



Wallowa County Weed Watch

Whitetop

Whitetop is an aggressive noxious weed!! This Eurasian native is invading Wallowa County!

The Problem

Whitetop invades moderately moist, sunny sites in rangeland and pasture. It forms dense monocultures, displacing native plants, degrading wildlife habitat and reducing forage and crop value. The seeds can also be mildly poisonous to cattle in the fall.

An extensive root system and vegetative reproduction make Whitetop very difficult to control. Fast growing taproots can reach 30 feet and underground stems can spread outwards to 12 feet in the first year. Each plant can produce 50 new vegetative shoots per year (like quack grass). First year plants over winter as rosettes, start growth early in spring, and bloom in May. Plants may produce seed 2 times per year. Seeds are spread by wind, water, on vehicles and in hay and crop seed.

Known infestations of Whitetop in Wallowa County are mainly in the lower Imnaha River Canyon and Freezeout Creek, but there are small patches scattered around the county. It is a high priority weed in Wallowa County and Oregon, requiring aggressive treatment measures.

Identification

Whitetop, or Hoary Cress, is a perennial mustard that can get up to 2 feet tall. Leaves clasp the stem and are lightly covered with soft white hairs. Clusters of many white flowers sit atop multi-branched stems. Seedpods are round or heart shaped, and contain two red-brown seeds. The seedpods are puffed, not flat like other mustards.

You can distinguish Whitetop from the many other white flowered mustards by its smooth (not ribbed) stems, puffed seedpods and extensive root system.

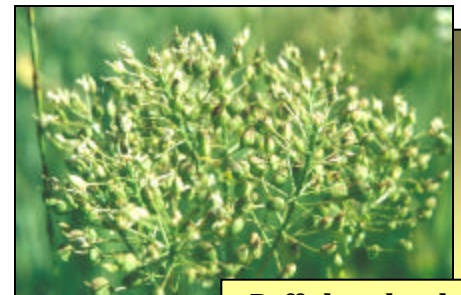
Treatment

It is extremely important to contain existing infestations of this noxious weed. There are no biological control bugs for Whitetop. Complete and ongoing digging can control small infestations. Continuous moderate grazing with sheep can be an effective control and flooding may help in appropriate areas. Mowing combined with herbicide can also be effective in some cases.

To control Whitetop chemically, combine Escort (1 oz/Acre) & Weedmaster (1 quart/Acre) in the spring. For fall treatment use Telar (1 oz/Acre).



Flower head



Puffed seed pods



**Whitetop
invading pasture**

Read and follow all label instructions when applying herbicides. Trade names have been used to simplify instructions and no endorsement or warranty is expressed or implied by the Wallowa County Weed Board or this brochure.

For more information or to report weed sites call:

Allen Schnetzky, Wallowa County Weed Control (541) 426-3332
Leigh Dawson, Wallowa Whitman National Forest (541) 426-5535

Mark Porter, Wallowa Resources (541) 426-8053
Nelle Murray, Asotin County (509) 243-2098