



# THE WEED STALKER

## Why Won't That Weed Go Away?

**W**e all have that certain weed or weeds that come back year after year, no matter what you do. You've tried pulling them up, spraying them with different kinds of herbicides, burning them to the ground whether they're still green and dried. You've even gone to the point of getting the rototiller or the tractor out and just tilling or plowing up the ground, and nothing seems to work. It may have not come up for a year or two and you think that you've finally won the battle, then spring comes and there it is again. Frustrating isn't it. An uphill battle that you feel like you will never win. Well there are many reasons why those weeds just won't stay away....

All plants have their own special traits in order to survive and multiply. Many of them having several ways that make them capable of adapting to any environment. Noxious weeds can adapt and thrive in any place they are. How in the world can that be? They muscle out crops and other desirable plants competing for water, nutrients, sunlight and space. They become the "Perfect Plant"

with the ability to reproduce and assure long-term survival.

Your nemeses plant can poses many traits that gives it the advantage over other plants. These include life history, is it an annual, biennial or perennial. How does it grow? Is it tall, bushy, or does it creep on the ground and on anything in

*Many invasive weeds are non-native plants first introduced in North America as ornamentals*

its way? Can it tolerate heat, cold, drought, flood or even fire? Does it grow quickly and produce many seeds that can be disperse different ways, like water, wind, animals or even soil erosion? How many years can the seed lay dormant and what elements allow it to germinate? Does your perfect plant have defenses such at spiny seeds, toxic to the touch or by eating, preventing insects or grazing

*Field bindweed is a perennial with a long lateral root system, a depth up to 20 ft, reproduces by seed and plant parts. Seed can lay dormant for up to 50 yrs*



*Puncturevine (goathead) is a mat forming annual with a single taproot, yellow flowers and sharp spiny seeds that occur from May—October. Seeds can lay dormant for 10 yrs.*

as a natural predator? What do the roots on your plant look like? They may be large to absorb more water and nutrients from the surrounding plants, or long and thin and able to travel easily spreading everywhere and produce more plants if disturbed, or large like tree roots crowding out everything growing near?

If any of these traits sound like the plant you've been fighting, call today and we can help identify and even find a way to get rid of it or reduce the spread of your weed. It's important to know that not all weeds are the same and that it sometimes takes other means of going after getting rid of that weed.

For more information or assistance on control of your unwanted weeds call Weed and Pest for recommendations. 307-765-2855.

## Big Horn County Weed and Pest 2017 Employee of the Year Kyler Flock

Kyler is a great seasonal for many reasons. He has always had an overall good disposition and a good outlook on what we do at the weed and pest. He is a fast learner and always looking to learn more. Without his unique personality and sense of humor, it would have made for a pretty boring summer. We look forward to seeing more of Kyler here at the Big Horn County Weed and Pest.





There are currently 10 priority invasive species in Big Horn County that are the main focus for the 100% cost-share program offered by Big Horn County Weed and Pest District.

The cost of controlling these priority species on Private Lands, including labor and herbicides, is covered 100% by the District. Most of these weeds are well controlled with herbicides, however, finding and identifying individual plants on a landscape scale can be difficult. Leafy spurge was the backpacking spray crews major focus again in 2017. The majority of the cost in controlling priority species is labor, this demonstrates the importance of EDRR (Early Detection/Rapid Response) practices.

**Leafy spurge Treatment Program:** For this program, our summer backpack crew chemically treat all known leafy

## What are Weed and Pest Summer Crews Up To?

spurge infestations and survey for any new infestations in Big Horn County. Anywhere from 2-4 acres of Leafy Spurge are treated each year on private and public lands. The entire cost of the treatment is covered by the Big Horn County Weed and Pest District.

**Whitetop Treatment Program:** Big Horn County has a serious Whitetop problem. To help with that we have an 80% cost share on chemical and labor for any Big Horn County landowners that would like their Whitetop sprayed. Our summer crews spray Whitetop for landowners in the spring and early summer and we also utilize contractors to spray larger infestations with a helicopter. By the end of the whitetop season, an average of 1,000-3,000 acres are treated each year.

**100% Treatment Program** The 100% program is one that treats listed noxious weeds on Big Horn County private lands at no cost to the landowner. Here is a list of 100% listed noxious weeds that are typically found in Big Horn County:

*Black henbane, diffuse knapweed, houndstongue, leafy spurge, musk thistle, oxeye daisy, perennial pepperweed,*

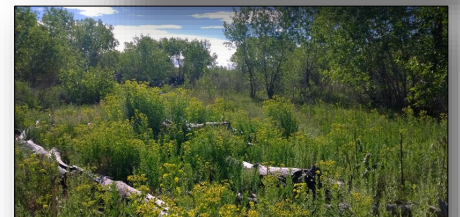
*purple loosestrife, spotted knapweed, and yellow toadflax.* Approximately 100 acres of 100% listed noxious weeds are sprayed each year by our summer crews with backpacking and UTV sprayers. In an attempt to prevent the introduction and spread of new noxious weeds, as well as to limit the spread of noxious weeds of limited distribution in Big Horn County, the District offers this 100% cost share. Most of our noxious weeds were introduced either as a seed contaminants or intentionally as ornamental plants. If new infestations are identified quickly, a rapid response and control techniques can be initiated to keep these new weeds out of Big Horn County.

