

KING COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL PROGRAM

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION

Provide benefits to the environment, recreation, public health, and economic resources of King County by preventing and minimizing harmful impacts of noxious weeds.



Letter from the Board

On behalf of the King County Noxious Weed Control Board, I am pleased to present to you our 25th annual report. The benefits described in this report are the result of the important investment by the people of the county through direct participation and through funding provided to the Noxious Weed Control Program.

This report shows the value of maintaining the Program's long-term strategy to minimize the harmful impacts of noxious weeds to the environment, recreation, public health, and the economy. The actions taken, the results achieved, and the benefits provided from this strategy are described in this report. Only a comprehensive, coordinated, community-wide effort can be successful in the long run to achieve noxious weed control.

Thank you for your interest and active participation in achieving these goals in King County.

Becky Chaney, Chair, King County Noxious Weed Control Board

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King County Noxious Weed Control Board

The King County Noxious Weed Control Board sets county weed control priorities, adopts the county weed list, and oversees the King County Noxious Weed Control Program (the “Program”) according to the requirements of the State Noxious Weed Law, RCW 17.10. The Board was activated by the King County Council on August 7, 1992, in response to a citizen’s petition. The Board produces this annual report on the performance and activities of the Program.

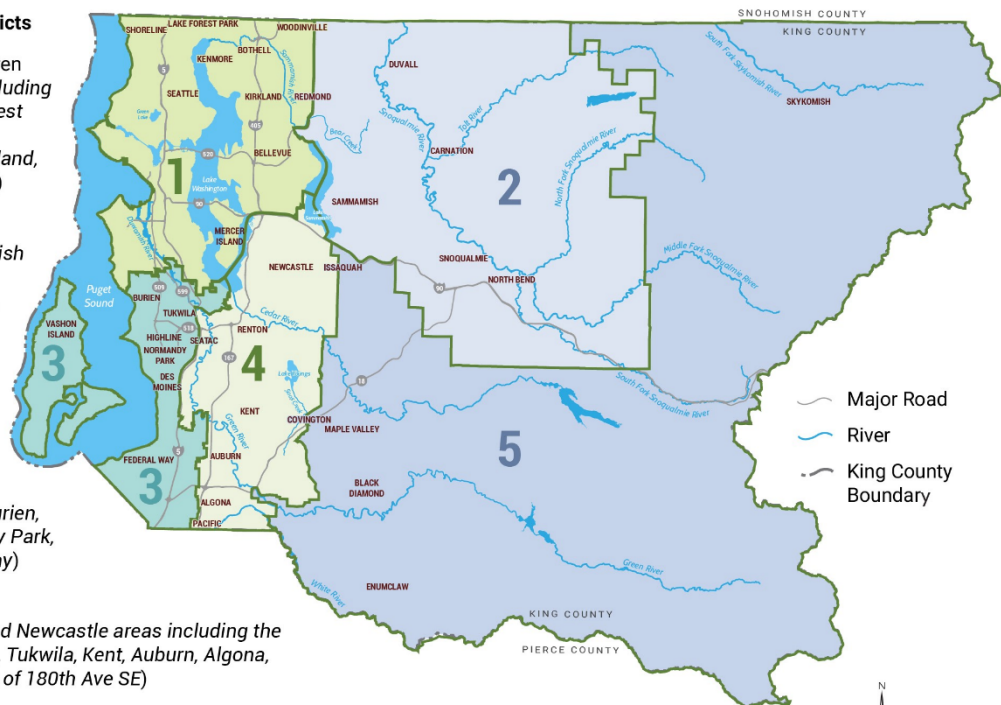
The Board is composed of five residents representing the five noxious-weed districts within the County. Board members are volunteers appointed by the King County Executive and confirmed by the King County Council. In addition, one staff person from the Washington State University (WSU) Extension serves as a non-voting member. The following Board Members served on the King County Noxious Weed Control Board in 2023:

Alaine Sommargren, Board District 1
Becky Chaney, 2023 Chair, Board District 2
John Browne, Board District 3

Grace Stiller, Board District 4
Eldon Murray, Board District 5
Jennifer Andreas, WSU Extension

King County Noxious Weed Districts

- District 1:** Alaine Sommargren
(northwest King County including Shoreline, Seattle, Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, Bothell, Woodinville, Redmond, Kirkland, Bellevue and Mercer Island)
- District 2:** Rebecca Chaney
(Bear Creek, East Sammamish and Snoqualmie areas including Duvall, Carnation, Snoqualmie, North Bend, Sammamish and communities east of Redmond, Bellevue and Lake Sammamish)
- District 3:** John Browne
(southwest King County including Vashon Island, Burien, Highline, SeaTac, Normandy Park, Des Moines and Federal Way)
- District 4:** Grace Stiller
(Green River, Soos Creek and Newcastle areas including the cities of Newcastle, Renton, Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, Algonia, Pacific and Covington west of 180th Ave SE)
- District 5:** Eldon Murray
(eastern King County including Issaquah, Black Diamond, Maple Valley, Enumclaw, Skykomish and Covington east of 180th Ave SE)



