

Purgatoire Watershed WEED MANAGEMENT COLLABORATIVE



**EXPLORING THE BENEFIT OF NOXIOUS WEED
MANAGEMENT FOR LANDOWNERS, BUSINESSES AND
COMMUNITIES IN LAS ANIMAS COUNTY, COLORADO**

“Our goal is to maintain, protect, and improve the ecological integrity, agricultural productivity, recreational and hunting opportunities, and the economy of the Purgatoire River Watershed”

Our Story

The Purgatoire Watershed Weed Management Collaborative (PWWMC) arose from a common commitment to a truly stunning and ecologically remarkable watershed. The Purgatoire River, and surrounding landscape, represents one of the most ecologically intact watersheds in the state of Colorado. In 2004, out of growing concern for the impact of noxious weeds on this unique environment, the PWWMC partnership was formed. One of the first major projects was compiling a preliminary assessment of two major noxious tree species, tamarisk and Russian-olive.

After a decade of hard work, PWWMC was formalized in January of 2016 among RiversEdge West, Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District and Purgatoire Watershed Partnership. PWWMC is now the Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District’s designated noxious weed program.

PWWMC has grown and flourished, treating nearly 2,000 acres of noxious weeds within the watershed and working with over 50 landowners. Such success can be attributed to the extensive ongoing support from local landowners, conservation agencies, governmental entities and businesses.



PWWMC
Snapshots

2004 –2008

Partnership formed and watershed mapping of tamarisk and Russian-olive/Pilot Projects

2009—2012

Tamarisk controlled in the entire Chacuaco Drainage

2007-2014

Tamarisk and Russian-olive controlled in major upper watershed tributaries, areas along the Trinidad River Walk and areas at Trinidad Lake State Park

2016

PWWMC Formalized

\$800,000

Awarded to the partnership since 2005

Over 20

Dedicated Partners

2,000

Acres treated between 2005 and 2018



Tamarisk trees displacing native plants along the Purgatoire River in the Hoehne area



Tamarisk tree in full bloom

Noxious Weeds Matter!

The Purgatoire Watershed is one of the most ecologically intact watersheds in the State of Colorado. It boasts amazingly intact native vegetation and extraordinary biological diversity, all while supporting vibrant communities, robust agricultural production and highly sought after recreational and hunting opportunities.

Counties within the Purgatoire Watershed depend on their natural resources for economic well-being and quality of life. Agriculture, recreation, hunting, tourism, drinking water supply; each of these depends upon quality natural resources and informed resource management as the basis to a sustainable economy.

Noxious weeds pose one of the biggest threats to these resources and the long-term health of the Purgatoire Watershed. Whether through declining agricultural productivity and recreational opportunities, degraded wildlife habitat and hunting opportunities, or simply the ongoing costs associated with noxious weed control, the economic and environmental costs are staggering. **By working together, landowners, businesses, and communities can more efficiently and effectively invest in protection of our natural resources. PWWMC can serve as the conduit for collaborative conservation efforts.**



Noxious Weed
Snapshots

133,000,000

The number of acres
nation-wide that are
infested with
noxious weeds ³

Over 100

The number of noxious
weeds known in the
State of Colorado ²

\$14 Million

Estimated annual economic impact to
the State of Colorado from only ten
noxious weed species ¹

\$32 Billion

Estimated annual value of lost crop production to
US Agriculture (2007) ³

1,700,000 acres

New land overcome by noxious weeds each year in
the United States ³

¹ Colorado State University Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, 2014; ² Colorado Department of Agriculture; ³ Invasive Plants: Their Role in Species Extinctions and Economic Losses

Why Get Involved?

Noxious weeds pose one of the biggest threats to the long-term health of the Purgatoire Watershed. They can displace desirable vegetation and degrade natural and agricultural lands. Local involvement of businesses, private landowners and communities will increase PWWMC's reach, providing more resources for direct conservation of Las Animas County natural and agricultural resources. This translates to economic protection of local communities.

By partnering with PWWMC, local businesses, landowners and communities can become a proactive partner for implementation of direct on-the-ground conservation efforts like noxious weed management and land restoration. PWWMC can assist landowners with the expertise and resources needed to achieve successful control of noxious weeds and land restoration.

Your participation or investment in the Purgatoire Watershed Weed Management Collaborative will provide a brighter future for the livelihoods of all Las Animas County residents. Your support will ensure the long-term ecological and economic protection of the Purgatoire Watershed.

For More Information

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Why Contribute?

Noxious weeds pose serious economic and environmental consequences

Intact native ecosystems provide protection of the drinking water supply, recreational and hunting opportunities, and agricultural production

Healthy landscapes attract new businesses and investments in Las Animas County communities

Collaborative work reduces restoration costs by combining resources

Your contribution goes directly to improving the health of the Purgatoire Watershed!

