

# Weed Control Districts in Oregon

*To identify, prevent, and control noxious weeds*



# What is a weed control district?

Under Oregon law (ORS 569.360) a weed control district is defined as a geographic area, usually a county or a portion of a county, which allows local officials to declare and control noxious weeds.

This can allow a district to:

- Provide noxious weed identification assistance.
- Provide noxious weed control consultation or assistance as needed.
- Provide special trainings and presentations on noxious weed prevention and control methods.
- Regulate which weeds are required for control by creating a local noxious weed list.

# What are the benefits of forming a weed control district?

- Allows more local control over the protection of natural resources, including economic losses that accompany noxious weed infestations.\*
- Keeping areas free of noxious weeds is an important part of maintaining healthy habitats that benefit wildlife, water quality, and air quality.
- Early detection of noxious weeds, along with a quick response to address them, can also reduce pesticide use as problem weeds are stopped early in their invasion cycle before costly widespread control is needed.
- ORS 569.495 provides a mechanism for the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to provide financial assistance to weed control districts once a funding source is secured. ORS 569.425 provides the option for a county body to levy a special assessment to finance weed control activities.

# How is a weed control district formed?

A weed control district is formed when a county governing body declares the county or a portion of the county as a weed district. Following the declaration, the county appoints a weed inspector and publishes a noxious weed list. A county may also choose to officially delegate the authority of the weed control district to a local agency such as a Soil and Water Conservation District or Cooperative Weed Management Area.



Special weed control districts can also be formed in specific areas—such as a watershed—by interested parties when the area is not covered by an existing weed control district or there are additional plants of concern in the area they would like to declare as noxious. To form a special district, a petition must be created that defines the area and the weeds of concern, then it must be signed by more than half the landowners in that area who also own more than half the acreage in the area. Once the petition is presented, the county governing body will declare that area to be a special weed control district.

ODA is available to consult with local agencies to help them get started.



\*A recent study, *Economic Impact from Selected Noxious Weeds in Oregon*, looked at 25 of 128 state-listed noxious weeds and estimates those weeds have an \$83.5 million a year impact to Oregon's economy. If uncontrolled, the impact potential of these weeds could be approximately \$1.8 billion.



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