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Noxious Weed Control Program Staff 2023

The Program works throughout King County to minimize the economic, environmental, and social impacts of noxious weeds. Noxious weeds are defined as non-native and aggressive, but with the potential to be eradicated or controlled in the state. Program staff work with all land managers in the County—public and private—to achieve this goal. Staff focus on direct service, efficiency, and technical expertise. Though the Program has regulatory authority, the primary goal is to help everyone find the best control options for noxious weeds on each site and to reduce the overall impact of noxious weeds throughout the County.

Program Manager: Steven Burke

Administration: Denise Liguori

Communications and Education: Lauren Vorona,
Rahel Stampfer, Skye Pelliccia

County Lands: Roy Brunskill

State and Federal: Tricia MacLaren

Aquatic: Ben Peterson

Healthy Lands: Dan Sorensen

Region Leads: Allison Bachner, Ashley Shattuck,
Ashlie Arthur, Maria Winkler, Matthew Martin,
Mattia Boscolo, Minwook Park, Tom Erler

Riparian Specialists: Avery Bowron, Erin Haley,
Harvey Martin, Justin Brooks, Sara Price, Sayward
Glise

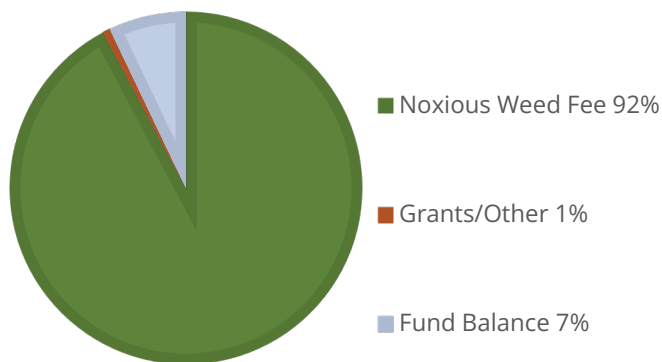
Field Technicians: Lars Krokum, Megan
Chaplin, Nick Peda, Seage Moss,
Savannah McGhee

Program Finances

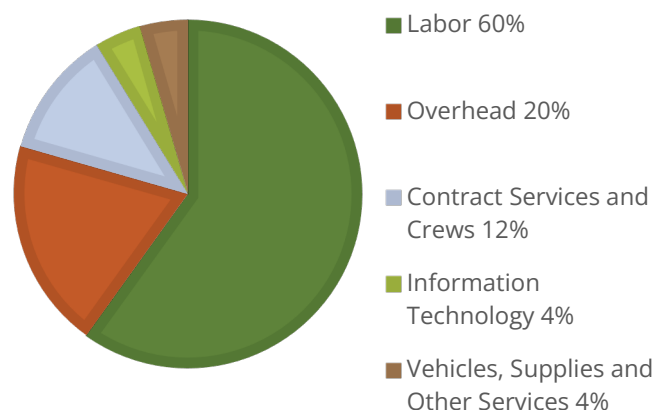
In 2023, the Program was funded through a Noxious Weed Parcel assessment of \$6.20 a year per parcel plus 44 cents per acre on all properties in the County, except for property classified as forest land or federal and tribal properties. Property classified as forest land is assessed at the rate of 62 cents per parcel plus 4 cents per acre. See chart below for details on program revenue.

As illustrated in the chart below, program expenditures fund staffing, fixed County overhead, contracted services, and crew work. Remaining funds are allocated to facilities, vehicles, information technology, King County operations, staff training, and materials printing.

PROGRAM REVENUES:
\$4,964,651



PROGRAM EXPENDITURE:
\$4,964,651



Year in Review and Progress Report

Controlling and Monitoring Noxious Weeds

- Surveyed **10,005** infestations of noxious weeds.
- Controlled **93%** of sites (**9311 of 10,005**), covering **149** acres.
- Control work was completed by property owners on **80%** of sites and by program staff on **20%** of sites.
- Eradicated noxious weeds on **707** sites. Noxious weeds have not been found on those sites for three years or more.

Containing Regulated Weeds

- Controlled **97%** of all known Class A noxious weed sites.
- Controlled **93%** of all known regulated Class B noxious weed sites.
- Located **209** new regulated noxious weed infestations.

Managing Riparian Areas for Healthy Habitats

- **76** river miles surveyed for invasive knotweed, controlling all infestations, and preventing spread.

