

HB 420: Support Montana Food and Agricultural Development Centers

What would this bill do?

This bill would fund Montana's food and agricultural development centers to maintain and modestly build on Montana's capacity to assist entrepreneurs in the areas of food manufacturing and alternative energy production.

It also makes sensible, needed changes to statutory language to allow the Department of Agriculture more flexibility to respond to increased demand for the Centers.

These centers hold tremendous potential for economic development in both urban and rural communities. They keep money in our communities, improve access to healthier food for our citizens, and reconnect our rural and urban economies.

Who will benefit from the bill?

Farmers, Ranchers, and Small Businesses.

By ensuring that these centers can continue to provide technical assistance to Montana's food and farm entrepreneurs, this bill will help Montana retain a greater share of the billions of food and energy dollars Montanans otherwise send out of state.

Montana's Citizens and Communities.

The demand for Montana-produced food and energy greatly exceeds supply. Maintaining and building our food manufacturing and farm-energy production infrastructure adds value that stays on our farms and in our communities, while reducing our dependence on global sources for food and fuel.

Why do we need Food and Agricultural Development Centers?

Montanans spend more than \$3 billion a year on food, but currently only about 10% of that money stays in Montana. Research confirms that the lack of a food processing and value-added agriculture infrastructure is a primary barrier preventing farmers and food entrepreneurs from succeeding in in-state markets.

Food manufacturing is a growth industry in Montana, once again. As of 2009, food product manufacturing is the third largest manufacturing sector in Montana in terms of labor income, accounting for 10 percent of the value of all manufacturing in Montana. The growth in this sector is supported by the Food and Agricultural Development Network in ways not available from other business and economic development agencies in Montana. For continued growth, the Food and Ag program needs adequate funding.



Strengthening our Food and Agricultural Economy

Montana's Food and Agricultural Development Centers

FY-2012 Highlights

FY2012	Food	Ag Energy	Other Value-Added Ag	TOTAL
Active clients	104	11	17	132

In FY 2012 the program saw a **24 percent increase in the number of clients served.**

- **79% were food businesses**, up 6% from the previous biennium.
- **76% of all new clients were food clients.**
- **13% were "other value-added agriculture"** businesses.
- There was a **4% decline in farm-based energy clients**, a trend driven by increased investment in oil development, and uncertainty in the renewable energy sector.



In FY 2012, food and ag. development center clients:

- Introduced **47 new products**;
- Started **19 new businesses**;
- Undertook **24 business expansions**;
- Created **41.5 new jobs** and
- Leveraged **over \$2,000,000 in outside funding**, over one third from private sources.

These centers, operating as a statewide network, have developed specific capacity to provide training, coaching and technical and financial assistance in:

- **Product development, testing, analysis, labeling**
- **Regulatory compliance training and implementation**
- **Food processing**
- **Market analysis in the especially fast-growing food markets**
- **Business networking**
- **Cooperative development**
- **Business planning & development**
- **Access to financing**
- **Education on industry dynamics & technologies**



For more information, please contact:

Grow Montana Coordinator-Stephanie Potts-Stephaniep@ncat.org-(734)476-7353

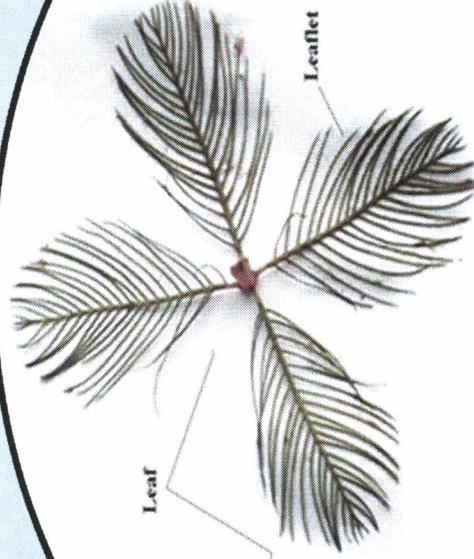
≈ Have you seen this water weed?

Eurasian watermilfoil is not native to Montana, and once it starts growing, it is very difficult to control.

To identify Eurasian Watermilfoil:

- Count the pairs of leaflets. Eurasian Watermilfoil has 12 or more pairs.
- It has a feather-like appearance. The leaves collapse around the stem when removed from the water.
- The topmost leaves and stems may be reddish-brown or pink.
- Mature leaves are usually arranged in whorls of four around the stem.

