



Save Money, Control Invasive Weeds

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Invasive weeds are plants that adversely impact the social, economic, and ecological resources of our community. They can adversely affect our community by disrupting habitats and displacing our native plants as well as reducing our economic viability.

According to the Oregon Invasive Species Council, it is estimated that weeds have a total direct and indirect impact of 143 billion dollars per year within the United States. Within the state of Oregon the expense associated with controlling just twenty-one species of **noxious** weeds costs the residents of Oregon \$125 million dollars a year in lost agricultural production, fire damage, and control expenses. These expenses are absorbed by all of us through increased food costs, higher taxes, and decreased property values. These economic impacts clearly demonstrate the potential economic benefits associated with controlling invasive weeds.

Non-native species and invasive weeds can also have a profound impact on our watersheds by displacing diverse native plant communities and replacing them with weedy monocultures. This expansion of weed populations alters ecological processes and disrupts habitat and complex food webs which adversely affect fish and wildlife. The result is a loss in biodiversity that leaves behind a landscape that is much less productive and less resilient to changing environmental conditions. Weeds result in land that is homogenous and less diverse and "Oregon-like".

WeedWise Tips for Reducing the Impact of Invasive Plants

- *Know your invasives.* Familiarize yourself with problem non-native and invasive plants in your area, so that you can properly identify these species on your land or open spaces in your neighborhood.
- *Prevent weeds from invading.* By preventing disturbance and maintaining a diverse and healthy vegetative ground cover you can prevent many problem weeds from establishing.
- *Eradicate weeds before they become a problem.* Controlling weeds when populations are small reduces the time and expense to eradicate them.
- *Plant native shrubs and trees* to control erosion and assist in shading out fast growing non-native species.
- *Don't let weeds go to seed.* By preventing weeds from setting seed, you can reduce the rate of spread by that weed in future generations. Pull, dig, cut, or spray flowering weeds before they set viable seed.

- *Utilize mulch or appropriate landscape fabric to minimize the use of herbicides in your landscape.* If herbicides are used, read the label carefully, used only chemicals specific for the purpose and conditions and dispose of unused chemicals properly. Consult a certified pesticide applicator.
- *Avoid spreading weed further.* If you are working in weed infested areas, be sure to clean your shoes, clothing, equipment, and vehicles when leaving the site to prevent spreading seeds to other locations.
- *Be patient and diligent.* Controlling and preventing the reinfestation of weeds is a long term process. It is easy to get discouraged when tackling an infestation. Just remember that controlling these invaders gets easier over time.
- *Know when to seek help.* Some weeds can be difficult to control and may require particular methods or techniques for eradication efforts to be successfully. Contact the Conservation District for additional information about controlling a particular invasive weed.

The Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District WeedWise program provides assistance to local landowners to promote more effective and efficient weed control strategies and management practices. Contact us at 503-655-3144. Or send us an e-mail at clackamas.swcd@oacd.org



Garlic Mustard in a new invader to Clackamas County. Report your sighting the Oregon Invasive Hotline (oregoninvasiveshotline.org) or to the Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District.