



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



KEEP
WYOMING WILD
& BEAUTIFUL

Dear Reader:

Fremont County Weed and Pest District provides local services and expertise for the management of noxious weeds and pests impacting land health. In this report, we highlight partnerships, programs, and projects that improve land health and the resources land owners and public land users value.

June was incredibly wet. I think it rained nearly every day? The rain created challenges for the District and our local farmers. For the District, the wet conditions reduced hours we could be in the field and made for muddy conditions that limited access. The wet conditions were timed perfectly to promote productive plant growth, including the noxious and invasive varieties. As the yellow and white flowers bloomed bright, the demand for weed control work spiked to its highest in ten years.

The Weed and Pest District operates out of Lander, Riverton, and Dubois. From these three locations 11 full time staff and 31 seasonal employees provided services benefiting nearly every resident in Fremont County. I want to thank these dedicated individuals for their hard work and commitment to our mission. Congratulations to Brian Greeves and Bob Finley on earning Master of Science degrees in GIST and Plant Science. No doubt, these new skills will benefit our programs. We also want to recognize the retirement of Kim Johnson. Her 29 years of service leading GIS and mapping programs for the Fremont County Weed and Pest District and the Wyoming Weed and Pest Council were groundbreaking.

We also want to thank outgoing board members Joe Crofts and Tom Massey for their service on the board of directors. Joe was the District's treasurer for many years. First appointed to the District board in 1997, he has contributed valuable insight and mentorship ever since. Tom was appointed to the board in 2016 and served as vice chairman for most of those years. He served two terms on the board, but Tom had a long history with Fremont County Weed and Pest District. He was employed seasonally during his summer break from teaching history lessons, then hired as a full time assistant supervisor after his retirement from the school district.

Lastly, we want to welcome our newest board appointees, Mark Hogan and Tiffany Hartpence. Mark is retired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service where he worked for private land and Wind River Indian Reservation wildlife and land management projects. Tiffany is a real estate broker with Home Source Realty. As a lifelong Fremont County resident and experienced realtor, Tiffany will bring new and valuable perspectives to weed and pest management.

Thanks for reading!

Sincerely,



Aaron Foster, District Supervisor





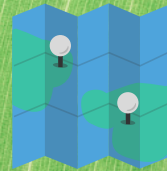
FCWP Total Budget
\$ 4,101,746



Total Acres of Weeds Treated
14,033



FCWP Total Cost-Share dollars
\$ 930,580



Acres Covered
486,661



**Customer Visits to
Herbicide Warehouses**
988



New Invasive Species Found
0



**On-site
Landowner Consultations**
130



Acres Treated for Grasshoppers
0



**Educational publications and
outreach events**
13



Aerial Weed Control Acres
4,641



Acres of Certified forage:
5,082



FCWP Seasonal Staff
31



Certified Gravel Pits:
13



FCWP Full-time Staff
11



**New Bio-control species
released**
0

Total Agency Program Costs – Partners and Programs

Our partners pay for a large percentage of work done on lands they administer or own, allowing FCWP to utilize a greater portion of the mill levy as a cost-share incentive to local taxpayers.



Total Acres Treated : 81 acres

Total Labor Hours: 1046 hrs

Total Travel Time: 109 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 81,555.02



Total Acres Treated: 5440 acres

Total Labor Hours: 757 hrs

Total Travel Time: 155 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 191,904.94



Total Acres Treated: 1023 acres

Total Labor Hours: 450 hrs

Total Travel Time: 329 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 110,555.55



Total Acres Treated: 766 acres

Total Labor Hours: 144 hrs

Total Travel Time: 45 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 41,961.22



Total Acres Treated: 1347 acres

Total Labor Hours: 1247 hrs

Total Travel Time: 315 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 234,120.36

Total Agency Program Costs – Partners and Programs cont...

Private Lands – General Noxious Weed Control Programs

This includes FCWP labor, travel, and herbicide for work controlling noxious weeds on private lands, irrigation companies formed by private water user groups, as well as over the counter cost-share on herbicide purchases by private landowners.



