



HPWMA Program Description

Program Description and Goals:

- As a response to the increasingly persistent problem of noxious weeds and invasive species in the Nebraska Panhandle, the Counties of Scotts Bluff, Banner, Kimball, Morrill, Cheyenne, Garden, Deuel, and southern Sioux have joined together to create a partnership that will address this growing need.
- Targeted species include Russian Olive, Salt Cedar, Canada Thistle, Musk Thistle, Scotch Thistle, Phragmites, and other noxious weeds.
- High Plains Weed Management Association are charged with the mission of coordinating invasive plant species/noxious weeds education, research and control with various partners/entities concerned with promoting invasive plant-free habitats.
- Coordinating the efforts of the partners will provide a broad spectrum, innovative approach for improving/rehabilitating local natural habitat. Education, awareness and participation truly encompass what HPWMA hopes to accomplish by providing a resource for landowners, organizations, local municipalities, and authorities in the field of invasive species.

Key Benefits

- The current drought in Western Nebraska has forced landowners to evaluate every available option for water conservation. The projects that are being under-taken by the group will reduce water consumption, which will benefit the entire Platte River watershed. The possibility of extensive flooding due to debris in the flood plain will be greatly reduced through these efforts as well. Enhancement of water quality and quantity while restoring native habitat and pastureland are the key goals of the organization, which it hopes to achieve through these efforts.

Species Focus:

- Phragmites – Priority #1 (total eradication)
- Salt Cedar – Priority #1 (total eradication)
- All Russian Olive (on property) – Priority #2
- Blocks of Russian Olive – Priority #3
- Eastern Red Cedar – Priority #4
- Additional riparian invasive or noxious weeds will be noted and reported to the respective County Weed Control Authority for future control efforts

Contract Length:

- minimum of 3 year contract

Payment Rates:

- 100% cost-share for total eradication of Phragmites and Salt Cedar in riparian areas
- 80% HPWMA cost-share on actual costs or \$50/acre landowner out of pocket expenses (whichever is less) on Russian Olive and Eastern Red Cedar control and disposal practices
- 90% HPWMA cost-share on actual costs or \$50/acre landowner out of pocket expenses (whichever is less) Russian Olive and Eastern Red Cedar control and disposal practices if and when landowner is approved for coordinating federal or state cost-share programs.
- Landowners will be able to use both cash and in-kind activities for their portion
- Every effort will be made to acquire 3 (or more) bids for projects



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Project Timeline:

- Year 1 – Initial control with removal and disposal (if applicable)
- Year 2 – Evaluation and follow-up spraying (if applicable)
- Year 3 – Evaluation and follow-up spraying (if applicable)

Practices and Techniques:

- Phragmites
 - ▶ Spot spray stands and leave standing (minimum 1 year)
- Salt Cedar
 - ▶ Foliar spray, or basal bark spray trees and leave standing (minimum 3 yrs)
- Russian Olive
 - ▶ Shear trees and spray stumps
 - ▶ Spray and leave standing
 - ▶ Growth less than 3” diameter may be mowed with wet blade (preferred)
 - ▶ Pile trees at least 100 ft. from water-holding channel and dispose piles by chipping or burning (limited number may remain for habitat); landowner retains ownership of chipped piles
- Eastern Red Cedar
 - ▶ Shear, pull, or hand-cut trees
 - ▶ Pile trees at least 100 ft. from active channel or dispose by chipping or burning
- Grazing deferment
 - ▶ Landowners may conduct an optional grazing deferment for a growing season, or one or more years as an in-kind contribution to the project cost
 - ▶ Value will be \$10/acre for growing season deferment and \$15/acre for year long deferment
- Shrub thicket establishment
 - ▶ May be established under the assistance of outside programs as in-kind contribution to project cost
- Grass buffer enhancement or establishment
 - ▶ May be established under the assistance of outside programs as in-kind contribution to project cost

Contractor Process:

- HPWMA will acquire bids for projects and identify contractors
- Upon satisfactory completion of projects, HPWMA will pay contractors full amount and subsequently bill the landowner for their cost-share portion (if applicable)

Follow-up Management:

- Phragmites – Sites will be evaluated in Year 2 for follow-up spraying needs and spot spraying will be conducted accordingly
- Salt Cedar – Sites will be evaluated in Years 2 and 3 for follow-up spraying needs and spraying of missed trees or seedlings will be conducted accordingly
- Russian Olive – Sites will be evaluated in Years 2 and 3 for follow-up spraying needs and spraying of sprouts and seedlings will be conducted accordingly
- Eastern Red Cedar – Sites will be evaluated in Years 2 and 3 for follow-up spraying or mechanical removal needs
- Additional noxious weeds – Spraying for additional noxious weeds may occur in conjunction with follow-up spraying for the species listed above (only on acres where removal occurred)