

# Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, Washington County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA)

## Five-year Management Plan

Revised December 31, 2014

### Purpose and description

The impacts of invasive weeds and the importance of their management are apparent to a wide variety of organizations. After habitat loss, invasive species have been recognized as the second largest danger to threatened and endangered species (*Precious Heritage: The status of biodiversity in the United States*, The Nature Conservancy). According to a study commissioned by the Oregon Department of Agriculture, 21 state-listed noxious weeds alone cause economic losses to Oregon of over \$125 million per year (*The Economics of Invasive Species*, Cusack *et al.*, 2009).

Throughout the Portland Metropolitan Region there are a multitude of economic impacts which arise as a result of invasive plant infestations. The ecological impacts of invasive species result in degradation of water quality, loss of wildlife habitat, and replacement of native plants in our natural areas and open spaces. Economic impacts include loss of revenue in the nursery, farming, and timber industries, an increase in roadside, power line and drainage ditch maintenance costs. Invasive species can also adversely impact how people interact with natural areas and limit the social benefits of parks and greenspaces, as well as negatively impact human health.

The Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, Washington County CWMA (informally known as the 4-County CWMA) exists to create and support collaborative weed management among land managers and owners within these four counties (Appendix II: List of Cities and Large Private Landowners). Private lands include residential areas within incorporated cities and subdivisions, commercial and industrial properties, crop-producing farms and container nurseries. Invasive plants extend across multiple ownerships and move around the landscape, making collaboration and partnerships essential for effective management. Partnerships can access new sources of funding and increase implementation efficiency. The 4-County CWMA promotes weed education and outreach, weed inventory and prevention, and weed control activities. The intention of the 4-County CWMA is to foster partnerships amongst local organizations and land managers to enhance available resources and help maximize efficiency and effectiveness of noxious weed management, regardless of political boundaries.

The 4-County CWMA includes 3727 square miles of land within its boundary. The CWMA has a total population of 2,108,775 and includes the major urban and suburban areas of Portland, Vancouver, Gresham, Tualatin, Hillsboro, Forest Grove, and Oregon City as well as many other towns municipalities.

The 4-County CWMA contains extensive rural agricultural lands as well as important natural areas. The economy of the CWMA is diverse including manufacturing, retail sales, import/export, government agencies, education, agriculture, forestry, recreation and

tourism. Industrial areas are concentrated around the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers and in the Columbia Slough Watershed. River drainages in the area include the Columbia, Clackamas, Lewis, Molalla, Sandy, Salmon, Santiam, Tualatin, Trask, Washougal, and Willamette Rivers.

The CWMA also has a diverse range of plants, wildlife, and habitats. There are at least six distinct ecosystem types: cold, high elevation noble fir forests, wet western hemlock forests, mixed pine and fir forests, oak woodlands, valley grassland or prairie, and riparian communities. Within these ecosystems habitat loss, invasive species, pollution, and hydrologic alterations are the greatest factors contributing to the listing of federal and state Sensitive, Threatened and Endangered species. There are currently 63 endangered or threatened fish and wildlife as well as 19 plant species within the CWMA (Appendix III).

### **Current CWMA MOU Participants:**

Audobon Society of Portland  
Cascade Pacific-Resource Conservation & Development  
City of Gresham  
City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services  
Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District  
Clackamas River Basin Council  
Clark County Noxious Weed Control Board  
Columbia Land Trust  
East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District  
Johnson Creek Watershed Council  
Metro  
Mt. Hood National Forest  
The Nature Conservancy  
Portland State University  
Salem Bureau of Land Management  
Sandy River Basin Watershed Council  
Tryon Creek Watershed Council  
Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District  
Tualatin River Watershed Council  
Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District  
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Clackamas County  
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Multnomah County  
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington County  
West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District

### **Management principles**

The 4-County CWMA utilizes Integrated Weed Management practices based on the following principles:

- New infestations are addressed through a combination of surveying, monitoring, and collaboration amongst members.
- Projects are designed using an ecosystem management approach based on an understanding of weed biology, weed ecology, and landscape level processes.
- Treatment copies a ‘wildfire management’ model with the following priorities:
  - a. Target sources of spread and isolated populations while protecting high value localities.
  - b. Determine the perimeter of larger infestations and contain them to the area.
  - c. Attack larger infestations or widely dispersed weeds using biocontrols when appropriate and available.
- Control projects are designed after consideration of a range of treatment options so that the control methods are the most effective and appropriate to a given situation.
- Projects include a vision and plan for desired future conditions once the weeds are controlled.
- Education and outreach activities are targeted to specific audiences, with clearly defined desired behavioral changes.

### **Definition of management levels**

- Eradicate: the weed species is eliminated from the management area, including all viable seeds and/or vegetative propagules.
- Control: Dispersal is prevented throughout the target patch and the area coverage of the weed is decreased over time. The weed is prevented from dominating the vegetation of the area but low levels are accepted.
- Contain: Weeds are geographically contained and are not increasing beyond the perimeter of the infestation. Treatment within established infestations may be limited, but areas outside are controlled or eradicated.
- Reduce: The density and/or rate of spread of the weed are reduced across a geographic area.
- Custodial: Specific treatment for a particular plant is deferred at this time. Infestations may be treated as a result of other weed priorities. The species may not be inherently invasive, habitats are not susceptible to invasion, or the infestation is not treatable with current technology.