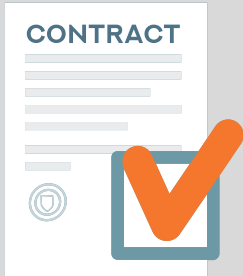
Total Acres Treated: 733 acres

Total Labor Hours: 1536 hrs

Total Travel Time: 445 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 308,795.59

Private Lands – Special Management Programs



Total Acres Treated: 2055 acres

Total Labor Hours: 1280 hrs

Total Travel Time: 329 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 229,922.97



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Total Acres Treated: 362 acres

Total Labor Hours: 271 hrs

Total Travel Time: 64 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 59,863.25

Total Agency Program Costs – Partners and Programs cont...

Vegetation Management



Total Miles of Hwy: 1,000 mi
Total Acres Treated: 1,446 acres
Total Labor Hours: 155 hrs
Total Travel Time: 35 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 46,624.35

Noxious Weed Control (Paid for through WY Dept. of Ag.)



Total Miles of Hwy: 1,000 mi
Total Acres Treated: 110 acres
Total Labor Hours: 390 hrs
Total Travel Time: 68 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 40,785.80

Irrigation District Noxious Weed Control

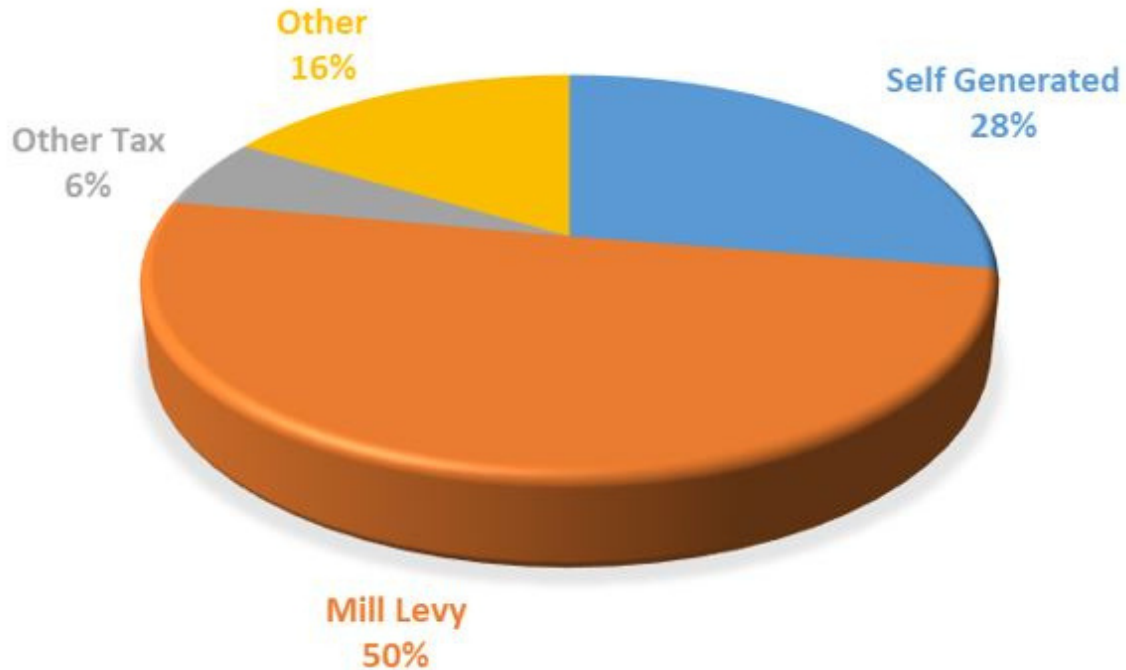


Total Acres Treated: 267 acres
Total Labor Hours: 514 hrs
Total Travel Time: 76 hrs

Total Cost: \$ 64,610.52

FCWP Budgeted Revenue Overview and Description

BUDGETED REVENUE - \$4,101,746



Mill Levy: The tax money allocated to each weed and pest district throughout the state, authorized by the WY Weed and Pest Act of 1973. This money is generated through local property taxes.

Self Generated: Agency contracts, herbicide sales, etc..

Other Tax: A small portion of tax money collected from vehicle license plates

Other: Value of Herbicide Inventory, Accounts Receivable, and Available Cash on Hand at fiscal year end.