Leveraging Our Expertise to Support the Public

- Responded to **653** reports of noxious weeds.
- Taught people about noxious weeds at **11** online trainings, **22** in-person presentations, and **17** field trainings.
- Hosted an educational table/booth at **15** in-person events, developing new connections with community groups.
- Hosted 3 educational webinars (one in Spanish!) with over **1000** participants, providing continuing education credits to **527** weed-management practitioners.
- Engaged the County-wide audience with monthly articles about weeds through the Noxious Weed News blog with **60,299** views, and the Noxious Weed News newsletter, with **10,037** subscribers.
- Loaned **20** landowners knotweed injector kits and provided training to control knotweed on their properties.



Field Specialist Seage Moss checks for Egeria. Photo by Ben Peterson.



Regional Specialist Matthew Martin treats wild basil on the Issaquah Plateau. Photo by Tricia MacLaren.

Major Weeds of King County

Top Class A Weeds in King County

Garlic Mustard
646 active sites



5% eradicated
97% controlled

Giant Hogweed
205 active sites



82% eradicated
99% controlled

Milk Thistle
55 active sites



32% eradicated
100% controlled

False Brome
33 active sites



0% eradicated
100% controlled

Goatsrue
19 active sites



35% eradicated
99% controlled

Top Regulated Class B Weeds in King County

Tansy Ragwort
4,285 active sites



36% eradicated
87% controlled

Purple Loosestrife
1,201 active sites



20% eradicated
87% controlled

Orange Hawkweed
514 active sites



21% eradicated
99% controlled

Poison-hemlock
541 active sites



0% eradicated
97% controlled

Spotted Knapweed
332 active sites



60% eradicated
86% controlled

Policeman's Helmet
189 active sites



54% eradicated
92% controlled

Sulfur Cinquefoil
207 active sites



47% eradicated
96% controlled

Yellow Hawkweed
189 active sites



42% eradicated
98% controlled

Garden Loosestrife
212 active sites



6% eradicated
81% controlled

Dalmatian Toadflax
148 active sites



57% eradicated
96% controlled

Definitions (RCW 17.10, WAC 16-750)

Class A: Eradication required by State Law due to limited distribution in the state and potential significant impact to the state's economy and environment.

Regulated Class B: Control required by State Law. Class B weeds are regulated in areas of the state where they are limited in distribution to prevent further spread.

Eradicate: Eliminate a noxious weed within an area of infestation.

Control: Each year, prevent seed production and dispersal of parts capable of forming new plants.

State, Federal, and Tribal Lands

State and federal agencies own more than 3,700 parcels within King County, comprising 38 percent of the county. In 2023, there were 343 active, regulated noxious weed sites on state and federal parcels, including eight new sites. Staff surveyed 100 percent of the sites and 99 percent of those sites were controlled.

In addition, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) maintains 18 state highways that traverse King County, covering 368 linear miles. Program staff surveyed 100 percent of the 749 regulated noxious weed sites on state highways, and 96 percent of those sites were controlled through cooperation between WSDOT and Program staff including two new sites.

King County is on land that is home to the Muckleshoot, Tulalip, Snoqualmie, and Duwamish Tribes. The Noxious Weed Program works cooperatively with the Tribes to reduce the impacts of noxious weeds on their lands and resources.

Highlights of the Program's successful working relationships with state, federal and tribal land managers:

- Facilitated the Upper Snoqualmie Cooperative Weed Management Area to foster collaboration among federal, state, county, and city agencies, the Snoqualmie Tribe, and non-governmental organizations, and more effectively manage noxious and invasive weeds, protecting the quality habitats of the project area.
- Worked with the Muckleshoot Tribe to reduce the impacts of spotted knapweed, wild chervil, and sulfur cinquefoil.
- Collaborated with the Snoqualmie Tribe on the lower Snoqualmie River by treating two tansy ragwort and knotweed infestations (Class B noxious weeds) and by sharing information on best management practices for controlling creeping thistle.
- Controlled Class B noxious weeds purple and garden loosestrife on Lake Washington and Portage Bay through collaboration with the U.S. Department of Commerce.
- Collaborated with the Bonneville Power Administration for control of noxious weeds on its properties and easements.
- Partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to survey and control noxious weeds in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.
- Collaborated with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission for successful control of noxious weeds within state parks.



Purple loosestrife removal at a NOAA property. Photo by Tricia MacLaren.



Wild Chervil on USFS lands in the Skykomish Ranger District. Photo by Tricia MacLaren.

