



STATE AGENCY AND COUNTY WEED DISTRICT
BIENNIAL NOXIOUS WEED REPORT
Fiscal Years 2016 & 2017

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Prepared by the Montana Department of Agriculture
Noxious Weed Program

State Agency and County Weed District Biennial Noxious Weed Report For Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017

The Montana Department of Agriculture is pleased to submit the State Agency and County Weed District Biennial Noxious Weed Report for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. The report is legislatively required, and compiles weed management information from ten state agencies owning land in Montana and the 56 county weed districts where the land is located. It is critical that responsible parties at the local and state levels communicate effectively and actively take part in each other's noxious weed control program to facilitate effective weed management across the state.

Under Section 7-22-2151, MCA, of the County Noxious Weed Control Act, state agencies are required to develop an agreement with county weed boards for weed management on state-owned lands.

Agreements must include:

- an integrated noxious weed management plan that is updated biennially;
- a noxious weed management goals statement;
- a specific plan of operations, including a budget to implement the plan; and
- submittal of a biennial performance report to the State Weed Coordinator at the Montana Department of Agriculture regarding success of the plan on a form provided by the Department.

To meet statutory requirements, an online reporting form, maintained by the Montana Department of Agriculture, was created. State agencies owning land in Montana consist of Administration, Corrections, Environmental Quality, Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Heritage Commission, Montana State University, Natural Resources and Conservation, Public Health and Human Services, Transportation and the University of Montana. Report information for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 was provided to the Department of Agriculture by representatives of nine agencies and approved by county weed district representatives. Based on submitted information, the report shows that:

- an estimated 334,117 acres of state lands are infested with noxious weeds, an increase of over 13 percent from the previous report;
- 102,883 acres were controlled at a cost of \$6,156,806, for an average cost of approximately \$59.84 per acre;
- additional funding is needed for dedicated personnel and noxious weed control programs on state lands to protect Montana's agriculture, forestry, livestock, wildlife, and native plant communities.

There are significant discrepancies in how agencies monitor and inventory weed infested acres, causing reported totals to differ across the state. Agencies can only estimate the percent of acres being controlled as the actual number of infested acres is largely unknown. Accurate data and a defined measure of infested acres is needed. Dedicating considerable time, effort and funding is necessary to accomplish this change and improve the reporting process.

The format of the State Agency and County Weed District Biennial Noxious Weed Report for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 has been revised to provide a user-friendly summarized report. The summary, found at <https://agr.mt.gov/NoxiousWeedBiennialReport-Summary> includes a multi-agency comparison followed by single-page summaries of data and comments reported from each agency and the Department of Agriculture.

In-depth report data can be found at <https://Agr.mt.gov/NoxiousWeedBiennialReport>. Information in this detailed report is interactive, utilizing three tabs at the top of the page and a sorting tool for review of

individual agency/county summary sheets, agency goals, and comments submitted by report participants. Comments are shown as written by the reporting agency and county representatives.

Weed management in Montana continues to be challenged by the lack of a stable structure and adequate funding. The [Montana Noxious Weed Management Plan](#) includes tasks for developing long-term funding that supports employment of full-time, professional, qualified individuals to serve as weed coordinators in each state agency and county. Employing a full-time weed coordinator provides the leadership critical for organizing, directing, and implementing weed management and will ultimately strengthen Montana's weed management effort and facilitate implementation of the Montana Noxious Weed Management Plan.

As the report is reviewed, we encourage feedback and discussion with agency and county contacts, and the Montana Department of Agriculture. Agency contact information is listed below, and county representative contact information is available from State Weed Coordinator Dave Burch (444-3140 / dburch@mt.gov) at the Montana Department of Agriculture.