The following are FCWP District cost-share amounts



Herbicide cost at wholesale value for BLM Lands within the Government Draw Aerial Project:

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 10,083.82



FCWP offers a funding match to BIA funds:

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 114,232.06



FCWP Provides a funding match for general noxious weed control to the Wyoming Game and Fish Dept.

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 36,939.52



FCWP Provides a funding match to the Midvale Irrigation District.

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 25,195.42



FCWP absorbs 100% of the cost of weed control on Fremont County owned land, including county roads. Some non-noxious weed control is offered to the County in exchange for the use of the courthouse office facilities in Lander.

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 75,626.26



Herbicide cost at wholesale value for State Lands within the Government Draw Aerial Project:

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 7,221.34

The following are FCWP District cost-share amounts cont..



FCWP costs from program expenses the district incurred that exceed WYDOT 's allowable charge amounts for hourly and per acre charge rates

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 3,110.80

FCWP Provides a cost-share to the public for general noxious and High Priority weed control on private lands within Fremont County.

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 197,546.62



Special Management Programs for Leafy spurge and Russian knapweed

FCWP offers an additional cost-share to landowners enrolled in Special Management Programs.

Total FCWP District Cost: \$189,214.65

FCWP Provides a cost-share reimbursement for participating herbicide retailers in Fremont County.

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 130,841.00

FCWP Provides a cost reimbursement program for cities and towns that have implemented noxious weed control programs within their jurisdictions.

Total FCWP District Cost: \$ 191,246.91

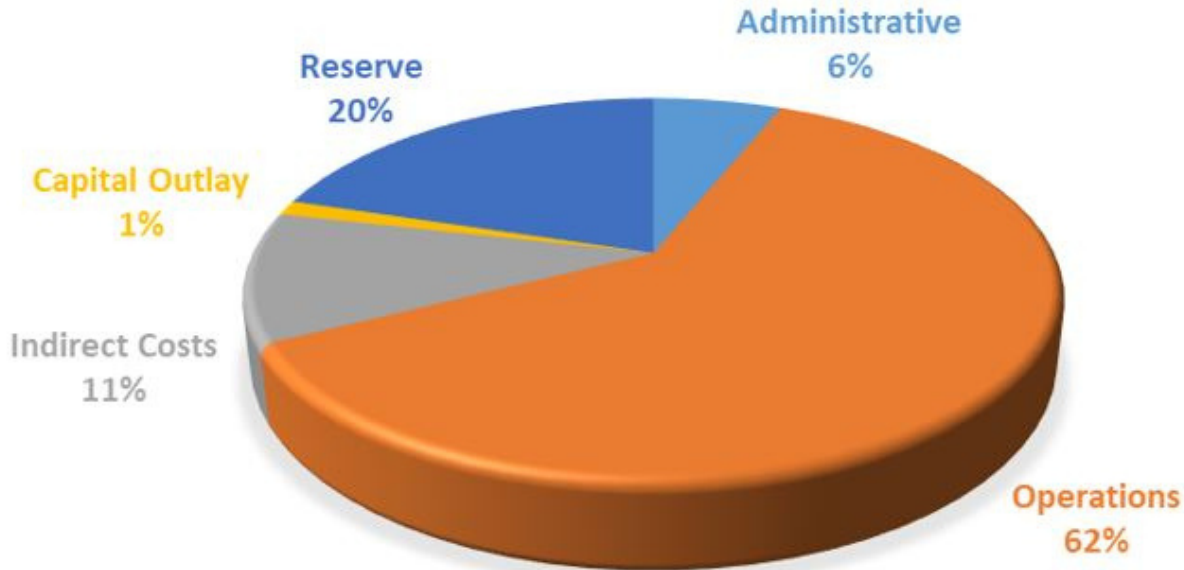
Total Fremont County Weed and Pest Cost-Share Program Expenses for 2023:

\$981,258.40



Budgeted Expense Overview and Description

BUDGETED EXPENSE - \$4,101,746



Definitions

Operations: Herbicide purchases, program cost-shares, staff wages, spray equip., etc..

