

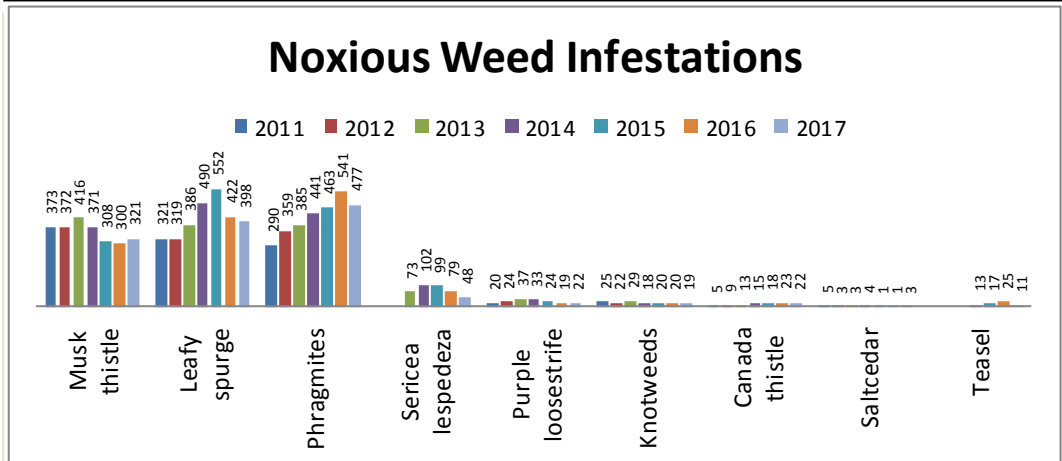
Lancaster County Weed Control – City of Lincoln Weed Abatement

2017 Combined Weed Program Review

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“These ornamentals have escaped their original settings and are now found growing in the wild along or creeks and other riparian areas”



Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) continues to be the main focus of invasive weed control in Lancaster County. The earlier a landowner can start an aggressive effort to control infestations, the better chance they have to eradicate the problem. Our mission is to stop the spread of new invasives before they get a strong foothold in Lancaster County, as well as aggressively manage the invasives that already exist. Cutleaf and common teasel were added as

noxious weeds in Lancaster County because of its aggressive nature. This plant has the ability to spread rapidly and cause economic loss for property owners. With landowner cooperation we are beginning to see a decline in teasel infestations. Canada thistle, leafy spurge, sericea lespedeza, phragmites, and teasel all saw decreases this year, while musk thistle, purple loosestrife and saltcedar infestations increased. No piece of land is safe from noxious weeds. They are found wherever

they're able to establish a root system. In 2017, our inspectors documented 1,322 sites infested with noxious weeds. 414 of those sites were located within Lincoln city limits. Due to their introduction as ornamentals; saltcedar, purple loosestrife and knotweed are more commonly found in the city than rural areas in Lancaster County. These ornamentals have escaped their original settings and are now found growing in the wild along or creeks and other riparian areas.

Real Estate Commission Adds Noxious Weed Question

In an effort to protect home buyers from purchasing a property with an infestation of noxious weeds, the Nebraska Real Estate Commission recently adopted amendments to the [Seller Property Condition Disclosure](#)

Statement (“SPCD”). The form now includes a question in the Environmental Conditions section about noxious weeds.

The question reads; **Have you been notified by the**

Noxious Weed Control Authority in the last 3 years of the presence of noxious weeds, as defined by Nebraska law (N.A.C. Title 25, Ch. 10), on this property? The seller will answer Yes, No, or Do Not Know.



STOP INVASIVE SPECIES IN YOUR TRACKS.

PlayCleanGo.org

“The overall number of enforcements in 2017 ended at a 5 year low with 253 enforcements”

2017 City of Lincoln Enforcements

Any time a property owner does not comply with our legal notice to maintain their property below the 6” city height ordinance; our office hires a contractor to cut the property. Once the cutting is complete we file a “notice of possible unpaid weed assessment” with the Register of Deeds. If the assessment is not paid, a lien is attached to the property and is treated the same as unpaid property taxes.

Weed Abatement Enforcements

- 2013 325
 - 2014 299
 - 2015 386
 - 2016 258
 - 2017 253
- Average 304**

The overall number of enforcements in 2017 decreased by 5, totaling 253; this is a 2% decrease. The number of legal notices issued decreased from 920 in 2016 to 849 in 2017. The number of properties inspected decreased from 2,891 to 2,692. In addition to the legal notices, we also sent 865 letters, posted 1,274 warning signs and made 119 personal contacts to get properties controlled.

