

**AUGUST 2001 FIRE COMPLEX
RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT
NON-NATIVE INVASIVE PLANTS**

I. Objectives

The fires of the August 2001 fire complex were assessed to determine if monitoring and/or treatment for Non-native Invasive Plants species should be included in the ESR plan. Objectives include:

1. Determine if previous inventories reported Non-native Invasive Plants.
2. Determine if Non-native Invasive Plants were within or near the burned area by field inspection.
3. Determine if Fire Suppression activities could have spread established Non-native Invasive Plants or introduced them and the need to monitor for the establishing infestations.

II. Issues

The BLM desires to protect the ecological integrity and site productivity of pinyon/juniper, riparian, and shrub-steppe plant communities within BLM lands in accordance with established mission statements and management plan guidelines. Non-native Invasive Plant control, containment, or eradication is necessary to accomplish the management plans and comply with Nevada State Law and to implement the Integrated Weed Management Program of the Elko Field Office.

III. Observations

Bailey Fire X-297

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database had no weed species identified on the BLM administered lands of the Bailey burn. The Resource Advisor for the fire reported no noxious weed species in the burned area. Not much vegetation could be seen after the fire. Previously unreported noxious weed infestations may become observable in the future as they recover from the fire. Dozers were used for fire suppression activities. Nearly all of the burn area burned in the Sadler fire of 1999. The Bailey burn area has been without good plant competition produced by native species since 1999 and this will continue for several more years resulting in a large risk to invasion by noxious weeds.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found no infestations of noxious weeds on BLM lands. There may have been some potential for dozers to spread weed seeds.

Buffalo Fire X-286

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database has scotch thistle, hoary cress and black henbane on the BLM administered lands of the Buffalo burn. Hoary cress and scotch thistle are also known to be present along the access roads to the fire. The Squaw Valley Ranch where the ICP was located has hoary cress along the ditches and lanes.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Not much vegetation could be seen after the fire. Scotch thistle plants were found on BLM administered land and private land in the burn along Scrapper Springs Creek. Scotch thistle is also present on BLM administered land and on private land along Frazer Creek. Frazer Creek is habitat for the threatened Lahontan Cutthroat Trout. The private ground is owned by Barrick Goldstrike Mines and will be coordinated with for treatment programs. Previously unreported noxious weed infestations may become observable in the future as they recover from the fire.

Coyote Fire X-284

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database has scotch thistle and knapweed on the BLM lands of the Coyote burn. Hoary cress is also known to be present in the general area. The county road from Interstate 80 to the Red House Ranch headquarters has many miles lined with scotch thistle and spots of hoary cress and Russian knapweed.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Not much vegetation could be seen after the fire. An infestation of approximately 1/10 acre of scotch thistle was found along Beaver Creek on BLM administered land. Previously knapweed was reported in the same general area but was burned over and not found. This drainage has the threatened Lahontan Cutthroat Trout. An infestation of approximately 100 square feet and another of approximately 1500 square feet both previously unreported were found on top of the ridge just south of Little Beaver Creek on BLM land. A dozer putting in fireline had worked through one of the thistle infestations. Seed was spread but to what extent could not be determined. The Helibase on Maggie Creek and the ICP in the pasture at Red House Ranch headquarters both were located in infestations of scotch thistle and Russian knapweed. There is a high probability weed seeds from these infestations may have been spread. Previously unreported noxious weed infestations may become observable in the future as they recover from the fire.

Dee Gold Fire X-283

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database had no weed species identified on the BLM lands of the Dee Gold burn. The Resource Advisor for the fire reported no noxious weed species in the burned area. Not much vegetation could be seen after the fire. Previously unreported noxious weed infestations may become observable in the future as they recover from the fire. Noxious weed species present in the general area include scotch thistle and hoary cress. Dozers were used for fire suppression activities and were not washed or checked prior to making fire line so there is a potential risk to invasion by noxious weeds from seeds which were introduced.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found no infestations of noxious weeds on BLM lands. There may have been some potential for dozers to spread weed seeds.

Dunphy Fire X-282

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database had no weed species identified on the BLM lands of the Dunphy burn. The Resource Advisor for the fire reported no noxious weed species in the burned area. Private lands close to the fire have hoary cress, scotch thistle, saltcedar, and Russian knapweed infestations. Not much vegetation could be seen after the fire. Previously unreported noxious weed infestations may become observable in the future as they recover from the fire.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found no infestations of noxious weeds on BLM lands. Infestations on private lands have the potential to spread to public lands. There may have been some potential for dozers to spread weed seeds.

