

Distribution of the 1999 Colorado Noxious Weed Management Fund

The Colorado Noxious Weed Management Fund was created in 1996 by the Colorado Legislature, in part, to provide grants or contracts to communities, weed control districts, or other entities for the purpose of stimulating and supporting local cooperative efforts to manage noxious weeds. Organized private interests as well as public agencies may apply for moneys from the fund provided that the moneys will be utilized to further weed management efforts in the State of Colorado. For fiscal year 1999, the Legislature allocated \$225,000 for the Fund. This year, the department received 42 applications requesting a total of \$615,082 in assistance (very comparable to the total requested in 1998) and providing a total match of \$2,929,313.20 (4.76:1 overall matching ratio, a significant increase over 1998).

Each application was evaluated by a committee of seven individuals that represent the perspectives and experiences of professionals and elected officials of Colorado government, weed science, agriculture, the environment, public natural resource management, and state and local weed management. Evaluation committee members scored the applications based on a number of factors including the nature of partnerships formed, the urgency of the problem, the projected impact of the project, and the use of sensible strategies and integrated pest management. For each application, an average score was calculated and ranked against the other applications in descending order. This ranked list provided a starting point for the committee's discussions. After careful deliberation, the evaluation committee recommended a number of projects for funding to the Agriculture Commission and the Commissioner of Agriculture.

In 1999, the Department of Agriculture will distribute \$225,000 to the following projects of local, regional, and statewide importance. Collectively, recipients will match the state's dollars with approximately \$1,152,943.60 (5.12:1 matching ratio - a significant increase over 1998).

1. The Upper Bear Creek Hawkweed Eradication Project (Jefferson County) will establish a coordinated effort to contain and eradicate the only known population of a highly invasive weed, orange hawkweed, in Colorado. This species, generally considered to be Idaho's worst noxious weed, will eventually spread from the Upper Bear Creek Drainage if left unmanaged. This project, organized and led by the local homeowners association, will use funds to hire a seasonal coordinator and acquire necessary equipment to map and control this species.

\$9,932 requested **\$9,932 allocated**

2. Toadflax Management in the Upper Arkansas Watershed (Lake and Chaffee Counties) will provide a focussed effort along the upper reaches of the Arkansas River and its tributaries to detect, map, and manage numerous populations of both Dalmation and yellow toadflaxes. These species threaten grazing resources for livestock and wildlife throughout the Arkansas watershed. Continued seed production will spread the species downstream to communities that are presently uninfested. Funds will enable a systematic mapping and control effort to eradicate and contain existing populations.

\$6,000 requested **\$6,000 allocated**

3. The Upper Gunnison Toadflax Coalition (Gunnison and Delta Counties) will coordinate control efforts of yellow toadflax and other noxious weeds in an upper watershed of the Gunnison River. Existing infestations threaten the North Fork of the Gunnison River, the lower Gunnison River (which includes Gold Medal fishing waters), agricultural lands of Delta County, and two wilderness areas. Funds will be used to provide equipment, supplies, and labor.

\$8,000 requested **\$8,000 allocated**

4. The Eradication/Education on Newly Established, Remote Weed Populations Project (Statewide) is a unique effort which emphasizes the importance of detecting and managing new infestations of noxious weeds in remote areas. It will educate landowners about managing small-scale weed infestations and provide specialized equipment (horseback herbicide units) at cost to private landowners. Funds will be used to assemble panniers and purchase the parts necessary to assemble the units. Unlike many other projects, the funding will perpetuate itself as landowners and managers invest in units and training.

\$12,000 requested **\$12,000 allocated**

5. The North Platte Headwaters Weed Management Area Plan (Jackson County) is one of six model programs in the state chosen by the Colorado Noxious Weed Management Team. It is an exemplary working model of public-private partnerships that prioritizes target weed populations and provides for management regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. This unique program is one of the only projects in the nation to collaborate across a state line (Wyoming) to manage noxious weeds throughout a watershed. Funds will be used to conduct staff and public educational efforts.

\$20,000 requested **\$8,000 allocated**

6. The Purple Loosestrife Control Project (Denver metro-area) is perhaps the best known and successful effort by the Colorado Division of Wildlife to manage noxious weeds. Begun in 1992, this project has successfully helped to manage purple loosestrife on both public and private lands throughout the Denver metro-area. Funds will be used to hire seasonal staff to conduct “mop-up” efforts during the final phase of the project and permit the Division to slowly turn over management responsibilities to local public and private landowners.

\$4,000 requested **\$4,000 allocated**

7. This Coordinated Noxious Weed Management Project (Grand and Summit Counties) will establish a coordinated weed management effort throughout the Blue River and Upper Colorado River Watersheds. It will focus on prioritized populations of noxious weeds throughout the region regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. An Intergovernmental Agreement has already been signed by federal, state, and local branches of government which facilitates cooperation. Funds will be used to purchase reseeding and herbicide equipment.

\$24,400 requested **\$24,400 allocated**

8. The San Miguel River Tamarisk Control Project (San Miguel County) will systematically remove tamarisk trees from the San Miguel River and its tributaries. Although the majority of this watershed is still characterized by healthy native plant communities, the invasion of tamarisk threatens to irreversibly damage the habitat, recreational opportunities, and water quality/quantity for downstream irrigators. Funds will be used to match a federal grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and provide labor and equipment to carry out the project.

