

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant Program

Grant Guidelines



PROGRAM INFORMATION

History

The Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) grant program was established by the 1985 Montana Legislature to provide funding for the development and implementation of weed management programs. As required in the Montana constitution, there is a noxious weed management trust fund of \$10 million.

Interest or revenue generated by the trust fund is utilized to fund research, education, and local cooperative noxious weed management projects. Funding assistance is provided to counties, local communities, researchers, and educators in their efforts to solve a variety of weed problems in Montana.

An eleven-member Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council reviews grant applications submitted to the Noxious Weed Trust Fund and provides funding recommendations. The Council is appointed by the Director of the Montana Department of Agriculture.

All grant applications and proposals should complement and enhance the Montana Weed Management Plan. The [Montana Weed Management Plan](#) can be found on the Department website or by contacting the Department of Agriculture.

Legal Authority

MCA Sections 80-7-801 – 80-7-823 (Montana Code Annotated)

ARM 4.5.101 – 4.5.113 (Administrative Rules of Montana)

Contacts

Montana Department of Agriculture
Noxious Weed Program
302 North Roberts
Helena, MT 59601
or
PO Box 200201
Helena, MT 59620-0201

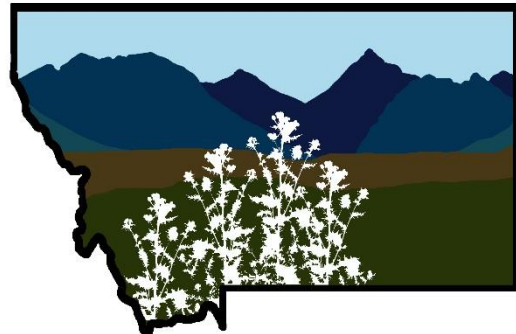
Phone: 406-444-7882 | 406-444-3140

Email: greta.dige@mt.gov | jchaffee@mt.gov

Website: <https://agr.mt.gov/NoxiousWeedTrustFund>

Noxious Weed Trust Fund

Montana Department of Agriculture



NOXIOUS WEED TRUST FUND APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS

Applications are submitted once per year to the Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) for Research, Education, Development, Local Cooperative (landowner cost share) projects, and Statewide Programs. Requested funds should be fully spent within one year, however for those projects eligible for Statewide Program grants, funds can cover up to three years. See *Statewide Programs* under **Specific Project Types** for more details.

All grant projects should complement and enhance the [Montana Weed Management Plan](#) and focus on state or county listed noxious weeds. **Grant funding is provided as reimbursement for completed project expenditures.**

**** Applications for NWTF grants are due January 6th of each year. ****

HOW TO APPLY

Grant applicants collaborate with an organization, such as those listed below, that will administer the grant and serve as the recipient for funding reimbursements from the NWTF.

- County Weed District
- Tribal Weed District
- Extension Service
- Educational Institution
- Conservation District
- Other Established Organizations

Apply Online - Application forms are submitted electronically and can be found at <https://funding.mt.gov/> using the online **WebGrants** system. Applications are available beginning in July / August. Information on using the WebGrants system and specific application instructions can be found in the links section of the Montana Department of Agriculture website at <https://agr.mt.gov/NoxiousWeedTrustFund>

GRANT PRESENTATIONS

Submitted applications are reviewed by Department staff and the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council. Council members attend the NWTF Grant Hearings in February / March, where applicants provide a ten-minute presentation (PowerPoint, photos, etc.) for their project. An additional five minutes per application is allocated for questions from the Council.

Grant applicants will be notified of the date and time of their presentation following the application submittal deadline. **The grant hearings are held in March in Helena; please check the website for updated information.**

FUNDING DELIBERATIONS / PROJECT SELECTION

Selection of successful projects is a competitive process. Applications are evaluated based on the degree to which it addresses specific criteria found in these guidelines. Following applicant presentations at the grant hearings, the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council provides their funding recommendations to the Director of the Montana Department of Agriculture. Final funding is approved by the Director.