County Lands

As one of the largest landholders in King County, King County agencies manage approximately 40,000 acres of public lands (2.7 percent of land within King County), 1,500 linear miles of road rights-of-way, and 390 miles of trails. In 2023, County agencies controlled 96 percent of the 1,815 infestations of regulated noxious weeds located by Program staff on County lands. There were 27 different species of regulated noxious weeds found. The top five species found on County managed properties were tansy ragwort, yellow hawkweed, purple loosestrife, garlic mustard, and poison hemlock. County agencies controlled 97% of these species at 1550 sites.

Control of Regulated Noxious Weeds on County-Managed Lands 2023		
Agency	Number of Sites Surveyed	Percent Sites Controlled
Department of Local Services / Road Services	1513	97
Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) / Parks and Recreation Division	147	88
DNRP / Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD) / Stormwater Services Section	105	81
DNRP / WLRD / Rivers and Floodplain Management Section	37	100
Executive Services Department / Facilities Management Division	5	100
DNRP / Solid Waste Division	4	100
King County Sheriff's Office	1	100

In addition to controlling regulated noxious weeds, the King County Parks and Recreation Division successfully controlled 115 acres of non-regulated noxious weeds and other invasive vegetation on its properties. This work included 85 acres of blackberry, ten acres of thistle and teasel, nine acres of knotweed, six acres of butterfly bush, and two acres of Scotch broom.

During 2023, plumeless thistle (*Carduus acanthoides*) was discovered near Black Diamond. This is the first time this Class B noxious weed has been found in King County. Plumeless thistle is a spiny upright growing biennial that can reach a height of 8 feet tall. It can severely impact pasture lands and fields by crowding out desirable forage species. Forage animals do not graze plumeless thistle. The infestation found in the Black Diamond Open Space will be closely monitored and controlled with the goal of eradicating it from King County.



The spiny stem of the plumeless thistle. Photo by Tom Erler.



Above: Flowering plumeless thistle. Photo by Tom Erler.

Biological Control Activities

The Program partners with Washington State University Extension's Integrated Weed Control Project (IWCP) to identify weed infestations that can be effectively addressed through biological control, a method that uses natural enemies, usually insects, that only impact the target weed species and are approved by the United States Department of Agriculture. For noxious weeds that have approved biological control agents available, this method may be a cost-effective way to reduce impacts over the long term, especially when infestations are large and/or remote, and where there are insufficient resources available for methods that are more expensive.

In 2023, the Program and IWCP released the newly approved gorse biocontrol agent, *Sericothrips staphylinus*, for the second year in King County. The gorse site is very steep and challenging to manage using other management techniques. Thrips were recovered after overwintering at the site and had moved to adjacent gorse plants. This is currently the highest elevation site in the continental U.S. and the thrips survived snow and ice storms. Thrips were found actively moving on stems and feeding damage was evident in several areas. An additional 900 thrips were released nearby. This work is greatly assisting keeping King County largely free of gorse.

IWCP continued to study the biocontrol agent for invasive knotweeds, the knotweed psyllid (*Aphalara itadori*). Psyllids were recovered after fall releases at the hybrid knotweed site in Kent and giant knotweed site in Maple Valley during early spring surveys but were not found in subsequent surveys. Psyllids will be released again in 2024. Additional knotweed sites continue to be explored for future releases. Successful establishment and spread of biocontrol agents are important tools towards achieving long term effective weed control. Overall, three biocontrol agent species were released at seven locations in the county.



Galerucella spp. feeding found in October on purple loosestrife at Kent Parks - Green River Natural Resources Area. Photo by Jennifer Andreas.

Biocontrol Agent Releases in King County		
Noxious Weed	Biocontrol Agent(s)	2023 Locations
Purple loosestrife	<i>Galerucella</i> spp. – leaf-feeding beetles	5 releases: UW Bothell, UW Ravenna Creek, SE 8 th – Sammamish, Bellefield Office Park, Mercer Slough
Purple loosestrife	<i>Nanophyes marmoratus</i> – flower bud-feeding weevil	Inglewood Shores
Gorse	<i>Sericothrips staphylinus</i>	Enumclaw quarry



Sericothrips staphylinus thrips were released for the second time in King County in summer 2023. Overwintering thrips (in yellow circles) and their damage (mottled white/green appearance on leaves) were found during the site visit. Photo by Jennifer Andreas.

Aquatic Weed Control

Aquatic noxious weeds impact our lakes and waterways by altering diverse native plant assemblages, reducing water flow, impeding recreation, reducing water oxygen levels, and providing habitat to non-native fish that prey on native fish such as Kokanee. During 2023 1,490 regulated aquatic weed sites were surveyed, including all active Class A noxious weed infestations. Of those sites surveyed, 96 percent were controlled, either by the landowner (61 percent of the sites) or by the Program (39 percent of the sites). Intensive surveying of aquatic areas is an important program activity that aids in early detection of new infestations followed by rapid, effective control response. In 2023, Program staff surveyed 40 lakes, large ponds, and rivers in King County, including 35 miles of the Snoqualmie River and several areas of Lake Washington, Lake Sammamish, as well as many streams and wetlands.

