

INVASIVE WEED WATCH

WABAMUN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Invasive Weed FAQ

1. What is an invasive weed?

A non-native plant that is introduced outside of its natural habitats and that takes control over native plants. It usually spreads quickly and infests large areas.

2. Why should we care about invasive weeds?

Invasive weeds can cause economic and environmental harm. They can out-compete agricultural crops, using up nutrients, moisture and space. By invading native plants communities, they degrade biodiversity and wildlife habitat. Species are then forced to move to new areas. Once established, invasive weeds are hard to remove, so prevention is the best option.



Detail of Purple Loosestrife leaves - a Prohibited Noxious Weed.

Photo: Alberta Invasive Plants Council

3. What is the difference between a noxious weed and a prohibited noxious weed?

- *Noxious Weeds – They have the ability to spread rapidly and cause severe crop losses resulting in economic hardship.*
- *Prohibited Noxious Weeds —They are to be eradicated by law because of their highly competitive nature. They are difficult to control once established.*

4. Do we need an approval/permit to remove an invasive weed?

If the invasive weed is in the water or on the shoreline you are technically required to have an approval under the Alberta Water Act before removal, however you are also required to control or eradicate invasive plants under the [Weed Control Act](#). Given this conflicting legislation, efforts are underway to allow the removal of invasive aquatic weeds without an approval as long as certain criteria are met, e.g. the weed is selectively cut or pulled so as to minimize the impact on native aquatic or riparian vegetation.



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5. What are the laws and regulations regarding invasive weeds?

The Weed Control Act enforces the control of invasive weeds in order to protect landowners and our environment. The Act charges landowners with the responsibility to control weeds on their property. Noxious weeds must be controlled and Prohibited Noxious Weeds must be destroyed under the Weed Control Act.

6. What should I do if I find an invasive weed on my property?

Depending on the classification of weed (see above), you must either control or destroy any invasive weed on your property. How you do so should be based on the recommendations specific for that plant as outlined on the Weed Watch fact sheets on this site or on the [Invasive Plants Council](#) web site.

7. What should I do if I find an invasive weed on public land?

You should report the sighting to your local municipality and in the case of invasive weeds on the shore or in the lake, report your sighting to your nearest Environment and Sustainable Resources office.

8. How many invasive weeds do we have in Alberta?

More than 70 invasive weeds are listed in the [Weed Control Regulation](#) - 46 are listed as Prohibited Noxious Weeds and 29 are listed as Noxious Weeds.

9. How can I help?

You can learn to [recognize invasive weeds](#) and deal with them on your property or report them if found on public property (see above). You can also tell people what to watch for and help them to deal with any invasive weed in their gardens.



Perennial Sow Thistle flower and seed head.

Photo: Alberta Invasive Plants Council

10. Where should I go if I want more information?

You can visit the Invasive Plants Council web site at: www.invasiveplants.ab.ca