

Weed Awareness

Prepared by

Weed Control Authority
Lancaster County



The Weed Control Authority is responsible for implementation of the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act throughout Lancaster County. The authority has also provided the inspection and administration of the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Program since entering into an interlocal agreement with the city in 1996.

The County Commissioners serve as the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority. Russell Shultz serves as the superintendent and supervises a seasonal staff of six weed inspectors with the assistance of Chief Inspector Barb Frazier and Lori Pracheil, Account Clerk.

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2006 Annual Report

The primary goal of the Weed Control Authority is to educate landowners county-wide of the benefits of preventing and controlling noxious weeds and landowners in the City of Lincoln of the desirability of keeping weeds and worthless vegetation cut. As more landowners and managers keep their weeds under control, less inspections and notifications are needed to achieve compliance with the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act and City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Ordinance.

The Weed Control Authority's inspection program identifies properties that require some sort of notification and follow-up action to obtain compliance. Most landowners are responsible and do not require notification. Almost all of those who require notification respond favorably to a personal contact, card or letter. A legal notice is used in less than 25% of the notifications.

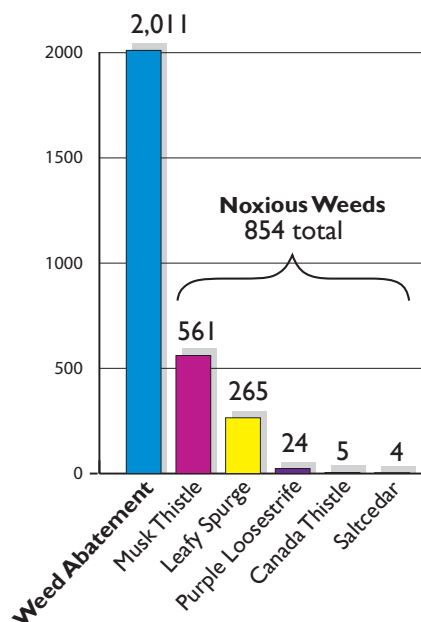
Inspection Activity

A total of 7,498 inspections were made of 3,467 sites during the year. There were 2,866 violations found on 4,425 acres. Inspections increased by 323 from last year, a 5% increase.

Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Program

— Infestations were found on 854 sites and 3,035 acres as a result of 2,003 inspections on 1,071 sites. The number of infestations found decreased by 150 from last year. There were 113 less purple

INSPECTION SUMMARY 2,866 violations/infestations



loosestrife infestations found. This decrease was the result of less ornamental plants due to excellent cooperation from residential landowners. 772 of the noxious weed sites were controlled by landowners, and the Weed Control Authority controlled 15 sites.

City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program — A total of 5,495 initial and follow-up inspections were made on 2,396 sites on 1,474 acres. The 2,011 violations were found as a result of 1,717 complaints and inspector observations. This was 223 more violations than in 2005. Legal notices had to be published in the paper for 171 properties under foreclosure because of unclear

ownership. Of these, 72 resulted in force cuttings, almost 50% of the total forced cuttings. Forced cuttings had to be performed on 153 sites at the cost of \$21,107. This was an increase of 46 sites and increased cost of \$7,145 from last year. Of these, 117 sites had to be specially assessed for \$16,530. Only about one-third of those sites receiving a bill for forced cutting make immediate payment, collections for past special assessments make up the difference.

Public Awareness

The major information efforts are maintaining and updating a Web site (www.lincoln.ne.gov/cnty/weeds) and publishing a four-page Weed Awareness insert in University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County's NEBLINE newsletter. In 2006, there were 57,000 hits on the Web site and 11,000 copies of the Weed Awareness insert printed. Other informational efforts last year included over 1,000 special mailings, approximately 2,866 notifications of violations, several news articles and a state fair exhibit.

Other Activities

Other activities included making seven inspections for weed-free forage certification, participating with the Lower Platte Weed Management Area, attending required continuing education sessions and actively participating in the Nebraska Weed Control Association and the North American Weed Management Association.