Montana Department of Administration (ADM)
Joshua LaFromboise / JLaFromboise@mt.gov / 444-3030

Montana Department of Corrections (CORR)
Ross Wagner / RWagner2@mt.gov / 846-1320 ext. 2322

Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Ben Quiñones / Bequinones@mt.gov / 444-6593

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)
Adam Sieges / Adam.Sieges@mt.gov / 693-9083

Montana Heritage Commission (HERI)
Elijah Allen / eallen@mt.gov / 369-8147

Montana State University (MSU)
Jody Barney / jody.barney@montana.edu / 994-3292

Montana Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
Dan Dobler / ddobler@mt.gov / 444-9726

Montana Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)
Cheryl Richman / crichman@mt.gov / 444-4690

Montana Department of Transportation (DOT)
Mike Miller / mikmiller@mt.gov / 444-6991

University of Montana (U of M)
Marilyn Marler / marilyn.marler@mso.umt.edu / 544-7189



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Department of Administration: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and TREATMENT COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES				INFESTED ACRES			% INFESTED			TREATED ACRES				% TREATED				\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED			
	0	50	100	150	0	20	40	60	0%	20%	40%	0	20	40	60	0%	50%	100%	150%	\$0	\$20	\$40
ADM	150				50			33.33%			50				100.00%				\$50.00			

ACRES TREATED & COST FOR EACH CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES													EXPENDITURES					
		0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	\$0	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,500	
ADM	Herbicide	25													\$1,250					
	Mechanical	25													\$1,250					
	Total	50													\$2,500					

Agency Comment:

Summary comment was not submitted.

Agriculture Comment:

Being able to cover all infested acres in a two-year period is very commendable. I would suggest doubling their budget and treating all 50 acres per year for a couple of years. By reducing the infestations, they should be able to reduce their cost, creating a spot treatment program in future years.
Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Environmental Quality: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and TREATMENT COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES			INFESTED ACRES			% INFESTED				TREATED ACRES					% TREATED			\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED		
	0K	2K	4K	0K	1K	2K	0%	20%	40%	60%	0K	2K	4K	6K	8K	0%	200%	400%	\$0	\$50	\$100
DEQ	3,707			1,898			51.20%				6,698					352.90%			\$77.20		

ACRES TREATED & COST FOR EACH CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES							EXPENDITURES					
		0K	1K	2K	3K	4K	5K	6K	7K	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$400,000
DEQ	Herbicide	6,698							\$517,096					
	Total	6,698							\$517,096					

Agency Comment:

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality's Remediation Division (DEQ) is responsible for implementing Superfund cleanup along Silver Bow Creek and the Clark Fork River. The cleanup activities have occurred in Silver Bow, Deer Lodge, and Powell Counties within properties held by DEQ, other governmental entities, and private parties. During the Biennium, the DEQ (through private contractors) conducted weed control on 3,643 acres (2,180 acres held by others), each receiving two full rounds of weed control, followed by a late season, abbreviated third pass targeting weed hotspots the first year. During the second year, DEQ conducted weed control as described above on 2,716 acres (1,392 acres held by others) along Silver Bow Creek and the Clark Fork River. Weed control activities were aimed at remediated areas, in addition to pretreating project areas prior to cleanup activities to reduce the noxious weed seedbed.

Over the years, personnel from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's Remediation Division have noticed a decrease in noxious weed density within the Upper Blackfoot Mining Complex project area (Lewis and Clark County). We attribute this to an aggressive weed control program. Weed control at the Basin Creek Mine (Jefferson and Lewis and Clark Counties) has targeted weed infestations in and near areas with active construction to minimize spread by equipment and trucks.

Ben Quinones, DEQ

Agriculture Comment:

By all accounts it appears that DEQ is doing a good job.

Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Natural Resources and Conservation: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and TREATMENT COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES					INFESTED ACRES				% INFESTED			TREATED ACRES			% TREATED			\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED			
	0M	2M	4M	6M	8M	0K	100K	200K	300K	0%	2%	4%	0K	5K	10K	0%	2%	4%	\$0	\$20	\$40	\$60
DNRC	5,621,061					225,373				4.01%			8,718			3.87%			\$53.85			

ACRES TREATED & COST FOR EACH CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES									EXPENDITURES				
		0K	1K	2K	3K	4K	5K	6K	7K	8K	9K	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$300,000
DNRC	Bio-Control	526									\$9,850				
	Herbicide	8,184									\$459,431				
	Mechanical	8									\$177				
	Total	8,718									\$469,458				

Agency Comment:

