

SAN JUAN COUNTY
NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD 2019 ANNUAL
REPORT TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL



Native Camas Wildflowers
San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuge,
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Photo by Jason Ontjes

2019-2020 San Juan County Noxious Weed Control Board Members:

Mr. Bruce Gregory, Chair, North San Juan, Stuart
1071 Mitchell Bay Road
Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(Term expires 7/21)

Mrs. Joyce Nigretto, West Orcas, Shaw, Crane
2366 Orcas Road
Eastsound, WA 98245
(Term expires 7/20)

Dr. William Agosta, Vice-Chair, South San Juan
P.O. Box 1547
Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(Term expires 7/22)

Mr. Todd Goldsmith, Lopez, Center, Blakely &
Decatur
1844 Baker View Road
Lopez, WA 98261
(Term expires 7/21)

Mr. William Rupp, Secretary, East Orcas,
Obstruction
122 Peapod Lane
Olga, WA 98279
(Term expires 7/22)

Dr. Brook Brouwer, *ex officio* and
WSU Extension Director, San Juan County
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Class B lesser celandine,
an escaped
garden ornamental

Program Staff:



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Julie at WSU
Extension
Office,
November
2019

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Shawn with
reed canarygrass,
San Juan Valley
October 2019

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Jason at
management
training,
October 2019

INTRODUCTION.

The San Juan County Noxious Weed Control Program marked **its 16th year** of funding as a taxing district and its **21st year of operation**. The SJC Noxious Weed Control Board annually adopts, with public input, the county noxious weed list, administers the Noxious Weed Control Program according to the requirements of RCW 17.10 and WAC 16-750, and prioritizes weed control activities. The Board advises and directs the county's Noxious Weed Program staff as they carry out the mandates of the state's noxious weed control law by primarily focusing on prevention, education and technical assistance in controlling or eradicating noxious weeds. The program relies primarily on voluntary compliance, with provisions for enforcement when necessary. Five voting members volunteer their service to the Board, joined by SJC WSU Extension Director, Brook Brouwer, serving as an *ex-officio* member. Board members represent each of the five County weed districts and are appointed by the County Council to four-year terms. Council member Bill Watson, District No. 1, is the Council's present liaison to the Weed Board.

KEY ISSUES FOR 2019 (and CHALLENGES IN THE YEAR AHEAD).

The Noxious Weed Board of San Juan County has identified several key issues and highlights for 2019-2020, which are summarized in this report:

- The adequacy of Public Works' countywide noxious weed disposal budget remains an issue for the Board; increased funding for 2020 merits serious consideration.
- The NWB's investment in the Youth Conservation Corps' 2019 budget was \$6,000 and expected to remain stable in 2020, barring a severe recession.
- The NWB's staff continued work on its Integrated Weed Management Plan, and will have a draft ready in the first half of 2020.
- The current ban of all herbicides in county road rights-of-way (SJC Code 18.60.090 A.3) remains a serious obstacle to achieving an effective, efficient, and successful noxious and invasive weed control program for San Juan County.
- RCW 17.10.050 currently requires at least 4 of the 5 voting county board members to be "engaged in the primary production of agricultural products", a stipulation that may inhibit recruitment of new members.
- As the costs of insurance, IT and other non-negotiable line items go up each year, the Noxious Weed Board's operating budget correspondingly diminishes.
- Recruitment and retention of valuable employees are being undercut by the high cost of living in San Juan County, particularly with housing.

FUTURE BOARD APPOINTMENTS.

The SJC Noxious Weed Control Board currently enjoys full membership of five voting members. As with other boards and advisory committees in San Juan County, the Noxious



Orcas Board member,
Joyce Nigretto
(Islands' Sounder)

Weed Board's present membership has remained dedicated to the cause for multiple, successive terms. Two of our Board members have served more or less uninterrupted since the Board's founding in the 1990s: current Chairman, Bruce Gregory, and Orcas Island's Joyce Nigretto (pictured). The present review of RCW 17.10.050 by the State Department of Agriculture and key stakeholders may lead to broader participation in the future, if prospective Board members are allowed in fields such as natural resource management, landscape design, horticulture, etc. The uneven geographic distribution of

agricultural areas within the county has also hindered recruitment of new board members. Right now, the law requires 4 of 5 voting county board members to be engaged in the primary production of agricultural products.

COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED PLAN.

