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MRWC Launches Early Detection Mapping System (EDDMapS)

The Missouri River Watershed Coalition (MRWC) launched an Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS) on September 28, 2010 (<http://www.eddmaps.org/mrwc/>). The EDDMapS was developed by the Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health (CISEH, also known as Bugwood) for the Coalition over the past year.

The CISEH created and hosts the custom EDDMapS for invasive species reporting and mapping in the six MRWC headwater states (Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming). The system will provide a means of reporting new sightings of select invasive species, a mechanism to alert appropriate individuals to the reports and generate distribution maps for reported species.

The MRWC EDDMapS will focus on species that are new or potentially new invaders to the Coalition states and these reports will form the database rather than historical or current distribution data for all invasive species within the six states. Initially, the system will focus on a specific list of invasive plant species identified by each state (see below). More species and distribution data may be added subsequently.

Initial species of concern include:

- Colorado - purple loosestrife, giant salvinia, hydrilla, garlic mustard, water hyacinth, knotweeds (Japanese, giant and Bohemian), yellow starthistle
- Montana – dyer’s woad, yellow starthistle, rush skeletonweed, purple loosestrife, flowering rush, Eurasian watermilfoil, Japanese knotweed complex
- Nebraska - houndstongue, garlic mustard, sulfur cinquefoil, St. Johnswort, perennial pepperweed (*Note: Nebraska will be releasing a new list in the next few months*)
- North Dakota - houndstongue, yellow toadflax, Dalmatian toadflax, black henbane, hoary cress, baby’s breath, orange hawkweed, yellow starthistle
- South Dakota - yellow starthistle, Dyer’s woad, orange hawkweed, grecian foxglove, vipers bugloss
- Wyoming - dyer’s woad, vipers bugloss, Eurasian watermilfoil, yellow starthistle, *Sericea lespedeza*, squarrose knapweed, rush skeletonweed.

The system will focus on plants and not other invasive species taxa. As part of the system, a web page interface allows users to enter the location of a species via Google Maps or by entering GPS coordinates. This page will also allow the user to provide: (1) information on population characteristics such as the size and density of the infestation, (2) photographs of the species for identification purposes, (3) comments and (4) contact information.

Mechanisms are set up to automatically notify the State Weed Coordinators in the six MRWC states when a species on the list is reported. Other interested users are also able to register to receive notifications when a species is reported in their area of concern and the report has been confirmed or validated by the State Weed Coordinator. A newly reported population of invasive species will *not* be shown on the Google Maps interface until the report has been confirmed or validated.

It is going to take all of us – land owners, land managers, recreationists, and concerned citizens – working together and sharing information as quickly as possible, to keep ahead of new weed invaders. We encourage all of you to use this new and simple EDDMapS tool to report sighting of new plant invaders; all you have to do is click on this link: <http://www.eddmaps.org/mrwc/>. For more information about the MRWC, please visit our website at: <http://www.weedcenter.org/mrwc/index.html> .