

## 2023 SANDERS COUNTY WEED MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Montana County Noxious Weed Control Act, Title 7, Chapter 22 Section 7-22-2116 states: "*It is unlawful for any person to permit any noxious weed to propagate or go to seed on the person's land.*" The language of this act indicates the serious threat noxious weeds present to the state of Montana.

The Sanders County Weed Department exists to help the county meet the challenge noxious weeds and invasive plant species present to all landowners. Weed department staff report to a volunteer board of directors, which includes a representative from the Sanders County Commission.

### GOAL

The Sanders County Weed Department operates to prevent the spread of noxious weeds in the county. The department annually concentrates on treating county properties and rights-of-way where primary weed threats have been identified and environmental factors permit treatment, and provides services that help private county landowners control weeds on their properties.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Assess the distribution and abundance of noxious weed species in and around Sanders County.
2. Identify new infestations and areas at risk for new infestations.
3. Control the spread of noxious weeds on county roads and state highway rights-of-way, gravel pits, waste transfer sites, and other county properties. (The department may enter into cooperative agreements to treat weeds on other properties when it benefits the county.)
4. Support the efforts of landowners to control or eradicate noxious weeds in Sanders County.

Support for county landowners comes in the form of:

- Herbicide sales and spray equipment rental at reduced rates.
  - Herbicides will be sold only to residents/landowners of Sanders County and must be used on property within Sanders County. All purchases and rents are payable at the time of sale or rental and must be used on property in Sanders County. Unused, unopened chemicals may be returned during the spray season they were purchased in, accompanied by a sales receipt.
  - Equipment to apply herbicides may be rented by county residents. Sprayers in a range of sizes and configurations are available, including pickup slide-ins and pull-type sprayers. A burrow-building machine is also available for pocket gopher bait application. Rental sprayer units must be triple rinsed on site prior to return.
- Information and education regarding noxious and invasive weed species and various means to prevent or control their spread in the county.

## TREATMENT PRIORITIES

Noxious weeds to be treated by the department will be scheduled according to the following priorities and land ownership patterns within the county, taking into consideration department labor and equipment availability.

1. County lands
2. State highway rights of way
3. Government and non-government lands (*non-government lands may include utility and railroad rights of way, etc.*) with cooperative agreements in place.
4. Private landowner cooperative agreement lands.

## PRIORITY WEED SPECIES

Priority weeds to be treated in the county include those identified in the current Montana Noxious Weed List, as well as species identified by the county. See Appendix A, page 5.

## COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS TO CONTROL WEEDS

The weed department and its board may enter into cooperative agreements with other agencies or organizations as appropriate to benefit the county and its residents, in accordance with the Montana Noxious Weed Act Title 7, Chapter 22, sect 7-22-2151, Cooperative Agreements, which states:

*"A board may develop and carry out its Noxious Weed management Plan in cooperation with Boards of other Districts, with state and federal agencies, or with any other person within the District. The Board may enter into cooperative agreements with any of these parties."*

Under the Sanders County Weed Management Plan, the board may enter into cooperative agreements with the following entities (as per Montana Code Annotated Statue, Title 7, Chapter 22, Section 7-22-2151). The weed district coordinator/supervisor will advise the board regarding agreements that may be advantageous to the county. Agreements must identify administrative or other expenses and identify the part responsible for payment of said expenses. Agreements are subject to approval by county commissioners.

- Montana State Highway Department (MT DOT)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (B.I.A.) and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
- Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)
- Incorporated towns of Hot Springs, Plains, and Thompson Falls
- Private corporations (utilities, timber companies, etc.)
- Private landowners
  - The board may enter into cooperative agreements with private landowners to control infestations including, but not restricted to, Priority 1A & 1B noxious weed species on a landowner's property. The county weed coordinator/supervisor will advise the board regarding site and infestation characteristics, treatment options and potential costs. The department and board will pursue strict compliance with control of Priority 1A & 1B noxious weed species under any cooperative agreement.

- Landowners must notify the weed department coordinator/supervisor of their desire for assistance controlling priority noxious weeds on their property. The department coordinator/supervisor will assess the amount of assistance based on the type and size of infestation, site characteristics that influence will costs, and the landowner's ability to complete the treatment.
- If the landowner requests that the county weed department complete the treatment, an agreement will be signed by the landowner relieving the county of any liability for damages that might occur during efforts to control noxious weeds on their property. In either case, the board and coordinator/supervisor will determine eligibility for assistance and the amount to offer.

All agreements will include a budget identifying all costs to implement the plan (i.e. county administrative, on-the-ground weed controls, monitoring, reporting, etc.).

### **“I CONTROL MY OWN” PROGRAM**

County landowners may agree to treat weeds on rights of way adjacent to their lands under the county’s “I CONTROL MY OWN” program. County weed crews and/or contracted sprayers will honor “I CONTROL MY OWN” signs posted at either end of a landowners’ property when treating rights of way.

This program is offered at no cost to landowners. Agreement forms and signs are available at the Sanders County Weed Shop. Individual agreements must be renewed on an annual basis.

### **DEPARTMENT STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS**

The Sanders County Weed Department Coordinator/Supervisor will be licensed as a government applicator and herbicide/pesticide dealer. The coordinator/supervisor reports to the weed board of directors and directs the activities of seasonal county employees and schedules approved treatment contractors. Seasonal county crew members will receive, at a minimum, training to include private applicator licensing and documented orientation to safely operate all equipment.