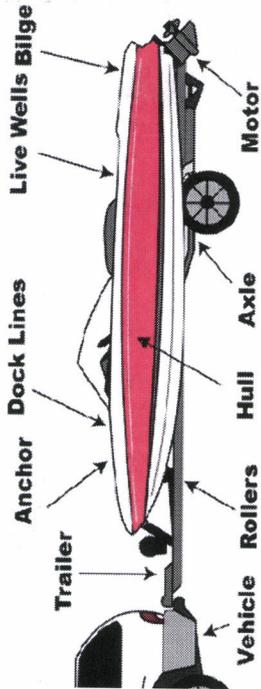
If you see this plant, contact:
Montana Department of Agriculture
406.444.3144



≈ What can you do to help?

The best way to control Eurasian Watermilfoil is to prevent the weed from spreading to new areas. Here's how:

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.



1. INSPECT: After leaving a lake or stream, inspect your boat (see graphic above) and gear for mud, water, and vegetation that could carry aquatic invasive species.

2. CLEAN: Completely remove all mud, water, and vegetation you find. Boaters should use a pressurized power sprayer, found at most do-it-yourself car washes. The hot water helps kill organisms and the pressure removes mud and vegetation. No need to use soap or chemicals.

3. DRY: Aquatic invaders can survive only in water and wet areas. By drying your boating and fishing equipment thoroughly, you will kill most invasive species. The longer you can keep your boat, trailer, waders, wading boots, and other equipment outside in the hot sun between fishing trips, the better.

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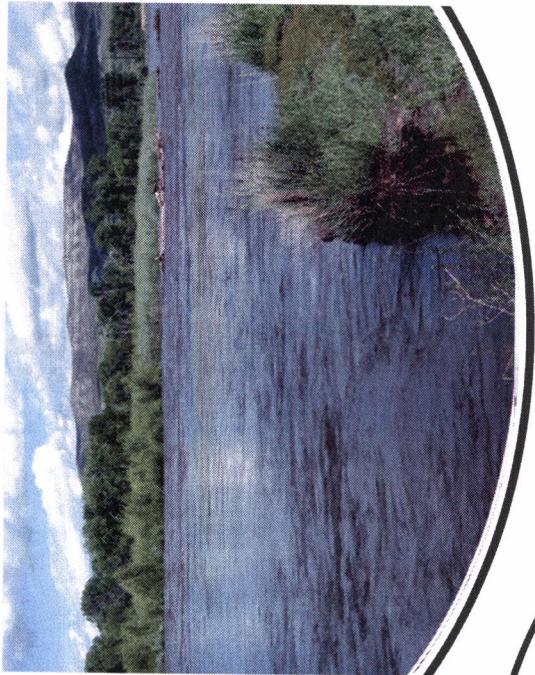
Or your local Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force:

HEADWATERS TASK FORCE

Celestine Duncan

(406) 443-1469

Weeds1@wildblue.net

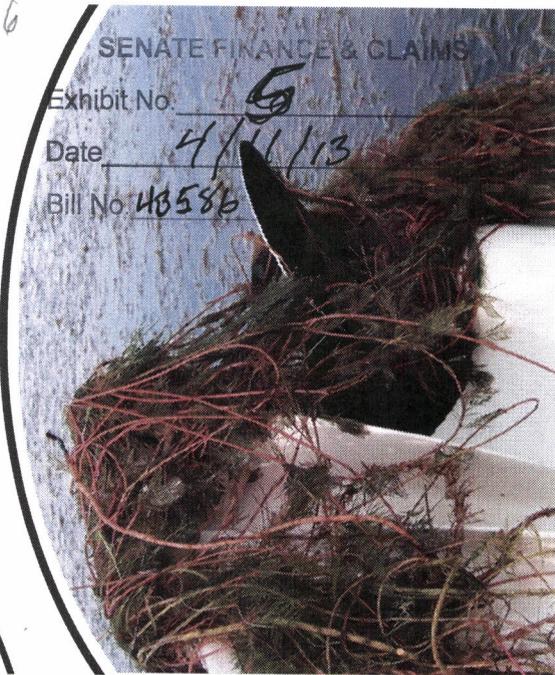


MONTANA

Noxious Weed Alert

Eurasian Watermilfoil

You can help save Montana's waterways



~ Why is Eurasian Watermilfoil a problem?

Eurasian Watermilfoil can cost Montana millions of dollars a year to manage.

Eurasian Watermilfoil is a highly aggressive aquatic plant that can form dense mats which clog waterways and crowd out native aquatic plants.



Protect our pristine lakes for our future.

