

Otero Soil and Water Conservation District 3501 Mesa Village Dr. Alamogordo, NM 88310 (575) 437-3100 ext.3

Current SWCD Board of Supervisors:

- Bob Nichols, Chairman
- Rick Baish, Vice Chairman
- Jeff Rabon, Secretary/Treasurer
- Colt Howland, Supervisor
- Eddie Vigil, Supervisor
- James Evrage, Supervisor
- Clifton Varbel, Supervisor

NRCS Staff:

- Kristi Wright, District Conservationist
- Katie Pritchett, Soil Conservationist
- Erika Rodriguez, Rangeland Management Specialist
- Jennifer Howard, Soil Conservation Technician
- Amalia Montoya, Area Rangeland Specialist
- Morgan Smith, Civil Engineering Technician

FSA Staff:

- Cheyanna Reyes, County Executive Director
- Amanda Wylie-Largeteau, Program Technician

District Employee:

- Victoria Milne, District Manager

The Otero SWCD is an equal opportunity employer.



District board meetings are generally, the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 am. The meetings are held in the same building, in the Forest Service's Smokey Bear conference room located at 3463 Las Palomas Dr.

The USDA Alamogordo Service Center will be closed:
May 27th - Memorial Day; July 4th - Independence Day

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2024



Spring

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The Otero SWCD Noxious Weed Program Began April 1st

Herbicides are Reserved for Mapped and Licensed Cost-share Participants.

All Participants are required to present their current applicator's license at the time of herbicide purchase.

For the complete Noxious Weed Control Program Guidelines go online to: www.oterswcd.org.

The Noxious Weed Season is Here!

Combating Noxious Weeds is a frustrating and endless fight. As soon as weed populations in one area begin to decline, seeds transported from untreated areas create new populations. Many of these seeds can remain viable, even on treated sites, for many years causing persistent infestations. If seeds fail to repopulate an area, many Noxious Weeds have complex and prolific root systems that will produce new plants from root buds.

The information we have compiled tells us to start treatment of Noxious Weeds early in the spring, after sufficient winter and spring moisture allows for vigorous or "active" plant growth. Preventing the plant from flowering and going to seed is a key element in controlling Noxious Weed spread.

Drought affects a plant's physiological growth. A plant will expend stored resources from the roots to produce

Russian knapweed



Inside this issue:

Noxious Weed Spray Program	2
Noxious Weed Season is Here continued...	
Outreach in Otero County	3

Noxious Weed Spray Program

The Otero SWCD is focused on treating Noxious Weeds along Otero County right-of-way. We plan to target



Musk thistle, Russian knapweed, and Canada thistle beginning at High Rolls and working into the Sacramento Mountains. In an effort to prevent re-infestation of the treated right-of-way, the Otero SWCD offers landowners the opportunity to have the Commercial Applicator spray private lands through the cost-share program.

Participating landowners are only responsible for the cost of the Applicator's time spent on their property. The Otero SWCD picks up the chemical cost. The current Commercial Applicator rate is \$65.00 per man hour. They can usually cover 2-3 acres in an hour depending on terrain.

Helping
people help
the land.

The Noxious Weed Season is Here Continued...

flowers and seed even when plant growth is suppressed by drought. If a plant is not actively growing, taking in resources to replenish root stores, herbicides will be less effective as they will not be taken into the root system either. Thus continuous mechanical management is the best option during drought. After the first mechanical treatment is applied in early spring, re-treat the infestation every 8

weeks until the first frost in fall. This will not only impede seed production but also continually stress the plant's stored resources and eventually cause root kill.

This method, like most, will need to be repeated consistently for the next several years to ensure that roots and any viable seed remaining in the soil have expired.



If you would like to participate in the cost-share program to have African rue, Malta starthistle, Russian knapweed, Musk thistle, or Canada thistle on your private land sprayed, please contact the Otero SWCD or fill out the Commercial Applicator Spray Program form online @ oteroswcd.org. Return by email or mail before May 31st to participate in the Spring 2023 Noxious Weed spray.

Spread the Word Not the Weeds!

Hoary cress



Malta starthistle



Earth Day Alameda Zoo April 20th—Alamogordo Service Center staff Erika McLaughlin and Jennifer Howard were on hand to discuss the role of pollinators in agriculture. They had posters, native wildflower seed balls and other handouts for the public.

OUTREACH EVENTS IN OTERO COUNTY

Tularosa High School Career Day April 19th— The event was to promote different careers for the high school students who are in the beginning stage of figuring out what they would like to do for a living. Several people of different career fields were invited to give a 20 minute presentation of the business/organization they represent. The students rotated amongst the different presenters. We represented the NRCS by speaking about the different positions and duties that are done in the agency, all the field and office work that gets done, salary, education needed, and personal experiences we've had on the job that make it unique compared to other jobs.

