

## Distribution of the 2000 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 2000, the Legislature allocated \$225,000 for the Fund. This year, the department received 44 applications requesting a total of \$624,951 in assistance (comparable to the total requested in 1999) and providing a total match of \$1,830,632 (2.93:1 overall matching ratio).

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 2000, the Department of Agriculture will distribute \$220,700 to the following 19 projects of local, regional, and statewide importance. Collectively, recipients will match the state's dollars with approximately \$840,033 (3.81:1 matching ratio).

1. The Buckhorn Yellow Starthistle Control Project (Montrose County) will enhance a coordinated effort to contain and eradicate Colorado's largest known population of yellow starthistle, a highly invasive weed. This species, which infests tens of millions of acres in the West, will eventually spread from the Buckhorn drainage into the Uncompahgre River if left unmanaged. It presently threatens the rangelands, pastures, and native plant communities of the West Slope. This project, organized and led by the Montrose County Weed Department, will use funds to provide cost-share opportunities for infested private lands and acquire a GPS unit to enhance mapping capabilities.

**\$10,500 requested**

**\$10,500 allocated**

2. The Yellow Starthistle Eradication and Prevention Project (Mesa County) will provide for a focussed effort to eradicate three small populations discovered in 1999. Specific tasks for 2000 are to scout, locate, and map all suspected starthistle infestations in the county; eradicate discovered populations; and educate local landowners. Funds will be used to hire a part-time seasonal assistant to coordinate mapping, scouting, and management, and provide some supplies.

**\$6,000 requested**

**\$6,000 allocated**

3. The North Platte Headwaters Weed Management Program (Jackson County) is an exemplary working model of public-private partnerships that prioritizes target weed populations and provides for management regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. In order to help build the program's capital infrastructure, funds will be used to acquire a GPS unit and a used ¾ ton pickup. Funds will also be used to launch a containment/eradication initiative targeting yellow toadflax populations scattered across the county's private and public lands.

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

4. The Mesa County Purple Loosestrife Control Project (Mesa County) will provide for a focussed effort to reduce existing populations to easily manageable levels and eliminate this species from the Colorado River throughout the county. The largest known infestations of purple loosestrife are on private lands where it is economically and physically impossible for landowners to accomplish control on their own. Funds will be used to hire two seasonal assistants and purchase personal protection equipment and two backpacker sprayers.

**\$11,200 requested**                      **\$11,200 allocated**

5. The Purple Loosestrife Control Project (Denver Metropolitan 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 support seasonal staff that conduct "mop-up" efforts during the final phase of this project.

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

6. The Garfield County/SCD Cost Share Program (Garfield County) endeavors to stimulate coordinated weed management efforts among private landowners in several communities in Garfield County. Funds will be used to provide cost-share dollars to private landowners that provide written weed management plans and are selected through a ranking system which emphasizes fighting satellite populations of Russian knapweed and leafy spurge, partnerships among landowners, and attendance of land stewardship and weed management workshops.

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

7. The Old Fort Lewis Community Weed Control Project (La Plata County) will provide additional resources to control noxious weeds along streams and irrigation ditches in and around CSU's San Juan Basin Research Center. As a consequence of the infestations in this area, downstream landowners and Southern Ute Tribal Lands are receiving a continuous source of weed seed. In partnership with neighboring private landowners, funds will be used to attack noxious weeds in a prioritized fashion to reduce the spread of noxious weeds in this area.

**\$23,500 requested**                      **\$8,000 allocated**

8. The Nucla Purple Loosestrife Control Project (Montrose County) will provide funds to initiate efforts to eradicate the single largest population of purple loosestrife presently found on the West Slope. This infested field has an artificially high water-table which will be lowered to improve access to the site, allow burning, and facilitate herbicide applications. Funds will be used for drainage efforts and herbicide applications.

**\$15,000 requested**                      **\$12,000 allocated**

9. 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. Funds will be used to complete GIS mapping efforts and coordinate weed management efforts to attack high priority species.