Noxious Weeds Inside Lincoln City Limits



Cutleaf teasel along Salt Creek in Lincoln

Noxious weeds know no boundaries. They find themselves at home inside the city limits, along the creeks, in wetlands and waste areas just as well as in the rural areas. Saltcedar, purple loosestrife and knotweed were first introduced as ornamentals and planted in our landscapes, so they are found more in the city than in rural areas. It’s important to control them in the city to prevent the spread into rural areas.

In 2017, 29.5% of our noxious weed inspections occurred inside the city limits. While these infestations are very small in the total number of acres infested, we continue to find noxious weeds all around the city, many along the creeks and in waste areas.

Our city inspectors made 1,029 inspections on 576 sites and found 414 sites infested with noxious weeds.

Lincoln’s Noxious Weeds

number of sites infested in 2017

- Musk thistle 150
- Phragmites 108
- Leafy spurge 99
- Purple loosestrife 13
- Knotweed 18
- Canada thistle 15
- Teasel 8
- Saltcedar 3

“With the ease of turning in complaints electronically on our web site, the Citizen ACTION Center, smart phones and tablets we received 1,785 complaints”

City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program

Weed Abatement

total inspections

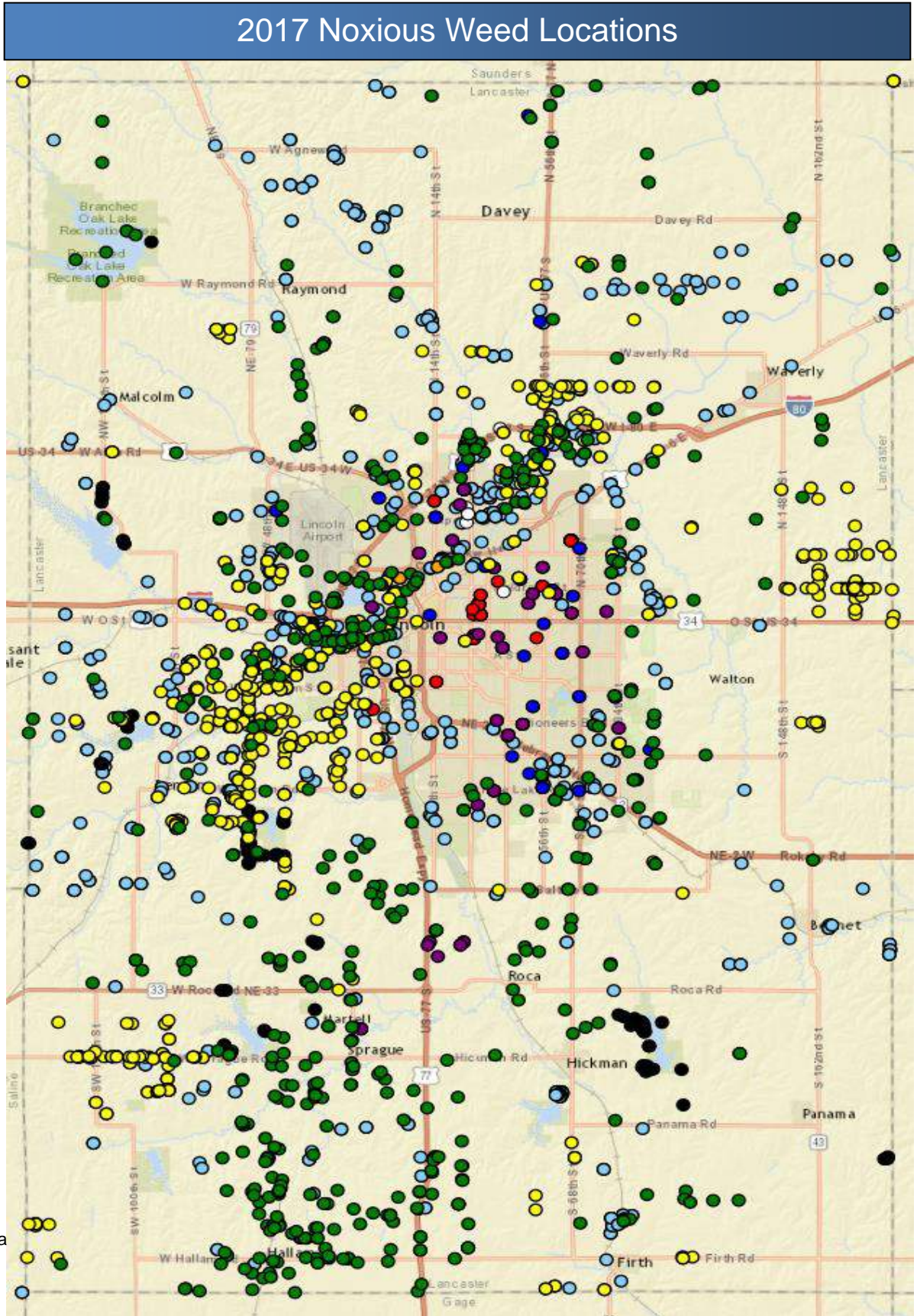
2012	5,354
2013	7,099
2014	8,310
2015	7,802
2016	6,210
2017	5,844