2023 Aquatic Weed Control (* = Class A, ** = Class B weeds)		
Regulated Aquatic Weed Species	Surveyed Sites	Sites Controlled
Common Reed**	47	96%
Egeria**	2	100%
Floating Primrose-willow*	2	100%
Garden Loosestrife**	199	93%
Parrotfeather**	6	100%
Purple Loosestrife**	1227	97%
Reed Sweetgrass*	2	100%
Ricefield bulrush*	3	100%
Yellow Floating-heart**	2	100%

Notable achievements in aquatic weed control for 2023:

- In 2023 eradication work began on a new infestation of the Class A noxious weed floating-primrose willow (*Ludwigia peploides*) on Evans Creek near Redmond. Program staff visited the site eight times between May and October and developed an integrated pest management strategy to map and control all known plants. This is one of two floating-primrose willow sites in the county, and only the fifth occurrence in the state. Our program will work with the property owners to eradicate the plant from the wetland over time.
- A mail campaign to over 1,000 Lake Sammamish property owners was conducted to reduce the impact of Class B noxious weeds purple and garden loosestrife on the lake. Property owners achieved 72 percent control of purple loosestrife and 69 percent control of garden loosestrife as of the mid-August survey date.



Field Specialist Savannah McGhee pulls floating-primrose willow on Evans Creek. Photo by Ben Peterson

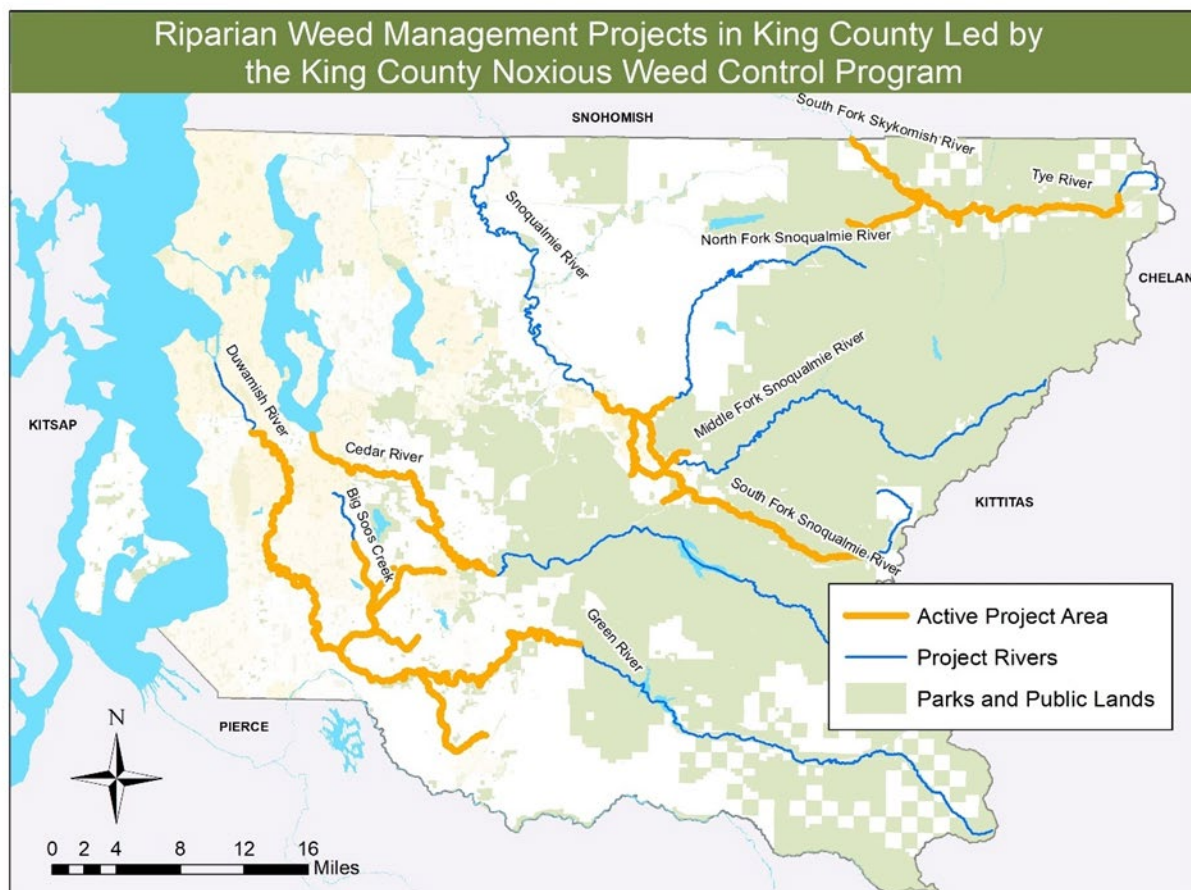
Cooperative Weed Management in Riparian Areas

To protect habitat, improve water quality, and aid salmon recovery efforts, the Program conducts cooperative, multi-jurisdictional, public-private projects to control knotweed and other high-priority riparian weeds on King County's major river systems. As knotweed is reduced, the Program focuses on collaborative habitat restoration with project partners.

