

Noxious Weeds

Many people are surprised to discover that the beautiful plant they've been nurturing along the driveway is in fact a dangerous invader that threatens our local habitats.

Noxious weeds are so classified because they meet two criteria: they are not native to our local habitats, originating elsewhere in the world; and they aggressively invade native habitats, displacing natural vegetation. Many of the worst noxious weeds in British Columbia are escaped garden plants that originate from Europe and Asia. In our area, without the presence of native pests and predators, these plants thrive and invade.

Noxious weeds are often thought of as a problem of the agricultural community. Even though noxious weeds can and do have an effect on both ranchers and farmers, noxious weeds affect everyone.

Some of the effects of noxious weeds include:

- ✓ invasion of natural plant communities and displacement of native species
- ✓ the destruction of natural habitats
- ✓ reduction of land values where invasions are severe
- ✓ destroy recreational opportunities and the beauty of the landscape
- ✓ reduce yield and quality of agricultural crops
- ✓ increase soil erosion and stream sedimentation

Weeds may be transferred to your property in a number of ways. Weeds may come through



agricultural means such through hay or seeds, you should always check with your supplier to ensure they are weed-free. Weed seeds may also be transferred on vehicles or by animals. Check and wash your vehicle after you have traveled through areas where weeds are present.

Making a commitment to controlling weeds on your property is important for your own property and for your neighbours. Weeds spread easily between properties and working together as neighbours can help everyone.

Here are some strategies to control weeds on your property:

- ✓ Preventing weeds from becoming established is the easiest and most effective control. Seed broken ground as soon as possible and remove weeds as soon as you notice them on the property.
- ✓ Maintaining healthy grass and shrub cover prevents the establishment of weeds. Do not overgraze.
- ✓ Minimize necessary soil disturbance.
- ✓ Use a full-scale management approach, identify areas on your property where weeds have invaded or are likely to invade and take action.
- ✓ Monitor your property regularly for new weed outbreaks or place where weeds might establish. Dealing with small problems while they are small will make for less work in the long run.
- ✓ Learn about the different techniques available for dealing with your weeds.
- ✓ Read herbicide application instructions carefully and do not apply herbicides near water sources.
- ✓ Check to ensure that any seed you buy is certified weed free by requesting a Certificate of Seed Analysis which details the seed makeup of any seeds sold.
- ✓ Wash vehicles or equipment before and after moving them to reduce the spread of weeds.
- ✓ Avoid moving livestock from weedy pastures into "clean" pastures.