\$12,500 requested **\$12,500 allocated**

9. The Cherry Creek Weed Project (Douglas County) will document the extent of noxious weed populations throughout the project area ($\frac{1}{6}$ of the county), map property-specific populations, and work directly with individual landowners to develop and implement effective noxious weed management plans. It will also boost the Town of Parker’s efforts to establish a long-term weed management program. Funds will purchase video-mapping equipment and a laptop computer that will facilitate work with private landowners throughout the project area.

\$24,030 requested **\$6,887 allocated**

10. The Park County-South Platte River Weed Control Project establishes a cooperative weed management area in the southeast quarter of Park County. It emphasizes partnerships among private and public landowners as well as prevention, control and restoration. Funds will be used to purchase mapping and control equipment and contract additional labor.

\$15,950 requested **\$6,908 allocated**

11. The San Luis Valley Coordinated Noxious Weed Program (Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache Counties) will build upon its efforts last year to establish a coordinated, valley-wide weed management effort and standardized mapping system. This year, the program will complete GIS mapping efforts, coordinate weed management efforts based upon prioritized watersheds, and promote awareness among the public. Funds will be used to match a federal grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

\$50,000 requested **\$25,000 allocated**

12. The Moffat County Weed Bounty Project will utilize funds to pay bounty hunters for the removal of targeted biennial weeds from private and public lands in Moffat County. While this effort will provide a coordinated management effort, it will also emphasize education and training for bounty-hunters and landowners alike. The weed bounty project is one part of a comprehensive effort launched in 1999 by the county to educate and assist private landowners.

\$5,000 requested **\$5,000 allocated**

13. The Upper Roaring Fork Valley Weed Management Project (Pitkin County) will focus efforts to control noxious weeds in the Maroon Bells vicinity; one of the most highly photographed areas of Colorado. Partners, including the City of Aspen and a local environmental group, will provide a variety of cash and in-kind resources to carry out this program. Funds will be used to hire seasonal labor to conduct control and restoration work.

\$8,500 requested **\$5,000 allocated**

14. The Winiger Ridge Weed Control Project (Boulder County) is part of an extensive ecosystem management pilot program sponsored by the USDA-Forest Service. Throughout this Front Range watershed, landowners are working together to address aspects of ecosystem health such as water quality, insect and disease cycles, and wildfires. Funds will be used to implement integrated weed management priorities established by the management task force.

\$25,000 requested **\$12,500 allocated**

15. The San Juan Basin Coordinated Weed Project covers over four million acres of southwestern Colorado (Archuleta, Dolores, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mineral, Montezuma, Ouray, San Juan, and San Miguel Counties). Funds will be used to support a broad, collaborative management effort among numerous local, state, and federal partners scattered across the region. Funding will support management to eradicate, contain, or otherwise manage noxious weeds.

\$75,000 requested **\$20,000 allocated**

16. Natural Areas Noxious Weed Program (Denver County) will establish the first, active weed management program within the City and County of Denver. The plant communities of numerous publicly-owned parklands will be restored with a heavy emphasis on the management of noxious weeds. Funds will be used to manage noxious weeds largely through prescribed grazing and to promote community awareness and involvement.

\$25,000 requested **\$15,000 allocated**

17. Russian Knapweed Control in Galatea Community (Kiowa County) will prevent the spread of an extensive Russian knapweed infestation which affects 40 square miles of dryland in eastern Kiowa County. Emphasis will be placed on discovering and mapping all knapweed populations within the management area and working with landowners to apply integrated weed management techniques. Funds will be used to hire a technician to map populations, control small infestations, and educate landowners. GPS and associated mapping equipment will also be purchased.

\$11,500 requested **\$11,500 allocated**

18. The Flagler SCD Canada Thistle Project (Kit Carson County) will assist landowners with CRP acreages to manage Canada thistle populations more effectively. Through a combination of cost-share incentives, education, and inventories, this project will demonstrate effective management techniques and promote landowner action. Funds will be used in all aspects of this project.

\$5,000 requested **\$5,000 allocated**

19. The Three Creeks Integrated Weed Management Project (Adams County) will establish a small demonstration area to eradicate and reduce the spread of Canada and musk thistles. Thistle populations will be intensively grazed throughout the season with the cow/calf pairs of involved landowners and followed with a fall herbicide application. Funds will be used to provide a cost-share to involved landowners.

\$800 requested **\$800 allocated**

20. The Spotted Knapweed and Leafy Spurge Management Project (Washington County) will provide additional resources to permit an organized and aggressive control effort to map, contain, and eradicate limited populations of these species that have been discovered in two county drainages. By combining the use of herbicides, reseeding, and deferred grazing, the local weed district will provide integrated weed management services to affected landowners. Funds will be used to acquire necessary equipment and materials.

\$15,950 requested **\$4,573 allocated**

21. The Phillips County Capital Equipment Purchase will share the cost of replacing the county's well used and aging truck which is used primarily for herbicide applications. Since 1967, Phillips County has funded the weed management program from its general fund. The program provides direct assistance to landowners, primarily agricultural producers, in need of spot-spraying as well as general maintenance of county properties.

\$7,000 requested **\$7,000 allocated**

22. Creating Integrated Weed Management Plans (Statewide) is a handbook that is currently being developed as a collaborative effort between the Colorado Department of Agriculture and the Colorado Natural Areas Program. This handbook will help owners and managers of land with significant natural resources (including range and forested lands, both private and public) develop effective integrated weed management plans customized specifically for their properties.

\$15,000 requested **\$15,000 allocated**