

Colville National Forest Weed Prevention Guidelines

Objectives: Develop Colville National Forest Management guidelines to minimize the introduction of noxious weeds; minimize conditions that favor the establishment of noxious weeds; and minimize conditions that favor the spread of noxious weeds.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE	MANAGEMENT PRACTICE
<p>1. EDUCATION: Ensure public and employee knowledge of noxious weeds to help reduce both the spread rate of existing weeds and the risk of infestation by new weeds.</p>	<p>1.1) Educate every employee on the National Forest regarding the problems associated with and the identification of noxious weeds. Add weed awareness to Employee Orientation, Fire Effects and other training. Report infestation to the appropriate District Noxious Weed Coordinator.</p> <p>1.2) Work to increase public (including contractors and permittees) awareness of noxious weeds and their potential negative impact on the environment. Use education programs to increase weed awareness and prevent weed spread</p> <p>1.3) Increase the level of educational material regarding weeds displayed at trailheads and District offices. Use education programs to increase weed awareness and prevent weed spread by recreationists and other Forest users. Post prevention practices at NFS trailheads, roads, boat launches, and other forest recreation facilities.</p> <p>1.4) Continue work with State, local and interested partners to develop additional educational materials that improve the understanding and identification of noxious weeds in Northeast Washington.</p> <p>1.5) Discuss weed prevention practices at annual grazing permittee meetings and contractor pre-work sessions.</p> <p>1.6) Coordinate weed prevention efforts with other agencies.</p>
<p>2. PROJECT NEED: Weigh the need of the proposed project against the risk of weed infestation.</p>	<p>2.1) In the earliest stages of project consideration, look at the risks of weed infestation and the long-term consequences of dealing with weeds. Determine if the project is worth pursuing. The project need must exceed the risk of implementation.</p> <p>2.2) Evaluate the need for any ground disturbing activity and ways to minimize the possible effects of implementation, e.g. winter logging, minimizing openings.</p> <p>2.3) Be realistic during project size-up. What are the chances of success? Are the costs realistic?</p>
<p>3. MINIMIZE</p>	<p>3.1) Remove mud, dirt, and plant parts from all off-road equipment (road construction equipment, rock</p>

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<p>TRANSPORTATION OF WEED SEED: Reduce the spread of existing weeds across the Forest and the risk of introducing new weed species to project sites and other areas of the Forest.</p>	<p>crushers, ATV's, fire equipment, etc.) before moving into a new or different project area. Cleaning must occur in areas where removed weed seed will not create additional problems. (This does not apply to service vehicles that stay on the roadway, traveling frequently in and out of the project area).</p> <p>3.2) When possible, keep active road construction sites closed to vehicles not involved with construction.</p> <p>3.3) Use only weed-free mulch on surface soil stabilization and erosion control projects. Minimize the use of straw unless the source is known to be weed free.</p> <p>3.4) Require the use of pelletized feed or Washington State weed free feed (when it becomes available) for all pack animals in backcountry. Encourage the development of a Washington State Weed Free Feed Certification program.</p> <p>3.5) Treat weeds at all Forest Service administrative sites including Ranger Stations, trailheads, boat launches, campgrounds, airstrips, interpretive and historic sites, and roads leading to trailheads.</p> <p>3.6) Encourage motorized trail users to inspect and clean their vehicles prior to using NFS lands.</p> <p>3.7) Require all Forest Service employees to inspect, remove, and properly dispose of weed seed and plant parts found on their clothing and personal equipment prior to leaving a project site.</p> <p>3.8) Consider using transitional pastures when moving livestock from weed infested areas onto NFS lands. (Transitional pastures are designated fenced areas that can be logistically and economically maintained in a weed-free condition)</p> <p>3.9) All gravel and borrow sources must be inspected before use. Active gravel and borrow sources should be kept in a weed-free condition. If weeds are present, strip and stockpile the top 8" of contaminated material to reduce transport of buried weed seed to other sites.</p> <p>3.10) Whenever possible, establish fire camps, vehicle and crew staging areas, helibases, helispots, and</p>