The Board maintains its interest in developing a countywide comprehensive plan for noxious weeds, drawing input from other land management groups (Preservation Trust, Land Bank, Friends of the San Juans, WSDA, BLM, State Parks, NPS, Public Works, etc.). Based on the experience and success of Clallam County, the Board hopes to emulate this previous work as a template for supporting documents, eventually leading to public workshops or presentations. The Board's staff continues to work on a draft of the plan in 2019-2020.

SJC CODE 18.60.090 A.3.

The Board still wishes to modify County Code 18.60.090 A.3, which states that “no herbicides, pesticides or chemicals shall be used for weed control in (county) road rights-of-way”. The Board believes that the extremely limited use



Scot's Broom Infestation,
Dill Road (Lopez)

of herbicides, if used in a targeted, highly selective manner with the latest technology available, and according to label directions by its own licensed and properly trained staff, is a critical part of an integrated weed management program, especially in road rights-of-way, if permitted. Roadways serve as a major vector or pathway for the spread of noxious weeds, so effective control of roadside weeds is of paramount importance to prevent further spread. The absence of herbicides from the road right-of-way toolbox is

a major impediment, the Board believes. Extensive outreach efforts will be needed to convince the public that this code should be modified



Class B Meadow Knapweed,
Lopez roadside, May 2019

Certain roadside noxious weeds now required to be controlled (either by the state or county) exist in numbers too large to be manually controlled, and are not suited to common mechanical control practices, such as mowing. These roadside species, therefore, continue to expand coverage: Further expansion of these weed populations into adjacent properties, including farmlands and forests, is an unintended and undesirable outcome of the current ordinance.

The Board believes that a very limited, targeted approach to controlling noxious weeds with herbicides along county roadsides would result in a dramatic reduction in these populations, some of which have persisted for decades. The Board **does not** wish to promote broadcast applications (“boom spraying”) with mechanized equipment along county roadsides, nor does it wish to target native or non-invasive species as part of a general “vegetation management” strategy.

Any removal of large patches of noxious weeds would need to be balanced with revegetation using native or non-invasive species suited to roadside environments. Based on the success of previous efforts made by WSDOT and Clallam County, among others, the high proportion of staff time spent working in county rights-of-way (representing many acres) offers the program a unique opportunity to engage in ongoing, widespread, and low-input habitat restoration in the course of work already performed. This approach would simultaneously allow the program to significantly reduce noxious weed populations and spread, improve rights-of-way habitat potential for native pollinators, and contribute to the beautification of our county roadsides.

OPERATING BUDGET. The San Juan County Noxious Weed Board receives funding through property levies, both on a per-parcel basis and by acreage. This amount has remained unchanged since 2009, at \$6.25 per parcel and \$0.625 per acre. The total annual amount received for these assessments was expected to be \$170,000 from 2016-2018, but only \$160,841 in 2019. Meanwhile, charges for some items, such as Information Technology Services, continues to rise substantially: ITS expenditures alone have grown each of the past three years to its current level of \$10,499, about 6.5 % of the Board’s budget (the Board’s allocation for technology in 2016 was \$1450 and provided by CenturyLink and Rock Island). Another expense, the monthly motor pool lease, is now

appropriated at \$4,200 a year (none in 2016 prior to Council’s approval of a second vehicle purchase through ER & R). In addition to inflation, such costs are largely beyond the Board’s direct control, thus its operating budget correspondingly declines each year.

YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS FUNDING.

For the past three summers, the Noxious Weed Board has provided funding to noxious weed-related Youth Conservation Corps work on public lands within San Juan County. A\$6,000 this season, this money was used in part for staff wages, stipends for participants and supported costs such as transportation, equipment, food, and other overhead items. The Board continues to support this allocation (\$6,000) in 2020 in order to encourage youths’ understanding and appreciation of the importance of controlling noxious weeds in the county, which participants



Orcas YCC and staff after successful blackberry removal at Patos Island, Aug. 2019



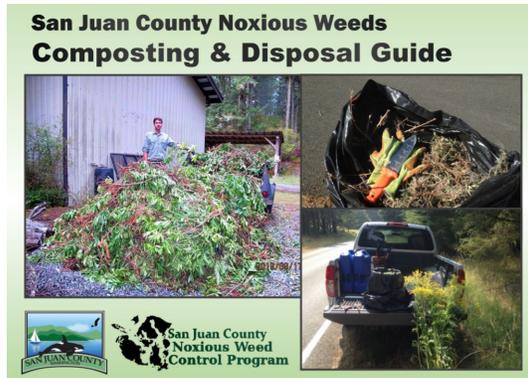
Source: dol.wa.gov, accessed 11/15/19

may impart to family and friends. Some participants may consider future careers in natural resource management, a prominent profession in our county. The new automotive license plates for San Juan County, which are to be used for YCC funding and natural resource management, may boost the program to the point that Weed Board funds may one day be redirected or reduced if

appropriate. A downturn in the local economy due to recession might also lead to reduced or eliminated Board funding for YCC activities.