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Trust Land Management Division manages 5.2 million surface acres of State School Trust Lands to generate revenue from natural resources such as timber, grazing lands, agricultural lands, minerals, and real estate. The DNRC does annual inspections on approximately 10% of those lands every year through a lease renewal inspection process. As lands are inspected in association with leases or other projects (such as timber sales and mineral development) weed infestations are noted. For leased lands, follow-up contact is made with the lessee and a noxious weed management plan and/or control is required by the Department as part of the lease agreement. For unleased lands or other projects, site-specific plans are developed to address weed control before, during, and after those activities are completed. In my professional opinion, I would estimate approximately 15-18% of DNRC owned lands have noxious weed infestations opposed the 4% infestation level showing in the report. The report also shows that DNRC is spending approximately \$235,000 on an annual basis for weed control across leased and unleased lands.
Dan Dobler, DNRC

Agriculture Comment:

In reviewing the reports and the numbers submitted, I would agree with Mr. Dobler that 15 to 18 percent of DNRC land is infested with noxious weeds. I would also point out that their current program of treating 3.8 percent of the infested acres is inadequate to achieve a desirable reduction in infestation size and in cost. I believe that until DNRC creates a comprehensive reporting system for their leased lands, requesting acres infested, and dollars spent on weed management, they will never have a complete understanding of the magnitude of their noxious weed problem.
Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Transportation: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and TREATMENT COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES			INFESTED ACRES				% INFESTED				TREATED ACRES					% TREATED			\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED				
	0K	100K	200K	0K	20K	40K	60K	0%	10%	20%	30%	0K	20K	40K	60K	80K	0%	100%	200%	\$0	\$20	\$40	\$60	\$80
DOT	158,914			44,375				27.92%				66,963					150.90%			\$64.35				

ACRES TREATED & COST FOR EACH CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES							EXPENDITURES				
		0K	10K	20K	30K	40K	50K	60K	70K	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000
DOT	Bio-Control	405							\$5,350				
	Herbicide	50,695							\$3,838,064				
	Mechanical	15,863							\$465,663				
	Total	66,963							\$4,309,077				

Agency Comment:

The Montana Department of Transportation greatly appreciates the Department of Agriculture's effort to create a biennial report format that accurately portrays weed efforts across the state. We feel that the new format encourages better communication with all partners necessary for a cooperative weed effort. In future years, having this format in place will lead to more effective planning, goal setting and reporting. I would suggest that those that try to decipher the report understand that "infested acres" is a very subjective number. It can be very difficult to define or measure "infested". Many of the graphs and percentages from the biennial report are based on "infested acres" and they may be interpreted differently by different people. I would hope that any questions or concerns about information in the report would be directed to the proper agency for clarification of the information.
Mike Miller, MDT

Agriculture Comment:

Knowing how this program works and with the county weed districts conducting much of the weed control work on DOT properties, I think this is one of the better programs run by a state agency. MDT has one of the better funded programs, with a line item budget for noxious weed control, a dedicated coordinator for at least 50 percent of the time, and the ability to provide support to other programs such as the Montana Noxious Weed Education Campaign and the Biological Control Program.
Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Public Health and Human Services: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and TREATMENT COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES			INFESTED ACRES		% INFESTED				TREATED ACRES			% TREATED				\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED					
	0K	1K	2K	0	100	200	0%	5%	10%	15%	0	200	400	0%	100%	200%	300%	\$0	\$20	\$40	\$60	
DPHHS			1,665			225				13.51%			452				200.89%					\$49.12

ACRES TREATED & COST FOR EACH CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES										EXPENDITURES				
		0	50	100	150	200	250	300	350	400	450	500	\$0	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
DPHHS	Herbicide	229										\$5,311				
	Mechanical	6										\$11,000				
	Revegetation	217										\$5,890				
	Total	452										\$22,201				

Agency Comment:

Summary comment was not submitted.

Agriculture Comment:

Managing to cover 100 percent of their property multiple times a year will help reduce infestations.
Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Fish, Wildlife and Parks: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and TREATMENT COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES				INFESTED ACRES			% INFESTED			TREATED ACRES				% TREATED			\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED			
	0K	200K	400K	600K	0K	20K	40K	0%	5%	10%	0K	5K	10K	15K	0%	20%	40%	\$0	\$20	\$40	\$60
FWP	512,459				38,350			7.48%			13,347				34.80%			\$50.26			

ACRES TREATED & COST FOR EACH CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES								EXPENDITURES			
		0K	2K	4K	6K	8K	10K	12K	14K	\$0	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$600,000
FWP	Bio-Control	1,387								\$24,058			
	Herbicide	10,425								\$513,214			
	Mechanical	1,535								\$133,524			
	Total	13,347								\$670,796			

