



1517 Broadway Suite 101

Phone: 308-632-1311

Scottsbluff, NE 69361

Fax: 308-632-7671

<http://www.npnrd.org/hpwma.htm>

Western Nebraska is in the ninth year of drought. This period of drought has increased landowners interest in many water conservation practices including the control of Invasive trees and weeds. This concern and heightened awareness initiated seven counties to recently agree to join a cooperative effort and form the “**High Plains Weed Management Association.**”

Our first priority is to educate all landowner’s concerning the need for a comprehensive regional invasive control strategy. An agreement was reached with the PRIDE to share the cost of printing and distribution of an annual landowner news letter that provides updated information on the newest most effective control methods. A property distributed newsletter with a variety of control methods would serve as the most effective first step toward regional invasive species control.

The second priority is collecting an accurate survey of the Riparian wetlands areas impacted by Russian Olive trees and Salt Cedar (Tamarisk) for each county. Many of the counties in the HPWMA have limited budgets and only part time employees. Their time and money is necessarily focused on control of only the most obvious infestations of noxious weeds. A budget enhancement of one thousand dollars per county would compensate for the time and mileage to allow county weed directors to conduct a visual survey of impacted riparian wetlands and create working maps.

The third priority is to initiate control of Russian Olive trees and Salt Cedar in Riparian Wetlands. Each county will use the budgeted two thousand to control the invasives in the areas they have identified from their survey and mapping. Then working with landowners in each county, the riparian wetlands that are most severely impacted by invasive trees can be controlled.

Many of the counties in our newly formed HPWMA haven’t even considered accessing riparian wetland areas that might be under siege from invasive trees. This grant money could augment the county budget allowing assessment and phase one of control methods in their county. Those counties along the North and South Platte River realize the daunting task ahead of them for controlling invasive trees. As we met to form the new Weed Management Area, one of the primary discussions involved the benefit of a coordinated effort to clear the entire watershed in the most cost effective manner.