Members of the volunteer board of directors are appointed by the Sanders County Commissioners and charged with confirming weed treatment policy and related programs, agreements, and budget administration. The County Weed Board for 2023 consists of:

John Errecart ..... Board Chairman (Plains, 2/2016)  
 Alan Dettwiler ..... Board Member (Heron, 4/2014)  
 Renee Hofeldt ..... Board Member (Trout Creek (12/2021)  
 Ross Middlemist..... Board Member (Dixon, (12/2015)  
 Dale Neiman ..... Board Member (Camas Prairie (11/2014)  
 John Holland ..... Sanders County Commissioner (1/2023)  
 Vacant ..... Weed Department Coordinator/Supervisor (----)  
 Wendy Carr ..... Ex Officio; Board Secretary (Sanders County MSU Extension Agent (1/2022)

### **MEETINGS**

Unless otherwise scheduled, the Sanders County Weed Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month, with locations alternating between the Sanders County Courthouse in Thompson Falls and the county weed shop in Plains. Meetings are open to the public and input is welcome. Agendas are posted 48 hours prior to meetings in the Sanders County Courthouse. Contact the Weed Department Coordinator or MSU Extension agent for specific dates and locations.

## LOCATION, HOURS, & CONTACT INFORMATION

The Sanders County Weed Department Office is located at the Sanders County Highway Department compound on Old Airport Road, west of Plains, Montana.

Address: ... 36 Old Airport Road, Plains, MT 59859

Hours: ..... April – October: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday

November – March: Hours vary

Phone: ..... 406-826-3487

Email: ..... weeddept@co.sanders.mt.us

Weed department staff may be out of the office or unable to immediately answer calls or emails during stated hours, due to work in the field or performance of equipment maintenance, etc. Please leave a voice or email message.

## REVIEW & APPROVAL

This document will be reviewed annually, or as needed by the board and commissioners of Sanders County.

*Revised June, 2023*

### APPROVED:

Sanders County Weed Board Chairman:

John Emerick

Date: 7/19/23

Sanders County Commissioners:

J. J. Holland  
Dan B. Rowan  
Amy D. Cox

Date: 6-22-2023

Date: 06-22-2023

Date: 06-22-2023

## APPENDIX A – PRIORITY WEED SPECIES

The following weeds, identified by the State of Montana and Sanders County, will be treated or managed as indicated below:

### Montana Noxious Weed List (Effective July 2022)

PRIORITY 1A These weeds are not present, or have a very limited presence in Montana. Management criteria will require *eradication if detected, education, and prevention*:

- (a) yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*)
- (b) dyer's woad (*Isatis tinctoria*)
- (c) common Reed (*Phragmites australis* ssp. *australis*)
- (d) medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusa*)

PRIORITY 1B These weeds have limited presence in Montana. Management criteria will require *eradication or containment and education*:

- (a) knotweed complex (*Polygonum cuspidatum*, *P. sachalinense*, *P. × bohemicum*, *Fallopia japonica*, *F. sachalinensis*, *F. × bohemica*, *Reynoutria japonica*, *R. sachalinensis*, and *R. × bohemica*)
- (b) purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
- (c) rush skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*)
- (d) scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)
- (e) blueweed (*Echium vulgare*)

PRIORITY 2A These weeds are common in isolated areas of Montana. Management criteria will require *eradication or containment* where less abundant. Management shall be prioritized by local weed districts:

- (a) tansy ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*, *Jacobaea vulgaris*)
- (b) meadow hawkweed complex (*Hieracium caespitosum*, *H. praealtum*, *H. floridundum*, and *Pilosella caespitosa*)
- (c) orange hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*, *Pilosella aurantiaca*)
- (d) tall buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*)
- (e) perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*)
- (f) yellowflag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)
- (g) eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)
- (h) flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*)
- (i) common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica L.*)
- (j) ventenata (*Ventenata Dubia*)

PRIORITY 2B These weeds are abundant in Montana and widespread in many counties. Management criteria will require *eradication or containment* where less abundant. Management shall be prioritized by local weed districts:

- (a) Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)
- (b) field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*)
- (c) leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)
- (d) whitetop (*Cardaria draba*, *Lepidium draba*)
- (e) Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*, *Rhaponticum repens*)
- (f) spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*, *C. maculosa*)
- (g) diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*)
- (h) dalmatian toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica*)
- (i) St. Johnswort (*Hypericum perforatum*)
- (j) sulfur cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*)
- (k) common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*)
- (l) oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*)
- (m) houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*)
- (n) yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)
- (o) saltcedar (*Tamarix* spp.)
- (p) curlyleaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*)
- (q) hoary alyssum (*Berteroia incana*)

PRIORITY 3 REGULATED PLANTS: (NOT MONTANA LISTED NOXIOUS WEEDS) These regulated plants have the potential to have significant negative impacts. The plant may not be intentionally spread or sold other than as a contaminant in agricultural products. The state recommends *research, education, and prevention* to minimize the spread of the regulated plant.

- (a) cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*)
- (b) hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)
- (c) Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)
- (d) Brazilian waterweed (*Egeria densa*)
- (e) parrot feather watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum aquaticum* or *M. brasiliense*)

**Sanders County Noxious Weed List** (*In addition to Montana State listed Noxious Weed species*)

- (a) baby's breath (*Gypsophila paniculata*)\
- (b) common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)