2015 Puget Sound Knotweed Forum Notes

November 4, 2015

Cedar River Watershed Education Center

Justin Bush: Thanks to SPU for facility – Cyndy, Sally; King County Noxious Weeds – Denise, Sasha, riparian team

Participant introductions and project information sharing (too many to type all):

Justin Brooks, KCNWCP – Snoqualmie River – 25mi upper section, 2mi mainstem 4mi middle fork, Roaring Creek. KCNW working there for about 8 years, found nothing on north fork – yay. In future, protect salmon-bearing streams, get below falls – final two miles to the falls 2016. Using 1% imazapyr (Polaris), 1% Competitor foliar spray, averaging 90-95% control. Confluence difficult – lot of floodplain, have been running progressively wider buffers in this sections. Challenge of bees, pollinator enthusiasts.

Sayward Glise, KCNWCP – Cedar River in partnership with Forterra and SPU. Spraying 1% imazapyr (Polaris), 1% competitor. In treatment for 9 years. Bonus working with Forterra – free planting to replace knotweed for landowners on the river. Injected on two private properties this year – Aquaneat – more herbicide used on those props than in an entire river mile of spraying. Future: expand to other weeds.

Judy Blanco, Forterra – Also working on Cedar, working with KC parks, expanding down to Renton; have 100% permission from landowners, has worked 6 years on Cedar. Working on Green, Duwamish.

Michelle Quast, Forterra – Works with landowners to plant to replace knotweed.

Cary Hoffman, WCC/Forterra – Cedar treatment, Cedar Grove Rd to I-405 in Renton, cut down retreatment drastically; 2 wk injection this year at Ron Regis; working to limit negative impacts of spraying – start at 6am, ending about 9:30 to avoid impact to pollinators

Sally Nicholson, Cedar River Watershed – 18 acres dispersed, scattered large patches; has tried many control methods that avoid herbicide use. Covering with fabric works on single plants, has tried digging/burying in gravel pit – none worked. Finally got legal permission to use imazapyr in watershed (1%) – 1% Competitor, .5% Agridex. Imazapyr is only herbicide permitted. ~90% biomass reduction above ground, fair amount of small plants remain. Feels foliar imazapyr is nicely targeted, but depends on the soil.

Mason Conservation District – Skokomish watershed, working top down; buffer gets wider downstream, 8%glyphosate mix – not super effective, switched to 1%imazapyr, .5% surfactant. Starting work on Goldsborough Creek watershed.

Lisa Nelson, Mountains to Sound – Issaquah Creek, KC parks, to Lk Sammamish, 80% landowners on board; challenge of landowners wanting view of creek when planning planting. Raging River – 6 years,

collaboration with KC parks, DNR, private landowners. Little Bear Creek in Woodinville – challenge to track down owners that don't live in area/state.

Jeanne Schollmeyer, Seattle Parks – Oversees ~1000 acres of SE Seattle, mostly horticultural care. Knotweed is patchy and small and all over, but occasionally finds large patches hiding. Seafair area challenges: vegetation must be cut so people can spectate. Gets to educate laborers. Has garden loosestrife. Uses imazapyr on knotweed.

Kris Buitrago, Lisa Brandt, KC Rivers and Floodplain Management – White, Raging, Green, Cedar, Snoqualmie – flood protection facilities. Knotweed can be hazard to their facilities. Started weed control in 2008, self-motivated, growing partnerships, evaluating management strategies. 2012 – started lower Snoqualmie, Raging River. Phase 3 – Tolt, Sammamish.

Alaine Sommargren, Mercer Island, Matt Distler, now with Oxbow farms – knotweed in parks, natural areas, right of ways – spread by mowing. Took knotweed over from right of way people, surveyed all roads by bicycle, made signs to stop mowing, get attention, conversations. MI has a lot of shoreline, ravines, private land with knotweed; did workshop with KCNW for landowners, getting great response from landowners that have seen signs. Not allowed to do the work with public resources, but working on getting grants. Glyphosate injection, looking into imazapyr to knock the rest out.

We ran out of time for project sharing.

Other Announcements and Statements:

KC Noxious weeds has updated the BMP for knotweed – check it out!

Chad Phillips – Don't go over rate! Especially in the big patches.

Sally – Tim Miller says .5% surfactant is fine.

Injection – glyphosate is the only herbicide labelled for knotweed injection.

Replant! Don't just kill it and not put anything back.