### **Goal**

Prevent the introduction and control the spread of harmful invasive plants in the CWMA region by facilitating cooperative management among all willing land managers.

### **Objectives and activities**

1. *Manage the 4-County CWMA through information sharing and relationship building.*

**Activities**

- a. Convene CWMA meetings regularly.
- b. Use the 4 County CWMA list-serve to share information and seek advice.
- c. Involve new partners and existing partners to represent all major land managers and others who work on weed issues within the CWMA.
- d. Track legislative issues, funding opportunities, and other pertinent issues.
- e. Develop and maintain an *MOU* and *Management Plan*.
- f. Maintain long-term management objectives for targeted weeds of concern according to area prioritization.
- g. Support the Oregon Invasive Species Hotline, iMapInvasives, and other collaborative efforts to abet invasive species management.
- h. Conduct tours and training for members and local land managers.
- i. Coordinate the annual *Pull Together* conference.

2. *Inventory and assess weeds*

**Activities**

- a. Encourage members to collect evidence of new invading species by mapping locations using GPS and taking photographs.
- b. Develop and share protocols for surveying and mapping weed sightings.
- c. Coordinate and support the use of a regional mapping system.
- d. Maintain a shared database for inventory data of new and established weeds.
- e. Review the weed list on a biennial basis.
- f. Develop risk assessments and where appropriate nominate invasive weeds to the Oregon State Weed Board and to the Washington Noxious Weed Control Board noxious weed list.

3. *Conduct outreach to raise awareness about weeds among the wider public.*

**Activities**

- a. Prepare a five year report showing accomplishments and distribute to funding sources, media, government, citizen groups, etc.
- b. Develop and disperse brochures for consumers about horticulturally traded noxious weeds.
- c. Develop awareness, education, and training programs.
  - Provide updates to local nurseries/growers and landscape industry members about potentially invasive plants.
  - Educate consumers about noxious weed issues.
- d. Conduct outreach via booths at public events.
- e. Support local activities in coordination with the Oregon Invasive Species Council and National Weed Awareness Week.

**Structure and Process**

a. *Steering Committee*

Roles:

- Share information.
- Maintain the MOU by updating members as necessary.

- Develop and maintain the Management Plan and coordinate its implementation.
- Provide supervision to staff as needed to support coordination of the CWMA.
- Interact with media and interested citizens. Partners will take the lead on their particular projects.

Composition and Process: Representatives will be comprised of MOU signatories but the meetings will be open to any other interested persons. The Steering Committee will convene as needed to administer CWMA tasks, but will meet a minimum of four times a year. Consensus will be sought, but decisions will be made by a majority of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee shall consist of 7 members

- 4 County representatives (1 from each county)
- 2- At-Large Representatives
- 1- *ex officio* Fiscal Admin Representative

The Fiscal Administration representative will be an *ex officio* representative to inform Steering Committee business and CWMA administration. Additional Steering Committee members are voluntary. Members will be voted upon by the CWMA membership during general meetings. Steering Committee members will elect a chair and/or co-chairs from amongst Steering Committee members. Interim appointments may be made by majority of the Steering Committee members to fill vacant positions, but must be voted on by all members at the next general meeting. County Representatives may be replaced by an additional At-Large Representative as needed, if desired participation within a particular county wanes amongst member organizations. A quorum of 3 members must be met to conduct CWMA business.

Steering Committee members will serve two year terms. Every 2 years members will be nominated and voted upon by the CWMA signatories at the general meeting. Consensus will be sought, but decisions will be made by a majority of the Steering Committee.

Administration: The Steering Committee Chair and/or Co-Chair will sign all agreements and documents pertaining to the operation and administration of the CWMA when authorized by a majority of the Steering Committee.

- b. Subcommittees.** For specific projects or tasks, *ad hoc* groups will be formed which can exist for a short time or indefinitely. Subcommittees will elect a chair or co-chairs from their ranks to lead meetings and prepare agendas; the coordinator will record minutes if time allows, otherwise, subcommittees will appoint a secretary to record meeting minutes. Minutes will be submitted to the CWMA Coordinator for distribution to CWMA members and partners. Officers serve at will and elections will be held biennially, with no enforced term limits. Subcommittees will be structured around a set of goals and objectives to direct the activities of the group. Goals will be in line with the goals of the CWMA, and objectives will provide the structure for accomplishing those goals. Goals and objectives of the subcommittees will be revisited biennially and submitted to the coordinator for posting on the website.

- c. *CWMA Coordinator.* This is a staff position to help coordinate the CWMA and its related events, raise funds, manage projects, provide administrative support and deal with public relations related to the CWMA as a whole.
- d. *Meeting management.* Steering Committee members will take turns as chair (prepare agenda and lead meeting) and secretary (prepare and distribute meeting notes).
- e. *Funding.* The CWMA will not handle funding directly. Partner organizations will apply for and manage grants themselves. Where resources need to be shared, separate agreements between the relevant parties will be developed.
- f. *Planning:* The Steering Committee will prepare an Operating Plan which specifies activities, responsible parties, deadlines for completion, and resources available to accomplish activities.

### **Modifications and term**

The Management Plan is a living document and will be revised as needed by the Steering Committee. The Plan will be reviewed on a biennial basis and the Weed List adjusted as necessary.