

Looking Ahead to 2018: Your Input is Valued!

The Gunnison County Weed Management Program welcomes feedback from all Gunnison Basin residents. As planning for the 2018 field season begins, we would greatly value your input. Please take a few minutes to consider any or all of the following questions and send your replies to the Weed Management Program at: jmugglestone@gunnisoncounty.org

If you would like to mail your replies, please send them to PO Box 915, Gunnison, CO 81230. Or, call 970-641-4393 to discuss your thoughts and ideas.

1. During the 2017 field season, did the efforts of the Gunnison County Weed Management Program meet your needs and/or expectations? How can we better serve you during the 2018 field season?
2. Are there specific areas in the Gunnison Basin that you think require additional attention as weed control efforts are carried out in 2018?
3. How can the Weed Management Program most effectively reach out to citizens of the Gunnison Basin to raise awareness about noxious weeds and their control?
4. Do you have any suggestions for improving Gunnison County's Reclamation Permit application and/or inspection processes?
5. Other than the goals for 2018 listed in the column to the right, are there any other priorities that you would suggest the Weed Management Program consider?
6. Please share any other thoughts, suggestions or ideas you think the Weed Management Program should consider.

Thank-you very much for your time and for sharing your thoughts. Your ideas and suggestions are valued and will be carefully considered. We look forward to serving you in 2018!



A cheatgrass management and revegetation partnership in Taylor Canyon (funded by the US Forest Service Resource Advisory Committee and implemented by Gunnison County Weed Management Program staff) in 2016 showed good results during the 2017 growing season. Cheatgrass populations were reduced by an estimated 50% and we anticipate that re-seeding of infested areas with native grasses and forbs will contribute to the long-term success of this ongoing reclamation effort following road construction-related soil disturbances. Research shows that re-seeding is a critical component of long-term weed noxious management success. The Weed Management Program will continue to seek funding to integrate re-seeding into our efforts to steward native plant communities and reduce the impacts of noxious weeds.

2018 Goals

- Grow cooperative efforts with municipal partners and secure sustainable, equitable funding for a permanent, shared position focused on weed management and awareness-raising in the Basin's population centers
- Secure grant funding that will support continued growth of private lands assistance program
- Seek funding for the integration of re-vegetation into weed management projects, with priority focus on GuSg habitats
- Utilize social media to increase awareness raising and outreach efforts
- Update and increase resources available on the WMP's webpage on the Gunnison County website
- Update application record keeping procedures for better accuracy & consistency
- Pursue a Program name change that more accurately encompasses our work
- Look for opportunities to increase "front-end" assistance to Gunnison County Reclamation Permit applicants in order to ensure successful re-vegetation and noxious weed control prior to post-construction reclamation inspections
- Continue assist hay producers with certification of weed-free forage in partnership with CO Dept. of Agriculture
- Contribute as appropriate to natural-resource focused initiatives and goals included in the County's Strategic Plan and OVPP, such as outdoor recreation, sustainable tourism, water quality, wildlife conservation and land stewardship.



**Gunnison County Weed Management Program
2017 Annual Report**

Bombus sp. on Canada thistle: Protecting pollinators through precision and timing of noxious weed treatments is a Weed Management Program priority.

Thank You!

As 2017 draws to a close, the Weed Management Program is grateful to all of the partners, funders, colleagues and citizens who played important roles in making our work a success this year. As their ongoing funding commitment demonstrates, Gunnison County, it's managers and the Board of County Commissioners continue to "lead the charge" in acknowledging the importance of noxious weed management to the ecology and economy of the Gunnison Basin.

Our federal, state, county, municipal, non-profit and citizen partners on the Gunnison Basin Weed Commission continually share their passion and steadfast dedication to stewarding the health of the Basin's agricultural, ecological and recreational resources. In generously sharing their funding, expertise, time and cooperation, GBWC members help us continue to strengthen the results that the Weed Management Program delivers. We are sincerely grateful for the partnership of everyone involved.

We appreciate grant funding provided by the Colorado Department of Agriculture that supported some of the efforts we were most proud of in 2017. Those funds allowed us the privilege of partnering with the Town of Crested Butte, Town of Mt. Crested Butte and Crested Butte Land Trust to hire a seasonal employee, Jason Evanko, to lead our collective efforts to better address cross-jurisdictional noxious weed issues in the Upper East River Valley. We are truly grateful to these partners for working with us through the process of establishing this new collaboration, committing to partner with us again in 2018, and for helping us set the stage to bring the City of Gunnison into the partnership next year. We also extend our gratitude to Jason Evanko, who brought a thoughtful demeanor, enduring work ethic and unshakable commitment to meeting the goals of this partnership.