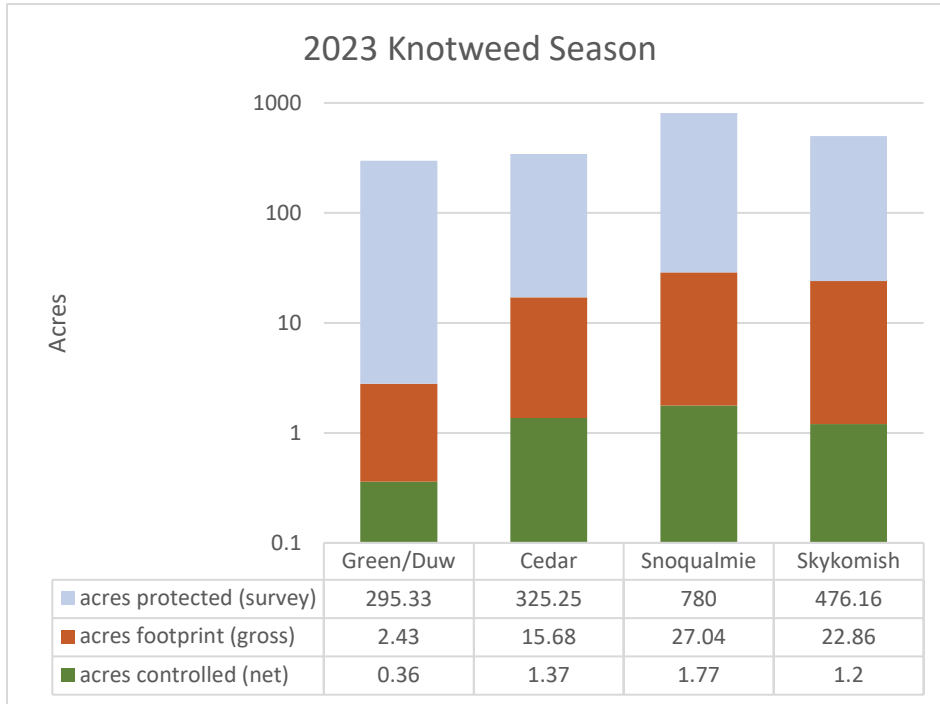
In 2023, the Program surveyed for knotweed on 76 river miles and controlled 4.7 acres of knotweed over 68 infested acres. Project areas include the Green/Duwamish River, Cedar River, Snoqualmie River (upstream of the falls), and the Tye/South Fork Skykomish River. The support of landowners within these project areas is vital to the success of the Program's work. More than 1,600 property owners voluntarily gave permission to allow access and control of knotweed on over 2,700 parcels.



Riparian Team fords the Skykomish River to treat invasive knotweed. Photo by Sara Price.



These projects are funded through a combination of competitive grants and internal funding. Grant funds in 2023 were provided by the King County Flood Control District. Puget Sound Corps crews provided by WDNR allowed for knapweed, tansy ragwort, Dalmation toadflax and hawkweed control on 13 river miles of riparian headwater habitat.



Terminology:

Acres protected measures the full acreage of land for which the Program develops plans for monitoring and treatment.

Acres footprint is the acreage that was treated in 2023. Because individual knotweed plants can grow across a large area, we also measure the **acres controlled**, which is the total area that the Program treated. These multiple measurements can help determine the density of knotweed stands and our progress in the region.

To ensure sustainable results and long-term stewardship of restored riparian lands, the Program develops partnerships with public and private entities. In 2023, the Program's internal King County partners included the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (Parks Division and Water and Land Resources Division), and the Department of Local Services (Roads Division).

Externally, the Program partnered with the Snoqualmie Tribe, U.S. Forest Service, Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), Washington State Department of Agriculture, Seattle Public Utilities, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Washington Conservation Corps (WCC), Puget Sound Corps (PSC), EarthCorps, Sound Salmon Solutions, Oxbow Farms and Conservation Center, and the cities of Snoqualmie, North Bend, Auburn, Kent, Covington, Renton, Maple Valley, Tukwila, and Skykomish.