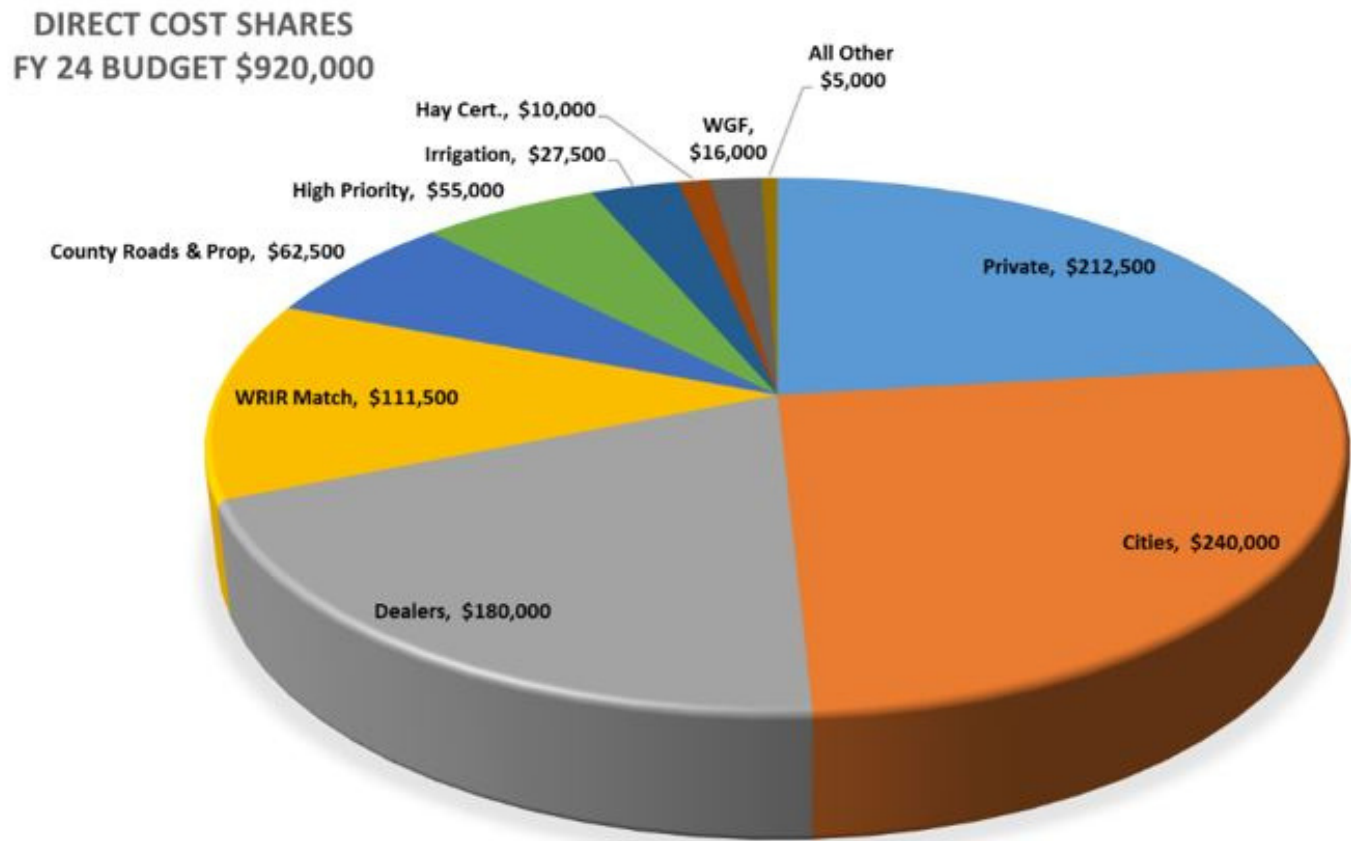
Indirect Costs: Property and liability Ins., payroll costs like health care and social security, etc...

Capital Outlay: Vehicle purchases, building improvements, large equip. purchases, etc...