NOXIOUS WEED DISPOSAL FUNDING.

The Noxious Weed Board continues to advocate for county funding of noxious weed disposal at the Lopez, Orcas and San Juan transfer stations, a program that is now administered by Public Works’ Solid Waste Program Administrator. This program remains popular with the public, and its budget (\$7,500 for 2019) has been spent well before the end of the year in each of the previous few years, indicating consistent, strong interest and



Composting & Disposal Guide, 2018

participation amongst county residents. The Board's members continue to believe that the noxious weed disposal program encourages greater compliance with noxious weed laws, and it would support additional increases in funding in the years ahead if this level of public support remains strong. Kendra Smith of Public Works has promoted the idea of reducing per-can fees from 2018 levels in order to control costs and stretch the weed disposal budget. A large container (20 cubic yards) exclusively dedicated to noxious weed disposal has also been mooted in the past for each island, though feasibility due to haulage costs remains in question for San Juan Island. In 2018, the Noxious Weed Board's Shawn Beach (Field Specialist) researched and developed a compost and disposal guide for noxious weeds of San Juan County (pictured above), in order to reduce inputs to the waste stream through appropriate composting, where possible.

GOALS:

1. Provide information and outreach services to public and private entities on topics related to invasive plants.
2. Provide education-based implementation and enforcement of state and local noxious weed laws.
3. Work closely with individuals, property owners, businesses, associations and government agencies in noxious weed control efforts.
4. Eradicate all known Class A noxious weeds within the county.
5. Contain or control the spread of all state-designated or county-selected Class B and C noxious weeds within the county.
6. Prevent the incursion of newly listed or unlisted weeds of concern on to county lands.



Class A eggleaf spurge
discovered on Orcas,
Sept. 2019

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop, in cooperation with the State Noxious Weed Control Board, the 2020 County Noxious Weed List and prepare the preliminary 2021 County list by April of 2020;
2. Research, on a species-by-species basis, the safest and most efficacious means of weed control, guided by integrated vegetation management (IVM) principles and current best management practices amongst noxious weed management professionals;
3. Create, update and print brochures and articles on individual weed species

- and/or weed control methodology;
4. Participate in outreach events as opportunity allows;
 5. Maintain the program's WSU Extension website (<https://extension.wsu.edu/sanjuan/noxious/>) with current information on noxious weed identification and control;
 6. Conduct site visits and develop weed management plans for property owners—including government entities—as requested;
 7. Work with county agencies such as Public Works, the Land Bank, and Parks and Fair to help them manage their weed populations, providing technical advice and control measures as requested;
 8. Monitor all known sites of Class A weeds, eradicating any known remnants of those populations in coordination with property owners and/or managers;
 9. Monitor public and private lands to document the presence of noxious weeds and any invasive plant species that may present a future threat to county lands;
 10. Endeavor to contact relevant property owners or managers in order to promote compliance with noxious weed laws and raise awareness of the importance of control;
 11. Provide monthly reports of program activities to the County Weed Board.

OUR PERSONNEL IN 2019.

Dr. Brook Brouwer, the Director of the WSU Extension Office in San Juan County, supervises the Weed Program's staff and serves as an *ex officio* Weed Board member. He manages not only the Noxious Weed Program, but also staff members of 4-H, the Agriculture Program, Master Gardeners, and Food Preservation. Brook helped to establish research plots recently for a study on hayfield management and the use of enhanced soil nutrition as a means to combat oxeye daisy and other weeds.

Julie Holley is the new Office Manager of the WSU Extension Office, joining us from her previous stint with Public Works. She ensures that invoices are paid, expenses are accounted for, and timesheets are completed for our staff, and helps to set up meetings for the Board. She also maintains our website.

Our 2019 seasonal field staff members (0.25 FTE), **Caroline Wiltz** and **Erinn Nelson**, helped the program to gain ground on a number of noxious weed control projects over the summer (mid-May to mid-September) and also collected data on our iForm Builder app. We plan to hire one seasonal for 2020 to continue their good work.