CDA also provided funding for the continuation of the Private Lands Assistance Program, which allows the Weed Management Program to provide financial assistance to private landowners who are managing noxious weeds on their properties. Without landowners' stewardship, our efforts to ensure Basin-wide land health are in vain. We are grateful to all Gunnison Basin citizens who are doing their part to be good neighbors by managing noxious weeds, and we look forward to gladly helping those who may benefit from our assistance in the future.

With our upcoming office move approaching at the end of 2017 (see our new location address below), we will soon be very sad to bid farewell to Ann Wood. The value of Ann's administrative support to the Weed Management Program for the past 12+ years is immeasurable. We are so grateful to her, not only for her support of the Weed Management Program's efforts, but even more importantly, for her friendship.

Finally, we are grateful for the privilege of serving the citizens and lands of the Gunnison Basin. We sincerely approach our jobs with our sights set on safety, ecological stewardship and service to the people of the Basin. Please don't hesitate to contact us with thoughts about how we can better serve you and the places you care about.

Jon Mugglestone & Bradley Wigginton, Co-Coordinator

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2017 Highlights

The Gunnison County Weed Management Program coordinates integrated noxious weed management in the Gunnison Basin, provides education and consultation on plant community ecology and management, certifies weed free hay and implements and inspects reclamation projects. Below, please find some of the accomplishments we were most proud of in 2017:

- 374 acres of noxious weeds were treated on federal, state, county, municipal and private lands throughout the Gunnison Basin.
- 33 reclamation permit inspections and reports (100% of outstanding permits) were completed by WMP Co-Coordinator
- Consultations and on-site visits were carried out with over 200 private landowners, agency representatives and businesses.
- Five Certified Weed Free Hay inspections were completed for local hay producers and the CO Dept. of Ag, for a total of 520 acres certified.
- A \$19,485 grant from the CO Dept. of Ag funded a shared seasonal employee who initiated the Upper East River Valley CWMA in partnership with Towns of CB & Mt. CB and CB Land Trust.
- Co-Coordinator interviewed with KBUT for a noxious weed awareness story, which aired in July.

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State-Listed Noxious Weed Control

373.65 acres of state-listed noxious weeds were treated using chemical and mechanical control methods during the 2017 field season, April 18– November 2. Treatment locations, acreages, hours worked and cooperators' annual monetary contributions to the Weed Management Program's efforts were as follows. For additional details about any of these treatments please contact the Weed Management Program Co-Coordinators.

