

Distribution of the 2002 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 2002, approximately \$240,000 was available to fund management and education proposals. This year, the department received 37 management and 11 education proposals requesting a total of \$615,948 in assistance and providing a total match of \$3,397,118 (5.5 : 1 overall matching ratio).

Each proposal 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 2002, the Department of Agriculture distributed \$239,692 to the following 20 management and 8 education projects of local, regional, and statewide importance. Collectively, recipients matched the state's dollars with approximately \$1,368,264 (5.7 : 1 matching ratio).

Proposed Management Projects for Funding

1. The San Miguel Basin Multi-Species Eradication Program (Montrose and San Miguel Counties) applies intensive management efforts upon eight noxious weed species that are rare to the area and/or the state. Funds will support mapping and eradication efforts on affected lands, hire a seasonal intern, and provide cost-share dollars to affected landowners.

Amount Requested: \$15,000

\$15,000 allocated

2. Meadow Knapweed Eradication Project (Routt County) will begin a focussed effort to identify and eradicate all populations of meadow knapweed, a state rare noxious weed, in the Elk River Watershed. Funds will help Routt County hire a seasonal employee and purchase a state-of-the-art mapping system for field use.

Amount Requested: \$2,576

\$2,576 allocated

3. Tiara Creek Noxious Weed Management and Restoration (Mesa County) will continue an ongoing effort to eliminate purple loosestrife from this tributary to the Colorado River. Funds will support two internships for students from Mesa State College and purchase educational materials for a landowner workshop on noxious weeds.

Amount Requested: \$7,150

\$7,150 allocated

4. The San Miguel Watershed Invasive Tree Removal Project (Montrose and San Miguel Counties) will work with public and private landowners to remove tamarisk, Russian-olive, and Siberian elms from the watershed. Funding will help hire work crews to perform management along 10 river miles.

Amount Requested: \$15,000

\$15,000 allocated

5. Wet-Mowing (Delta County) will evaluate the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of a new weed management technology that combines mowing and herbicide application in a single process. This technology may result in improved management success, reduced herbicide volume, reduced opportunity for drift, and enhanced public safety. Funds will help purchase machinery components.

Amount Requested: \$12,500

\$12,500 allocated

6. Grand County's Leafy Spurge Eradication Project (Grand County) will continue to receive state support. Funding will defray the expenses of mapping and management of this aggressive invader in these headwaters of the Colorado River.

Amount Requested: \$3,500

\$3,250 allocated

7. Enhancing the Roles of US Forest Service Districts in Local Management (multiple USFS ranger districts across Colorado) will enhance the capacity of local Forest Service districts to manage noxious weeds cooperatively with local weed management programs. Funding will purchase equipment for five ranger districts across the state.

Amount Requested: \$25,000

\$15,400 allocated

8. Upper Arkansas Watershed Weed Cooperative (Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Lake, Park, Pueblo, and Teller Counties) will continue a coordinated effort to eradicate all diffuse and spotted knapweed populations and begin eradication and containment of leafy spurge, Russian knapweed, Dalmatian and yellow toadflaxes, and hoary cress in this watershed. Funding will be used largely to defray management costs.

Amount Requested: \$30,000

\$27,500 allocated

9. The Diffuse Knapweed Control Program (Adams and Arapahoe Counties) initiates an effort to engage private landowners in the management of this rapidly spreading noxious weed. State funds will be used to provide cost-share dollars for integrated weed management efforts and to purchase small herbicide sprayers that may be lent to private landowners.

Amount Requested: \$7,265

\$7,265 allocated

10. Mount Vernon Metropolitan District (Jefferson County) will continue to develop and implement a weed management plan for this homeowners' association. Funding will be used largely to support additional weed management and education for the district's residence.

Amount Requested: \$6,680

\$4,990 allocated

11. Baseline Inventory and Cooperative Weed Management Area (San Juan County) initiates an effort to develop an adequate noxious weed management program for this small county dominated by federal lands. In 2002, state funds will be used to hire a contractor to map noxious weeds within the county and work with surrounding counties as well as state and federal agencies to develop a cooperative effort to manage noxious weeds in this high country area.

Amount Requested: \$16,500

\$16,500 allocated

12. South Republican Noxious Weed Project (Yuma County) begins an effort to map and manage tamarisk and Canada thistle in the South Fork of the Republican River and Bonny State Recreation Area.

Amount Requested: \$22,800

\$20,000 allocated

13. The Upper Gunnison Watershed Weed Mapping Project (Gunnison, Hinsdale, and Saguache Counties) sets three priorities for developing an inventory of noxious weeds in the watershed. Priority 1: New and rare noxious weed species. Priority 2: Species with infestations ranging from 1-5 acres. Priority 3: Species infesting more than 5 acres. Funding will be used to hire a mapping contractor to map the watershed during the summer and produce maps in the winter.

Amount Requested: \$15,000

\$15,000 allocated

14. The West Slope Tamarix Mapping Project (Counties across Colorado's western watersheds) will compare the accuracy and cost-effectiveness of a variety of remote sensing methods and tools to identify stands of tamarisk in four different quadrangles in western Colorado. Managers will then select a tool with which to develop an inventory from which a comprehensive integrated weed management plan can be formed. Funding will help acquire imagery and data.

