

**Looking Ahead to 2016: Your Input is Valued!**

The Gunnison County Weed Management Program welcomes feedback from all Gunnison Basin residents. As planning for the 2016 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](mailto: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 2015 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 2016 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 2016?
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 2016 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 2016!



A grant-funded re-vegetation and weed management project was completed in the Quartz Creek Subdivision near Pitkin in 2015.

**2016 Goals**

- Provide all Weed Management Program cooperators with fair value by ensuring that the price charged for noxious weed management services is comparable to the market rate.
- Seek and receive grant funding to cover the costs of a seasonal position for the Weed Management Program focused on private land noxious weed issues.
- Complete a cheatgrass treatment and re-seeding project in Taylor Canyon, which is being funded by an \$8000 grant from the USFS Resource Advisory Committee.
- Keep the Reclamation Permit inspection program current, avoiding any backlog of permits awaiting inspection.
- Ensure large-scale soil disturbances associated with Gunnison County projects, such as the Antelope Hills water line, Taylor Canyon road improvements and North Valley sewer line extension are regularly monitored and treated as necessary for noxious weeds.
- In addition to chemical weed treatment methods, continue to expand the use of integrated approaches to weed management including cultural, biological and mechanical approaches.
- When chemical weed management approaches are used, seek the safest effective products on the market
- Continue to raise awareness of the CO Dept. of Agriculture's Certified Weed Free Hay Program and expand the Weed Management Program's efforts to offer certification for local hay producers.



List A noxious weed cypress spurge (*Euphorbia cyparissias*), discovered near Crested Butte in 2015.

**Another Year of Growth**

Once again, it has been a year of positive growth for the Gunnison County Weed Management Program. As I believe the "2015 Highlights" (see column to the right) demonstrate, our work and accomplishments, both "on the ground" and as a result of our awareness-raising efforts, continued to nudge noxious weed issues throughout the Gunnison Basin in a positive direction. However, the most significant growth in 2015 happened within the Program itself.

At the end of 2014, I noted that the Program's growing season workload far exceeded its staff capacity and that I intended to work toward solving that problem by finding resources, both within and outside of Gunnison County, to improve the Program's staffing situation during that critical time of year. Thanks to Gunnison County and the Weed Management Program's cooperators, a large step toward increasing the Program's growing season staff capacity has been accomplished, both in 2015 and into the future Here's how:

First, Gunnison County was awarded a grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture to hire a seasonal employee in 2015, which allowed the Program to demonstrate the effectiveness of adding an additional staff person during the growing season. Second, we continued to request and receive increasing and ongoing financial support from the Program's federal, state, county and municipal cooperators. Increasing this sustainable revenue stream allowed the Program to work close to within its current budget to request that Gunnison County consider adding a second permanent field-based staff person. Gunnison County has generously agreed to fund this budget request.

So, beginning in 2016, the Weed Management Program will add a Co-Coordinator to its staff. Both Co-Coordiators will work full time for nine months during spring, summer and fall, with reduced hours during the three, less busy months of winter. I believe this adjustment to the Program's staffing will allow us to most efficiently utilize limited budget dollars during critical growing season months, thereby ensuring that the Program most effectively serves the ecosystems, economy and people of the Gunnison Basin when our services are in highest demand.

A review of the Program's efforts in 2015 would not be complete without recognition of the work of seasonal weed management technician Bradley Wigginton. In addition to greatly increasing our accomplishments in managing noxious weeds Basin-wide, Bradley played a crucial role in the Program's awareness-raising efforts, generously shared the knowledge he has gained from his extensive weed management experience throughout the nation and internationally, and infused the Weed Management Program with new ideas and positive energy that stem from his passion for and commitment to thoughtfully and sustainably caring for the ecosystems of the Gunnison Basin.

Thanks for a great year, and for the privilege of serving you as the Program's Coordinator!  
Jon Mugglestone

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**2015 Highlights**

The Gunnison County Weed Management Program coordinates noxious weed control in the Gunnison Basin, provides educational and consultative services focused on land management, certifies weed free hay and inspects reclamation projects. Below, please find a few of the accomplishments the Weed Management Program was most proud of in 2015:

- Over 729 acres of noxious weeds were treated on federal, state, county, municipal and private lands throughout the Gunnison Basin.
- 46 reclamation permit inspections and reports were completed by field-based staff and Office Manager, Ann Wood.
- Consultations and on-site visits were carried out with over 105 private landowners, agency representatives and businesses.
- Five Certified Weed Free Hay inspections were completed for local hay producers and the Colorado Department of Agriculture, for a total of 310 acres certified.
- Weed Management Program revenue increased approximately 40% from 2014, as price increases for service were implemented, cooperators increased service requests and grant funding was received.

