

Lower Jefferson River Valley Cooperative Weed Control Project

2005 Through 2010

For the past five years, Gallatin County Extension has created partnerships with public and private entities to further noxious weed control efforts on the Lower Jefferson River. Extension provided technical assistance while public partners provided cost share for landowners to develop and implement noxious weed management plans. The program has evolved since it began in 2005. The initial project encompassed 5,400 acres in a pilot area. This pilot project was so successful that neighboring landowners wanted to participate. The program grew in size and success every year. In 2010 the project area was 149,760 acres and 6,597 acres of noxious weeds have been treated since 2005.

In 2005 when the project started, participants' goals were:

- 1) Increase awareness of the grant program and noxious weed management for livestock, wildlife, and healthy riparian areas among landowners, managers, public officials and sportsmen.
- 2) Entice neighbors to work together to have a more effective weed control program.
- 3) Concentrate efforts on weeds away from the river working back towards the river.
- 4) Find financial assistance for noxious weed control.
- 5) Bring noxious weed infestations under control so weed management would continue in future years.

To date the project has met its goals utilizing financial assistance from the Montana Department of Agriculture Noxious Weed Trust Fund.



As the Jefferson River high water recedes, leafy spurge and spotted knapweed sites become exposed.



Steep sites where even helicopter application is difficult are future sites for insect releases.

Group and Agency Participants:

- Northern Rocky Mountain RC&D
- Gallatin, Broadwater, Jefferson, Madison County Weed Districts
- Gallatin, Madison-Jefferson County Extension
- Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Lewis and Clark Caverns
- Southwest Montana Mule Deer Foundation

Finances

<u>Montana Department of Agriculture</u>
<u>Grant Funds</u>
\$124,190
<u>2005-2009 Producer Match</u>
\$163,288
<u>Local Govt. Match</u>
\$25,652

Impacts

- ◆ 18 landowners have developed and implemented noxious weed management plans in the project area.
- ◆ Treated 6,597 acres for noxious weeds since 2005
- ◆ 95% of all noxious weeds inside the project area have been treated
- ◆ Lewis and Clark Caverns managed by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is currently involved in the project utilizing funds from their budget and funds from the Mule Deer Foundation
- ◆ Biological controls have been released
- ◆ Plans have been developed to provide long-term control while incorporating scientifically sound ecological management
- ◆ Monitoring sites indicate positive results from active management plans



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