



BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

1500 Hwy 2, Suite 101 • Sandpoint, ID 83864 • Phone: (208) 255-5681 ext.6
<https://www.bonnercountyid.gov/noxious-weeds>

Weed of the Month

By Chase Youngdahl, *Bonner County Noxious Weeds*

The end of the year is a whirlwind of deadlines for cooperative weed management area reports and noxious weed mapping data, converging with the conjunct noxious weed meetings which take place at the start of the year in Boise. These meetings enhance statewide collaboration on noxious weed management and facilitate meaningful networking; as well as provide industry updates, state & county project updates, applicable regulation changes and overall professional development. I will be contributing in some of these areas with presentations at the Idaho Association of County Noxious Weed Control annual meeting as well as at the Idaho Noxious Weed Conference. Additionally, I will be absorbing as many presentations and discussions as possible in order to gather information and updates that can be used to benefit Bonner County. I often collect new ideas for program improvements—whether it’s something groundbreaking to better assist landowners with noxious & invasive weed management, or something nuanced to help polish my own educational presentations. With a myriad of happenings over the last year, including the Sackett vs. EPA decision, the Quagga-Mussel discovery/response, Idaho pesticide administrative rule changes (proposed), noxious weed list changes (proposed) and new chemical & bio control tools, there will be a lot to learn. Upon returning from Boise, I will be forging ahead with the planning process for 2024 operational and educational activities. One such plan is to put a finer point on surveying areas of known EDRR (early detection, rapid response) noxious weed populations. The process will start with identifying and cataloguing surrounding properties in these areas, then reaching out to the owners with letters. Come field season, the process will continue (hopefully) with performing physical inspections of the properties. Treatment plans will be initiated with the landowner(s) should the targets be found. University guidance regarding species eradication recommends inspecting a half-mile radius from the last known population. A list of the Idaho noxious weeds that exist in Bonner County is on our website, and it indicates which ones we classify in the EDRR category.

Saltcedar (*Tamarix* spp.) is one of nine EDRR noxious weeds in Bonner County. The state listing includes all species and subtaxa of *Tamarix*—similar to how Brooms are listed. Saltcedar is an evergreen shrub/small tree reaching heights of over 20 feet at maturity. The scaly,



BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

1500 Hwy 2, Suite 101 • Sandpoint, ID 83864 • Phone: (208) 255-5681ext.6
<https://www.bonnercountyid.gov/noxious-weeds>

overlapping leaves kind of resemble the leaf structure of our native cedars, but...that's where the similarities end. Saltcedar is from Eurasia and Africa, and is incredibly invasive in a number of North American habitats—from dunes and deserts to riparian areas. It severely limits biodiversity not only by creating a monoculture, but due to a biological niche, where the roots extract salts from the soil and excrete them from the leaves. The salt deposits on the soil surface inhibits growth, survival and recruitment of desirable native vegetation. While some species of Saltcedar were introduced for the purposes of bank stabilization, others were introduced as ornamentals—sought after for the appealing pastel-pink clusters of flowers and ability to create privacy hedges. As such, infestations can be found in landscaping. For domestic water that's sourced from springs or shallow seepage wells, nearby Saltcedar infestations can be a problem, especially during droughts. Saltcedar = groundwater going 'bye-bye'. A single, mature Saltcedar can transpire at least 200 gallons of water per plant, per day. For perspective, that's on the high end of what a mature Cottonwood transpires, and Saltcedar is a fraction of the size of a Cottonwood. Heavy Saltcedar infestations along riparian corridors can alter or even stop the flow of water, and can increase area flooding by narrowing channel widths.

I have only dealt directly with one Saltcedar, and it was in the form of a fully mature, 20 foot tree. It was a cut & remove situation with triclopyr applied to the cut stump to prevent regrowth. A year later, another one was discovered on a site about 2 miles away—the landowner opted to take care of it themselves. Those are the only two instances of Saltcedar in Bonner County that I have encountered, so be on the lookout—there are miles upon miles of lake shore and river bank that serve as prime habitat for it. Additionally, it could be present in urban and suburban landscapes. Aggressive pursuit of EDRR noxious weeds remains a high priority for our operations.

Onward!