GRANT AWARD PROCESS

Applicants selected for funding will be notified approximately three weeks after the NWTF grant hearings. Successful projects are funded through contractual agreements that outline each party's responsibilities. A contract will be developed to define all project terms, conditions, and responsibilities of the applicant. The contract will clarify all legal patents and proprietary rights that will result from the proposed activity and will incorporate the successful application among its provisions.

Once the contract is reviewed and signed by all applicable parties, the recipient will be able to request reimbursement for eligible costs incurred as outlined by the terms of the funding award. Costs incurred prior to final signing of the contract will not be reimbursed unless otherwise noted in the contract. The contract is effective upon the final signature(s) and date.

Projects must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, licensing, and regulations for funds to be awarded. Evidence of such compliance may be required before grant reimbursement is issued.

Applicants not approved for funding will be notified in writing of the decision.

GRANT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Project status reporting is a condition of receiving grant funds. Award recipients are required to submit status reports, online through WebGrants, in April and November of each year that the grant is underway as specified in the grant contract. Status reports address project activities from the preceding time period and planned activities for the upcoming period. Grant recipients are required to submit a completed final report form summarizing the activities, impacts, and results of the project prior to the final claim being paid.

INELIGIBLE COSTS

Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant funds may not be used for:

- Application expenditures - developing grant proposals, grant hearing travel expense
- Purchase of biocontrol agents
- Equipment purchases
- Indirect costs
- Capital improvements

- Annual herbicide for cropland/CRP practices
- Re-seeding efforts for alfalfa fields, grain for wildlife habitat, or other cropland situations

SPECIAL FUNDING

Applicants meeting the requirements may request special funding. Choosing a special funding type will not have any effect on project evaluation or funding recommendations.

General Funding dollars are available to help mitigate the impact of noxious weeds on private lands due to the activities of the MT Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Examples of areas impacted by FWP activities include wildlife grazing and wintering areas, recreation areas, and waterways.

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Funding dollars are available to help manage private, tribal, and non-federal public land noxious weed infestations. Requested funding must focus on state-listed noxious weeds and the project must be within an established Weed Management Area on private, tribal, and/or state lands in areas associated with federal lands with an active weed management program. The project area must have 10% forest cover or be lands with infestations adjacent to or associated with weed threatened forested lands.

WEBGRANTS TIPS

- Always **use the navigation buttons within the Web Grants screen** for Back, Add, Delete, Edit, Save, etc. Do not use the web-browser buttons at the top of the window.



- All fields marked with a red asterisk are required.
- Forms can be edited after being marked as complete.
- Hold down the CTRL key and use your mouse to select multiple items.

SPECIFIC PROJECT TYPES

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Development projects should develop or enhance existing or new tool(s), skill(s), or technology for weed management, or develop new and innovative programming that may include mapping, monitoring, and/or planning. Creative proposals for investigating new weed management techniques are encouraged. Matching funds are not required for research projects but can be included in budget information. In-kind matches or forgone indirect costs can be noted in the application. Maximum request of \$75,000 per year.

Applicants should contact the [State Biological Control Coordinator](#) to discuss and collaborate on biological control components of the project.

Development projects should:

- support the state in accomplishing Coordination, Prevention, Detection, Rapid Response, or Control goals outline in Appendix A, and/or the Research Plan of Action section of the [State Weed Management Plan](#),
- increase knowledge of noxious weeds and/or improve an important aspect of noxious weed management,
- provide the foundation for a positive long-term effect on threatened natural resources,
- explore new technologies or tools to increase the efficacy of noxious weed management,
- develop biocontrol agents prior to release, or
- provide capacity for planning, mapping, and developing future programming and/or cooperative projects.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Research projects may include chemical, non-chemical, biological, and integrated approaches to weed control. Research projects use experiments and other techniques to answer a specific research question or test a hypothesis. Matching funds are not required for research projects but can be included in budget information. In-kind matches or forgone indirect costs can be noted in the application. Maximum request of \$75,000 per year.