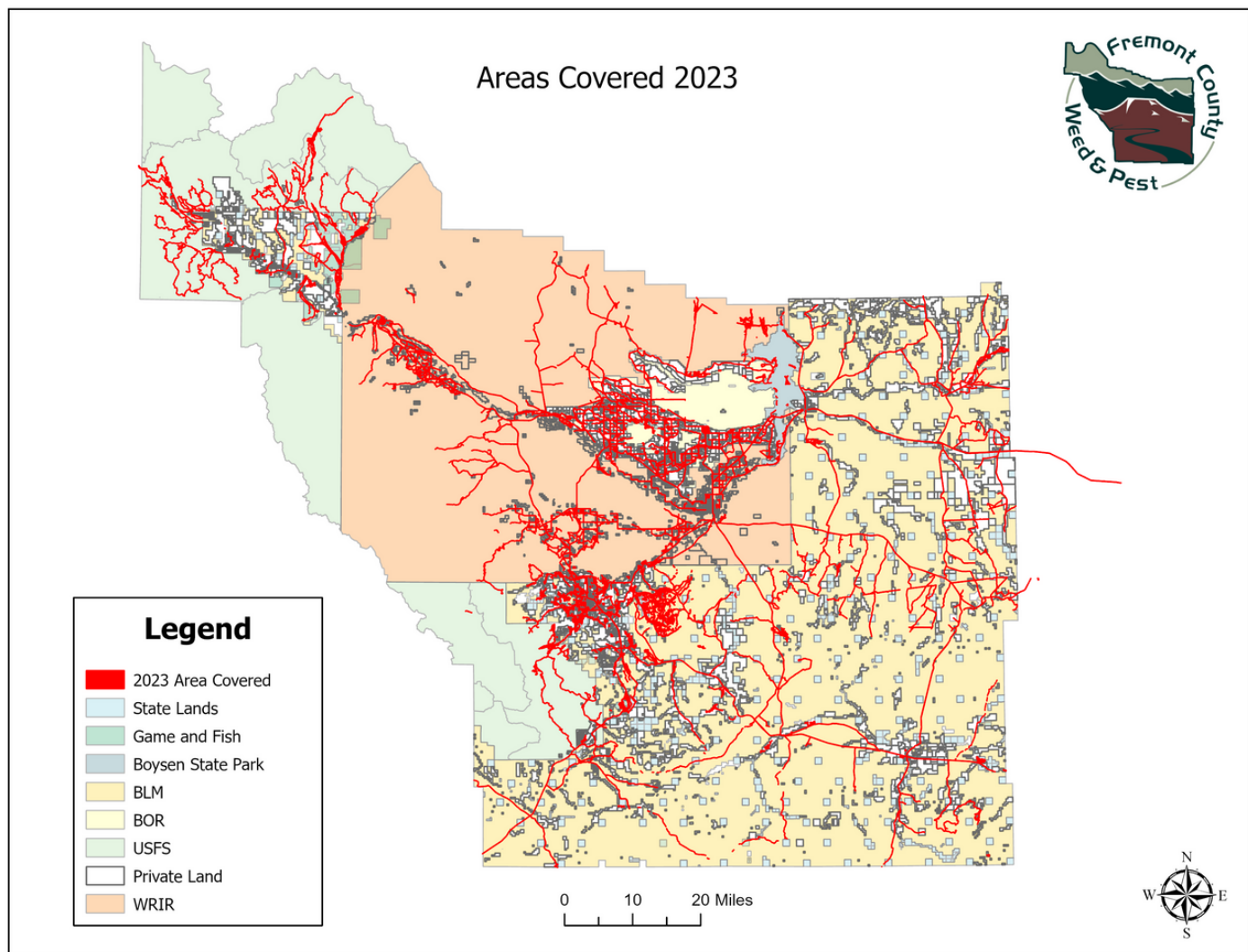
Administrative: Admin staff wages, board expenses, outreach costs, accounting fees, office supplies, etc...

FCWP's breakdown chart for Cost-Share programs

These programs provide FCWP funds to cities and towns, local herbicide dealer cooperatives, agency matches, herbicide cost-share to landowners, and free services like hay certification, on-site consultation, mapping, high priority weed control, and county road spraying. These are the budgeted amounts for the 2024 fiscal year.