Jason Ontjes (Program Coordinator) and **Shawn Beach** (Field Specialist) are now on separate islands, Orcas and San Juan,



Erinn and Tansy
Ragwort, Lopez
Sept. 2019

respectively. This arrangement has allowed us to focus more attention on San Juan Island in the past year, thanks to Shawn's labors there.

OUR BOARD MEMBERS.

Mr. Bruce Gregory, the current Chair of the SJC Noxious Weed Board, is a Natural Resources Planner for the San Juan Islands Conservation District. He has traveled to Tajikistan this fall to help fruit growers there with their management practices. **Bill Agosta**, the current Vice-Chair, also serves on the State Noxious Weed Board, representing the northwestern counties of the state: San Juan, Island, Skagit, Whatcom, Snohomish, King, Kitsap, Clallam and Jefferson Counties. He has served South San Juan since December 2002.

Mr. William Rupp of Anchor Farms represents East Orcas and Obstruction Island, while serving as the Board's Secretary. He has volunteered his service to the County since October 2010. **Ms. Joyce Nigretto** of Orcas, a Board member since July 1996, is serving until July 2020. She represents Orcas West and Waldron Island. **Mr. Todd Goldsmith** continues to operate T and D Farms with his wife, Diane, on Lopez. Todd also represents Center, Blakely and Decatur Islands. We are grateful for all the Board members' dedication and guidance over the years.

CHANGES TO THE 2019 NOXIOUS WEED LIST.

The 2019 San Juan County Noxious Weed List was mostly a bookkeeping exercise compared to the changes made in 2018. Several species' scientific names changed, most notably tansy ragwort, now known as *Jacobaea vulgaris*, formerly *Senecio jacobaea*. The other species to get new Latin names were kochia (now *Bassia scoparia*), leafy spurge (now *Euphorbia virgata*), Himalayan knotweed (*Persicaria wallichii*), and Russian knapweed (now *Rhaponticum repens*). The State Weed Board decided to make butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*) a B-designate in San Juan County, meaning the state requires its control when found to be invasive (there are "accepted sterile cultivars" that do not appear to be a problem). Butterfly bush, an ornamental originally from Asia, is popular with gardeners because of its bright clusters of flowers, which can attract a number of



Butterfly Bush photo by
Laurel Baldwin, Whatcom
County NWCB

different pollinators. Butterfly bush is also on the state “plant quarantine list” (WAC 16-752).

2019 COLLABORATIONS.

One of the Noxious Weed Board’s goals is to work in collaboration with other entities in noxious weed control efforts. The Weed Board and its staff have:

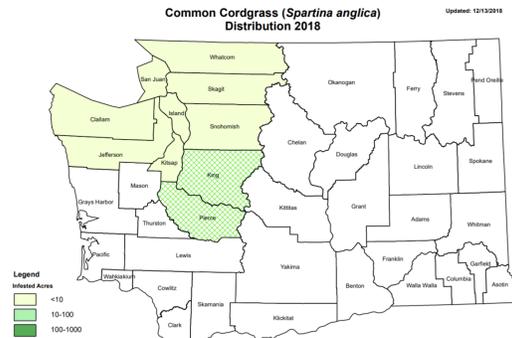
- Continued control work on Orcas Power & Light Cooperative’s properties and easements, gaining compensation for labor and materials;
- Continued State Parks noxious weed control for hourly compensation and reimbursement for materials, mostly within Moran State Park;



Garden Helleborine, a State Monitor Species, found at Lime Kiln State Park

- Worked with the State Weed Board and WSDA staff on potential revisions to the state’s weed law (RCW 17.10), identified previously unknown weed infestations in San Juan County and served as the outlet for state noxious weed publications for county residents;
- Continued joint monitoring with the San Juan County Land Bank on known Class A species found on Land Bank properties and offered technical assistance for weed control on their preserves and conservation easements;
- Controlled weeds at Turn Point Park for County Parks & Fair, in preparation for 2020 restoration efforts;

- Continued monitoring of Class A *Spartina anglica* (common cordgrass) as part of WSDA eradication efforts in the Puget Sound region (none seen in our county in 2019);
- Trained and worked with Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) members from Lopez, San Juan and Orcas on noxious weed control projects on state and county lands;



