Annual Billings County Weed Control Board Newsletter 2021

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Billings County Weed Control Board

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2021 Noxious Weed Informational Events

The Billings County Weed Control Board (BCWCB) strives to be actively involved in our local ag. community. We

will have a booth set up at the Medora Grazing Association's annual meeting at 1:30 pm Wednesday May 26th at the AmericInn in Medora. The ND Weed Control Association will be hosting a sprayer school at the Stark County Weed Board on May 27, 2021. Registration will begin at 8:30 am. Sprayer schools are held to provide additional information about controlling noxious and troublesome weeds. Other topics may include safety information, calibration, weed ID, law changes, chemical updates, and new herbicides entering the market. For more information about the sprayer school or to register please visit www.ndweeds.com

Weed Watch: Spotted Knapweed

Spotted knapweed is a growing concern in Billings County. Each year the number of infested acres is increasing significantly. It is

commonly found along roadways, oil locations, pipelines, railroads, pasture, and rangeland. Spotted knapweed spreads only by seed. Each plant produces 1,000 or more seeds, that can live in the soil up to five years. Characteristics that help identify it are its greenish-gray foliage and bright pink oval shaped flower. It grows between 2-3 feet tall and unlike other knapweeds, has stiff black bracts located beneath the flower. Plants bloom between July and September.

Spotted knapweed is a major concern of our weed board. It inhabits more acres in Minnesota and Montana than Leafy spurge. It spreads faster than Canada thistle and is extremely invasive. This plant is not as commonly known as Canada thistle or Leafy spurge, but our local landowners and operators need to familiarize themselves with it. In hopes of preventing Billings County and North Dakota from acquiring as large of an infestation as our neighboring states. Spotted knapweed can be controlled by using chemical, cultural, or biological methods. For the best control, a combination of methods is most effective. Hand pulling works well when infestations are small, and the plant has not produced seed. When hand pulling, it

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is important to remove the entire taproot of the pulled plant to prevent it from re-emerging. After hand pulling, an application of a herbicide should be applied to prevent emergence of new seedlings. In larger infestations, chemical control is one of the most cost-effective ways to prevent spreading. Applications should be done prior to the plant creating a bud or flower. Herbicides such as Tordon 22K and Milestone can be applied when Spotted knapweed is in the rosette stage. A follow-up application can be done in the fall of the year to control new regrowth. The BCWCB is working with the ND Dept. of Ag. to establish biological control sites. We hope to establish biological control agents in the coming years to better combat Spotted knapweed.







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North Dakota and Billings County Noxious Weed List



The pictures above shows common burdock in various stages of growth throughout its life cycle.

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Flea Beetles for the Control of Leafy Spurge

Leafy spurge Flea Beetles were first introduced to North Dakota in 1986. In the late 80s and earlies 90s, several species were distributed throughout

North Dakota. By 1996, nearly all North Dakota counties had both *A. lacertosa* and *A. nigriscutis* species. Leafy spurge Flea Beetles are used as a biological control for Leafy spurge. The adult beetles control Leafy spurge by feeding on its vegetation. The primary way that beetles are effective is from the larvae they lay in to the soil. Over the winter months, larvae feed on the plants' root systems. This damages the plant's ability to absorb water and nutrients, causing the plant to be under stress. When stressed, Leafy spurge is more susceptible to pathogens within the soil, and more reactive to herbicide treatments. Research has found that flea beetle populations flourish in several different soil types but are less productive in sandy soils.



When choosing beetle release sites, producers should find areas that are well drained and are not prone to flooding or standing water. Flea Beetles are less

productive in controlling Leafy spurge next to rivers and waterways. South-facing slopes and areas that are not heavily shaded have proven to be most effective as release sites. Flea Beetles flourish in moderate to heavy Leafy spurge infestations. In addition, the infestation needs to have a small amount of grass cover. When releasing the Flea Beetles, make sure to place them on the edge of dense infestations. This allows the beetles to feed on the spurge inward.



In 2021, the BCWCB will be hosting three public collection field days at two different sites within Billings County. Directions to the collection sites will be posted on our website prior to collection dates. In order to receive Flea Beetles, the participant must be actively sweeping during the collection. Nets and containers for the bugs will be provided by the BCWCB. Participants must bring their own ice packs and cooler to keep the beetles cool during transportation. Please wear adequate clothing and bring your own sun protection, water, and snacks. BCWCB employees will assist in gathering, sorting, measuring and transporting beetles to containers. Once the collection has ended, all collected beetles will be distributed evenly amongst the participants. If beetles cannot be released the day they are collected they can be stored in the refrigerator up to forty-eight hours. It is best to get them released as soon as possible in order to prevent a death loss. We advise releasing beetles the same they day are collected for best results.

Listed below are our 2021 collection dates. Note: Collections begin at 10:00 a.m. MST.

Franks CreekJune 24thJune 29th

Wannagan Creek July 1st

Dates will be rescheduled if weather is unfavorable and if beetle populations are still flourishing. Please check our website closer to collection dates for site directions and to be sure the collection has not been canceled. You can also contact the BCWCB for additional information.

Billings County Emergency Notifications

Automatic Emergency Notifications are sent out at the request of the hese notifications will only go out

Billings County Sheriff/Emergency Manager. These notifications will only go out when there is an emergency situation in an identified geographic area located within Billings County. All land-lines are automatically registered for Emergency Notifications.

We encourage citizens to register their mobile phone numbers. Please scan the code on the right using the camera on your smart phone. Enter your name, phone number, and physical address for the Billings County 911 Citizen Notification database. If you have any questions, please contact the Billings County 911 office at 701-623-4810.



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The BCWCB will again offer cost-share on the chemicals listed below. We may also be 2021 Cost-Share able to offer assistance on other chemicals at a landowner's request, including prairie dog bait. Restricted use products require certification to purchase. Anyone planning to purchase restricted use products must be currently certified as a private or commercial applicator through NDSU Extension. The ND Dept. of Agriculture Landowners Assistance Program (LAP) covers 70% of the chemical costs and the landowner is responsible for the remaining 30%. There is a cap of one thousand dollars per producer per year. After this cap has been reached, landowners will be charged full price on any additional products purchased. The BCWCB also offers spraying services on privately owned land within Billings County. Prices for spraying vary. If you have questions about pricing or would like to know more about the spraying services we have to offer contact the BCWCB. Due to the abundance of spraying requests, we will only be spraying for two days per landowner. Landowners must call yearly to be added to the spray list. NOTICE: The BCWCB will not allow customers with outstanding bills to purchase chemical or be provided with spraying services until all bills are paid in full. 2021 Estimated Chemical Costs **Dye Packets** Milestone Plateau Tordon 22K 2-4D Amine \$99.00/gal \$10.40/gal. \$5.50/pkt. \$66.25/qt. \$43.70/gal. Glyphosate Surfactant Vista 2-4D Ester MSO \$14.80/gal. \$18.70/gal. \$167.20/gal. \$17.70/gal. \$12.90/gal. The Billings County Weed Control Board is focused on providing high-quality service and customer satisfaction. "We take pride in helping our local landowners maintain and control noxious weed populations." We would like to thank everyone involved with the control of noxious weeds in our County!

To find out more about the BCWCB please visit us on the web at www.bcwcb.com