



# **BENTON COUNTY COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT AREA (CWMA)**

**STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2012**

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# **BENTON COUNTY COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT AREA (CWMA) STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2012**

## **HISTORY**

In 2010, Benton Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) recognized the need to develop an overarching plan on invasive species management across jurisdictions in Benton County. To develop a plan that addresses the protection of quality conservation areas in the County, provides for native fish and wildlife species, and contributes to an informed public aware of the threat invasive species pose to our economy and environment, the SWCD initiated a planning process with a group of land and invasive species managers working in Benton County.

In preparation for this planning process, a survey was conducted and distributed to all potential partners (federal, state, local, nonprofit, industry and private organization) to identify regulatory authority, gaps and overlaps, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of invasive species management within the boundaries of Benton County, Oregon. This resulting information (Appendix A) was used to establish core priorities driving invasive species work in the county, and served as a foundation for the development of this plan.

In total, 79 individuals from 27 organizations were at least tangentially involved in this planning process, with about 25 participants attending each of the three initial planning meetings (Table 1). The objective of these meetings was to collectively and collaboratively address invasive species issues- and most importantly, develop a county-wide plan aimed at early detection and rapid response (EDRR) as well as outreach and education. Specifically, the group sought to effect collaboration among local partners to address invasive plant prevention and management issues via a strategic planning process.

This document summarizes the outcomes of those planning meetings and describes the actions that will be taken to further the collaborative efforts identified by the planning group.

## September 2011

The planning committee (Table 1) initially convened on September 7 of 2011 to:

- Define the “ideal state” Benton County land management and other organizations see to achieve relative to invasive plant management and articulate a vision for a productive invasive plant program, which includes a long-term maintenance strategy as well as public engagement.

The group also described goals that could advance their five-year vision:

- ✓ Protect Benton County from invasive species using:
    - (a) a comprehensive EDRR strategy; and
    - (b) a landscape-scale strategy based on designated priority habitats;
  - ✓ Develop consistent, permanent, stable, reliable funding for EDRR implementation to achieve landscape goals;
  - ✓ Conduct an inventory to designate priority weeds across ownerships;
  - ✓ Establish a weed control district;
  - ✓ Reduce the number of new invaders to Benton County;
  - ✓ Increase the quality of priority habitats by articulating priority habitats and priority invasive species associated with those habitats;
  - ✓ Effect on-the-ground improvements by implementing best management practices for integrated pest management; and
  - ✓ Create an informed, aware, and knowledgeable citizenry.
- Review the results of the survey (Appendix A) and describe the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the current and potential invasive species programs;
  - Begin to identify goals based on survey results and participant perspectives; and
  - Articulate specific actions to advance goals for a robust and effective invasive plant management program in Benton County.

## November 2011

The planning committee met again on November 10 of 2011. Between September and November, several committees formed to address action items from the first planning session, and develop materials and background information to inform next steps. During the November 2011 planning session, the planning committee:

- Reviewed the results of the action items from the September 2011 planning session and took next steps to develop implementation strategies for the following:
  - Inform the development of an EDRR strategy for Benton County (model, list of eradication species, list of containment species, listing process);
  - Describe the scope and scale of a landscape-level strategy for Benton County (review existing maps, identify priority habitats, and recommend components important to incorporate into the strategy);
  - Develop a public engagement strategy for Benton County;

- Develop a successful approach(es) to fund invasive species in Benton County; and
- Create a governance structure in Benton County to advance invasive species management and planning efforts (review existing models and recommend the appropriate model for Benton County).