Noxious Weed Control on Public Lands

The Weed Control Authority maintains contact with 30 different public land managers in a coordinated effort of noxious weed control. They represent the following agencies and departments:

City of Lincoln

- Airport Authority
- County/City Property Management
- Lincoln Electric System
- Lincoln Public Schools
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Works & Utilities

County

- County Engineer

State of Nebraska

- Air National Guard
- Army National Guard
- Education Lands & Funds
- UNL Landscape Services
- Department of Roads
- Department of Corrections
- Game & Parks Commission

Other

- Lower Platte South NRD
- NE Public Power District

Each of these land managers has committed significant resources to plan ongoing noxious weed control on property that they own or control. They maintain two-way communication with the Weed Control Authority throughout the year. When the Authority requests follow-up control work, the land managers provide immediate response. The efforts of these land managers are a key part of keeping noxious weeds under control in Lancaster County.

The Weed Control Authority has special arrangements regarding the sanitary landfills and county roads. The Authority makes inspections of the two landfill sites and arranges the contract with a contractor to do the noxious weed control. The Authority also makes inspections of and controls more than 150 leafy spurge infestations on county roadsides.

Learn to Recognize Nebraska's Noxious Weeds

The Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act states it is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land. Pictured are Nebraska's noxious weeds which can be found in Lancaster County.*



Musk Thistle



Leafy Spurge



Purple Loosestrife



Canada Thistle



Saltcedar



Plumeless Thistle

Noxious weed is a legal term used to denote a destructive or harmful weed for the purpose of regulation. The Director of Agriculture establishes which plants are noxious. These non-native plants compete aggressively with desirable plants and vegetation. Failure to control noxious weeds in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock and to the welfare of residents of this state. Noxious weeds may also devalue land and reduce tax revenue.

*Nebraska's noxious weeds Spotted and Diffuse Knapweeds have not been found in Lancaster County.

Weed Awareness

Weed Prevention Tips

There are several options for the control of noxious weeds. The easiest and most effective approach is prevention.

Maintain Healthy Grass

Healthy stands of desirable vegetation make it difficult for weeds to get established. Before purchasing grass or forage seed mixes, it's always good practice to request to see a Certificate of Seed Analysis, which details every seed (including weed seeds) contained in the bag. Even if your dealer says the seed is certified, he/she is required by federal law to provide the certificate on request. Replant bare areas and water if necessary. Do not overgraze pastures. If farming, practice conservation tillage to minimize soil disturbance.

Prevent Spreading Weed Seeds

Another basic principle of prevention of new sites becoming infested is not to spread seeds and viable plant parts to new sites. This can be accomplished by being alert to activities that might spread existing infestations and not to infest new sites with movement of noxious weed contaminated articles or materials on to your property. Noxious weeds may be disseminated by several methods or articles. Following are some treatments for articles capable of disseminating noxious weeds, when such articles are suspected to have noxious weeds present.

Harvesting machinery and equipment:

- Remove all loose material from the top and sides of the machine and all other places of lodgement by sweeping or the use of forced air or forced water.
- Remove all noxious weeds from shakers, sieves and other places of lodgement.
- Run the machine empty for at least five minutes, alternately increasing and decreasing the speed.
- Follow the manufacturer's detailed instructions for cleaning the machine.
- Whenever possible, aforementioned treatments should be performed while the article is still on the land on which it became infested. If treatment cannot be performed at this location, the location selected should be such as to minimize the possible dissemination of noxious weeds.

Trucks, RV's, other vehicles and articles such as railroad ties, fence posts and fencing:

- Wash vehicles prior to moving from weeds to weed-free areas whenever possible.
- Treat by brushing, sweeping, forced air, forced water and/or physical removal of noxious weeds.

Livestock:

- Avoid moving livestock directly from weedy to weed-free areas.

Grain and seed suspected to contain noxious weeds should not be sold or transferred to another person:

- Treat by using a seed cleaner which is effective in removing the noxious weeds from the grain and seed.
- Screenings remaining following treatment should not be used for feed or for any other purpose which could result in the dissemination of noxious weeds.

Soil, sod, nursery stock, hay, straw, manure and other similar materials:

- No known acceptable method of treatment exists for these articles. Such articles should not be moved from the location at which they initially become infested, but may be utilized at that location.