Weed Abatement inspections decreased from 6,210 in 2016 to

5,844 in 2017, a 5.9% decrease. These inspection numbers represent only the 6” height ordinance on overgrown properties; they do NOT include noxious weed inspections. The total number of properties on which these inspections occurred has also decreased from 2,891 in 2016 to 2,692 in

2017, a 6.9% decrease. Our office relies on citizen’s to let us know when their neighbor’s properties become a violation. With the ease of turning in complaints electronically on our web site, the Citizen Action Center, smart phones and tablets we received 1,785 complaints from the public.

Lancaster County, NE



- Map Key**
- Phragmites
 - Saltcedar
 - Leafy spurge
 - Purple loosestrife
 - Canada thistle
 - Teasel
 - Knotweed
 - Sericea lespedeza
 - Musk thistle

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E-mail:
weeds@lancaster.ne.gov



We're on the Web!
lancaster.ne.gov/weeds

"There are "invasive" plants we recommend controlling, but they do not meet the criteria necessary to be listed as noxious"

Good Neighbors –
Control Invasive Weeds !!!

Combined Weed Program

Almost every parcel outside of developed residential lots has or had one or more kinds of noxious weeds present. The key to noxious weed control is not allowing the plants to seed. This requires persistence and follow-up. Most of the public and private landowners understand this and are keeping their noxious weeds under control. It is the job of noxious weed control authority staff to assist landowners in the job of controlling noxious weeds. Many landowners are accomplishing control without any assistance or contact from the authority. The authority carries out a strong information and awareness program along with an extensive inspection program to encourage voluntary compliance of the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act.

The authority has also provided the inspection and administration of the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement program since entering into an Interlocal agreement with the City in 1996. The County Commissioners serve as the Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Authority. Brent Meyer serves as the superintendent and supervises a seasonal staff of six weed inspectors with the assistance of Chief Inspector Pat Dugan and Account Clerk Jasmine Slezak.

What Makes A Weed "Noxious" vs "Invasive"?

In the plant world we often throw around the terms "noxious" and "invasive" when referring to plants. This often raises the question - What's the difference? Confused? Let me explain... only the worst of the worst weeds make it to the [Nebraska's noxious weed list](#). When a plant becomes noxious, it requires landowners to control the plant on their property to prevent spread to neighboring properties. I would consider all of Nebraska's noxious weeds to also be invasive.

According to [Nebraska's Weed Control Act](#):
The term Noxious weeds means and includes any weeds designated and listed as noxious in rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the

Director of Agriculture.

To be listed as "noxious" there is a process used to evaluate the plant before it is considered for the noxious weed list, and before it would go to the Director of Agriculture for consideration.

Nebraska Law requires a plant meet at least 6 of 9 criteria developed to help evaluate the plant. The process begins with a scientific review of the plant called a Weed Risk Assessment (WRA). This Assessment is used to determine if the plant poses a threat to Nebraska. A few of the criteria include; *the plant poses a threat to Nebraska's economy, environment, social welfare, wildlife, or safety; the plant is listed as*

noxious in at least two neighboring states; the plant reproduces and disseminates rapidly; the plant is not native to Nebraska; Infestation levels have been surveyed and documented in the State.

There are "invasive" plants we recommend controlling, but they do not meet the necessary criteria to be listed as noxious. Being non-native is the one criteria required for any plant to be considered as noxious. Example; Poison ivy is often considered an invasive plant and some think it should be "noxious", but poison ivy is a native plant to Nebraska, so it will not likely ever make it to Nebraska's noxious weed list.