Cooperative Weed Management Area Grant

The Red Lake County SWCD applied for and received $36,000 in grant funds, from the MN Board of Water & Soil Resources, to establish a Cooperative Weed Management Program. The main focus of this program is to reduce and/or eradicate Invasive Species in Red Lake County.

A Cooperative Weed Management Team has been formed to make decisions on what weeds will be targeted, how the funding will be dispersed, and oversee the implementation of the program.

Cost share assistance will be provided to landowners at a rate of 75% of the cost of the chemical not to exceed a maximum of $500.00 per landowner. If a commercial applicator needs to be hired that expense can also be covered by the 75% cost share but the maximum amount will still remain $500.00 per landowner. Funds must be spent by January 15, 2010.

Applications can be picked up at the Red Lake County SWCD office. Landowners will need to identify species type, location, size of the area, and have a cost estimate of the price of the chemical they will need.

Applications will need to be approved by the Red Lake County SWCD board. Applicants will be notified whether or not they have been approved.

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**Invasive Plants in Red Lake County**

**Canadian Thistle Cirsium arvense (L.) Scop.**

**Description:** Canada thistle is an herbaceous perennial in the aster family (asteraceae) with erect stems 1 1/2—4 feet tall, prickly leaves and an extensive creeping rootstock. Stems are branched, often slightly hairy, and ridged.

One plant can produce 1,500 to 5,000 seeds that are capable of germinating eight to ten days after flowers open.

Fibrous tap roots may extend 6 feet deep.

**Control:** Repeated mowing and selective cutting close to the ground can reduce infestations. Cutting should be done at least 3 times per year. It can also be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides.

**Wormwood Artemisia absinthium**

**Description:** Perennial -1.5 to 5 feet tall. Leaves are grayish-green, lower leaves are divided 2-3 times in narrow segments, upper leaves are lance-shaped, leaf edges are smooth. Flowers are grayish green, inconspicuous and occur in nodding clusters in the leaf axils of the upper leaves. Plant appears shrub-like and has a sage-like odor. Reproduces primarily by seeds and sometimes roots.

**Life Cycle of Weeds**

- **Annuals**—complete their life cycle in one growing season
- **Biennials**—complete their life cycle in two growing seasons
- **Perennials**—Live three or more years.
Leafy Spurge *Euphorbia esula*

**Description:** Biennial or short lived perennial. Spotted knapweed produces a toxin via the roots that kills plants within its root zone. The plant can have one or more shoots up to 4 feet tall. Rosette leaves can be six inches long and deeply lobed. Leaves on shoots are smaller and finely divided, becoming smaller toward the top of the shoot, and are covered with fine hair. In mowed areas the plant will bloom and produce seeds at 4-6” high.

Spotted knapweed occupies dry meadows, pastures, stony hills, roadsides and the sandy or gravelly flood plains of streams and rivers where soils are light textured and well drained. Spotted knapweed seed may spread by vehicles, including ATV’s, livestock feed, hay used as mulch, and contaminated crop seed, or gravel.

**Biological Control:** Spotted Knapweed Seedhead Weevil and Root Weevil.

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Purple Loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria L.* (Lythracease)

**Description:** A stout, erect, perennial herb with a strong developed taproot. The plant’s flower clusters are spike-like and range from four to 20 inches tall, topping a plant that ranges in height from two to six feet. The four-five angled stem can be smooth to somewhat fuzzy. The leaves attach directly to stems at their bases, and they are opposite or in whorls, narrow or narrowly oblong, with heart-shaped bases.

The flowers are magenta, or occasional white or light pink, with five to seven petals.

**Habitat:** Purple loosestrife is found in wetlands such as cattail marshes, sedge meadows and open bogs. It also occurs along streams, riverbanks, and lakeshores.

**Control:** Large populations extending over three acres or more are difficult, if not impossible, to completely destroy. Preventing the expansion can be accomplished through hand-pulling new plants along the edges or spraying herbicide on plants extending beyond the main body of the population.

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