Musk Thistle Management Strategy

To successfully fight weeds, you need to know as much as possible about each weed, then develop a strategy to manage that weed. Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*) is usually thought of as a biennial, germinating one year, usually in the fall, overwintering and flowering the next year. When there is a long enough cool period in the spring, some musk thistle plants will act as annuals by germinating in the spring and flowering in early summer. Musk thistle spreads only by seed. One seed head can produce over 1,000 seeds. The seeds can remain viable in the soil for ten years. The key to managing musk thistle is to prevent all plants from going to seed.



Musk thistle is easiest to kill during the rosette stage (pictured).

Control Steps

- 1) Scout the areas with past infestations in late September and early October for seedlings and rosettes. A seed bank has built up in the soil at these sites. These seeds will remain viable for eight or more years waiting for the right conditions to germinate.
- 2) It is most effective to treat the entire area with herbicides in order

to control all the small seedlings and rosettes and seedlings that have not emerged. Spot control of these sites usually results in a lot of escapes since not all the plants are observed and some plants germinate later.

- 3) Use 2,4-D as a contact herbicide along with a herbicide that will

add to the effectiveness of killing the plants present, but also have residual that will kill later germinating plants. Some of the herbicides that will provide residual control are Escort (www.dupont.com/ag/vm/products/escort.html), Tordon 22K, Vanquish, Banvel and Telar (www.dupont.com/ag/vm/literature/h87276.pdf).

- 4) Scout these fall treated areas in March and April for escapes and new plants.

- 5) Provide control prior to bolting of the flower stem in May. Use 2,4-D along with a residual herbicide.

- 6) Scout these areas weekly and provide needed follow-up control until July. Be alert to the musk thistle plants acting as annuals due to a cool spring. Remember, the best approach to control musk thistle is to scout and treat areas with past

infestations (these areas have built up a seed bank in the soil) in the fall and spring. Provide treatment in the spring prior to bolting and always scout treated areas for escaped plants.

Mechanical Control

Severing the root of musk thistle a couple of inches below the soil surface will kill the plant. The entire root does not have to be removed. Hand cutting or mowing has to be done at weekly intervals to be effective. Fire has not proven to provide effective control. The plants survive prescribed burning, but can be easily found and controlled by other means after the burn.

Biological Control

Musk thistle head weevil (*Rhinocyllus conicus*) is an introduced biocontrol species widespread in Lancaster County. They are reducing the number of viable seeds being produced, but do not provide complete control by themselves. Learn more about biological control at www.nysaes.cornell.edu/ent/biocontrol/weedfeeders/wdfdrtoc.html

REFERENCE

You can find much more information on musk thistle in The Nature Conservancy Element Stewardship Abstract for *Carduus nutans* at <http://conserveonline.org/docs/2000/12/cardnut.pdf>

Leafy Spurge Management Strategy

Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) is a perennial plant ranging in size from 6–36 inches in height. A native of Europe and Asia, leafy spurge emerges early in the spring and gets a head start on other vegetation in a race for space, sunlight, nutrients and water. Prolific seed production and an extensive root system give the plant a huge competitive advantage and make consistent, long-term control difficult. Monitoring of areas with known or potential leafy spurge infestations is critical; adequate control is possible if management procedures are implemented in the early stages of infestation, before the root system gets fully established. You can rarely achieve 100 percent eradication of spurge, but infestations can be reduced to manageable levels with the use of herbicides.

Strategy

The control of well-established leafy spurge stands must be considered a long-term management program. A landowner must develop a persistent annual program that will prevent the spread of larger stands, eliminate smaller infestations and prevent the spread of leafy spurge to uninfested areas. The extensive leafy spurge root system allows the plant to regrow from depths of 15 feet or more for several years. No single treatment will eradicate this weed, but a consistent annual treatment program can provide long-term control. Once you have achieved a high level of control, remaining isolated patches can be spot-treated, resulting in a less costly control program. This plant spreads by underground roots and there is always a fringe area of younger plants that do not bloom. There are also roots underground that extend laterally beyond the younger plants. A 15-foot perimeter should be



Leafy spurge extend roots deep into the ground as well as laterally.

treated around leafy spurge patches to control seedlings and spreading roots. Treated patches should be watched carefully for any regrowth and/or seedlings and retreated.