Common Cordgrass Distribution Map by County, 2018 (WSDA)



BLM's Patos lighthouse and bull thistle during YCC control work, Aug. 2019

- Continued weed control work on Public Works properties and road rights-of-way on Lopez, San Juan and Orcas;
- Controlled weeds on Port of Friday Harbor and Town of Friday Harbor properties;
- Helped neighborhood association members with noxious weeds (San Juan Community Home Trust, Mount Dallas Owners Association);
- Worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on noxious weed surveys and control efforts on their properties within San Juan County, spring and fall 2019;
- Using WSDA's iPhones, gathered noxious



Native camas in flower on U.S. Fish & Wildlife property, Spring 2019

- weed data (species, phenology, control methods, site) that have been entered in a state database;
- Continued to provide funding for WSU Extension's Integrated Weed Control Project, which offers biological control support for all the county noxious weed programs.

Collaborations allow the Noxious Weed Board to learn more about weed distributions throughout the county and to promote "best management practices" that may be used by land managers (outreach-education). Collaboration can be a tool to inform others about the state's weed laws (RCW 17.10 and WAC 16-750). Over time, our partners' familiarity with what we do hopefully makes it more likely to

achieve positive synergies and goal-sharing.

The Program's interactions with state-level agencies has expanded recently to include the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Department of Ecology, due to the recent discovery of Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) in Sportsman's Lake (San Juan Island). Ties with County Parks, the Land Bank, and Public Works remain active, with more site-specific work of late (Turn Point Park, False Bay Creek, Orcas Landing, and Stone Bridge-Terrill Beach



Whitetop (*Cardaria draba*) found along county road on San Juan (Class C)

Preserve). Though we maintain open channels of communication with staff in the federal government, most of our work in 2019 has been with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rather than the National Park Service or BLM. Both of the latter organizations are still grappling with vegetation management plans that have not yet received final approval or may be in draft phase.

2019 STAFF TRAINING EVENTS.

The WSDA and SJC Weed Board require our staff to maintain pesticide license accreditation through ongoing training. We achieved this in 2019 by attending the annual Washington Weed Association Conference in Wenatchee (Nov. 6-8) and the Washington State Weed Coordinators' Association Conference in Chelan in early March. For the Public Operator license, WSDA requires 40 approved credits every five years.

2019 OUTREACH EFFORTS.

One of the main goals of the Noxious Weed Board is to provide education and outreach services to the public in order to better foster an understanding and appreciation of the need to control noxious weeds and to share effective control strategies and techniques. Here are some of our 2019 outreach events:

- San Juan County Fair (318 contacts made, three times as many as the 2018 fair);
- Work parties with Orcas Island YCC, on Orcas at Moran State Park (June) and on Sucia Island (August);



Noxious Weed Booth, San Juan County Fair, August 2019



Noxious weed literature available to Lopez YCC crew, June 2019

- Work parties with San Juan YCC, at Jackson Beach (Port of FH) and near the “gravel pit” (Island Rec) in June;
- Work party with the Lopez Island YCC along Dill Road (June);
- Weed wrench loans to the public (19 on Orcas);
- Sent 85 letters of information, notification or reminder (3 times more than 2018) resulting in the reduction of several existing noxious weed populations;

- Made more than 1300 personal contacts, with about 15 % of those communications regarding site visit requests;
- Had a booth at the Orcas farmer’s market in September;
- Presented at the WSU Extension Master Gardeners’ annual luncheon at Red Mill Farm;
- Presented at WSU Extension Forestry’s ‘coached planning’ for forest property owners and managers, April (Orcas);
- Provided literature and information at the 2019 Ag Summit (San Juan);
- Conducted several reviews of farm properties for plants poisonous to livestock.

OTHER 2019 WEED BOARD & STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:



Teasel on Land Bank conservation easement in Deer Harbor, June 2019

- Published the *2019 Washington State & San Juan County Noxious Weed List*;
- Submitted our Italian arum leaflet for the 2019 county property tax mailings;
- Located and mapped nearly 350 noxious weed infestations involving 45 species using WSDA-provided iPhones and the iForm application;
- Eradicated propagules of Class A species (milk thistle, garlic mustard, eggleaf spurge and slenderflower thistle) while monitoring previous Class A sites;
- Monitored and removed Class B Scotch thistle, Scot’s broom, spotted and meadow knapweed, poison hemlock, purple loosestrife, sulfur cinquefoil and tansy ragwort, and Class C common teasel from county road rights-of-way;
- Submitted 11 monthly reports to the Weed Board;
- Participated in all State Weed Board meetings (William Agosta);
- Developed noxious weed disposal posters for the county’s three transfer stations;
- Released biocontrol agents to help control field bindweed (San Juan);