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	<p>airstrips in areas inspected and verified as weed-free.</p> <p>3.11) Work with other jurisdictions to identify and limit boat trailer introduction of aquatic weeds to small lakes within the forest boundaries.</p> <p>32.1) All active gravel and barrow sources must be inspected before use and transport. If weeds are present, strip at least the top 8" and stockpile contaminated material to reduce transport of buried weed seed. Treat weeds at new pits where widespread weeds are present before transport and use. (Requirement)</p> <p>30.2) Remove all mud, dirt, and plant parts from rock crushers before entering NFS lands. Cleaning must occur off NFS lands. (Requirement)</p> <p>30.3) New Pits: Do not establish new material sources in areas where new weeds are present. Where widespread weeds occur at new pit sites, strip at least the top 8" and stockpile contaminated material. Treat weeds at new pits where widespread weeds are present. (Requirement)</p>
<p>4. INCORPORATE WEED PREVENTION MEASURES INTO PROJECT PLANNING AND DESIGN, AND SPECIAL USE PERMIT ADMINISTRATION: Ensure that the risks of weed introduction and/or spread, and the mitigation required to minimize that risk are properly considered before ground</p>	<p>4.1) Environmental analyses for ANY and ALL ground disturbing projects will consider weed prevention and risk in the development and evaluation of alternatives and mitigating measures. Silvicultural prescriptions, logging plans, mining operation and/or reclamation plans will include weed prevention measures (e.g. shade retention and minimal soil disturbance) .</p> <p>4.2) Consider weed risk and spread factors in travel plan (road closure) decisions. Consider road closures in areas that are weed free and/or at unusually high risk to weed invasion.</p> <p>4.3) Incorporate weed prevention into road layout and design. Minimize the removal of trees and other roadside vegetation during road construction, reconstruction, and maintenance, particularly on southerly aspects. Design roads that are self-maintaining, e.g. outslope roads, rolling dips, take advantage of natural features. Design roads for revegetation success by saving and applying topsoil, laying back slopes, etc.</p>

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<p>disturbing activities begin.</p>	<p>4.4) During trail planning and alternative development, evaluate weed risk factors (presence of weeds, habitat type, aspect, shading, etc.) when determining trail location and design.</p> <p>4.5) Incorporate timber sale provisions CT6.6, (weed free seed) and CT6.343, Opt 2 (cleaning off road equipment) in all timber sale contracts.</p> <p>4.6) Include weed prevention and control measures in all special use permits that involve ground disturbance.</p> <p>4.7) When administering FRTA (Forest Roads and Trails Act) and private road easments, require appropriate weed control measures.</p> <p>4.8) Develop weed management plans with grazing permittees for each allotment, include: minimizing ground disturbance (at salt licks, watering sites, yarding/loafing areas, corrals and other heavy use areas), weed seed transportation, maintaining healthy vegetation, weed control methods, revegetation, monitoring, reporting and education. (See 3.8).</p> <p>4.9) Plan for and collect KV or other funds to treat soil disturbance or weeds as needed after timber harvest and regeneration activities when possible.</p> <p>4.10) Plan and apply for flood and/or fire rehabilitation funding to treat weed infestations not treated effectively the first growing season after the disturbance event.</p> <p>4.11) When possible, coordinate the timing of road maintenance activities and weed control activities. Delay blading roads within two weeks of herbicide application. Delay spraying after blading until vegetative regrowth has occurred.</p>
<p>5. PRE-ACTIVITY, INVENTORY AND</p>	<p>5.1) Perform pre-activity inventory and develop site specific plans for treatment of existing noxious weed populations.</p>

