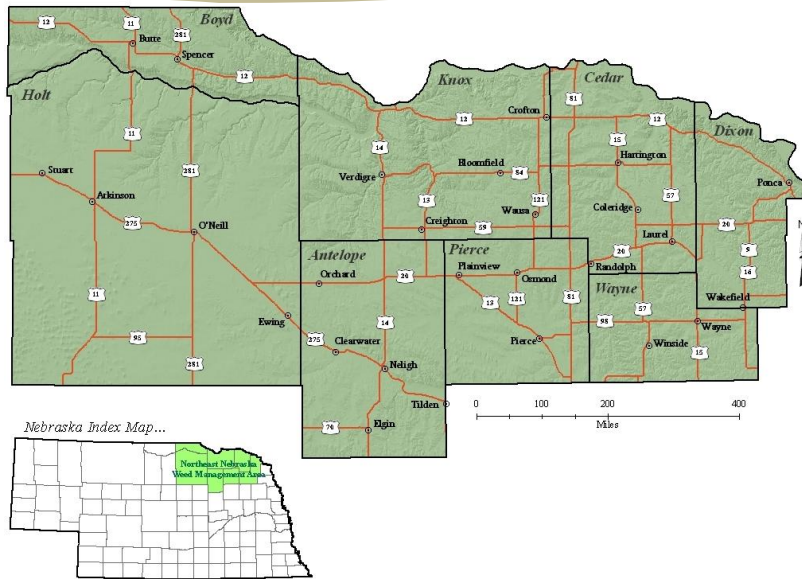


Know Your Weed Management Area...

# Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area



## Quick Facts...

- 1,274 Acres of Purple Loosestrife Infestation Treated in 2008
- Biological Control Insects Released on 2,255 acres in 2008
- Protected 8 Endangered or Threatened Species

*“Forming partnerships to raise awareness through education, and to identify, contain, and control the spread of noxious and invasive plants in the Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area.”*

## The Story...

The story of the Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area began in 1993 when USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service asked Northeast Nebraska RC&D to take on spotted knapweed infestations. At that time, there were approximately 10,000 acres of spotted knapweed in the state, mostly in northeast Nebraska.

In the spring of 1999, NNNWMA’s scope expanded, adding purple loosestrife as a focus. The group joined in the South Dakota/Nebraska Purple Loosestrife Project, spreading the word about this noxious species through continuing education efforts and tours. Most recently, purple loosestrife roots were dug and put into a “bucket garden” at the Yankton Prison, where Galerucella beetles will be reared.

The current chapter of the NNNWMA began in April of 2004. This joint effort addressing noxious and invasive species serves eight counties, including 4.6 million acres on private, public and tribal land in Antelope, Boyd, Cedar, Dixon, Holt, Knox, Pierce and Wayne Counties. Over the past five years, the group has received grant funding through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Nebraska

Environmental Trust Fund, and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture.



## Biological Control

*Biocontrol insects have been released in several infested areas located within the Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area, treating Canada thistle, spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, and Western Prairie Fringed Orchid.*

The group’s long-term objectives include expanding techniques of invasive and noxious weed control by utilizing biological control. In 2008, NNNWMA utilized insects on Canada thistle, spotted knapweed, leafy spurge and purple loosestrife, treating over 2,255 acres of infested ground

NNWMA consists of 318,751 acres of water or wetlands, and over 2 million acres of grassland or pasture. The district is bordered to the north by the Missouri National Recreational River, a component of the National Park Wild & Scenic Rivers System.

There are currently eight endangered or threatened species residing in the NNNWMA, bringing critical habitat to the forefront. Emergent sandbars in the Niobrara and Missouri River systems provide nesting habitat for the interior least tern and piping plover – these

sandbar habitats are threatened by exotic vegetation encroachment, specifically purple loosestrife and salt cedar; restoration of these areas will enable the return of native vegetation.

## Moving Toward The Future



Looking at the future of Northeast Nebraska, NNNWMA has set these priorities:

- Increase biological control of spotted knapweed, Canada thistle and leafy spurge in grassland and pastures; with emphasis on protection of the Western Prairie Fringed Orchid & Small White Lady Slipper Orchid
- Map 100% of newly treated areas, and 25% of historically treated areas.
- Containment of Salt Cedar.
- Continued chemical and biological control of Purple loosestrife along rivers.

## Promoting Weed Control Partnerships

As the group's vision statement reads, NNNWMA strives to form partnerships not only to control the spread of noxious and invasive plants, but also to raise awareness through education. Our partners include:

### County Noxious Weed Control

**Authorities.** Boyd, Antelope, Cedar, Dixon, Knox, Holt, Pierce and Wayne Counties in Nebraska

**State Agencies.** Nebraska Department of Agriculture; Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Nebraska Forest Service

**Federal Agencies.** U.S. National Park Service; U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Natural Resources Conservation Service

**Tribes.** Santee Sioux Nation; Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

**Natural Resource Districts.** Lower Elkhorn NRD; Upper Elkhorn NRD; Lewis & Clark NRD; Lower Niobrara NRD

### Local Landowners

**Groups.** Nebraska Weed Control Association; Northeast Nebraska RC&D; South Dakota/Nebraska Purple Loosestrife Project

## Sharing The NNNWMA Story



One of the Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area's key objectives is to educate private landowners on the subject of invasive species. In 2008, a field day was held, touring plots on leafy spurge, musk thistle, plumeless thistle and Canada thistle; attendees were also able to see a sweeping demonstration, and the release of biological control insects.

In addition, NNNWMA has been proactive with the news media, including utilizing the "County Weed Guy" radio show on a local station to educate private landowners on weeds and NNNWMA programs.



## The Target Species

### Leafy Spurge

*A branching perennial 2-4' tall, leafy spurge has smooth stems and yellow flower bracts. An aggressive invader, it displaces native vegetation through shading and using available water and nutrients. Leafy spurge also has the ability to prevent growth of other plants underneath it through biological toxins.*



### Spotted Knapweed

*A perennial that produces solely by seeds, spotted knapweed grows to about 2-4" and bears alternate pale green leaves; flowers are pink to light purple. This plant rapidly invades pasture, rangeland and fallow, causing serious decline in forage and crop production. Each plant can produce 1,000 or more seeds, and seeds remain viable in the soil for five years or more.*