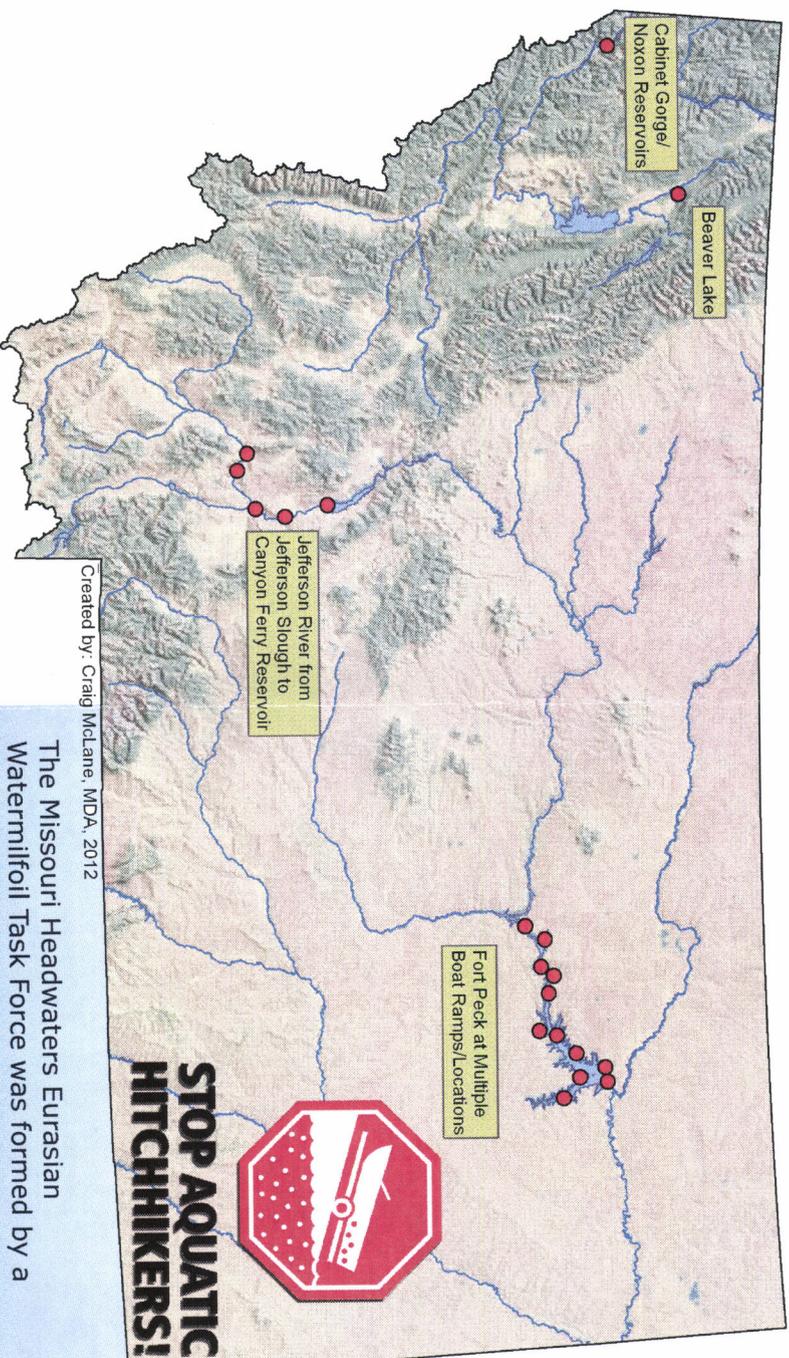
This has major implications for Montana:

1. Eurasian Watermilfoil may impair recreational uses of a waterway, including boating, swimming, and fishing; and
2. Dense growth can lead to deteriorating water quality, thereby altering and degrading the habitat of native fish and wildlife.
3. Montana's agriculture community can also be impacted from Eurasian Watermilfoil by choking ditches and canals along with clogging irrigation intake pipes and screens.

~ Where in Montana is Eurasian Watermilfoil?

Infestations of Eurasian watermilfoil in Montana are found in the lower Clark Fork River, Fort Peck Reservoir, the Upper Missouri River, lower Jefferson River and Beaver Lake. Be sure to **REPORT** any new infestations you find.

See the map below for locations.



~ How does it spread?

Eurasian Watermilfoil is easily spread by plant fragments that may be carried by water currents, boats, motors, trailers, live wells, water skis, bait buckets, or other gear. Eurasian Watermilfoil fragments can stay alive for weeks, if they remain wet.

DO NOT pull a plant if you spot one! This could cause fragments to break loose and spread more.

~ Who can stop it?

All of us! All Montanans and out-of-state recreationalists, vacationers, and travelers can help stop the spread of Eurasian Watermilfoil and other aquatic hitchhikers to Montana's uninfested waters.

See the back of this brochure to find out what **YOU** can do to help.

The Missouri Headwaters Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force was formed by a group of concerned people from county, state, and federal agencies along with other stakeholders in the Upper Missouri Watershed area. The Task Force works to increase education and awareness about the new invader. The Task Force is also working on management and containment options for this noxious weed.

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!



INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