## February 2012

Again, committees worked on advancing these action items between the November 10 meeting and their February 13, 2012 meeting. At their February 2012 meeting, they:

- EDRR Strategy: Shared proposed A (eradication) and B (containment) lists (Appendix B) with the entire planning group, and decided on next steps to further articulate the guidelines used to develop the lists as well as propose a C list.
- Described the scope and scale of a landscape-level strategy for Benton County by reviewing land management (Appendix C) as well as place-based (Appendix D) and vector-based (Appendix E) criteria maps committee members developed to inform potential priority habitats in the county.
- Discussed the pros and cons of a variety of governance structures (Appendix F), including a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) as well as a Weed Control District, and achieved consensus in moving forward as a Cooperative Weed Management Area, and within a 2-year time period, conduct a self-assessment, produce a report on that assessment, and potentially consider the creation of a weed district.
- In addition, they discussed refining their proposed outreach and education strategy (Appendix G) based on the new governance structure, the need to develop a funding strategy based on the new governance structure, and the ability to advance their EDRR initiatives with the use of *iMapInvasives* and its accompanying Smartphone application.
- They developed a steering committee that represents five key thematic areas for the CWMA:
  - Mapping/data: Laurie Starha (Benton County Public Works)
  - Outreach and Education: Heath Keirstead (Benton SWCD)
  - EDRR and on-the ground management: Henry Storch (Benton SWCD) and Glenn Miller (ODA)
    - Conduct an assessment
    - Identify projects and priorities
    - Identify the resources needed to complete the projects
  - Operational issues relative to the CWMA: Jennifer Ayotte (Benton SWCD) and Peter Kenagy (Benton County Farm Bureau)
    - Fundraising coordination
    - Framework for the CWMA self-assessment for County Commissioners
    - Action Plan with strategic objectives
  - CWMA Partner Recruitment: NAME NEEDED HERE
  - Steering Committee Members: Jennifer Ayotte, Heath Keirstead, Henry Storch, Peter Kenagy, Glenn Miller, and Laurie Starha

**Table 1. Benton County CWMA Planning Committee.**

## **BENTON COUNTY INVASIVE SPECIES PLANNING GROUP AND CWMA ADVISORY GROUP**

Applegate Forestry LLC—Debbie Johnson  
Benton County Farm Bureau—Peter Kenagy  
Benton County Public Works—Laurie Starha, James Stouder  
Benton Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)—Heath Keirstead, Henry Storch, Donna Schmitz, Jennifer Ayotte, Liz Graham  
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)—Ron Exeter, Diane Morris  
Cascade Pacific RC&D—Keli Kuykendahl  
City of Corvallis—Iris Benson, America McMillin  
City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES)—Dominic Maze  
Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District—Sam Leininger  
Greenbelt Land Trust—Jeff Baker  
Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE)—Matt Blakely-Smith  
Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)—Josh Lambert  
Luckiamute Watershed Council—Peter Guillozet  
Marion County Weed Control District—Tanya Beard  
Mary’s Peak Stewardship Group—Jane Barth  
Mary’s River Watershed Council—Karen Fleck Harding, Xanthippe Augerot, Kathleen Westly  
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)—Tom Snyder  
Northwest Weed Management Partnership (NWMP)—Vern Holm  
Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA)—Glenn Miller  
Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)—Will Lackey  
Oregon State University (OSU)—Barb Fick, Irene Pilgrim, Maggie Livesay, Tania Siemens, Claudia Ingham, John Mann, Chris Jackson  
Trout Mountain Forestry—Mark Miller  
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)—Molly Monroe  
US Forest Service (USFS)—Cindy McCain  
Western Native Plant Alliance—Jon Pampush  
Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)—Michael Crabtree

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**“Management of those invasive species that are able to dominate communities may not need further evidence to justify control: the invasion and displacement of native vegetation is the ecological disaster.” —Blossey, B. 1999.**

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This document is intended to serve as much as an operational management plan for the Benton County CWMA as a strategic plan, and is intended to be updated on a regular basis to ensure the CWMA is continually assessing the economic, political, and societal environments in which it is working and to articulate actions that effectively address invasive species management and prevention issues in Benton County. This document can be combined with specific longer-term management actions the CWMA seeks to articulate and achieve as the CWMA forms, or it can serve as a stand-alone document in concert with a longer-term management plan.