Research projects should:

- support the research needs listed in the Research Plan of Action section of the [State Weed Management Plan](#),
- be developed in cooperation with land managers to address land management needs,
- increase knowledge of noxious weeds and/or improve an important aspect of noxious weed management,
- enhance a new or existing method of weed management,
- provide the foundation for a positive long-term effect on threatened natural resources,
- effectively disseminate project results to end users, and
- be managed by or cooperatively with a university or educational institution.

EDUCATION PROJECTS

Projects are not required to have a 50:50 match on the budget form, but some match is suggested. Maximum request of \$75,000 per year.

Applicants should contact the State Education Coordinator to discuss and collaborate on educational components of the project.

Education projects should:

- support the state in accomplishing Coordination, Prevention, Detection, Rapid Response, or Control goals outline in Appendix A, in the [State Weed Management Plan](#),
- build coalitions and partnerships with available weed management resources,
- provide events and opportunities for the public to gain knowledge about noxious weeds and their impacts,
- create opportunities for the public to act, and
- impact a large number of participants and/or benefit future weed managers.

LOCAL COOPERATIVE PROJECTS (Continuing and New)

Local Cooperative projects involve on the ground treatment of noxious weeds within a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) and **require the participation of a minimum of three adjacent landowners**. Participating landowners must have a committed dollar amount for the acres to be treated prior to application submission, map noxious weeds in the project area, and develop long term weed control plans. This is not a maintenance program and continued grant support is not guaranteed in subsequent funding cycles.

Local Cooperative projects are **required to have a minimum of 50% cash match for commercial application, herbicide, and revegetation costs**. Projects are funded only if matching funds are available from grantees. All matching funds that are part of another government cost-share program must be specifically outlined in the grant proposal.

A current tribal noxious weed management plan or county weed management plan, of the reservation or county the project will take place in, must be on file with the Department of Agriculture. Tribes may submit a management plan from the county where they are located, multiple county plans, or their specific tribal weed management plan.

Local Cooperative projects (new and continuing) may request **administrative costs up to 3% of the grant total**, maximum of \$1,000, for organizations not receiving a County/Reservation Program Enhancement grant. Maximum total grant request of \$75,000 per year.

Local Cooperative projects should:

- support the state in accomplishing Coordination, Prevention, Detection, Rapid Response, or Control goals outline in Appendix A, and meet Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) criteria as described in the [State Weed Management Plan](#),
- be a large landscape scale management effort,
- effectively use grant funds for the short-term with a goal of getting to a maintenance phase manageable by landowners with minimal inputs,

- adhere closely to herbicide costs listed in the State Term Contract for agricultural chemicals. See vendors and prices here: [State Bid](#),
- have measurable objectives that describe how renewable resources will be enhanced,
- have completed weed mapping of target noxious weed infestations and completed one year of cooperative work within the weed management area,
- utilize appropriate integrated management techniques,
- incorporate an annual monitoring plan to effectively track progress, and
- provide educational opportunities for land managers.

New Local Cooperative projects require completion of an **environmental assessment (EA)** for the project area. It is important to allow enough time to complete the requirements of the EA. Requests for information required to complete the EA section of the application should be started by October. EA requirements under the Noxious Weed Trust Fund Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (May 2010) include:

- **Chemical Weed Control Projects**
Vegetation type, soil type, water resources, air quality, habitat of fish & wildlife, threatened, endangered and species of concern, and historical and archeological sites.
- **Non-Chemical Weed Control Projects** (grazing, cultural, and mechanical projects)
Vegetation types, habitat of fish & wildlife, threatened, endangered and species of concern, and historical and archeological sites.
- **Maps**
Surface and groundwater (identify all surface waters by name on the surface and groundwater maps), and soil property maps.
- **Letters**
MT Natural Heritage Program and MT Historical Society.

Herbicide Applicator Licenses

All commercial and governmental pesticide applicators must be properly licensed to apply herbicides. All landowners must have a farm applicator license if they will be using a restricted use herbicide, such as Tordon, in the project area. Verification of proper licensing will be required in project status reports.