Continued on inside page

# State-Listed Noxious Weed Control

Over 729 acres of state-listed noxious weeds were treated using chemical and mechanical control methods during the 2015 growing season, April 28– November 13. 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 Coordinator.

Cooperator	Treatment Site	Acres	Cooperator	Treatment Site	Acres	Cooperator	Treatment Site	Acres	
<b>NPS</b> (\$5900)	CONE Island	1.74	<b>Town of Pitkin</b> (\$300)	Streets/Alleys	1.13	<b>Gunnison Cty.</b> (continued)	CR 265	1.71	
	Dillon Pinnacles	0.12		<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>1.13</b>		CR 317	3.81	
	Bay of Chickens	0.40		<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>3</b>		CR 720	1.22	
	Elk Creek	1.99	<b>City of Gunnison</b> (\$1200)	Streets/Alleys	13.64		CR 721	2.97	
	East Elk Creek	0.51		<u>Water Treatment/Wetlands</u>	<u>2.59</u>		CR 726	0.25	
	Red Creek	0.83		<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>16.23</b>		CR 727	9.83	
	Iola	0.22		<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>25</b>		CR 730	53.06	
	Dry Creek	0.08		<b>Town of CB</b> (\$1800)	Block 76		0.45	CR 734	4.66
	North Willow	0.09			Butte Ave Rec Path		0.27	CR 737	12.72
	Lake Fork	0.19	Ditch Headgate		0.12		CR 738	4.81	
	Old Stevens	0.20	Gravel Pit		1.83		CR 740	2.62	
	Soap Creek	0.55	<u>Maintenance Yard</u>		<u>1.40</u>		CR 742	30.84	
	<u>Pioneer Point</u>	<u>0.07</u>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>4.07</b>	CR 744		1.65		
	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>6.99</b>	<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>18</b>	CR 771		0.65		
	<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>Town of Mt. CB</b> (\$2400)	Rec. Path	1.65		CR 811	1.80	
<b>USFS</b> (\$6000)	Kebler Pass	4.19		Gothic Road	2.14	CR 813	6.39		
	Marshall Pass	7.01		Winterset Dr.	0.01	CR 818	1.16		
	Gothic/Scohfield	1.44		<u>Parking Lots</u>	<u>0.19</u>	CR 826	0.73		
	Red Creek	3.60		<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>3.99</b>	CR 858	10.79		
	Slate River	4.56		<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>24</b>	CR 864	17.46		
	Washington Gulch	2.08	<b>Gunnison Cty.</b> (\$108,093)	CR 2	0.93	CR 887	3.19		
	Cement Creek	2.49		Marble Area Roads	8.83	CR 888	1.94		
	Taylor/Spring Ck.	14.47		CR 4	0.82	Antelope Hills Waterline	0.18		
	Needle Creek	0.55		CR 6	1.08	Allen Homesites	0.43		
	Irwin area	0.73		CR 7	2.40	Basin Industrial Park	8.65		
	Brush Creek	3.64		CR 8	0.49	CB Maintenance Facility	0.54		
	<u>Alpine Plateau</u>	<u>4.61</u>		CR 10	2.61	Dos Rios Subdivision	1.92		
	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>49.37</b>		CR 11	0.14	Fairgrounds/Airprt	0.49		
	<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>84</b>		CR 12	12.84	GC Landfill	0.12		
	<b>CDP&amp;W</b> (\$1500)	Sapinero SWA		3.65	CR 16 & 19	0.44	GC Somerset Maint. Facil.	0.20	
<u>Dome Lakes SWA</u>		<u>0.08</u>		CR 17	9.78	Goose Creek Gravel Pit	0.35		
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>3.73</b>		CR 18	0.32	Hartman Rocks	0.48		
<b>Hours Worked</b>		<b>15</b>		CR 21	0.38	Meridian Lake Pk Subdiv.	1.30		
<b>CDOT</b> (\$27,000)		SH 114		20.84	CR 24	0.31	N. Elk Meadows Subdiv.	0.42	
		SH 133		4.00	CR 25	6.90	North Valley Subdiv.	0.30	
		SH 135	103.22	CR 26	26.21	Panoview Subdivision	1.17		
		SH 92	26.78	CR 27	2.60	Quartz Creek Subdiv.	0.02		
		US 50	40.41	CR 28	0.13	Riverbend Subdivision	0.83		
		SH 149	33.43	CR 29	0.42	Somerset	0.37		
		<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>228.68</b>	CR 30	0.19	Whitewater Park	1.37		
		<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>281</b>	CR 32	1.75	<u>North Valley Sewer Easmt.</u>	<u>1.39</u>		
		<b>Hinsdale Cty.</b> (\$1600)	CR 30, 33, 20	10.38	CR 38	26.19	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>369.88</b>	
			<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>10.38</b>	CR 43	0.07	<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>917</b>	
			<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>16</b>	CR 44	5.36	<b>A Few Key 2015 Summary Totals:</b>		
	<b>Saguache Cty.</b> (\$2500)		CR 14PP	16.90	CR 45	5.09		<b>Total Acres Treated: 729.65</b>	
			CR 15GG	1.98	Castle Mountain	6.12		<b>Total Revenue (Cooperator Contributions): \$50,200</b>	
			CR 6YY	0.01	CR 49	0.65		<b>Total Growing Season Hours Worked for Cooperators: 542</b>	
			CR 17GG	4.50	CR 51	0.10		<b>Total Gunnison County Contribution: \$108,093</b>	
CR 17FF			1.49	CR 54	0.14	<b>Total Growing Season Hours Worked for Gunnison County: 917</b>			
CR 24UU			2.27	CR 56	0.16	<b>Total Grant Awards Received: \$34,800</b>			
CR KK14			4.28	CR 59	0.74				
CR NN14			3.77	CR 62	1.08				
<b>Total Acres</b>			<b>35.20</b>	CR 75	0.32				
<b>Hours Worked</b>			<b>25</b>	CR 76	48.88				
				CR 77	0.62				