*Field Specialist Harvey Martin treats knotweed along the Skykomish River.
Photo by Sara Price.*

Puget Sound Corps

The Puget Sound Corps (PSC) provides crews that work on projects to improve water quality and salmon habitat in the Puget Sound basin while providing training and work experience for young people in Washington. In 2023, King County was given an opportunity by WDNR to utilize nine PSC crew days for the survey and control of noxious weeds along riparian corridors in the Snohomish River watershed. WDNR designated EarthCorps to provide the crew in 2023. Additionally, this crew received specialized training for working safely near swift moving water.

Noxious Weed Control Program staff trained and directed the six-person crew in surveying and treating five different species of noxious weeds along the upper Snoqualmie River. The PSC crew surveyed and treated spotted knapweed, orange and yellow hawkweed, tansy ragwort, and Dalmatian toadflax on 14 acres of riparian habitat stretching over 2 riverbank miles. These noxious weed infestations were actively degrading the environmental and recreational values of public lands in King County. This contribution from WDNR and the partnership with EarthCorps continues to provide a significant benefit to the County. Partners in this PSC project included WDNR, Snoqualmie Tribe, U.S. Forest Service, Washington State Parks, private landowners, and EarthCorps.



PSC EarthCorps crew members ready to control knapweed on the upper Snoqualmie River. Photo by Tricia MacLaren.



PSC EarthCorps crew member treating knapweed on the upper Snoqualmie River. Photo by Tricia MacLaren.



Gravel bar of the upper Snoqualmie River where PSC crews surveyed and treated noxious weeds. Photo by Tricia MacLaren.

Healthy Lands Project

The Healthy Lands Project (HeLP) was created in 2019 to significantly reduce the impacts of widespread, unregulated noxious weeds and provide long term stewardship in natural areas protected through King County's Land Conservation Initiative (LCI). Stewardship plans are developed with public and private landowners, and crews and other resources are provided for weed control and stewardship work. This work increases ecological benefits provided by these newly protected natural areas, resource lands, and urban open space.

Highlights from 2023 include:

- Controlled noxious weeds on **49 sites**
- Staff surveyed **33 sites** covering almost **443 acres**
- **7 properties** were treated by HeLP project staff.
- In total, **91 net acres** of weeds were controlled for the first time and **26 net acres** received follow-up treatment in 2023.



Noxious Weed staff assist at a community workday event at Cemetery Pond. The Cemetery Pond site is managed by King County Stormwater and Surface Water Management (SWS) to advance Clean Water, Healthy Habitat goals of the County. The Healthy Lands Project has been active in supporting SWS in hosting events and managing noxious weeds on this site. Photos by Dan Sorensen.

Green Start

From May of 2022 to May of 2023, the Program, Dirt Corps, Neighborhood House and the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget (PSB) ran a new training program: Green Start. This program provided environmental stewardship and restoration training to people currently experiencing homelessness as a gateway to a career in conservation and ecological restoration. The Program provided support in site identification, site orientation, skill training and career guidance. The program concluded in May of 2023.

Green Start was funded through a county appropriation of funds received as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. Green Start was housed in the County's Jobs and Housing Program, located within King County's Performance, Strategy and Budget office. It was designed to stabilize the lives of people experiencing homelessness by providing a stable place to live, an interim county job, and access to support services and career navigation. The ultimate goal of the County's Jobs and Housing Program is to help people progress to getting a permanent job and permanent housing.

From January to May of 2023 the Green Start crew:

- Controlled 1 acres of weeds, covering a footprint of about 2 acres across 4 sites.
- Planted over 2,000 plants across 5 different sites.



The Green Start crew examine site conditions for potential planting. The Program provided training and site selection for Green Start crews. Photo by Sara Price.



Above: The Green Start Crew evaluates project site. Photo by Sara Price.

Left: The Green Start Crew and Staff celebrate the culmination of their program. Photo by Sara Price

Equity and Social Justice Commitment

The Program is dedicated to advancing equity and social justice so all County residents can thrive. The Program continues to strive to implement the King County Executive's commitment to anti-racism and pro-equity service delivery.

In 2023, the Program completed its third annual Equity Impact Review (EIR) process. EIR's are an iterative process that examines how the groups within the Program are having impacts on equity in King County, and how they will adjust their work programs to move towards a more equitable future.

In 2023, WLRD published its first Equity and Social Justice Action Plan, which will help guide the division on its journey to become an anti-racist and pro-equity organization. The Program's educator consultant brought a depth of public outreach experience that made the plan more accessible for the average reader. The Noxious Weed Program is recognized by name for EIR efforts in the plan within Focus Area #3. The Program has prioritized work in the following two focus areas in alignment with the ESJ Action Plan:

Build a workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

Status, January 2023: The program staff does not reflect the racial diversity of the population of King County. In response to the 2020 Census, 63.5% of the people in King County identified as white and 36.5% as BIPOC or choose not to respond.