Hot Lake Fire X-305

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database has scotch thistle and hoary cress on the BLM administered lands of the Hot Lake burn. Hoary cress is also known to be present along the access roads to the fire. The Squaw Valley Ranch where the ICP was located has hoary cress along the ditches and lanes.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Not much vegetation could be seen after the fire. Several scotch thistle plants were found on BLM administered land on the burn near the west perimeter of the fire. Previously unreported noxious weed infestations may become observable in the future as they recover from the fire.

Milemarker 367 Fire X-256

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database had no weed species identified in or close to the Mile Marker 367 burn. The Resource Advisor returning from the fire reported no noxious weed species in burned area.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found no infestations of noxious weeds. Fire suppression vehicles and equipment were not known to be a risk for spreading noxious weeds at this incident.

North Delano Fire X-257

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database has hoary cress and black henbane weed species identified in or close to the North Delano burn. The Resource Advisor returning from the fire reported black henbane noxious weed species on the south perimeter of the fire along the road. There were approximately 17 miles of dozer lines on this incident.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found black henbane along the road at the south perimeter of the fire. There is a potential for spreading the henbane with the dozers.

Ranch Fire K-857

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database had no weed species identified in or close to the Ranch burn. The majority of the burned area is within the Winnemucca district but the grazing is administered by the Elko Field Office.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found no infestations of noxious weeds in or close to the burned area. Cheatgrass is prevalent in this area. Drill seeding the lower lying areas is advisable.

Rodeo Creek Fire X-272

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database had no weed species identified in or close to the Rodeo Creek burn. Infestations of hoary cress are known to be within a five mile radius of the fire perimeter. The Resource Advisor returning from the fire reported no noxious weed species in the burned area.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found no infestations of noxious weeds. Fire suppression vehicles and equipment were not known to be a risk for spreading noxious weeds at this incident.

Sheep Fire X-275

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database identified hoary cress, squarrose knapweed, Russian knapweed and scotch thistle in or close to the Sheep burn. The Izzenhood area has suffered from cheatgrass invasion and it is the dominant species on the lowlands. The ICP set up at the Izzenhood ranch was in a pasture infested with Russian knapweed. Steps were taken to mitigate this problem including parking the vehicles in an area that appeared free of knapweed and not bringing the dozers into the pasture as they went to the fire line. Vehicles which had driven into the knapweed were marked and washed before going to the fire line with perhaps only a couple of exceptions. Besides the wash site at the ICP there was one at the intersection with the county road.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found hoary cress, a listed noxious weed, in the Battle Creek area of

the fire. Fire suppression vehicles and equipment may have been a risk for spreading noxious weeds at this incident. More infestations may be found in the future as vegetation grows back after the fire or establish from spread seed.

Stag Fire X-246

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office Noxious Weed Database had no weed species identified in or close to the Stag burn. Resource Advisors returning from the fire reported Canada thistle, a State designated noxious species, along the Deeth to Charleston road close to the burned area.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found one infestations of Canada thistle, a State designated noxious weed, along the Deeth to Charelston road in the Hanks Creek area. The infestation is less than 1/10 acre in size and has the potential to spread into the burned area because of the lack of native plant competition. After the burn very little vegetation could be seen. Fire suppression vehicles and equipment had the potential to spread Non-native Invasive species into the burned area during suppression activities. Water to suppress the fire was drafted out of several locations. One of the locations was on private ground along Mary's Creek which has Canada thistle along the edges. Potentially some thistle seed may have been in the water used to suppress the fire and was spread on the land. Other noxious species including scotch thistle and hoary cress exist several miles from the fire perimeter.

Tabor Creek Fire X-231

A. Background Information

The Elko Field Office 1998 Weed Inventory had no weed species identified in or around the Tabor Creek burn. Resource Advisors returning from the fire reported Canada thistle, a state designated noxious species along Tabor Creek close to the first ICP but no species in the burned area.

B. Reconnaissance Method

Reconnaissance method is a broad scale ocular observation for qualitative data (present / not present), and quantitative data (estimated acres of infestation), if an infestation is documented. Observations were made by trained weed monitoring specialists along access roads and off-road by hiking or using an ATV. Off-road efforts were concentrated along riparian and spring areas.

