



**NORTH PLATTE**  
Natural Resources District

**Press Release**

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**Efforts underway for new Weed Management Association**

Two area Natural Resources Districts and weed superintendents from seven counties have joined together to form a new Weed Management Association.

The High Plains WMA, covering the counties of Scotts Bluff, Banner, Kimball, Morrill, Cheyenne, Garden and Deuel Counties, will focus on the eradication and management of invasive species including saltcedar, Russian olive and Canada thistle, as well as musk thistle and white top.

It is the vision of the group to work cooperatively with private landowners, businesses, communities, government and non-profit agencies to seek funding for and promote programs to increase the productivity of the region's watershed and riparian areas, farmland and grazing areas; and to educate the public and landowners about proper weed management.

Weed Superintendents from the seven counties and representatives from the North Platte and South Platte Natural Resources Districts and other agencies met Monday in Scottsbluff to discuss invasive weed issues in their respective regions. Sheridan County Weed Superintendent Kristi Paul presented the advantages of forming a cooperative weed management association and outlined the procedure for establishing one in the central/southern Panhandle. Paul has helped coordinate the Chadron-based Panhandle Research Integration for Discovery Education (PRIDE) group since 1996. PRIDE cooperates in invasive weed management and education efforts in the northern Panhandle area.

"Weed management associations are highly visible, provide the opportunity to share and leverage resources and help promote public awareness and participation in weed and land management," Paul told the group.

Weed superintendents Terry Flick of Kimball County; Owen Walker of Morrill County; Bo Reichenberg of Banner County; Terry Raymer of Garden County; Jeff Schledewitz of Scotts Bluff County; Justin Shaw of Deuel County and Brian Hieh of Cheyenne County all recognized the need to form the partnership and said they would be contacting their

county commissioners and other government officials, private landowners, business owners and group in their respective counties to initiate the WMA's kickoff. The North Platte and South Platte NRDs also gave their commitment to work with the county superintendents to pursue the goals of the HPWMA.

During the next couple of weeks, these individuals will be contacting private landowners, and businesses and organizations as potential partners and supporters in their respective areas. Any one with interest in getting involved in the HPWMA is invited to contact their county weed superintendent or their local NRD office.