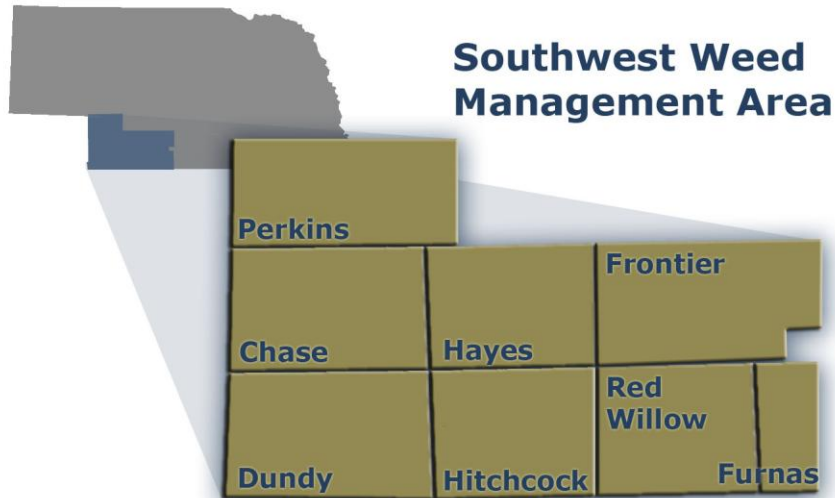


Know Your Weed Management Area...

# Southwest Weed Management Area



## Quick Facts...

- 2,000 Acres of Republican River Channel Cleared in 2007 & 2008
- Projects funded by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Nebraska Environmental Trust, and the Nebraska Republican River Management Districts Association

*"Forming partnerships to raise awareness through education, and to identify, contain, and control the spread of noxious and invasive plants in the Southwest Weed Management Area."*

## Our Story...

Southwest WMA began its Western Republican River Riparian Improvement Project in 2007, after receiving

funding from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture through LB 701. With these funds, the group began targeting phragmites,

Saltcedar, Russian Olive and Eastern Redcedar within 100 feet of the Republican River Channel.

Later that fall, the Republican River and its main tributaries were mapped using GPS/GIS technology to mark areas of invasive species in the river bed. In September, phragmites and Saltcedar were sprayed using an airboat at locations in Furnas, Red Willow and Hitchcock Counties.

Mechanical removal soon became the weapon of choice on the Western Republican River Riparian Improvement Project. To eradicate Russian Olive and Eastern Redcedar that were

choking out the river channel, contractors cut trees at ground level, and sprayed stumps with chemical to prevent re-growth.

Since 2007, Southwest WMA has cleared over 2,000 acres along the river channel, with impressive results. As the

invasive trees have been removed, water flow improves, often creating marshy wetlands in areas just cleared.

Wildlife activity has also notably increased along the river channel, spurring enthusiasm from both hunters and birdwatchers that frequent the area. Along with the Republican River Natural Resources Districts, Southwest WMA has also been involved in setting up a demonstration plot of habitat trees and shrubs near

Benkelman. This plot will be a great example of the difference between invasive tree stands and inviting habitat for wildlife.

## Before & After

*A view of the Doane site in Dundy County shows the North Fork of the Republican River covered with a Russian Olive infestation in May of 2008; and in June of 2009, cleared with re-growth of native vegetation.*



## Moving Toward The Future

Southwest WMA plans to continue its work on the Republican River; future projects include mechanical tree removal on:



- 309 acres of land in Dundy County
- 20 acres of land in Hitchcock County
- 240 acres of land in Red Willow County

## Promoting Weed Control Partnerships

As our vision statement reads, Southwest WMA strives to form partnerships not only to control the spread of noxious and invasive plants, but also to raise awareness through education. Our partners include:

**County Noxious Weed Control Authorities.** Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins, Chase, Dundy, Frontier, and Red Willow Counties in Nebraska

**State Agencies.** Nebraska Department of Agriculture; University of Nebraska Extension; Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Nebraska Environmental Trust

**Federal Agencies.** Natural Resource Conservation Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; USDA

**Natural Resource Districts.** Middle Republican NRD; Upper Republican NRD

**Local Landowners**

**Groups.** Nebraska Weed Control Association; Southwest RC&D, Twin Valley Weed Management Area; Aerial Applicators

## Sharing Our Story

When Southwest Weed Management began the Western Republican Riparian Improvement Project, it was met with hesitation from local landowners, but over the past two years – through both educational activities and word of mouth – one-time skeptics are seeing the success of the project, and the benefits of this management practice.



Since 2007, Southwest WMA has held several informational meetings and tours; and presented at meetings and conferences throughout the basin, and across the state. The group is also involved with studies regarding wildlife habitat and evapotranspiration rates and water usage of invasive plants.



## Our Target Species



### Russian Olive

*A small tree with silvery-colored leaves, the Russian Olive generally reaches heights of 15-25'. This species can adapt to a wide variety of soils, and has proven to be drought resistant.*

### Eastern Redcedar

*Eastern Redcedar is an example of a native, yet invasive, species. This evergreen can reach a height of 65 feet, and is rapidly spreading to rangeland, pastures, and along riverbeds.*

