

EXHIBIT 2  
DATE 3/29/05  
HB 766

# MONTANA WEED MANAGEMENT PLAN

MONTANA SUMMIT STEERING COMMITTEE

WEED MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE



*In cooperation with:*

- MONTANA WEED CONTROL ASSOCIATION
- FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES
- MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
- COUNTY WEED DISTRICTS
- PRIVATE LAND MANAGERS

COMPILED BY:

Celestine A. Duncan<sup>1</sup>

EDITING/DESIGN BY:

Melissa L. Brown

PRINTED BY:

The Montana Department of Transportation  
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*Cover drawing by Jennifer Cramer*

<sup>1</sup> Weed Management Services, PO Box 1385, Helena, MT 59624

THE MONTANA WEED MANAGEMENT PLAN—EXISTING SITUATION, CURRENT PROGRAM, AND PROGRAM NEEDS

Revenue expended includes \$250,274 (on-ground weed management); \$99,220 (weed control on trails); \$142,757 (private landowners on Block Management areas); \$1,950 (outreach and education); and \$9,386 (vegetation management of the Capitol complex). The proposed on-ground noxious weed management biennial budget for Fiscal Years 2004 through 2005 is \$469,994 (\$234,997/year). Weed control activities are funded through multiple operations budgets of the Fisheries, Wildlife, Field Services, and Parks Divisions. Future regional budgets would be similar to previous years' expenditures.

Six-Year Weed Management Plans have been completed for both Parks and Wildlife Divisions in the seven regions; two Regions are in the process of updating and revising their plans. Many of the larger Wildlife Management Areas also have site-specific weed management plans in place. For the majority of sites, weed control is accomplished via contract with county weed districts or private contractors.

*Program Needs*

- 1) Implement statewide inventory standards for mapping and monitoring weed infestations and weed management activities on FWP lands. Incorporate inventory data into statewide system.
- 2) Evaluate and prioritize current FWP noxious weed management practices and focus future efforts on high priority sites.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION (DNRC) TRUST LAND DIVISION (STATE LANDS)

State Lands Division manages 5.1 million surface and 6.2 million subsurface acres through six Area Offices and 12 Unit Offices. Currently,

the Division has a weed management budget of approximately \$60,000 for projects on state lands. This does not include staff time and expenses for annual biological control efforts. Total acres infested by noxious weeds are unknown and statewide inventories have not been conducted on state lands. Based on 9% of lands infested in Montana, a total of 459,000 acres are infested on state trust lands. The Legislative Performance Audit calculated 21% of state land infested. Weed specialists have estimated that a minimum annual budget of \$300,000 annually is necessary to assess the current status of noxious weeds on state owned lands and develop management strategies. In addition, cost to state-land lessees to stop spread and reduce existing infestations by 5% would be \$1.7 million annually (on-ground management costs only). Therefore, total predicted costs for weed management on state trust lands would be \$2 million.

As lands are inspected in association with leases or other projects (such as timber sales), weed infestations are noted. For leased lands, follow-up contact is made with the lessee and weed management plans or control is required. For other projects, site-specific plans are developed to address weed control during and after those activities.

In 2003, a Legislative performance audit reviewed weed management activities on state land. Based on recommendations from that audit, the Division developed weed management plans for each of its Area Offices. The plans, along with the County Cooperative Weed Agreements required by §7-22-2151. MCA, are intended to meet program needs 1 through 3 described below.

*Program Needs*

- 1) Identify and record noxious weed infestations on state land for inclusion in the statewide inventory system.

**Annual Weed Fees for School Trust Land by Acre**  
**10 cents/acre**

Number of Sections	Number of Acres	Total Charge		
		10 cents/acre	5 cents/ acre	1 cent/ acre
	1	\$0.10	\$0.05	\$0.01
1	640	\$64.00	\$32.00	\$6.40
2	1,280	\$128.00	\$64.00	\$12.80
3	1,920	\$192.00	\$96.00	\$19.20
4	2,560	\$256.00	\$128.00	\$25.60
5	3,200	\$320.00	\$160.00	\$32.00
6	3,840	\$384.00	\$192.00	\$38.40
7	4,480	\$448.00	\$224.00	\$44.80
8	5,120	\$512.00	\$256.00	\$51.20
9	5,760	\$576.00	\$288.00	\$57.60
10	6,400	\$640.00	\$320.00	\$64.00
11	7,040	\$704.00	\$352.00	\$70.40
12	7,680	\$768.00	\$384.00	\$76.80
13	8,320	\$832.00	\$416.00	\$83.20
14	8,960	\$896.00	\$448.00	\$89.60
15	9,600	\$960.00	\$480.00	\$96.00
20	12,800	\$1,280.00	\$640.00	\$128.00
25	16,000	\$1,600.00	\$800.00	\$160.00
30	19,200	\$1,920.00	\$960.00	\$192.00
35	22,400	\$2,240.00	\$1,120.00	\$224.00
40	25,600	\$2,560.00	\$1,280.00	\$256.00
45	28,800	\$2,880.00	\$1,440.00	\$288.00
50	32,000	\$3,200.00	\$1,600.00	\$320.00