Chemical Control

Currently, the three most effective herbicides are Tordon 22K, Plateau and Glyphosate (Roundup and others). Before using any herbicide, always read and follow label directions. Check label for permitted uses on your site.

Tordon (picloram) has been an effective herbicide for controlling leafy spurge. Tordon applied at two quarts per acre during flowering or fall regrowth can give 75 percent or more leafy spurge control the first year after treatment. A less expensive option for leafy spurge control is repeated annual treatments of Tordon at one to two pints per acre plus 2,4-D at one quart (four pound per gallon concentrate) applied in June, during flowering, can be quite effective. Tordon is a restricted-use pesticide requiring an application license to apply. Note label precautions.

Plateau (imazapic) applied in the fall at 8-12 ounces per acre can provide up to 90 percent leafy spurge control one year after treatment. The label recommends application from late-August to mid-October, but prior to a killing frost. Plateau should be applied with a methylated seed oil (MSO) at one quart per acre.

The addition of 28 percent Urea Ammonium Nitrate (UAN) liquid fertilizer to Plateau plus the MSO has occasionally increased long-term leafy spurge control. Plateau is safe to use around a variety of trees, many wildflowers and legumes.

Note: Plateau is not available from normal sources. It is available from the Jefferson County Weed Control Authority (402) 729-3602, jeffcoweed@diodecom.net

Glyphosate (e.g. Roundup) applied at a rate of one quart per acre from mid-July to mid-September can result in 80 to 90 percent control of leafy spurge. Note that glyphosate is a nonselective herbicide and it will kill grasses and other desirable plants. A follow-up treatment with 2,4-D at one pint (four pound per gallon concentrate) the following year (mid-June to mid-July) is necessary to prevent seedling reinfestation.

Mechanical and Grazing

Tillage, digging, mowing and grazing will control the top growth, but does not kill the roots.

Biological Control

Two *Aphthona* flea beetle species have been released in Lancaster County. Flea beetles typically take several years to impact leafy spurge infestations. It is important to understand that flea beetles do not eliminate leafy spurge. When flea beetles work, they establish a natural balance with the weed, reducing it to a non-impact plant and tolerable member of the plant community.

REFERENCE

TEAM Leafy Spurge has two manuals, "Herbicide Control of Leafy Spurge," and "Biological Control of Leafy Spurge," online at www.team.ars.usda.gov under publications.

Weed Awareness

First Nebraska Invasive Plants Conference is a Success

The Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA) was created in 2003 in response to dealing with purple loosestrife and saltcedar, invaders of riparian areas along the Lower Platte River and tributaries. As the extent of these noxious weeds and phragmites (a non-native plant not yet named to the noxious weed list) was noted, concerns were raised about the upstream seed source of these weeds and the lack of control efforts.

As a result, the LPWMA spearheaded the planning and presenting of a "Threats to Nebraska Rivers—Invasive Plants Conference" held in August 2006 at Kearney, Nebraska. Lancaster County Weed Control Authority superintendent Russ Shultz served on the conference planning committee as chairperson representing the LPWMA.

This was the first statewide conference on invasive plants. The purpose of the conference was to bring together individuals and groups that had like concerns and to promote a state-wide effort in restoring healthy riparian areas. Over 200 people attended the conference.

Some of the comments from attendees included: "It was an eye opening and informative conference with excellent presentations and tour. I was pleased to see all the agencies represented. Now if we can work together and get the landowner onboard we can get something done." "Outstanding learning experience." And, "Excellent conference, informative, we need more conferences like this to communicate and share ideas."

The conference received grant funds from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. Thanks go to numerous individuals, groups, agencies and organizations that were very willing and generous in their efforts and support, especially the Nebraska Weed Control Association.

Conference Highlights

Representative Tom Osborne gave a passionate keynote presentation that set the stage for an excellent conference. He made the case for providing funds for removal of

invasive vegetation on the Republican and Platte Rivers.