| Cooperator | Treatment Site | Acres | Cooperator | Treatment Site | Acres | Cooperator | Treatment Site | Acres |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|--------|
| NPS (\$5900) | Iola | 0.31 | City of Gunnison (\$1200) | Recreation Paths | 0.75 | Gunison Cty. (continued) | CR 49/I Bar | 0.46 |
| | NPS Pulloffs | 0.23 | | Streets/Alleys | 8.87 | | CR 50 | 0.15 |
| | Elk Creek | 1.92 | | Total Acres | 9.62 | | CR 51 | 0.02 |
| | North Willow | 0.23 | Hours Worked | 25.0 | CR 55 | | 0.01 | |
| | Dillon Pinnacles | 0.12 | Town of CB (\$1800) | Big Mine Park | 0.33 | | CR 56 | 0.28 |
| | Dry Gulch | 0.10 | | Butte Ave Rec Path | 0.15 | | CR 59 | 0.39 |
| | Red Creek | 0.30 | | Ditch Headgate | 0.06 | | CR 62 | 0.33 |
| | Bay of Chickens | 0.10 | | Gravel Pit | 1.21 | | CR 71 | 0.20 |
| | Cooper West | 0.10 | | Public Works | 0.20 | | CR 72 | 0.02 |
| | East Elk Creek | 0.29 | | Streets & Alleys | 1.89 | | CR 75 | 0.42 |
| | Old Stevens | 0.13 | | Total Acres | 3.84 | | CR 76 | 13.35 |
| | Stevens Creek | 0.28 | | Hours Worked | 68.0 | | CR 77 | 0.45 |
| | Wilson's Landing | 0.04 | | (note: 50 hours paid by CDA grant funds) | | | CR 265 | 0.92 |
| | Ponderosa | 0.14 | | Town of Mt. CB (\$2400) | Rec. Path | | 1.14 | CR 317 |
| | Cooper South | 1.74 | Street ROW's | | 4.91 | | CR 721 | 2.14 |
| Total Acres | 6.03 | Water Treatment | 0.29 | | CR 726 | 0.92 | | |
| Hours Worked | 64.0 | Town Hall/Pavillion | 0.29 | | CR 727 | 1.27 | | |
| | | Total Acres | 6.63 | | CR 730 | 14.38 | | |
| | | Hours Worked | 106.0 | CR 734 | 2.05 | | | |
| USFS (\$6000) | Roper's West | 0.50 | (note: 82 hours paid by CDA grant funds) | | CR 737 | 2.97 | | |
| | Needle Creek | 1.05 | CB Land Trust (\$0) | Rice Parcel | 2.40 | CR 738 | 3.04 | |
| | Slate/ Wash. Gulch | 1.75 | | Rec Path Parcel | 0.10 | CR 740/Allen HS | 2.30 | |
| | Alpine Plateau | 8.25 | | Lupine Trail | 0.54 | CR 742 | 25.99 | |
| | Kebler Pass | 2.87 | | Budd Trail | 0.63 | CR 743 | 0.90 | |
| | Taylor & Spring Ck. | 10.66 | | Total Acres | 3.67 | CR 744 | 7.60 | |
| | Lost Canyon | 1.67 | Hours Worked | 40 | CR 771 | 0.83 | | |
| | Gothic to Schofield | 5.16 | (note: all hours paid by CDA grant funds) | | CR 811 | 1.01 | | |
| | Cement Creek | 0.80 | Gunnison Cty. (\$101,091) | CR 2 | 0.63 | CR 813 | 5.51 | |
| | Red Creek | 6.44 | | Marble Area Roads | 4.20 | CR 818 | 0.35 | |
| Total Acres | 39.15 | CR 4 | | 0.83 | CR 826/8262a | 0.41 | | |
| Hours Worked | 64.0 | CR 6 | | 0.81 | CR 864 | 8.97 | | |
| | | CR 7 | | 0.27 | CR 887 | 2.09 | | |
| | | CR 10/North Valley | | 5.80 | CR 888 | 2.73 | | |
| | | CR 11 | | 0.14 | Antelope Hills Waterline | 1.25 | | |
| | | CR 12 | | 6.67 | Basin Industrial Park | 1.23 | | |
| | | CR 13 | | 0.13 | County Shop CB | 0.51 | | |
| | | CR 15 | | 0.06 | Dos Rios Subdivision | 0.51 | | |
| | | CR 16 & 19 | 0.15 | Fairgrounds/Airprt | 0.65 | | | |
| | | CR 17 | 5.73 | GC Landfill | 4.83 | | | |
| | | CR 18 | 0.44 | Hartman Rocks Front Side | 0.17 | | | |
| | | CR 20 | 0.15 | Meridian Lake Pk Subdiv. | 0.77 | | | |
| | | CR 21 | 1.21 | Riverbend Subdivision | 0.28 | | | |
| | | CR 24 | 1.50 | Somerset/GC Maint. | 0.75 | | | |
| | | CR 25 | 10.90 | Shadt Acres/ River Access | 0.10 | | | |
| | | CR 26 | 6.05 | Whitewater Park | 0.20 | | | |
| | | CR 27 | 4.32 | Total Acres | 191.97 | | | |
| | | CR 28 | 0.15 | Hours Worked | 1054.0 | | | |
| | | CR 29 | 0.59 | | | | | |
| | | CR 30 | 0.02 | | | | | |
| | | CR 32/Wetlands | 3.74 | | | | | |
| | | CR 38/Subdivisions | 12.24 | | | | | |
| | | CR 40 | 0.69 | | | | | |
| | | CR 42/42C | 0.66 | | | | | |
| | | CR 43 | 0.13 | | | | | |
| | | CR 44 | 2.57 | | | | | |
| | | CR 45 | 4.18 | | | | | |
| | | CR 47 | 0.20 | | | | | |
| | | CR 48/Castle/Mtn. | 2.04 | | | | | |
| Hinsdale Cty. (\$1600) | CR 30, 33, 20 | 19.71 | | | | | | |
| | Total Acres | 19.71 | | | | | | |
| | Hours Worked | 16.0 | | | | | | |
| Saguache Cty. (\$2500) | CR 14PP | 16.92 | | | | | | |
| | CR 18VV | 2.38 | | | | | | |
| | Gold Basin Rds. | 0.31 | | | | | | |
| | Total Acres | 19.61 | | | | | | |
| | Hours Worked | 27.0 | | | | | | |
| Town of Pitkin (\$300) | Streets/Alleys | 1.15 | | | | | | |
| | Total Acres | 1.15 | | | | | | |
| | Hours Worked | 3.00 | | | | | | |

A Few Key 2017 Summary Totals:

- **Total Acres Treated by GCWMP: 374**
- **Total Private Lands Acres Treated: 585**
- **Total Cooperator Contributions: \$50,200**
- **Total Growing Season Hours Worked for Cooperators: 697**
- **Total Gunnison County Contribution: \$101,091**
- **Total Growing Season Hours Worked for Gunnison County: 1054**
- **Total Grant Awards Received: \$26,485**

