

NOXIOUS WEEDS IN SAN JUAN COUNTY

What are noxious weeds?

“Noxious” is a legal term referring to non-native plants that are highly destructive, competitive and difficult to control by normal cultural practices. Aggressive growth patterns and lack of natural enemies allow these species to become highly invasive. Preventing the spread of noxious weeds is critical to the economic and ecological health of the county.

How do noxious weeds affect you?

Noxious weeds:

- can poison humans and livestock;
- decrease biological diversity by displacing native vegetation and wildlife;
- lower land values;
- clog lakes and ponds;
- reduce crop yields and increase agricultural costs;
- destroy intertidal ecological communities.



Some San Juan County noxious weeds:

spurge laurel, Scotch broom, gorse, tansy ragwort, spotted and meadow knapweeds, giant hogweed, English ivy, thistle, Spartina

The Mission of the San Juan County

Noxious Weed Control Program is to focus on education, prevention, technical assistance and control of noxious weeds through voluntary compliance with RCW 17.10 . *It offers:*

- early detection and rapid response;
- educational materials and programs;
- noxious weed identification and inventories;
- site specific control recommendations;
- assistance to individuals, organizations and other agencies in controlling noxious weeds;
- the loaning of weed wrenches for Scotch broom.

The best control is prevention.

What can you do?

- Learn to recognize noxious weeds. If you find an infested area or unfamiliar plant, contact the SJC Weed Program staff.
- Use weed free seed, forage, compost and soil.
- Carefully select garden plants, choosing native species or non-invasive ornamentals in your landscapes. Do not share aggressive plants with your neighbors
- Never empty your aquarium into ponds or streams.
- Check and clean your boats and trailers for any plant fragments.
- Wash mowers and other equipment when moving from a weed infested site to clean site
- Volunteer with The Land Bank, The Preservation Trust, the County or State Parks, Noxious Weed Program or other local agencies for weed removal.