-By Garret Anderson



Colin Cheatham filling backpacks to spray in Devil's Canyon

Colin Cheatham & Kyler Flock in a canoe to treat Purple loosestrife



Infestation of Leafy spurge in Big Horn County

## A Word From the Crew Foreman

### Garrett Anderson Assistant Supervisor - Crews

My job here at the Weed and Pest can include many different things depending on the season. In the winter we usually attend meetings and conferences and assist with any needs of our program like reporting the work we did in the previous summer, which involves writing grant reports, and also acquiring money through grants. Mostly though my job is to prepare for the next summer. This involves compiling what jobs we will do in the few months we have, and creating work plans for them.

Late winter and early spring entails hiring and training seasonal employees so we have enough help to get the jobs done. After that is all done, most of my summer is taken up by spraying. I am in charge of the backpacking crews at the Weed and Pest, and they are a dedicated bunch. Backpackers are the ones walking miles in the scorching heat and scuttling through the brush just to reach the elusive weeds. They spend most of the summer walking Big Horn County's major creeks and trails, sometimes hiking for 10 hours straight a day, to help reduce the spread of weeds from these hard to reach areas. Amazingly this crew com-

pletes hundreds of spray jobs every year, regardless of unfavorable conditions like rain, unbearable heat, dangerous terrain, and even never ending swarms of flies and mosquitoes, they endure it all. In summation, we ask a great deal from the backpack crews, and they handle it with ease, no matter the condition.



Garrett Anderson spraying Saltcedar on canals during early winter treatments.



## Special Grants for Big Horn County Weed & Pest

**G**rants play an important roll in providing imperative financial assistance for the many needs of the Weed and Pest Districts. Big Horn County Weed and Pest District has applied for and is receiving three grants for 2018.

**Greybull Watershed Special Weed Management Area** for \$20,000. This is for Whitetop and Leafy spurge in the Greybull Watershed. **Little Mountain Weed Treatment** for \$50,000

for treatment and survey of Medusahead and other noxious weeds **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation** for \$5,000 for treatment in elk habitat areas on the Big-horn National Forest. These grant funds supplement many important needs including; education, inventories and mapping, management, and monitoring, including the payment of the cost of personnel and equipment that promote control or eradication of noxious weeds. Thanks

to these grants being made available, we can partner together in reaching the same goal of providing resources to address specific weed issues that can affect important wildlife habitat, grazing allotments and recreational areas.



## Maintenance... A Never Ending Job

### Mark Christopherson, Assistant Supervisor—Maintenance

My job entails several different parts. In the summer we have a list of jobs to do. I lead a crew of side x side operators and go to several different jobs for spraying. I assist in training new and returning seasonal employees to help them safely perform their job. Spraying takes up most of my summer, but I still make time to fix equipment that is in need of repair. Throughout the year, I perform maintenance on all the equipment to ensure they are ready to perform the jobs they to accomplish. In the winter I order new supplies to replace the parts and equipment we have used during the summer. I also set up new equipment and fix and repair equipment that was broken during the summer jobs. It is my responsibility to take care of the chemical supply room, I organize, stock and restock the chemical as deliveries are made throughout the year. We've recently added a forklift to make the job more efficient. I also pull maintenance on the weed and pest property. I take measures that allow us to stay in compliance with OSHA and EPA. I am responsible for the Biocontrol program; areas that are hard to spray, Biocontrol agents become ideal. Releases are made and I then monitor those areas. I attend meetings for further training and updates. In the Winter I attend several meetings and conferences to receive further training. I also assist in finding the needs of our programs and taking measures to see they are met. I sometimes assist in financial matters and take part in securing funds through grants.

## Take Advantage of Great Cost Share Programs

**B**ig Horn County Weed and Pest District offers several cost share programs to Big Horn County residents in order to assist and educate residents in the control and/or the eradication of listed invasive species in our county. Currently there are eight programs available;

- \* Whitetop—80%
- \* Russian knapweed —80%
- \* Russian olive/Saltcedar—50%
- \* Priority Species—100%
- \* Grasshoppers—50%
- \* Canal Districts—50%
- \* Weeds of the West Book—70% (\$6.00)

Whitetop and Leafy spurge infestations are severe enough to require a special management program. This program is funded through the 2nd mil levy. All Big Horn County landowners are eligible for this 80% costs share. Regulations do apply and herbicides must be purchased through the District and verification by an employee

of the infestation.

These cost shares applies only to non-crop, pasture or rangelands, with non-crop referring to ditches and waste areas.

Herbicides are available at a discounted rate for those applying it themselves.

There is also the option of signing up in



Corey Call & Payton Gonzalez mixing chemical in their ATV's to treat whitetop.

order to have the District apply the herbicide, the cost for these services include the herbicide along with the labor at the offered cost share amounts. These are done on a first come, first serve and weather permitting.