Cooperation Key to Success in Population Centers

Assisting our partners in addressing noxious weed problems in population centers of the Gunnison Basin is a critical goal of the Gunnison County Weed Management Program. The towns and other densely populated areas in the valley are "hotspots" for noxious weeds, and we know that better management of infestations and increased awareness raising efforts in those places will prevent their spread to important natural, recreational and agricultural lands in other areas of the Gunnison Basin. While municipalities have taken positive steps in recent years to acknowledge and address noxious weed problems, funding and staff constraints have continued to limit noxious weed management work completed. The daunting combination of ongoing problematic, cross-jurisdictional noxious weed issues, coupled with scarce resources to solve them, highlights the pressing need for interagency cooperation.

In 2017, Gunnison County partnered with the Town of Crested Butte, Town of Mt. Crested Butte and the Crested Butte Land Trust to seek funding for a cooperative effort to comprehensively address noxious weeds across jurisdictional boundaries in the Upper East River Valley. The partners were awarded a \$19,485 grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture to hire a shared seasonal employee, Jason Evanko, who assisted each partner agency with their most pressing noxious weed treatment and public awareness raising goals.

In 2018, the Weed Management Program plans to partner with the City of Gunnison, Town of Crested Butte and Town of Mt. Crested Butte to lead a similar cooperative effort. Concurrently, WMP staff plans to initiate discussions with cooperating municipal partners and Gunnison County to seek their commitment to earmarking ongoing funding for the creation of a shared, permanent seasonal employee to lead noxious weed management and awareness-raising efforts in municipalities and in other population centers in unincorporated Gunnison County on an ongoing basis. By working cooperatively, we hope to ensure that Gunnison County and its partners effectively and economically address critical noxious weed problems and awareness-raising needs in the Basin's population centers, while equitably sharing the cost of those efforts.



Private Lands Assistance Program

Continuing to raise awareness and promote management of state-listed noxious weeds among private landowners is a high priority for the Gunnison County Weed Management Program. Through a \$5000 award from the CO Department of Agriculture's State and Private Forestry Grant fund, the Gunnison County Weed Management Program was able to leverage private landowners' commitment to noxious weed management by providing financial assistance for noxious weed treatments completed on their lands by licensed weed control contractors. The SPF Grant fund, which CDA administers on behalf of the US Forest Service, is aimed at preventing the advance of noxious weeds into the National Forests throughout the state.

In 2017, the Weed Management Program's Private Lands Assistance & Cost Share Program provided financial incentives to the landowners in the table below to implement research-based management of noxious weed infestations on their properties. While participation is voluntary, the Program is also intended to assist landowners who have been notified by the Gunnison County Weed Management Program that problematic noxious weed issues are present on their land and need to be addressed.

| 2017 Projects | Total Project Cost | Assistance Provided | Acres Treated |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Double R Ranch | \$6,153.46 | \$2,458.30 | 150 |
| Chair Mountain HOA | \$150.00 | \$150.00 | 5 |
| Buckhorn Ranch HOA | \$3,925.60 | \$1,000.00 | 300 |
| Wildbird HOA | \$1,111.25 | \$666.75 | 40 |
| Hidden River Ranch | \$1,208.25 | \$724.95 | 90 |
| Totals | \$12,548.56 | \$5,000.00 | 585 |

2017 Highlights

Continued from front page

- A \$5000 grant from the CO Dept. of Ag allowed the WMP to provide cost share assistance to landowners for contracted noxious weed treatments, resulting in 585 acres of noxious weeds treated.
- WMP staff partnered with BLM to lead 25 Western State Colorado University students and citizens in native plant seed collection for habitat restoration projects on National Public Lands Day.
- Updated educational newspaper ads aimed at raising public awareness of noxious weeds, treatment options and funding assistance opportunities ran in the Gunnison Country Shopper on a bi-weekly basis throughout the growing season.
- Over 200 acres of cheatgrass and other state-listed noxious weeds were treated in Gunnison Sage-grouse habitat.
- Co-coordinators met with Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to discuss shared goals for weed management in GuSg habitats.
- Co-Coordinator shared information on noxious weeds at the Colorado Native Plant Society Conference at WSCU in June.
- Presented at Public-Private Noxious Weed Management workshop at WSCU in May.
- Contributed to outreach on noxious weeds at Gunnison Farmer's Market.
- Established a treatment and effectiveness monitoring program for cheatgrass management with Esplanade, a highly-touted management tool recently released to the market.
- Co-Coordinator presented at CSU Extension Colorado Master Gardener course on noxious weeds in March
- All contracts for service completed on time & on budget.