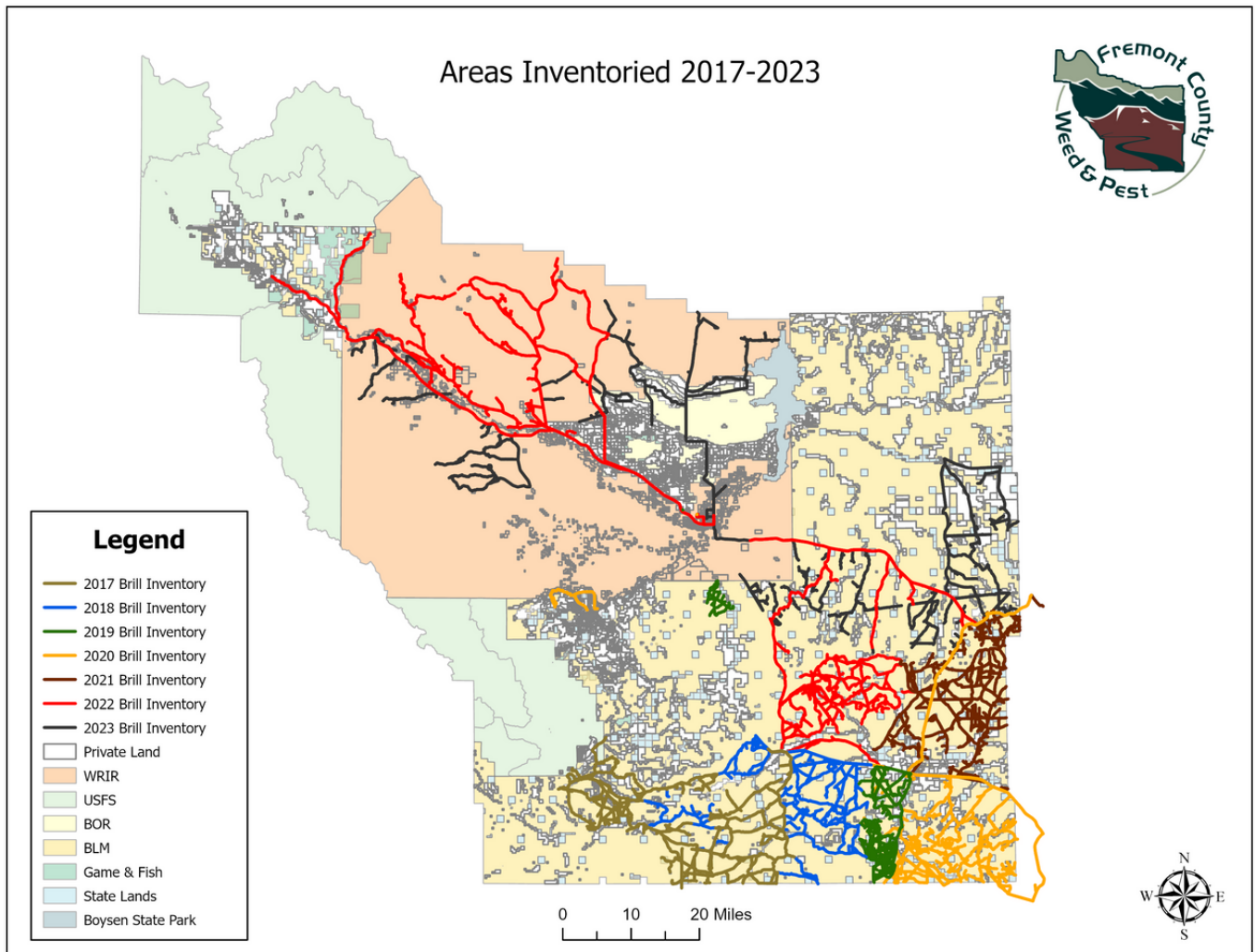
FCWP crews have a tremendous amount of land to cover while searching for and controlling invasive noxious weeds. This map provides a perspective of crew efforts in 2023. As you can see, the bulk of our work is often close to population centers and along roads. Invasive weeds are often introduced into otherwise healthy landscapes by vehicles and other human-related activities. Once established, the health and productivity of the land begins to decline. Awareness, monitoring, and prevention are vital components in maintaining our remaining healthy landscapes.