Pollinator-Friendly Invasive plant control discussion

Barb DeCaro – Seattle Parks IPM manager – Applicators are trained, safety measures for bees on labels; working with Puget Sound beekeepers. Didn't know knotweed is a very good pollen/nectar source – lots of those folks don't want to get rid of knotweed at all. Dealing with resistance by coming up with BMPs. Find out other great pollen/nectar sources to reveg. Look up Xerces Society for great info! In PNW, European honeybees doing better than rest of the country. Native honeybees are not doing so great. WSU tests in Magnusson. Let Barb know if you're dealing with these issues relevant to their BMP.

Matthew Schwartz, EarthCorps – reveg pollinator-friendly plants. Washington Native Plant Society article on front page of website with a great list (http://www.wnps.org/ "Restoring Native Pollinator Habitat: Puget Sound Lowlands," Matt Schwartz)

Judy Blanco – Cedar River landowner recommended 1925 book – Honey plants of North America (by Harvey B. Lovell) - has list of native pollinator-friendly trees. Use pollinator conversation to engage people – don't buy knotweed honey at the farmers market, etc. Perception/education opportunity.

Justin Brooks – Concerned citizen/beekeeper on Snoqualmie raised a ruckus this year – KCNWCP adjusting schedule to avoid bees.

Jacobus Saperstein, King Conservation District – Most of our native pollinator food source plants don't flower at the same time as knotweed.

Maples, blackberry are early food source.

Sally – Cedar River pesticide-free since 1989, lifted for knotweed/imazapyr for three years. Issue with perception, especially with beekeepers. Study showing possible small effect of herbicide on insect populations blown out of proportion and a citizen tried to change Cedar River ordinance, need herbicide education. Do test plots with beekeepers/organizations to find good knotweed alternatives, plants we can mow, etc.

Chad – WSDA perception is: It's complicated and trying not to tell anyone what to do. Bees are biggest reason he came today, wants to hear what people are doing. Hasn't seen decent evidence that herbicide kills bees. Change schedule to get out before bees. Has seen uninformed connections between neonics and imazapyr, totally wrong.

Justin Bush – Pollinators has been a huge deal this year with KCNWCP. Citizen had an email/phone campaign to county executive, so had some scrutiny. Documented a formal policy, adopted in July, get a copy (http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsAndPlants/noxious-weeds/weed-control-practices/bees-and-weeds.aspx). The formal policy means we're committed to something. Larger discussion, hearing later this year with everyone who applies herbicides at King County. Rampant impressions that Noxious Weeds is the only organization spraying, so we're going to pull other departments into the discussion. Protocol summary: don't use products that harm bees, minimize interaction with bees, replace knotweed with pollinator-friendly plants. Hopefully we can work on getting a unified approach in this group. WSDA can try to diagnose colony issues.

Justin Brooks – A ton of confusion, misinformation started this. Thinks this policy toned down the riots, discussion ongoing. Communication has alleviated a lot of concerns. We're running tests to spray bottom of cane only to reduce next year's flowering mass, results forthcoming. Also schedule treatment season around flowering times.

How late is too late to treat? If leaves are still on plant, not crispy, no frost yet, ok to spray.

Chad and Cary say dew and humidity, moisture increase herbicide uptake – when dry, plant isn't taking up anymore.

Consensus that imazapyr is more effective but slower, mix with glyphosate to get visible burndown, but limit to 1% imazapyr 1% glyphosate to give imazapyr time to work.

Bethany Lund, Clark County – Lots of volunteer injection, foliar imazapyr, surfactant. Eradication Nation started in 2011, grant funded, Salmon Creek watershed – not just on creek. Good success, found source of knotweed – 1950s garden club at headwaters, about a 1mi infestation, mapping net, gross area infestation/changes.

Mason County – 90% injection – makes bee ppl happy, 2x/yr inject, followed with imazapyr

Cary – stay on top of it! Has seen some residual effect on surrounding plants. It takes a long time – start with first 10' from water, then work back.

Future forum planning – discussion, speakers for future? What do we want?

-Great to hear back and forth discussion on what works/doesn't work.

- Information tables helpful, list of website resources

-Gluten-free pastries, wi-fi

-Compile spreadsheet of everyone's current treatment methods – timing, herbicides, graph, consider elevation

-In-depth experience on off-target effects

-The Olympic peninsula knotweed forum has evolved beyond knotweed to include other weeds, restoration discussion. Is this something we want to do or stay away from?

-Sharing session to build source/resource/partnerships for projects

-How we can be good land stewards on landscape scale when certain landowners are not on board

-Compile ways to get public attention – economic costs of knotweed, salmon impact, resources to take back to work to convince bosses

-Make an email listserv, online forum