Conference attendees then took a tour to view the phragmites explosion and invading saltcedar along the Platte River. Demonstrations were given of herbicide applications by four-wheelers, airboat and helicopter. Grazing by goats is also used to suppress the invading plants. Dr. Blossey



Representative Tom Osborne gave the keynote presentation.

provided hands-on guidance in distinguishing the difference between native and non-native phragmites. He also discussed the potential for biological controls.

UNL Researcher Robert Wilson reported at the conference that a 2006 survey found 8,500 acres of saltcedar and Russian olive along 120 miles of the North Platte River above Lake McConaughy. He stated, that based on research in western states, the removal of these invasive trees replaced with grass could liberate 25,000 acre feet of increased water flow annually.

Chris Kelly reported on the Nebraska Weed Control Association Nebraska Invasive Weed Mapping Project (see article on next page). This is a Web-based cutting edge program to assist in identifying, tracking, mapping and analyzing invasive plants for weed managers, landowners, public and private land managers and general public.

A representative of the National Invasive Species Council discussed the coordination of federal activities regarding invasive species. The National Invasive Species Information Center at www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov is



Dr. Blossey (right) is shown here standing next to Kent Aden, tour leader, holding a phragmites rhizome runner which can grow 10 feet or more in a single growing season.

a gateway to invasive species information from federal, state, local and international sources.

Conclusions

A presentation by Russ Shultz included the following conclusions for a Nebraska action plan:

- All the native plant communities have been compromised.
- Invading plants are depleting water generally at a rate more than native plants are being replaced.
- The stream bed vegetation is greatly increasing the hazards of flooding.
- We can reverse the riparian impacts by the invading plants.

- We can work with and assist the riparian landowners in restoring and maintaining healthy riparian systems.
- **A Healthy Riparian System Benefits All Citizens of the State**
- Will provide for more stable stream flows.
- Reduce water depletion.
- Reduce flooding hazard.
- Increase plant diversity.
- Improve wildlife habitat.
- Benefit threatened and endangered species.
- Provide for improved livestock grazing.
- Provide better hunting and fishing.
- Improve recreational opportunities.
- Increase land values and tax base.

Steps Towards a Task Force

During the conference, there was overwhelming interest to address the issues and concerns raised. As a result, the LPWMA planning committee has monthly follow-up meetings to identify areas to continue and/or initiate actions. They have sought the creation of a state task force and action plan for healthy riparian areas. To date, there have been positive steps taken by the Governor and legislature — it appears likely a task force will be formed.

Conference presentations are online at <http://www.neweed.org/tconpro.htm>

Lower Platte Weed Management Area Receives National Award

The Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA) received a 2006 Quality Vegetation Management (QVM) Project Habitat Award in the aquatic category. The QVM Project Habitat Awards, sponsored by BASF Professional Vegetation Management (ProVM), are presented to exceptional vegetation management projects that exemplify the principles and practices of QVM.



The LPWMA encompasses the 10 counties in the lower portion of the Platte River drainage, including Lancaster County. The LPWMA organized in 2003 as a cooperative effort of many partners to control the invasion of non-native vegetation of the riparian areas. To date, over 4,300 acres have been controlled along 170 miles of the Platte River and its drainage area. Efforts have focused on promoting awareness and organizing control efforts.

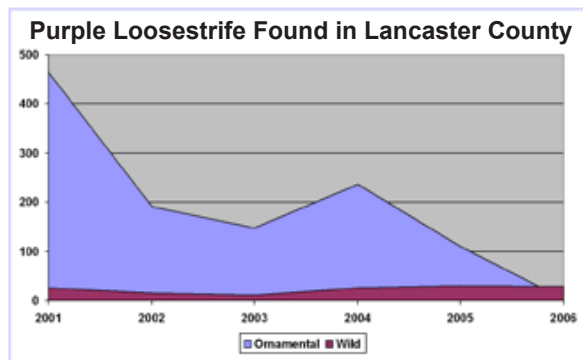
The Purple Loosestrife Story

Purple loosestrife was designated a noxious weed in Nebraska as of 2001, after which time it could no longer be sold for planting. At this time there were many ornamental purple loosestrife plants growing in residential yards and probably less than 100 wild infestations in the county. There were thousands of plants growing in 2,000 to 3,000 yards. These plants were not causing a problem in these yards, but with a single plant producing over a million seeds, many seeds were carried by rain or irrigation water to streams where they were subject to germinating and creating a wild infestation. The wild infestations are quite aggressive.