# Education & Outreach

Raising public awareness about noxious weeds and their control is a critical goal of the Gunnison County Weed Management Program's work. In 2015, the Weed Management Program led and contributed to numerous educational and outreach efforts, including the following:

- The Weed Management Program partnered with CSU Extension, US Forest Service and National Park Service to host and fund a local workshop focused on integrated weed management in the Gunnison Basin. This workshop, attended by 28 people, featured presentations by researchers from Colorado State University and Western State Colorado University and local representatives from land management agencies.
- Over 105 phone consultations and site visits were carried out by the Weed Management Program in 2015 to assist property owners and managers develop noxious weed control and re-vegetation plans for the properties they own and care for.
- Bradley Wigginton led a tour and staffed an information booth at the Crested Butte Wildflower Festival to raise awareness about noxious weeds



Newspaper ads focused on raising public awareness about noxious weeds appeared in the Gunnison Country Shopper throughout the growing season, spurring many inquiries to the Weed Management Program from citizens interested in receiving advice about effective and safe weed management on their properties.

The Weed Management Program continued its role meeting with hay producers wishing to have their crop certified as weed-free by the Colorado Department of Agriculture. This year, the Program inspected the fields of five Gunnison County hay producers, certifying 310 acres of hay fields as noxious weed-free.

# WCSU Research Informs WMP's Work on Private Lands

Ensuring effective weed management on private lands is one of the most daunting challenges faced by the Weed Management Program. While noxious weeds are being managed effectively on public lands where we work, we see private land weed problems increasing in many areas. State laws require that all landowners manage noxious weeds on their property, and the responsibility for enforcing these regulations falls to Gunnison County. Though landowner education and awareness-raising continue to be primary goals of the Weed Management Program, we recognize that we need to do a better job of ensuring that this awareness translates into motivation and action.

Bradley Wigginton, WCSU Master in Environmental Management Candidate and WMP seasonal employee in 2015, is working to meet this need. His Master's research is exploring private landowner awareness and perception of noxious weed issues in the Gunnison Basin in order to determine what motivates landowners to manage (or not manage) weeds on their properties.



As the Weed Management Program plans to bolster our work with private landowners in 2016 by seeking grant funding to create a seasonal position focused on raising awareness, providing assistance and ensuring compliance with noxious weed laws among private landowners Basin-wide, Bradley's research will provide a basis from which the Weed Management Program can build an effective approach for ensuring private land noxious weed issues are more effectively addressed.

# 2015 Highlights

Continued from front page

- A \$23,500 grant from the CO Department of Ag funded a seasonal position
- A \$3300 grant from CO Dept. of Ag provided funding assistance for re-vegetation following road construction in the Quartz Creek subdivision
- An \$8000 grant from the US Forest Service funded cheatgrass treatments and re-seeding in Taylor Canyon in 2015-16
- The List A species cypress spurge was identified and treated south of CB
- Educational newspaper ads aimed at raising public awareness of noxious weeds and treatment options ran in the Gunnison Country Shopper on a bi-weekly basis throughout the growing season
- An educational weed management workshop in Gunnison developed in partnership with CSU Extension, USFS and NPS was attended by 28 people.
- Bradley Wigginton led a tour and staffed an information booth at the Crested Butte Wildflower Festival to raise awareness of noxious weeds
- The Weed Management Program continued to make strides toward improving environmental stewardship and safety by using an integrated approach to weed management, reducing herbicide use, and using EPA-registered Reduced Risk Pesticides while making significant progress toward reducing noxious weed problems throughout the Gunnison Basin.
- The Weed Management Program continued contracts with private weed control service providers, ensuring large scale noxious weed problems around Marble and in the North Fork Valley were addressed in a timely and economical manner.