these plans. We need to facilitate distribution of the plans to stakeholders, agencies, etc.

Page 3-5.

3) Regional or statewide task forces have been formed and management plans written or are being developed for purple loosestrife, tansy ragwort, saltcedar, hawkweeds, and rush skeletonweed.

Again, we need to facilitate distribution of these plans; I have not seen any of them.

### *Need for Action*

Need to work towards developing a system (if not already done) for better and more organized rapid response. Such as a Rapid Response Guide/Checklist/Phone Tree. Guidelines will help prevent pitting one entity against another as to who needs to act first or be in charge.

Page 3-9

### *Current Program*

6) Public outreach campaigns to increase awareness of invasive plant movement in and along waterways.

This needs to reach all water users: Irrigation Districts, Municipal Water Supply managers, Anglers, Hunters, Tubers/Floaters, Water Skiers, Swimmers, Boaters, Jet Skiers. Must take place at the point of equipment purchase, rental, etc. and be reiterated at every public point of entry to a water body.

### *Trails*

More signing and education at trailheads and points of entry.

## RESTORATION AND RECLAMATION

Page 3-10 Last paragraph

The need for revegetation should be determined before weed treatments occur so that seeding can be done soon after the weeds have been removed and before the treated species or other weed species recolonize the site.

Somehow we need to make this a first focus/priority of IWM. Allowing recolonization to occur should not be allowed to happen. Once weeds are eliminated or density reduced to progression should be toward a healthy plant community not a re-invaded site.

Next paragraph

Although efforts to restore appropriate desired vegetation are being exerted on disturbed sites...there is limited work of this kind being done on degraded range, pasture and woodland sites.

As above, this needs to be a priority focus area.

Page 3-11

Monitoring – under bullet points

Additionally, inventory and survey of disturbed areas ready for weed invasion are just as critical as infested sites and totally clean sites. Need to incorporate some way of tracking ground disturbance events (man-made and natural) and areas that are severely degraded and waiting for weed invasion.

Page 3-15

## PREVENTION (RISK ANALYSIS AND PREVENTION)

Second column, first bullet at top of page.

Develop the scientific basis for management techniques to prevent weed invasion or re-invasion.

This is probably the most important item to facilitate of all. Without knowing whether any technique is working, all could be for not. This bullet point needs to be #1 priority to make happen of all IWM techniques.

It also ties directly to the next bullet point – Identify factors controlling plant community dynamics.

And

Last bullet point on page – Develop and demonstrate sustainable, integrated weed management strategies that set plant communities on a trajectory toward a desired state.

And

Page 3-16.

Improve the effective use and use of herbicides by investigating response and persistence of desirable vegetation as well as the target weed(s)...

And

Enhance use of sustainable grazing for weed management.....

I reiterate...this is probably the #1 issue/topic/piece of the Plan to make happen. Without this being 100% complete we have no idea if anything else is just money down the drain (in the big picture and in the long run).

## CHPATER 5 - ACTION ITEMS

### Risk Analysis and Prevention

#### Management – New Invaders and Established New Invaders

##### 2) Identification of high-risk areas for invasion.

Action Required: Identify high-risk sites for invasion for noxious weeds.

- Begin constructing a database/map of known disturbed sites such as road construction, flood/scoured areas, mines, logging. Map known disturbances annually. This would give an annual account of where weed management is needed.
- Similarly this should include improperly managed sites such as overgrazed areas, small acreage horse owners, vacant lots, etc.

## CHAPTER 5

### MANAGEMENT – *New Invaders and Established New Invaders*

Page 5-4

2) Action Required: Identify high-risk sites for invasion for noxious weeds.

- Begin constructing a database/map of known newly disturbed sites such as road construction, flood/scoured areas, mines, logging. Map known disturbances annually. This would give an annual account of where weed management is needed.
- Similarly this should include improperly managed sites such as overgrazed areas, small acreage horse owners, vacant lots, etc.

6) Action Required: Monitor existing weed management efforts.

- IWM methods
- Grazing management

8) Action Required: Develop guidelines (Russian Olive)

- Where to begin removal/treatment. Where and when it is appropriate and not appropriate with the ultimate goal of eventual eradication in riparian areas.

### MANAGEMENT – *Widespread Weed Infestations*

Page 5-5

3) Action Required: Promote ecologically sound weed management.

- Because ~ 65% of Montana is in private or tribal management we need to focus and prioritize efforts on those lands. These lands generally are seeing greater human use/impact on a large-scale basis than any other, creating an environment more favorable to weed invasion.
- High use per acre public lands need ongoing attention but many see treatment on a regular basis.
- Should focus on, and emphasize, ecologically sound integrated weed management on private lands. State and federal agencies will, in general, do as much sound weed management as is fiscally feasible. We need to focus more on the other larger and more significant part of the equation: private landowners that choose to do nothing, are incapable of doing anything, or are unaware of the situation.

### MANAGEMENT – *Special Management Zones*

1) Action Required: Finalize Plans

- FWP Plan will be finalized June/July 2008.

14, 15, 16)

- Each of these can be facilitated and at least in part accomplished through the MWCA annual convention and spring and fall coordinator trainings. And by providing links to information on MWCA and MDA web pages.

17) Action Required: Develop standardized requirements (gravel pits).

- Yellowstone National Park has gravel pit requirement that can be adopted and promoted. Contact Craig

## RESTORATION AND RECLAMATION

1) Action Required: Incorporate restoration concepts in land manager training.

- Noxious Weed Short Course addresses this
- MWCA Annual Convention could be used to further this training
- MWCA Spring and Fall Coordinators trainings
- Range Tours/Seminars
- Farm Bureau Federation Annual Conference
- Others

2) Action Required: Maintain good communication among agencies.

- This area has seen significant improvement.
- Joint watershed meetings, and the like, will continue to foster improved communication.
- Need to explore other areas of professional development training where professionals are likely to be together, and facilitate events to bring agency professionals together (ie. Range Society, The Wildlife Society, etc).
- In addition, need to encourage revegetation even where noxious weeds are not present to prevent invasion.

3) Action Required: Incorporate ecological systems theory into land manager training.

- Noxious Weed Short Course
- MWCA Annual Convention could be used to further this training
- MWCA Spring and Fall Coordinators trainings
- Range Tours/Seminars
- Farm Bureau Federation Annual Conference
- Others

- MSU materials already available

5) Action Required: Coordinate research and development.

- There is tremendous opportunity for testing and evaluating techniques, biocontrols, etc. – all research – on public lands: state and federal.

6) Action Required: Focus outreach efforts on revegetation and ecological principles.

- Many opportunities and avenues exist for distribution of education and outreach materials.

7) Action Required: Consult experts, develop and promote strategies.

- Guidelines and strategies have already been developed and are available. May need some “tweaking.”