On San Juan Island, our Field Specialist, Shawn Beach, performed noxious weed control for the following organizations:

- Public Works = 0.5 acre controlled on San Juan (0.2 acre with YCC at Jackson Beach, and 0.3 acre at Guard Street road shop);
- County Parks = 0.45 acre on San Juan, Turn Point Park;
- Land Bank = 3.5 acres (approximate) on San Juan, False Bay Creek-San Juan Valley Creek confluence; and Stone Bridge-Terrill Beach Preserve (Orcas), roughly 11 acres;
- Preservation Trust = 5 acres on San Juan, Pear Point English holly;
- State Parks = 0.2 acre on San Juan, Lime Kiln tansy ragwort;
- OPALCO = 2.65 acres on San Juan, Pear Point Road, Sutton Road, & Roche Harbor Road (Scot's broom);
- Port of Friday Harbor = 3.75 acres (broom, cinquefoil, spurge laurel, poison hemlock, purple loosestrife, and Canada thistle);
- Town of Friday Harbor = 0.25 acre, Spring Street x Lampard Road rights-of-way, spurge laurel and spotted knapweed;
- Also removed purple loosestrife, spotted & meadow knapweed, sulfur cinquefoil, and common tansy from county road rights-of-way on San Juan.

KEY PROJECTS FOR 2020.

State Parks. Moran State Park continues to suffer from significant noxious weed infestations, even with our seasonal employees working there for several days this summer, and Orcas YCC assistance for two days. Much of the tansy ragwort, Canada thistle, and bull thistle found there is in logged areas in the park, so there is a backlog of work for the spring of 2020. We have not yet been offered a contract renewal (previous one expired this summer), but we have been assured that State Parks will continue to pay for control work if invoices are submitted. There is a new contact person who is handling noxious weed contractors for State Parks in our corner of the state. We expect that 2020 will probably go about the same as 2019, unless we can convince Parks to help pay for a part-time seasonal that would work part of the summer solely on the parks' weeds. For the outer islands, Sucia Island seems to be the only one that could be scheduled for work in 2020, again on bur chervil as in the past couple of years.

OPALCO. Noxious weed work for OPALCO thus far in 2019 has largely shifted focus to San Juan Island after Shawn’s move there earlier in the year. We have billed the co-op \$1,951.75 dollars and have another bill in the pipe for more recent control work along Pear Point Road, which we expect will total just under \$1,000 by the end of 2019. Though the contract has officially expired, we have received no indication that they wish to discontinue our work on their behalf. Terry Turner is presently our OPALCO contact person. Lopez powerline rights-of-way continue to have Scot’s broom infestations that need taking care of (Center Road, Dill Road) in 2020, with the results of previous work showing little re-growth. We hope to take care of more tansy ragwort infestations on Shaw Island power easements once the weather warms up again.



Clematis vitalba on
OPALCO power lines,
West Beach Rd., July

Public Works. We receive occasional requests for assistance from Public Works, but three recent projects stand out. Byron Rot, Environmental Resources Project Manager, sought our advice and management support with a multi-acre reed canarygrass infestation on a Land Bank property in San Juan Valley. Once the reed canarygrass is under control, the site will be revegetated with native trees and shrubs as part of a larger stream restoration project. On Orcas, staff controlled noxious weeds at the Stone Bridge-Terrill Beach Preserve, also a Land Bank property but partly under Public Works’ stewardship due to a wetland mitigation project for work on Mount Baker Road. And at Orcas Landing, Kendra Smith, Environmental Resources Manager, wanted our help with control of Himalayan blackberry and English ivy, which was largely achieved. We continue to monitor roadsides and Public Works properties on Lopez, San Juan and Orcas, including current or former landfills. Here are several ongoing tasks for 2020:

- Port Stanley Rd. gravel pit monitoring for Scot’s broom, poison hemlock and butterfly bush, Lopez;