The following are key initial actions the CWMA seeks to achieve:

### OPERATIONAL ACTIONS

1. Ensure the CWMA has a coordinator to advance existing and future actions of the steering committee as well as ensure continued operation of the CWMA.

Responsibility: Jennifer Ayotte and Heath Keirstead (Benton SWCD) as well as partners (funding)

Timeline: March 2012

2. Seek the support of the Benton Soil and Water Conservation District to provide staff support to the newly formed Benton County CWMA.

Responsibility: Jennifer Ayotte (Benton SWCD)

Timeline: April 2012

3. Communicate the formation of the Benton CWMA to Benton County Commissioners in April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Public Works).

Responsibility: Jennifer Ayotte (Benton SWCD)

Timeline: April 2012

4. Create a directory of participating organizations in the Benton CWMA.

Responsibility: Vern Holm (NWMP) will share a template directory, and the Benton SWCD will maintain a directory of CWMA partners.

5. Draft a Memorandum of Understanding for the Benton CWMA partners and route for signatures by all participating organizations.

Responsibility: Vern Holm (NWMP) to share MOU template; Heath Keirstead (Benton SWCD) to route to partners for signatures.

Timeline: All partners will sign the MOU by May 2012.

6. Adopt short- and long-term funding strategies for the Benton CWMA, including a description of how the CWMA will process funds in the short term as well as articulating a fiscal sponsor that will manage and disburse funds for large landscape-level projects.

Responsibility:

Timeline: July 2012

7. Within a two-year timeframe, conduct a self-assessment of the CWMA to develop strategies to enhance strengths and address weaknesses, and determine if the county would benefit from the creation of a weed control district. If the latter is true, consider forming a recommendation to county commissioners in support of a weed control district. Consider how the formation of a weed district might affect county municipalities. If a weed control district is created, articulate the roles and responsibilities of both the CWMA and the Weed District such that no gaps or overlaps are created (e.g., the CWMA may be responsible for outreach and education as well as restoration while the weed district may be responsible for on-the-ground management).

Responsibility: Benton County CWMA steering committee

Timeline: April 2015

8. To ensure continued sustainable funding for Benton County invasive species prevention, management, and outreach efforts, survey voters to determine if support exists for a tax levy.

Responsibility: Benton County CWMA steering committee to propose tax levy to county commissioners.

Timeline: April 2015

9. Regularly review the partners engaged in the CWMA and consider outreach to new partners (e.g., Oregon Small Woodland Landowners and the Farm Bureau) that can add strength to the partnership.

Responsibility: Benton County CWMA steering committee

Timeline: Ongoing



## EDRR ACTIONS

1. Share with CWMA partners the process the Oregon Department of Agriculture uses to conduct risk assessments.

Responsibility: Glenn Miller (Oregon Department of Agriculture)

Timeline: February 2012

2. Develop criteria for restoration and management priorities based on areas on a set of articulate guidelines (e.g., where multiple agencies have intersecting priorities).

Responsibility: Benton County CWMA steering committee

Timeline: May 2012 and ongoing

3. Finalize the A (eradication) and B (containment) lists for Benton County and propose a C list, and provide criteria used to establish the lists. Consider agricultural weeds, and incorporate flexibility to address localized areas of infestation as well as return on investments) (see Appendix B).

Responsibility: Glenn Miller (Oregon Department of Agriculture), Dominic Maze (City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services), and Henry Storch (Benton SWCD)

Timeline: April 2012

4. Obtain additional GIS layers from Benton CWMA partners to continually inform restoration, management, and prevention priorities.

Responsibility: Benton CWMA mapping committee

Timeline: Consumers Power and Bureau of Land Management layers by May 2012; other partners on an ongoing basis.

5. Develop species-specific vector maps to help inform restoration, management, and prevention priorities.

Responsibility: Benton CWMA mapping committee

Timeline: July 2012

## RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

(To be developed)