

# Wyoming Weed and Pest Council

## News Release

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### **Governor Freudenthal declares 2<sup>nd</sup> Week in May “Wyoming Invasive Weed Awareness Week”**

Hunting, fishing, recreation, tourism, mining and agriculture are integral parts of Wyoming’s economy. These industries depend on healthy livestock, soils and wildlife which require healthy native plant communities. The rich varieties of habitats found throughout the State are treasured by residents and visitors alike. Few people realize however, that our precious landscapes are vulnerable to invasion by aggressive, non-native species called noxious weeds. Noxious weeds are most commonly introduced from Europe and Asia. They have the ability to spread quickly and out-compete our native plants for water, nutrients, and sunlight reducing the nutritious forage available for livestock and wildlife. Some species even increase the risk of fire and soil erosion while others such as Saltcedar (tamarix) can reduce the availability of one of our most precious resources, water.

Unfortunately, humans are responsible for many of the noxious weed introductions and their spread. Over 100 years of settlement, development and recreation have contributed to noxious weed infestations Statewide. Recognizing the seriousness of this issue, Governor Freudenthal has declared Wyoming Invasive Weed Awareness Week. Focusing on the noxious weed issue annually during the month of May will allow the Wyoming Weed and Pest Council (WWPC) and the local Weed and Pest Districts to increase public awareness and highlight the threats noxious weeds pose to our State.

Whether you are a rancher, outdoor enthusiast, fisherman, hunter, landowner or visitor this issue impacts you. Protecting our natural resources is everyone’s responsibility and can be as simple as learning to identify the noxious weeds found in your local area. The most important thing is to help control current infestations and stop new species from being introduced. This can be done by using Certified Weed Free Forage products and taking time to clean your equipment, hiking and camping gear, shoes and pets before moving to a new location. Please report new infestations to your local Weed and Pest District and don’t be afraid to utilize your local District for assistance on your own property. To learn more please visit the WWPC website at [www.wyoweed.org](http://www.wyoweed.org).