The Program's 2023 Approach: Focus on pro-equity hiring practices with a focus on temporary staff hiring processes. Boost potential pipelines by investing in natural resource education, training for youth organizations, and restoration workers.

Center anti-racist and pro-equity into our policies, services, and daily practices.

Status, January 2023: The program has various pro-equity services and programs.

The Program's 2023 Approach: The program completed its third Equity Impact Review (EIR) engaging staff in critical analysis of program operations. Priority action from these EIR plans include:

- Build and invest in relationships with partner organizations that are operated by and serve BIPOC communities.
- Develop intentional and inclusive language to describe the work of controlling noxious weeds.
- Leverage Healthy Lands Project to support projects in Equity Opportunity Areas.
- Provided a webinar for Spanish-speaking integrated pest management professionals.

Education and Outreach

Providing education to the public and restoration professionals is a key strategic element of the Program. Considerable resources are devoted to teaching the impacts of noxious weeds, plant identification techniques, appropriate removal, and reporting methods. The Program develops and deepens connections with community partners through tabling at community events, providing speakers, providing trainings and workshops, and leading volunteer events.

Highlights from 2023 education and outreach efforts include:

Webinars

The Program hosted two webinars to train professionals on integrated pest management topics. The spring webinar (hosted in English) had over 800 registrants over two days and offered pesticide recertification credits for both Washington and Oregon pesticide applicator license holders. The fall webinar (hosted in Spanish) had 228 attendees, earning 463 pesticide applicator recertification credits.

Aquatic

In 2023, two aquatic plant identification trainings were presented: one public and one at the Washington Lake Protection Association conference. In total over 35 participants attended. Participants learned how to differentiate native aquatic plants from aquatic noxious weeds and detect early infestations of weeds in waterbodies.

Newsletter, Blog and Social Media

The Program produced 12 blog posts that received 60,299 views. These posts provide guidance on integrated pest management, weed identification, state and county weed listing, and ecological concepts relevant to weed management.

The Program produces an Instagram page, which has over 3,000 followers. The top video for 2023 had over 60,000 views. The Instagram page delivers content on weed management tips, weed identification, and understanding weed ecology.

The blog, Instagram pages, and program events were promoted with a quarterly newsletter of 10,037 subscribers.

Presentations and Events in 2023	
Type of Event	Number in 2023
In Person Presentations	28
Online Presentations	9
Webinar	2
Tabling Community Event	15
Field Trainings	17



Promotional Flyer for Spring Webinar Series. Design by Skye Pelliccia.



Washington Lakes Protections Association participants learn to identify aquatic weeds. Photo by Ben Peterson

Engaging Young Learners

Through a partnership with Nature Vision, the Program provides free education on invasive plants to schools in King County. The classroom program, called Right Plant Right Place, provides age-appropriate and engaging content. Through classroom teaching and interactive activities, the students begin to understand the interactions of native and non-native plant species with each other and the environment, as well as the roles they play in local ecosystems. There are versions for elementary, middle, and high school, each designed to meet grade-level requirements and state standards.

Nature Vision's highly trained environmental educators provide Right Plant Right Place in classrooms upon request by teachers. The project is available for free to any school in King County through the sponsorship of the Program. Since 2021, the Program and Nature Vision focus recruitment efforts on schools in racially diverse and lower-income areas of the County to ensure teachers in those districts are aware of the opportunity. In 2023, Nature Vision taught 45 programs for 1,111 students in 7 school districts.



The Program partners with Nature Vision to provide youth education throughout King County. Photo Credit: Nature Vision

School	City	School District	Grade	# Students
Sequoyah Middle School	Auburn	Federal Way Public Schools	6 th	182
Glacier Middle School	Seatac	Highline Public Schools	8 th	90
Marvista Elementary	Normandy Park	Highline Public Schools	3 rd	96
Parkside Elementary	Des Moines	Highline Public Schools	4 th	50
Neely-O'Brien Elementary	Kent	Kent School District	4 th	84
Kent Meridian High School	Kent	Kent School District	11 th & 12 th	120
Sunrise Elementary - Kent	Kent	Kent School District	6 th	100
Alcott Elementary	Redmond	Lake Washington School District	3 rd	105
Lindbergh High School	Renton	Renton School District	9 th -12 th	50
Highlands Elementary	Renton	Renton School District	3 rd	88
Salmon Bay K-8 School	Seattle	Seattle Public Schools	4 th	54
Wing Luke Elementary	Seattle	Seattle Public Schools	3 rd	46
Shorecrest High	Seattle	Shoreline Public Schools	11 th & 12 th	46



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Water and Land Resources Division



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