They will crowd out desirable plants and reduce quality of the wildlife habitat and plant diversity.

It was necessary to make homeowners with ornamental purple loosestrife plantings aware of the threats and get their voluntary compliance to

remove their plants. An information effort was initiated using the news media and extension. A two year purple loosestrife exchange program was



developed in cooperation with nurseries and garden centers. The goal of the Purple Loosestrife Plant Exchange program was to get purple loosestrife and ornamental purple loosestrife out of flower gardens and reduce the potential for further spread. Owners received a 25 percent discount on eligible perennial

plants up to the number of ornamental plants removed. Field inspections were made and landowners with purple loosestrife were notified by door

hangers and letters that they needed to remove their plants. There were 1,676 inspections of 915 homeowner sites and 67 sites with wild infestations over the past six years in Lancaster County. All but two of these landowners responded favorably. Ornamental plantings found dropped from a high of 465 in 2001 to 3 in 2006 (see chart). A total of 67 wild infestations have been found. All but 29 of these have been eradicated. This very successful effort is a result of the excellent cooperation of the landowners.

Although we feel that most of the ornamental plants have been removed, a plentiful supply of seeds have been transported to low lying areas and will remain in the soil until conditions are right for them to germinate. Wild purple loosestrife plants have been



Wild infestation downstream from ornamental plantings.

found in many of the Lincoln streams downstream from ornamental plantings. This includes Dead Man's Run, Antelope Creek, Beal Slough and their tributaries. Wild plants have not been found in Salt Creek to date.

Continued inspections will be made of the wild infestation sites to assure they are kept under control.

Weed Awareness

Weed Free Forage Certification Program

You can prevent potential noxious weed infestations by insisting on Certified Weed Free forage. As a buyer, you should be aware that noxious weed infested forage products can cost you hundreds or even thousands of dollars down the road. Ask your forage supplier to have their hay certified prior to harvest. Forage growers must call the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority one to two weeks prior to harvesting. There is no charge for the field inspections. There is a small charge for the cost of bale tags.

Nebraska carries out its Weed-Free Forage Certification Program in accordance with the standards of the North American Weed Management Association standards.

Certified weed-free forage products include: straw, alfalfa/grass hay, forage pellets/cubes, alfalfa hay, grain hay and grass hay. Weed free forage is required on many U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands, in National Parks, Bureau of Reclamation land, military locations, tribal lands as well as National Fish and Wildlife refuges. The Nebraska Department of Roads requires weed-free forage on highway projects. Restrictions may apply to other lands administered by provincial, county, state or federal agencies.

For More Information

If you have questions about certification regulations or weeds not allowed in certified forage, please see the North American Weed Management Association's (NAWMA) Web site at <http://www.nawma.org> for a complete list of weeds and regulations.

Lancaster County Weed Control Web Site



The Lancaster County Weed Control Authority Web site at

www.lincoln.ne.gov/cnty/weeds provides very useful information about the Authority's program and activities and about weed control and management.

The site is continually being updated.

Via the Web site, you can:

- Contact the Weed Control Authority.
- Make a weed complaint.
- Make a real-time search of current weed inspections.
- Look at a map of noxious weed locations in the county.
- See the latest listing of possible weed special assessments.
- Study noxious weed and weed abatement laws and regulations.
- Learn about noxious weed identification.
- Read about the County Noxious Weed and City Weed Abatement Programs.
- See plans and reports.
- Check on noxious weed controls.
- Learn about managing natural areas in an urban setting.
- Test your knowledge about Nebraska weeds.
- Link to other weed control Web sites