Each cost share program offers discounted herbicide at different designated dates throughout the year. Those designated dates are based on when the treatment is most effective for the control of those specified species.



Porter Jones treating Russian knapweed..

2017 Cost-Share Programs	Total Sales	Sales w/ Cost Share
Canal Districts	\$188.58	\$94.29
Russian knapweed	\$27,057	\$5427.83
Whitetop	\$4458.72	\$891.74
Grasshoppers	\$964.68	\$482.34
Weeds of the West Book	\$122.50	\$28.55
Russian olive/Saltcedar	\$42,298.00	\$20,269.78
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$75,089.48</b>	<b>\$27,194.53</b>

## Pit Inspections Similar to Weed Free Forage Guidelines



There is a growing demand in Wyoming and the surrounding states for the use of certified weed free gravel and soil. In order to limit the spread of noxious weeds, Weed and Pest provides education and assistance help in the management of invasive species. The main purpose for weed free gravel is to work with Big Horn County to provide guidelines, standards, and set minimum requirements gravel pit certification.

The NAISMA Weed Free Forage and Gravel program is the only program in North America that maintains a list of standards that provide land managers assurance that noxious weeds will not be spread through the movement of forage, hay, mulch, or gravel brought in to the property. The goals of the Weed Free Forage and Gravel program are (1) to provide a guideline for the **minimum requirements** of certifying that forage, hay, and gravel are weed-free; and (2) to ensure uniform training and participation of

the provinces and states in the program.

The Weed Free Forage and Gravel standards are designed:

- to provide some assurance to all participants that forage and/or gravel certified through this program meets a **minimum** acceptable standard.
- to provide continuity between the various provinces and states in the program.

to limit the spread of noxious weeds through forage, mulch, and gravel.

NORTH AMERICAN INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (NAISMA) WEED FREE GRAVEL MINIMUM CERTIFICATION STANDARDS  
www.naisma.org

2017 inspections have included gravel and soil pits. The state has required that Weed and

2017 Certifications	# of Inspections
Forage	180
Straw	11
Pits	24

Pest Districts inspect all gravel/borrow areas in their County's and certify that they all shall be free of those noxious weeds or undesirable plant species listed on the Wyoming Designated Weed List. This is defined as any soil being disturbed for removal is required to be inspected.

Education has been the biggest benefit. Other benefits are to provide assurance to all participants that the product is certified through this program meets a minimum acceptable standard and to provide continuity between the various provinces, states and counties in the movement.

If you have an active pit, please call for your inspection before you disturb the ground.

*NAISMA is a network of professionals challenged by invasive species: land managers, water resource managers, state, regional, and federal agency directors and staff, and nonprofit organizations.*



## Employee Duty Responsibilities

### Bobbi Haley, Assistant Supervisor—Office Manager

I've been working for Big Horn County Weed & Pest going on 10 years. There is never a boring day in the office as the paperwork is never done. Summer time offers several challenges from trying to answer a 5 line phone system to waiting on customers which always seem to come at the same time. I usually get to spend at least half of my days outside loading chemical for customers. Other obstacles throughout my day consist of, paying bills, writing payroll, writing transit certificates for local producers needing to haul commodities and trying to offer as much knowledge as possible for the concerned property owner being overrun by weeds & pests. As the season continues with seasonal crews, the spray reports pile up from all the jobs which they have done, needing to be entered into the computer then being billed out. The best part of my job is working with my coworkers, being able to have very supportive board members and last but not least, all my customers who can always put a smile on my face.

### Lorraine Gonzalez

#### Assistant Supervisor—Education

As the Education person for Big Horn County Weed and Pest, it is my duty to inspect forage for either a quarantine release or certification throughout the growing season and just recently, inspect pits. I try to designate days to be in the North or the South end of the county, sometimes covering all in a day, trying to accommodate the producers the best I can. If I am familiar with the location of their fields, I do inspections and make contact with my findings, mailing or dropping off their paperwork and/or twine. It has been such a pleasure for me to get to know more of our county residents and being able to provide this service for them. The winter months are busy in a stationary sense. My responsibilities are to create and update media such as handouts, annual report and newsletter, web and Facebook pages. We also coordinate with University of Wyoming Extension in some trainings and events they offer and try to get into some classrooms for some education on noxious weeds awareness. It has been such a pleasure to have the opportunity to serve Big Horn County in this capacity.





## 2017 CREWS ON THE JOB

[www.bhcountyweedandpest.com](http://www.bhcountyweedandpest.com)



Back: Garrick Tolman, Tyrel Henderson,  
Porter Jones, Sam Davidson  
Front: Mark Christoperson, Colin  
Cheatham, Payton Gonzalez, Kyler Flock,  
Corey Call, Garrett Anderson



If you find a weed that is new  
and/or different, report it to  
the Big Horn County Weed &  
Pest office @ 307-765-2855

**HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF  
NOXIOUS WEEDS**