- Port Stanley Rd. former landfill monitoring and control of poison hemlock, tansy ragwort, Scot's broom, meadow knapweed and Canada thistle, Lopez;
- Center Rd. and Dill Rd. Scot's broom and spurge laurel removal, Lopez (in conjunction with OPALCO ROW work);
- Fisherman Bay Rd. "road shop" weed control (poison hemlock, bull thistle and meadow knapweed), Lopez;
- Beaverton Valley Rd., Roche Harbor Rd., and San Juan Valley Rd. Scot's broom, teasel and tansy ragwort removal, SJI;
- Beaverton Valley Rd. "Area 52" Scot's broom and hoary cress control, SJI;



Lopez YCC working on Scot's broom, Dill Road, June 2019



Non-native thistles (Canada and bull) along realigned Orcas Road, Oct. 2019

- West Side Rd. spurge laurel and Scot's broom control, SJI;
- Orcas former landfill teasel and Scot's broom control;
- Mt. Baker Rd. 'road shop' teasel, poison hemlock, tansy ragwort, Himalayan blackberry and thistle control, Orcas;
- Yellow hawkweed control on Mt. Baker Rd., Orcas (in conjunction with OPALCO work);
- County road ROW teasel control, Orcas and San Juan;
- Deer Harbor Rd. Scot's broom control, Orcas;
- Point Lawrence Rd. gorse control, Orcas (extreme fire hazard issue);

As noxious weeds are most vigorous during the summer months, the addition of seasonal employees in 2019 allowed us to deal with some of the roadside backlogs we have had in the past few years. There will be one seasonal field technician working in the summer of 2020 to continue this work.

OTHER ANTICIPATED OR DESIRED TASKS FOR 2020:

- Continue eradication efforts of all known populations of Class A noxious weeds in the county;

- Continue control or containment of Class B and C species selected for control on the 2019 County Noxious Weed List;
- Continue working closely with individuals, managers, associations and government agencies in noxious weed control efforts;
- Compose new brochures for reed canarygrass, clematis and yellow flag iris, and update noxious weed literature as needed;
- Submit noxious weed articles to the local media at least once per quarter;
- Continue research, on a species-by-species basis, on the safest and most efficacious methods of noxious weed control;



Caroline Wiltz at Lopez Public Works gravel quarry, with poison hemlock, June 2019

- Continue to refine the Noxious Weed Program’s website;
 - Keep Weed Board staff current on noxious weed research and control;
 - Create the 2020 state and county noxious weed list, taking public comments as required by law;
 - Prepare the noxious weed leaflet for the 2020 property assessments;
 - Mail weed lists and other relevant literature to local business owners (landscapers, gardeners, plant nurseries, quarry operators);
 - Continue to supply noxious weed literature to all of the ferry-serviced islands and other areas upon request;
 - Continue to send letters of notification and enforcement as needed;
 - Continue contract work with Washington State Parks and OPALCO;
- Attend training opportunities for staff as time allows;
 - Participate in the San Juan County Fair (four days in August);
 - Attend local farmers’ market events as time allows;
 - Continue outreach events as requested, such as organized “weed pulls”;
 - Continue to offer the public information about noxious weeds or species of concern and their control, making site visits upon request;
 - Continue to survey properties upon request for noxious and/or poisonous plant species;

- Continue to identify plant species for the public;
- Continue funding summer YCC noxious weed work for county youth;
- Work with our land use management partners on mapping weed populations, as time allows;
- Continue working with the Solid Waste Program on the noxious weed disposal budget and species permitted;
- Educate the public about alternative disposal options;
- Review tax parcels for Noxious Weed Board assessments as requested by the Treasurer's Office (recently completed for 2019);
- Develop a noxious weed guide for Public Works and other county agencies to help employees identify weeds and learn optimal control techniques and timing;
- Continue monthly reports for the Weed Board.



San Juan YCC at Jackson Beach, holding root crown of Himalayan blackberry, June 2019

SUMMARY.

The San Juan County Noxious Weed Control Board and its staff undertake four fundamental tasks:

- Education and outreach to members of the public about noxious weeds;
- Enforcement of state and county noxious weed laws;
- Field work related to noxious weeds, such as monitoring, site visits, and direct control measures;
- Administrative support (budgeting, monthly reports, staff training, etc.).

The Noxious Weed Board strives to help county and state departments meet the requirements of our noxious weed laws. Our association with State Parks and OPALCO through contract agreements gives the Board further opportunity to help reduce noxious weed presence on public lands while potentially transferring control methods to other personnel for any ongoing control. The Board's staff strives to serve the public and attain its goals and objectives while making further improvements in performance. We are looking forward to a productive 2020.