Riparian Area Concerns

Purple loosestrife is continuing to invade the streams in and around the city of Lincoln. A total of 67 wild infestations of purple loosestrife have been found since 2001. The seed source for these wild plants is from the ornamental lythrum plantings that have been made in yards throughout the city. Since purple loosestrife was designated a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2001, almost all homeowners have removed these plants from their yards. The Weed Control Authority has notified almost 1000 homeowners that they need to remove their ornamental purple loosestrife plantings. These homeowners, along with many others, have voluntarily done so. The wild plants need to be found and controlled before their populations explode and form solid dense stands of purple loosestrife in the Salt Creek System. This would severely reduce the wildlife habitat and other uses. Purple loosestrife is not desirable wildlife habitat and inhibits recreational uses.

There are two additional invasive non-native plants that are of a concern to riparian areas. These are saltcedar and phragmites. A few plants of both have been found adjacent to water and in the saline wetlands in and adjacent to Lincoln.

Saltcedar has been planted as an ornamental in some

yards in Lincoln. It was designated a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2004 and can no longer be sold or grown. It is a shrub or small tree with cedar like foliage with deep pink to almost white flowers that crowd in many slender spikes, forming dense masses at the top of the branches. The saltcedar's bark is a reddish brown while the wood is soft and white. The smooth bark ridges and furrows with age.

Common reed or phragmites, is a tall, perennial grass that can grow to over 15 feet in height. Once introduced phragmites, can quickly take over a wetland community, crowding out native plants, changing wetland hydrology, altering wildlife habitat and increasing fire potential. Its high biomass blocks light to other plants and occupies all the growing space below ground so plant communities can turn into a Phragmites monoculture very quickly.

These three invasive plants are a threat to the wetlands, streams and riparian areas in and



Phragmites along N. 27th Street

adjacent to the City of Lincoln. It is taking a considerable effort to try and get purple loosestrife under control. It would be wise to deal with saltcedar and phragmites now before they advance further. We can deal with saltcedar since it has been designated a state noxious weed. In order to take immediate aggressive actions with phragmites, it would need to be petitioned to be brought under the county control program. Until phragmites becomes a designated noxious weed, its control and management will depend upon the voluntary cooperation of landowners.

The assistance of the public is requested in reporting any sightings of these three plants. All reports will be acted upon. The locations will be mapped and the landowners contacted about control of the plants.



Saltcedar

New Statewide Weed Mapping Program

The Nebraska Weed Control Association along with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) have been working on developing a statewide GIS mapping program to manage invasive plants. This system uses a popular GIS map interface known as ArcIMS from ESRI. ESRI provides industry-leading software to GIS professionals.

The Nebraska Weed Control Association has paid for the custom coding required to create this system, from the NDA's invasive plant assistance fund, which was received from the Nebraska Environmental Trust organization.

Once the system is completed, the NDA and counties will be able to keep track on noxious and invasive weeds in Nebraska, as well as, track treatments and create online reports in an easy to use interface. Some of the features include a user management system, add and modify record set, create map and GPS points of invasive plants and print off various records for users.

The planning for this type of



system has been discussed for two years. Nebraska Weed Control Association hopes to start testing the system in January of 2007 with training to begin in February 2007. The custom work is being done by an outside vendor, GIS Workshop of Lincoln, Nebraska.

The goal is to have one database for the whole state based on standards and creating a system of knowledge sharing and communication with everyone concerned about invasive plants.

The county Weed Control Authorities will input and manage the program in their counties. Cooperating partners and other interested parties may provide location of infestations to their county weed control authority

for entry into the program. The program will serve as a tool for each of the counties in managing their programs. Not only will the system have information on location of infestations of invasive weeds, but it will also include inspection information, treatment provided and control results. The detailed information will only be available to the Weed Control

Authorities and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture.

General information, location and extent of infestations will be available to the general public, state agencies and NRD's for such things as developing plans on how to deal with water-depleting plants invading riparian areas. Landowners will be able to access and print off maps to help in developing their weed control plans.

The program is expected be operational by March 1, 2007 at www.newweedmapper.org. Data will be entered throughout the 2007 inspection season. Any questions about the program should be directed to Chris Kelly at ckelly2@unl.edu or 472-9059.