



JEFFERSON COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

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To: Jefferson County Commissioners

The Jefferson County Noxious Weed Control Board respectfully requests that the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners allow trained and licensed Weed Board employees to chemically control selected weeds on specific county roads. These plants are listed on the State Weed List as Class A, meaning that eradication is required, or Class B designated for control in Jefferson County.

We realize that for many years the County has had a no-spray policy on its roads, and we are not suggesting that this policy be rescinded. Mowing is an excellent means of vegetation control and the county crews do a good job. However, vegetation control and elimination of noxious weeds are two different things. Mowing achieves the objectives of keeping roadside vegetation low to enhance visibility and keeping plants off the roadway to prevent damage to the blacktop, but it does not control undesirable invasive plants. In fact, it stimulates the growth of biennial plants such as wild chervil, turning them into tough, woody perennials that become progressively harder to eliminate. Another problem is that mowers sometimes merely knock plants down without cutting them. These plants can still flower and produce seed, spreading the population further.

Plants such as meadow knapweed can produce flowers a few days after mowing, on stems an inch or two tall (see enclosed picture). State Weed Law requires control of meadow knapweed in Jefferson County, which is not achieved if plants are allowed to bloom.

Mowers also spread plant parts which can give rise to whole new populations. Small root or stem fragments of knotweeds are able to grow into new plants; and we are currently spending hundreds of thousands of public dollars on knotweed control in rivers and wetlands. We are particularly concerned about knotweed being mowed for this reason. When these plants move to adjacent properties, the issues of management grow, and the need for additional herbicide application expands as well.

These are specific plants and areas we would like permission to spray:

1. **Wild chervil** on Eaglemount Road, Old Eaglemount Road and Peterson Road. These roads are contiguous and contain the worst wild chervil populations in the county (photograph and map enclosed). Wild chervil is extremely invasive on roadsides and in pastures (information on this plant is enclosed). Scattered patches occur on other roadsides in the county but the Eaglemount area seems to be the epicenter. If we can eliminate wild chervil in that area we could control the other infestations manually and prevent it from taking over pastures within the county.

2. **Meadow knapweed** on

a. Center Road, which has a very well-established population, extending for at least two miles (photo enclosed). The same population extends up Nickelbush Lane (a private road where one landowner has spent many years and personal funds fighting knapweed) and onto land owned by DNR and one timber company. I have been in touch with DNR and the timber company and both are prepared to spray next year. However, all landowners have to work together to prevent re-infestation.

b. West Valley Road, where meadow knapweed (outside the Chimacum School) is also well established and is partially on School District property. Maintenance staff are willing to spray during the summer break, but again, all parties need to work together.

3. **Knotweed** on Dosewallips Road, Old Eaglemount Road and Leland Valley Road. Much effort and expenditure has gone into knotweed control on waterways in the county, funded by grants from Washington State Department of Agriculture. The Dosewallips Road closely follows the Dosewallips River and three small patches of knotweed are on the county right-of way. If these are not eliminated, they could re-infest the entire river. The patch on Old Eaglemount Road (photo enclosed) is close to an irrigation ditch that drains into Chimacum Creek (currently believed to be free of knotweed) and the Leland Valley Road patch is near water (Lake Leland). All these knotweed infestations could be injected with herbicide rather than sprayed. In 2008 the Weed Board asked the City of Port Townsend for permission to inject the knotweed near the Kah Tai Lagoon, despite the City's no herbicide policy. After some discussion the City agreed and asked us to treat other knotweed patches, also on City property. This project was very successful, with favorable public response.

Any chemical application on county roads would be conducted by Weed Board staff, who are licensed pesticide applicators with aquatic endorsements, and who are knowledgeable as to the most effective and least toxic products and best timing of applications. All legal requirements regarding posting would be followed.

We not envision herbicide use on county roads to be on-going. More than one application is usually necessary, but our goal is to use chemicals for a short time (2 to 3 years), eliminating the worst noxious weed infestations that we feel cannot be controlled by any other means.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request. Please contact us with questions or for more detail at 379-5610, extension 205.

Sincerely,

Linda Davis (Chair)

Jill Silver (District 1)

Richard Hild (District 2)

John Richmond (District 4)

Eve Dixon (Coordinator)