C. Findings

Ground assessment found two infestations of Canada thistle, a State designated noxious weed, in the Pole Creek drainage. Both infestations were less than 1/10 acre in size and have the potential to spread into the burned area because of the lack of native plant competition. After the burn very little vegetation could be seen and light amounts of cheatgrass were noted in unburned islands and fire perimeter fingers. At the first ICP location along Tabor Creek was an infestation of Canada thistle approximately 1/10 acre in size. Fire suppression vehicles and equipment had the potential to spread the thistle in to the burned area during suppression activities. Water to suppress the fire was drafted out of Tabor Creek which has Canada thistle along the edges. Potentially some thistle seed may have been in the water used to suppress the fire and was spread on the land.

IV. Recommendations

Bailey Fire X-283

A. Management (specification related)

No treatment recommendations will be made at this time for the Baily fire.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring for noxious weeds should be done on 100 acres of the Bailey fire on BLM administered land along Trout Creek and on the dozer lines.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Buffalo Fire X-286

A. Management (specification related)

Recommendations include treatment of approximately 5 acres of the Buffalo fire for scotch thistle and potentially other noxious species such as hoary cress and black henbane on BLM administered lands.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring of the Buffalo fire for noxious weeds should be done on 6,000 acres of BLM administered land and on the dozer lines.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Coyote Fire X-284

A. Management (specification related)

Recommendations include treatment on the Coyote fire of approximately 5 acres of scotch thistle and potentially other noxious species on BLM administered lands.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring for noxious weeds should be done on the Coyote fire on 3,500 acres of BLM administered land and on the dozer lines.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Dee Gold Fire X-283

A. Management (specification related)

No treatment recommendations will be made at this time for the Dee Gold fire.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring for noxious weeds should be done on 100 acres of the Dee Gold fire on BLM land including the dozer lines.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Dunphy Fire X-282

A. Management (specification related)

No treatment recommendations will be made at this time for the Dunphy fire.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring for noxious weeds should be done on 200 acres of the Dunphy fire on BLM administered lands.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Hot Lake Fire

A. Management (specification related)

Recommendations include treatment of approximately 1 acre or less of scotch thistle and potentially other noxious species such as hoary cress on BLM administered lands.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring for noxious weeds should be done on 20,000 acres of BLM administered land and on the dozer lines.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Milemarker 367 Fire X-256

A. Management (specification related)

No treatment recommendations will be made for the Milemarker 367 fire.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

No recommendations for noxious weed monitoring will be made for the Milemarker 367 fire.

C. Management (non-specification related)

North Delano Fire X-257

A. Management (specification related)

Treat approximately 5 acres of hoary cress and black henbane on BLM administered lands of the North Delano fire.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring of 3000 acres of BLM administered land on the North Delano fire for noxious weeds is recommended.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Ranch Fire K-857

A. Management (specification related)

No treatment recommendations will be made for the Ranch Fire.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

No recommendations for noxious weed monitoring will be made for the Ranch Fire.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Rodeo Creek Fire X-272

A. Management (specification related)

No treatment recommendations will be made for the Rodeo Creek Fire.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

No recommendations for noxious weed monitoring will be made for the Rodeo Creek Fire.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Sheep Fire X-275

A. Management (specification related)

Treatment of noxious weed infestations should be implemented to prevent the spread of the weeds. Treatment should be to approximately 10 acres of BLM administered land on the Sheep burn.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Monitoring is necessary for the Sheep fire. Recommendations are for 12,000 acres of BLM administered lands.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Stag Fire X-246

A. Management (specification related)

Non-native Invasive Plant treatment is recommended to control Canada Thistle on BLM administered land on the Stag fire along the Deeth to Chareleston road in the area of Hanks Creek. The acreage estimate is 1 acre or less at this time. After more time has past more infestations may be discovered as they recover from being burnt over or establish from

spread seed.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Portions of the Stag fire should be monitored for Noxious weeds. This should include 8,000 acres of BLM administered lands. There is approximately 20 miles of dozer line on this fire and some of the dozers came from out of state (California and Idaho). Since the dozers were not washed down there is a possibility of weed introduction of species not known to be in Nevada. Dozer lines should be monitored for noxious weeds.

C. Management (non-specification related)

Tabor Creek Fire X-231

A. Management (specification related)

Non-native Invasive Plant treatment is recommended to control Canada Thistle on BLM administered lands on the Tabor Creek burn along Pole Creek drainage. The acreage estimate is 1 acre or less at this time. After more time has past more infestations may be discovered as they recover from being burnt over or establish from spread seed.

B. Specification Monitoring (specification related)

Portions of the Tabor Creek fire should be monitored for Noxious weeds. This should include 1500 acres of BLM administered lands.

C. Management (non-specification related)

V. Consultations

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VI. References

Dan Kohring, Natural Resource Specialist, BLM, Elko Field Office