

Center Conservation District

Noxious Weed Plan

Last Revised on March 20, 2024

I. Colorado Noxious Weed Act

- a. Governing Body:** The Center Conservation District is considered a local governing body and pest control district and must uphold all responsibilities related to noxious weed management as determined in C.R.S. 35-4-5.
- b. Responsibilities:**
 - i. Landowners:** According to C.R.S. 35-5.5-108.5, landowners or occupants whose property may be affected by list A species or by populations of list B species designated for eradication shall allow the commissioner or local weed control officials access to such property for the purpose of immediate inspection and eradication when at least one of the following events has occurred:
 - 1. The affected landowner or occupant has requested the inspection;
 - 2. A neighboring landowner or occupant has reported a suspected noxious weed infestation and requested an inspection; or
 - 3. An authorized agent of the local government or commissioner has made a visual observation from a public right-of-way or area and has reason to believe that a noxious weed infestation exists.
 - ii. Local Entities:** According to C.R.S. 35-5.5-108.5, in compliance with the rules promulgated by the commissioner, a local governing body shall initiate and maintain communications with landowners who are affected by list A species and populations of list B species designated for eradication by the commissioner.
 - iii. Commissioner:** According to C.R.S. 35-5.5-108.5, the commissioner may enforce the provisions of this section as necessary to ensure the cooperation of local governing bodies and affected landowners.
 - iv. Federal and State Agencies:** According to C.R.S. 35-5.5-111, the local governing bodies of all counties and municipalities in this state are hereby

authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with federal and state agencies for the integrated management of noxious weeds within their respective territorial jurisdictions.

II. Status of Noxious Weeds in the Center Conservation District Jurisdiction (Saguache County)

- a. List A Species:** C.R.S. 35-5.5-108 describes list A species as rare noxious weed species that are subject to eradication wherever detected statewide in order to protect neighboring lands and the state as a whole.
 - i.** Yellow Flag Iris: currently located at and near Silver Creek Lakes on Poncha Pass over approximately 2 acres. The population is currently contained but has the potential to spread downstream into Chaffee County. Treatment is expected to begin in 2024 and continue through 2034.
- b. List B Species:** C.R.S. 35-5.5-108 defines list B species as noxious weed species with discrete statewide distributions that are subject to eradication, containment, or suppression in portions of the state designated by the commissioner in order to stop the continued spread of these species.
 - i.** Black Henbane: contained population at Gary Hill’s property on County Road CC 40 in Saguache on the south side of Saguache Creek on 2 acres. Currently being annually surveyed and treated as needed.
 - ii.** Canada Thistle: managed populations are across 35 acres and are primarily found between Moffat and Crestone on County Road 65. Currently being annually surveyed and treated as needed.
 - iii.** Dame’s Rocket: A small population on less than an acre has been managed near Gary Hill’s property on County Road CC 40 in Saguache. Currently being annually surveyed and treated as needed.
 - iv.** Hoary Cress: Populations of Hoary Cress are spread throughout the District with higher concentrations between Moffat and Saguache. This is one of the top priorities for our spray program. Currently being annually surveyed and treated.

- v. Leafy Spurge: A small population on less than an acre has been managed northwest of Center. Currently being annually surveyed and treated as needed.
 - vi. Oxeye Daisy: A population has been noticed at Silver Creek Lakes interspersed with the Yellow Flag Iris. The population is currently contained but has the potential to spread downstream into Chaffee County. Treatment is expected to begin in 2024 and continue through 2034, following the timeline of Yellow Flag Iris.
 - vii. Perennial Pepperweed: This is one of the top priorities for our spray program. Populations of Perennial Pepperweed are spread throughout the District with higher concentrations in the central part of the District north of Center. Currently being annually surveyed and treated.
 - viii. Russian Knapweed: Another top priority for our spray program, populations of Russian Knapweed are spread throughout the District with higher concentrations in the central part of the District north of Center as well as between Moffat and Villa Grove.
 - ix. Yellow Toadflax: A moderate population across 5 acres has been treated and is often sporadic. Currently being annually surveyed and treated as needed.
- c. **List C Species:** C.R.S. 35-5.5-108 describes list C species as widespread and well-established noxious weed species for which control is recommended but not required by the state, although local governing bodies may require management.
- i. Chicory: Most often found on the west side of the District in the foothills and mountains, Chicory has been managed well in the District and requires occasional surveys and treatment to maintain current populations.
 - ii. Downy Brome: Most often found on the west and east sides of the District in the foothill rangelands, Downy Brome has been managed well in the District and requires occasional surveys and treatment to maintain current populations.