**\$25,000 requested**                      **\$17,000 allocated**

10. The Grand County Leafy Spurge Eradication Project (Grand County) will contain and eradicate all known leafy spurge infestations where they occur on approximately 54 acres of private lands, Colorado Division of Wildlife land, and county rights-of-way. Reduction of satellite and perimeter infestations will be given first priority followed by continued efforts to treat dense infestations. Funds will help defray the cost of management and monitoring efforts.

**\$3,700 requested**                      **\$3,700 allocated**

11. 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. Work begun in 1999 will be continued to evaluate and retreat all the small, outlying infestations mapped and managed last year. Funds will be used to hire a technician to map populations, retreat small infestations, and educate landowners.

**\$3,750 requested**                      **\$3,750 allocated**

12. The Las Animas County Weed Management Project (Las Animas County) will address newly discovered infestations of leafy spurge in the canyons of the Purgatoire River while halting the spread of more common species to uninfested lands throughout the county. Development pressures in this county have accelerated greatly during the past few years. Consequently, the county must invest more heavily in weed management along its rights-of-way, education of new landowners, and better coordination across the landscape. Funds will provide for an additional weed control technician and the resources to increase management capacity on county roads.

**\$25,000 requested**                      **\$19,000 allocated**

13. Expanding Our Borders (Adams and Boulder Counties) will provide for weed control, prevention, and native habitat restoration at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Butterfly Pavilions, and adjoining open spaces. It will also emphasize education and outreach to the visitors of these very visible nature centers in metropolitan Denver as well as outreach to surrounding business and community developments. Funds will be used to provide for a seasonal intern and the development of educational materials in cooperation with the Arsenal's Wildlife Society.

**\$7,500 requested**                      **\$7,388 allocated**

14. The Upper Arkansas Weed Management Cooperative (Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Lake, Park, Pueblo, and Teller Counties) is a coalition of partners formed to expedite and coordinate weed management efforts among counties, state/federal agencies, and private landowners in the Upper Arkansas River watershed. Funds will be used to purchase equipment and supplies necessary to begin on-the-ground containment and eradication efforts to control small and newly discovered populations of high priority species.

**\$56,000 requested**                      **\$28,000 allocated**

15. The Rio Blanco Leafy Spurge Treatment/Comprehensive Planning Effort (Rio Blanco County) enhances on-the-ground actions aimed at managing a growing leafy spurge problem in the White River drainage and supports a planning effort to establish an innovative county-wide weed management plan. Funds will be used to facilitate weed management training of area landowners, implement inventory efforts on private lands, and provide initial treatment of small scale weed infestations.

**\$30,000 requested**

**\$25,000 allocated**

16. The City of Craig Noxious Weed Eradication Project (Moffat County) is an extension of the city's recently revised code enforcement program and newly updated weed ordinance. As the first municipality to receive funding from the Fund, the City of Craig will utilize moneys to develop and implement a cost-share program for vacant lot landowners, extend county education and weed bounty programs to city residents, and eradicate ornamental noxious weeds from properties within the city.

**\$8,000 requested**

**\$8,000 allocated**

17. The Spring Creek Leafy Spurge Control Project (Jefferson County) launches a new effort to bring together public agencies and private landowners to manage leafy spurge across a large area affected by the 1996 Buffalo Creek fire. Due to the disturbance resulting from the fire, leafy spurge has proliferated rapidly and is contributing to a severe degradation of the ecosystem in this watershed. Funds will be used to provide cost share agreements with private landowners for integrated control including grazing, mowing, herbicide treatments, and revegetation.

**\$25,000 requested**

**\$15,350 allocated**

18. The Riverbend Park Noxious Weed Program (Mesa County) will begin a weed management effort to clear this highly visible and visited public park along the Colorado River of noxious weeds; including Russian knapweed, Scotch thistle, and hoary cress. Educational signs will also be posted to inform visitors of these efforts and assist with the identification of local noxious weed species. Funds will be used to supplement Palisade's management efforts to apply chemicals, mechanically remove weeds, and reseed affected areas.

**\$1,812 requested**

**\$1,812 allocated**