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<p>ANALYSIS: Minimize the spread of existing weeds into new project areas.</p>	<p>5.2) Before construction equipment moves into a project area, treat seed-bearing noxious weed plants along existing Forest Service access roads leading to the project area. Pretreat existing weed infestations prior to creating new seed beds.</p> <p>5.3) Treat weeds in road obliteration, closure, and reclamation projects before roads are made un-driveable. Monitor and retreat as necessary.</p> <p>5.4) Treat pre-existing and proposed landings, skid trails and helibases that are weed infested before logging.</p> <p>5.5) Where practical, treat high risk areas for weed infestations (e.g. roads, disturbed ground) before burning. Monitor and retreat after burning if necessary.</p>
<p>6. MINIMIZE GROUND DISTURBANCE AND THE EXPOSURE OF MINERAL SOIL DURING PROJECT ACTIVITIES: Reduce the potential for weeds to become established on new sites and the need to conduct revegetation activities.</p>	<p>6.1) Minimize soil disturbance and conserve existing topsoil (A and B soil horizons) for replacement whenever possible in situations where ground disturbing activities are unavoidable.</p> <p>6.2) Reduce disturbance when doing road maintenance. Limit the amount of ditch pulling only to the amount necessary to assure proper drainage. Limit blading to running surfaces and the minimum necessary on road shoulders.</p> <p>6.3) Maintain desirable roadside vegetation. If desirable vegetation is removed during blading or other ground disturbing activities, that area must be revegetated.</p> <p>6.4) Armor areas that are constantly disturbed (e.g. cattle watering sites) at road/stream crossings.</p> <p>6.5) During timber sale activities minimize soil disturbance to meet prescription levels. Select skidding and burning methods that minimize weed establishment or spread.</p> <p>6.6) Minimize skid trails and the number and size of landings.</p> <p>6.7) Minimize fireline and associated soil disturbance during prescribed burning.</p>

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<p>7. REVEGETATE DISTURBED AREAS: Re-establish desirable vegetation on exposed mineral soil due to project activity and unplanned events such as: fire, flood, or other disturbances to minimize the introduction and/or spread of noxious weeds.</p>	<p>7.1) Evaluate disturbed sites and develop site-specific prescriptions for revegetation that include measurable outcomes.</p> <p>7.2) Reduce or eliminate the time lag between the ground disturbing activity and revegetation efforts.</p> <p>7.3) Monitor, as possible, revegetation success and re-seed as necessary if germination or survival rates do not meet objectives.</p> <p>7.4) Select regeneration species, whether native or introduced, that will occupy the site and compete successfully against noxious weeds. Use "Prohibited and Restricted Noxious Weed Free for the State of Washington." seed, when compatible with site objectives. Select for low nutrient demanding species to reduce the need for follow-up fertilization</p> <p>7.5) Avoid use of fertilizer in areas with high infestation of weeds where fertilizer may favor growth and spread of weeds over desirable species.</p> <p>7.6) If fertilizer is determined to be beneficial, based on soil analysis and cost effective, apply fertilizer one year after germination and establishment of grass has occurred. All contracts must include specific language for revegetation prescriptions, including the timing of application of fertilizer, if applied. When doing road maintenance activities, promptly revegetate.</p> <p>7.7) Promptly revegetate roadside drainage structures after cleaning if vegetation is removed.</p> <p>7.8) Seeding of back country sites with appropriate non-native species should only occur when it has been determined that native species will not be successful and the risk of weed infestation is high.</p> <p>7.9) Minimize and/or exclude grazing on restoration areas if not compatible with achieving revegetation efforts..</p>

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	7.10) During revegetation, consider the need to treat weeds on adjacent access roads to reduce seed spread into the newly disturbed areas.
<p>8.MONITOR: Conduct project follow-up and review to determine success of weed treatments and revegetation efforts and detect new weed sites requiring treatment and make corrections as necessary. Monitoring is a part of every project and as such, needs to be covered in NEPA discussions, and planned for as part of implementation.</p>	<p>8.1) Conduct treatment and post activity monitoring plans as part of the treatment of noxious weeds, <i>using measurable objectives</i></p> <p>8.2) Develop and maintain a consistent record keeping system not only across the Forest but also with other agencies, including appropriate GIS layers (e.g. county weed boards).</p> <p>8.3) Monitor all revegetation efforts and repeat them as necessary to insure successful site revegetation.</p> <p>8.4) Incorporate monitoring and reporting of weed species into road maintenance programs.</p> <p>8.5) Monitor areas of concentrated livestock use for weed establishment. Treat new infestations.</p> <p>8.6) Monitor and treat weed infestations at landings and on skid trails after harvest.</p> <p>8.7) Monitor and treat emerging weeds on stockpiled material at new and existing gravel and borrow pits. Monitor the area where pit material is used and ensure that no weed seeds are transported to the use site.</p> <p>8.8) Conduct post fire monitoring to identify weed spread until desirable vegetation is established..</p> <p>8.9) Retain performance bonds from mining operations until revegetation objectives are achieved.</p> <p>8.10) Survey bodies of water often for early detection and easier control of noxious aquatic weeds.</p>