308 Authorization

Montana water quality standards require state waters to be free from toxic or harmful substances to aquatic life. The 308 Authorization allows a short-term exemption from these water quality standards to apply pesticides to a state water body. If an aquatic herbicide is going to be applied in or over the water, contact the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Water Protection Bureau at 406-444-3080 or visit their website at <http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/othercert/308Authorization.mcp> for more information on this permitting process.

Grazing Projects

All sheep/goat grazing projects are required to consult with the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department (FWP) prior to project implementation due to possible conflict in areas associated with

bighorn sheep or predators (i.e., grizzly bears and wolves); special preventative action and caution must be taken with grazing projects. If bighorn sheep, grizzly bears, or wolves are observed in or near your grazing project area, FWP must be notified immediately.

Mapping and Monitoring

All local cooperative grant recipients are required to use, or share data with, Early Detection Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS) to map all weed infestations within the project boundaries. If you are currently using an alternative mapping or GIS program, please use the link below to access an upload service so the data can be incorporated into EDDMapS.

For more information about EDDMapS visit: <https://www.eddmaps.org>

Data Upload Link: <https://www.eddmaps.org/tools/>. Access information and procedures under Bulk Data Resources.

STATEWIDE PROGRAMS

The Statewide Program funding opportunity is only for specific Education and Early Detection, Rapid Response programs that benefit the entire state and regional partners and work in several or all counties. Programs are funded for three years and can apply for funds up to \$225,000, not to exceed \$75,000 per year.

Eligibility Information

- Applicants must work with and apply through an organization, such as a weed district, conservation district, extension office, non-profit, or tribal weed district
- Those interested in applying for this opportunity must have previously been awarded a Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant for the project for a minimum of **1 year** and be in good standing
- Contact the Grant Coordinator at 406-444-7882 for questions about eligibility

Statewide Education Programs – 3 YEARS

These programs include the Montana Noxious Weed Education Campaign and Montana Biocontrol Project. Programs require a minimum of three collaborating partners.

All awarded funds are reimbursable and may provide wages, supplies, communication, and travel expenses at state rates. All programs should support the state in accomplishing Coordination, Prevention, Detection, Rapid Response, or Control goals outline in Appendix A, in the [State Weed Management Plan](#).

Education projects should

- support local and county education or biocontrol programs,
- build coalitions and partnerships with other Montana and regional education or biocontrol organizations,
- create opportunities for the public to act, both locally and statewide,

- assist weed managers in hosting events, opportunities, and creating materials to increase landowner knowledge of noxious weeds and their impacts, and
- create opportunities for weed managers and the public to identify needs and gaps in noxious weed education.

Statewide EDRR Programs – 3 YEARS

These programs include EDRR programs managing new invaders either state listed Priority 1 noxious weeds or county listed noxious weeds. Many include using strike-teams to focus on a single high priority noxious weed in several counties. Programs require a minimum of three collaborating partners.

All awarded funds are reimbursable and may provide wages, supplies, communication, travel at state rate, contract work, and 50:50 cost-share for commercial application, herbicides, and revegetation costs. Herbicide costs listed in the State Term Contract for agricultural chemicals are found here: [State Bid](#). All programs should support the state in accomplishing Coordination, Prevention, Detection, Rapid Response, or Control goals outline in Appendix A, in the [State Weed Management Plan](#).

Applicants should contact the [State EDRR Coordinator](#) to discuss and collaborate on components of the program.

EDRR programs should:

- include collaborative resources from private, state, and/or federal sources,
- work across boundaries both locally and regionally to have a large landscape scale impact,
- participate in bi-annual partner meetings,
- utilize integrated management techniques that are both appropriate and applicable for the noxious weed species to be treated,
- track annual progress through annual monitoring and map weed infestations by using or sharing data on EDDMapS,
- include a current Weed Management Plan (taskforce, county, or statewide),
- focus on a single high priority noxious weed or more if capacity and management needs allow, and
- provide education for landowners and partners.