- iii. Field Bindweed: These populations are sporadic in the District and are often found north of Center, west of 285, and west of Saguache. Currently being surveyed and treated as needed.
- iv. Halogeton: Populations of Halogeton are mostly found in the central part of the District along 285 and between Saguache and Moffat. Currently being surveyed and treated as needed.
- v. Puncturevine: These populations are scattered throughout the District and are treated whenever possible, though populations tend to be more concentrated between Saguache and Moffat, east of Moffat, and along Highway 17.

III. Noxious Weed Management Approaches

a. Integrated Weed Management.

- i. Mechanical: when possible, mechanical management is a preferred method for smaller, more manageable populations. This is performed via hand pulling and/or mowing.
- ii. Chemical: most populations under the District’s jurisdiction require some level of chemical treatment. Chemical treatment is applied to larger populations and to species recommend this as an effective form of management. Chosen chemicals are specific and targeted to minimize contamination and health concerns and are only applied by a licensed professional.
- iii. Biological: when applicable, biological control via livestock grazing is highly recommended for landowners as an effective prevention and control method. This is only recommended for certain species that are safe for livestock consumption.
- iv. Cultural: when applicable, cultural control through recommendations of crop rotations, pre- and post-harvest land management, and introducing native species are made to landowners.

- b. **Public Right-of-Ways:** The District is currently under contract with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for the treatment of specified public right-of-ways in Saguache County. These treatment areas utilize mechanical and

chemical methods of control, depending on the species, habitat, and population size.

- c. Public Lands:** The District is capable of treating public lands when needed by contract with the public land manager or owner. For more information on how the District can assist with weed management on public lands, please contact the District or visit the District website.
- d. Private Lands:** Private lands are treated by the District upon landowner request or if a specialist in the District contacts the landowner to notify them of required treatment per C.R.S. 35-5.5-108.5. For more information on how the District can assist with weed management on private lands, please contact the District or visit the District website.

IV. Management Tools

- a. Education/Outreach:** Education and outreach on the prevention, control, and management of noxious weeds is a priority for the District. Information is provided to local landowners through booklets, pamphlets, meetings, seminars, general community involvement, and on the District website.
- b. Resources:** To conduct weed management services, the District utilizes the following resources:
 - i. Cost-Share:** the District is often able to provide cost-share services to private landowners in Saguache County available at a 1:1 cost.
 - ii. Fee for Service:** if a cost-share service does not apply to the landowner, fees may be charged to an entity for provided services.
 - iii. Grants:** the District is able to offer cost-share opportunities and receives maintenance and administrative funds through the Colorado Department of Agriculture Noxious Weed Grant.
- c. Enforcement:** Per C.R.S. 35-5.5-108.5, the District is required to enforce noxious weed management for each of these scenarios:
 - i. Public Lands:** enforcement on public lands is conducted by contacting the entity or landowner who oversees the designated public lands. Noxious weed management will then be performed based on a contracted

agreement between the District and public land managing entity or landowner.

- ii. **Private Lands:** enforcement on private lands occurs when a specialist from the District observes a noxious weed population from a public right-of-way. The District will then contact the landowner and will inform them of the population and the landowner's legal requirement to control the population. If desired, the District can perform control requirements on behalf of the landowner upon a contracted agreement.
- iii. **Right-of-Ways and Easements:** enforcement on right-of-ways and easements occurs when a specialist from the District observes a noxious weed population from a public right-of-way. The District will then contact the entity or landowner of the right-of-way or easement and will inform them of the population and the entity's or landowner's legal requirement to control the population. If desired, the District can perform control requirements on behalf of the entity or landowner upon a contracted agreement.

V. Noxious Weed Management Plan

- a. **Saguache County:** The District may only provide treatment of noxious weeds within its jurisdiction unless otherwise determined in a contracted agreement between an entity or landowner and the District. Common species treated within the District's jurisdiction are listed under Section II.
 - i. The District's goal is to eradicate the population of list A Yellow Flag Iris from Saguache County by 2034 which will require a semi-annual chemical treatment until the population is controlled enough for mechanical removal. An instream net will also be installed to prevent populations from developing downstream in Chaffee County. Control will be performed by the District, Saguache County, Chaffee County, the United States Forest Service, and the Colorado Department of Agriculture.
 - ii. List B species in Saguache County will be eradicated in the area by 2039. Chemical, mechanical, biological, and cultural control will be employed depending on the species, habitat, and population size. Control will be

performed by the District and Saguache County on a semi-annual basis for reported and monitored populations.

- iii.** List C and Watch List species in Saguache County will continue to be controlled and managed as needed. Chemical, mechanical, biological, and cultural control will be employed depending on the species, habitat, and population size. Control will be performed by the District and Saguache County on a semi-annual basis for reported and monitored populations.