Agency Comment:

After communications with Department of Agriculture, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan serves as a County Weed Management Plan for the agency. Any counties marked as not having a management plan in place were done so in error.
Adam Sieges, FWP

Agriculture Comment:

This is an agency that needs a full-time noxious weed coordinator and a line item budget for weed control. FWP is a complex agency with many different divisions, but one person is needed to provide coordination and the resources required to run a comprehensive program. Much like DNRC, I believe that the total number of infested acres is closer to 15 to 18 percent. Again, only treating 13 percent of their estimated acres in a two-year period is not a suitable situation. More funding dedicated to weed control and more coordination is needed.
Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Montana Heritage Commission: ACRES, INFESTED ACRES and COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES 0	INFESTED ACRES 0	% INFESTED 0%	TREATED ACRES 0	% TREATED 0%	\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED \$0
HERIT	0	0		0		
Grand Total	0	0		0		

ACRES TREATED & COST/ACRE PER CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES 0	EXPENDITURES \$0
HERIT	~No Action T..	0	\$0
	Total	0	\$0
Grand Total		0	\$0

Agency Comment:

Agency did not complete reports or submit comment.

Agriculture Comment:

Information was not received from this agency despite several requests being made.
Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

Montana State University: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and TREATMENT COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES				INFESTED ACRES			% INFESTED				TREATED ACRES				% TREATED				\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED				
	0K	10K	20K	30K	0	500	1000	1500	0%	2%	4%	6%	0	500	1000	1500	0%	50%	100%	150%	\$0	\$10	\$20	\$30
MSU	22,454				1,268			5.65%				1,296				102.21%				\$32.31				

ACRES TREATED & COST FOR EACH CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES								EXPENDITURES								
		0	200	400	600	800	1000	1200	1400	\$0	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000
MSU	Bio-Control	71								\$2								
	Herbicide	1,175								\$39,586								
	Mechanical	47								\$2,150								
	Revegetation	3								\$140								
	Total	1,296								\$41,878								

Agency Comment:

The information submitted includes only lands owned and/or managed by the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station. Weed management for other Montana State University properties were not reported.
Jody Barney, MSU - College of Agriculture/Montana Agricultural Experiment Station

Agriculture Comment:

Seems to be covering all infested acres each year and controlling the infestations.
Dave Burch, MDA



Noxious Weed Biennial Report for FY's 2016 & 2017

University of Montana: ACRES , INFESTED ACRES and COST PER ACRE TREATED

AGENCY	AGENCY ACRES				INFESTED ACRES			% INFESTED				TREATED ACRES			% TREATED			\$ SPENT / ACRE TREATED		
	0K	2K	4K	6K	0K	1K	2K	0%	20%	40%	60%	0	200	400	0%	10%	20%	\$0	\$50	\$100
UofM	4,510				2,178			48.29%				365			16.76%			\$82.74		
Grand Total	4,510				2,178			48.29%				365			16.76%			\$82.74		

ACRES TREATED & COST/ACRE PER CONTROL METHOD

AGENCY	CONTROL METHOD	TREATED ACRES									EXPENDITURES						
		0	50	100	150	200	250	300	350	400	\$0	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000
UofM	Bio-Control	100									\$1						
	Herbicide	214									\$23,300						
	Mechanical	43									\$3,500						
	Revegetation	8									\$3,400						
	Total	365									\$30,201						
Grand Total	365									\$30,201							

Agency Comment:

UM has several properties that are traditionally landscaped and maintained college campuses (Mountain Campus in Missoula, Western in Dillon, Tech in Butte, and Helena College). We also own many acres of natural areas, working forests and ranchland, including Lubrecht Experimental Forest, Bandy Ranch, Mount Sentinel, Yellow Bay, Birch Creek and more. There is still considerable acreage infested with noxious weeds, but we are making steady progress. While some areas struggle with budget and staffing shortages, we are creative with external funding (Noxious Weed Trust Fund, and others) and at UM Missoula, we involve students in many aspects of work.
Marilyn Marler, University of Montana

Agriculture Comment:

While some areas owned by the University of Montana are having good success controlling noxious weeds many are not. Treating 12 percent of their infested acres will only lead to more weeds and larger infestations. Additional funding is needed to help this program.
Dave Burch, MDA