

Weed Management

If not managed, your property could be a source of weeds causing problems for you and your neighbors.

What is a Weed?

A weed is defined as a plant growing in a place in which it is not wanted. Almost any plant could be classified as a weed if found growing in an unwanted place. The most problematic weeds are those that are considered invasive and non-native. Not all non-native plants become invasive. However, invasive non-native weeds are plants that were introduced to our area and aggressively reproduce. These plants are

able to out-compete native plants because they have no natural predators to keep their populations in check. Consequently they reproduce rapidly and aggressively invade areas traditionally inhabited by native vegetation.

Some of Hood River County's "least wanted" weeds are:

Knapweed
Knotweed
Scotch Broom
Purple Loosestrife
English Ivy
Himalayan Blackberry

Why should we care about invasive weeds?

Our ecosystems rely on the native vegetation that makes up the foundation of the food chain. When non-native weeds displace native plants, they can permanently alter our natural environment and diminish the available food source for native wildlife. They can also reduce the economic viability of our community's farms and ranches.

Prevention

Prevention is the most effective and least costly form of weed control. Good management practices can help you maintain desirable vegetation. Sound practices include purchasing weed-free hay and bird seed, avoiding over-grazing, planting certified grass seed and washing your vehicle, waders, boots and clothing after being in a weed-infested area. Respond quickly to weed infestations when they do occur.

Weed Control

The best way to combat weeds is to provide strong competition from desirable plants. Healthy, vigorous, non-invasive plants compete for the space, moisture and nutrients that weeds need to live.



Japanese Knotweed (also known as false bamboo) is one of Hood River County's least wanted weeds.

The use of herbicides is just one way to control weeds. To be successful chemical controls should be coupled with cultural and mechanical management techniques. Mulches, cultivation and other cultural methods of management can be lower in cost and more effective than the use of chemicals. When there is soil disturbance on your land, seed desirable plants quickly before weeds take over. Never leave bare soil.

Identification

Landowners are encouraged to learn to identify plants common to our area. Information on weeds and plant identification is available from the Hood River County Weed and Pest Division, OSU Extension Service and the Hood River SWCD offices.

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Resources

Oregon Department of Agriculture:
www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/

Plant Conservation Alliance:
www.nps.gov/plants/alien/factmain.htm#pllists

Center for Invasive Plant Management:
www.weedcenter.org

Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook:
<http://ag.ippc.orst.edu/pnw/weeds>

Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board:
www.nwcb.wa.gov