Amount Requested: \$25,000

\$17,105 allocated

15. Idaho Springs Noxious Weeds Control (Clear Creek County) will initiate a noxious weed control program this summer in cooperation with the county. Funding will help the city to train staff, acquire herbicide application and safety equipment, and begin managing a variety of noxious weeds including Chinese clematis.

Amount Requested: \$7,000

\$4,332 allocated

16. Colorado Springs Regional Parks and Open Space (El Paso County) will utilize funding to expand their weed management efforts to additional parks beyond Garden of the Gods. Funding will help hire a seasonal staff person to manage noxious weeds throughout the summer.

Amount Requested: \$2,600

\$2,600 allocated

17. Prowers County Weed Control Startup Program (Prowers County) will begin an effort to reinvigorate this county's weed management efforts. The county will create a new weed management plan, develop an inventory of noxious weeds, and begin educating residents about specific weed threats.

Amount Requested: \$22,500

\$15,000 allocated

18. Rights-of-Way Weed Program (Cheyenne County) will provide the Eastern Cheyenne County Pest Control District with the means to build and install a boomless roadside sprayer for accurate application of herbicide to roadside weeds throughout the county

Amount Requested: \$7,529

\$7,529 allocated

19. Green Mountain Knapweed Control (Jefferson County) will establish a cooperative effort between Lakewood Regional Parks and the Colorado Wool Growers Association to graze sheep on 500 acres of diffuse knapweed infestations. CSU will also monitor the effects of grazing on diffuse knapweed populations.

Amount Requested: \$5,166

\$3,100 allocated

20. An additional \$3,000 has been transferred to the Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management at Colorado State University to develop management recommendations for common teasel (a species for which two municipalities applied for management funding) and a publication suitable to provide to landowners affected by this noxious weed.

Total Expenditures for Management Projects: \$214,797

Proposed Education Projects for Funding

1. Poudre Wilderness Volunteers (Larimer County) is a not-for-profit organization founded to assist the Canyon Lakes Ranger District in managing and protecting wilderness and backcountry areas of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest. This grant will help provide training to the volunteers who will report noxious weed infestations and educate trail users about noxious weeds and their spread.

Amount Requested: \$3,000

\$3,000 allocated

2. Colorado Foundation for Agriculture (Statewide) will produce two issues of the Colorado Reader Series – one on noxious weeds and the other about native plants. These eight page student newspapers will be distributed to fourth and fifth graders across the state and their teachers will receive an accompanying teacher's guide that provides additional reference material. These readers also reinforce Colorado Content Standards with CSAP type questions.

Amount Requested: \$4,000

\$4,000 allocated

3. City of Gunnison (Gunnison County) will implement a program to educate city staff, residents, and the local development community (contractors, realtors, builders) about noxious weeds and their spread. Door hangers identifying and describing local noxious weeds will be on city residences and funds will be used to develop a local video that addresses the economic and ecological threats weeds pose to the area.

Amount Requested: \$4,272

\$3,780 allocated

4. The San Juan Weed Posse (Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, and San Juan Counties) will provide information and educational materials regarding noxious weeds to users of the Weminuche Wilderness and San Juan National Forest. San Juan Mountains Association members will train its Wilderness Information Specialists and Ghost Rider volunteers to also report weed locations to public land management agencies.

Amount Requested: \$5,000

\$3,500 allocated

5. Cooperative Weed Solutions (Elbert County) will continue to provide a small set of landowners with very intensive education and training to manage noxious weeds in challenging situations. Through a variety of teaching strategies, agricultural producers and rural homeowners will meet together to identify and resolve specific weed management problems. Funds will be used to support educational meetings and field trips.

Amount Requested: \$4,150 **\$3,150 allocated**

6. The Noxious Weed Identification Project (Yuma County) will purchase four complete sets of mounted weed collections for use by Yuma County's high school agricultural education programs. This grant will serve the schools of Idalia, Liberty, Wray, and Yuma.

Amount Requested: \$750 **\$750 allocated**

7. Rock Bottom Ranch (**Pitkin County**), a project of the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies, will provide education about noxious weeds to local students, volunteers, and members of the community. Educational opportunities will include hands-on courses for high school students, volunteer work days, and demonstrations of management techniques for visitors.

Amount Requested: \$1,000 **\$710 allocated**

8. The Upper Arkansas Watershed Noxious Weed Education Program (Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Lake, Park, Pueblo, and Teller Counties) will utilize funds to provide workshops for local weed managers and develop a brochure for distribution to private landowners that will help advance the management objectives of the watershed group.

Amount Requested: \$7,443 **\$6,005 allocated**

Total Expenditures for Education Projects: \$24,895

Total Expenditures for All Grant Projects: \$239,692

The remaining \$50,308 was utilized by the Colorado Department of Agriculture and Colorado State University to establish a statewide weed inventory and mapping project. This project provides the data required to facilitate coordination of weed management efforts across the state in alignment with Colorado's strategic plan to stop the spread of noxious weeds.