Invasive Weed Mapping and Inventory Efforts

Systematic weed survey

We continue our systematic survey for noxious weed infestations in areas not normally covered by FCWP spray crews. This work helps to catch small infestations before they become well established, monitors and maps the spread of infestations, and locates new invasive species in Fremont County. We also hire a private contractor to survey and map areas for noxious weeds in areas of the county that may have infestations the district is unaware of.



Special Management Programs

What is an SMP?

Answer: An SMP is a program developed within a weed and pest district that uses a separate, dedicated fund to implement a management program for no more than two noxious weeds found within that district. Under WY State Statute, one of those weeds must be leafy spurge, while the other species is selected by the local weed and pest district. In Fremont County, the two species eligible for SMP funds are [Leafy spurge](#) and [Russian knapweed](#)

Who can enroll in these programs?

Answer: Any landowner within Fremont County is eligible to enroll as long as the SMP weed species are found on their lands.

What are the program details?

Answer: Please visit our website: fcwp.org and click on the services tab.

SMP enrollment is a five-year cycle. At the end of the cycle the programs will be evaluated, and currently enrolled landowners will receive notification for re-enrollment. Re-enrollment for all SMP recipients will take place beginning Jan. 1, 2025.



Leafy spurge



Russian knapweed

EDRR and High Priority Programs

Early Detection, and Rapid Response is a critical component in limiting the establishment of invasive weed populations. EDRR increases the likelihood that localized invasive populations will be found, contained, and eradicated before they become widely established. The EDRR crew grew from three to five technicians this season which allowed for more boots on the ground and more acres treated!



The FCWP High Priority Program offers 100% cost-share to private landowners. The program consists of surveying, identifying, mapping, and treating noxious invasive weeds in areas where infestations are small, remote, and can be successfully contained before the infestation grows larger or spreads to uninfested areas through seed dispersal.

FCWP Crews 2023



Lander Crews



Canada thistle on USFS lands



Controlling leafy spurge on USFS lands



Controlling diffuse knapweed on BLM lands



Controlling black henbane



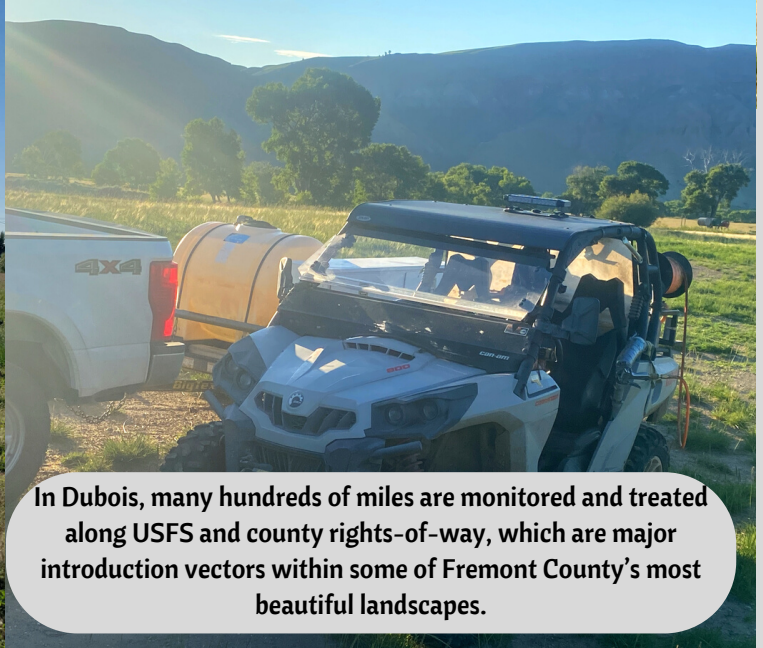
Controlling perennial pepperweed on BIA lands



Crews based in Riverton stay busy treating noxious weeds on over 1,000 miles of state and county rights-of-way



Providing noxious weed assistance to private landowners



In Dubois, many hundreds of miles are monitored and treated along USFS and county rights-of-way, which are major introduction vectors within some of Fremont County's most beautiful landscapes.



Quality control on rangeland and ditches



Decreasing seed banks



Backpacking small infestations



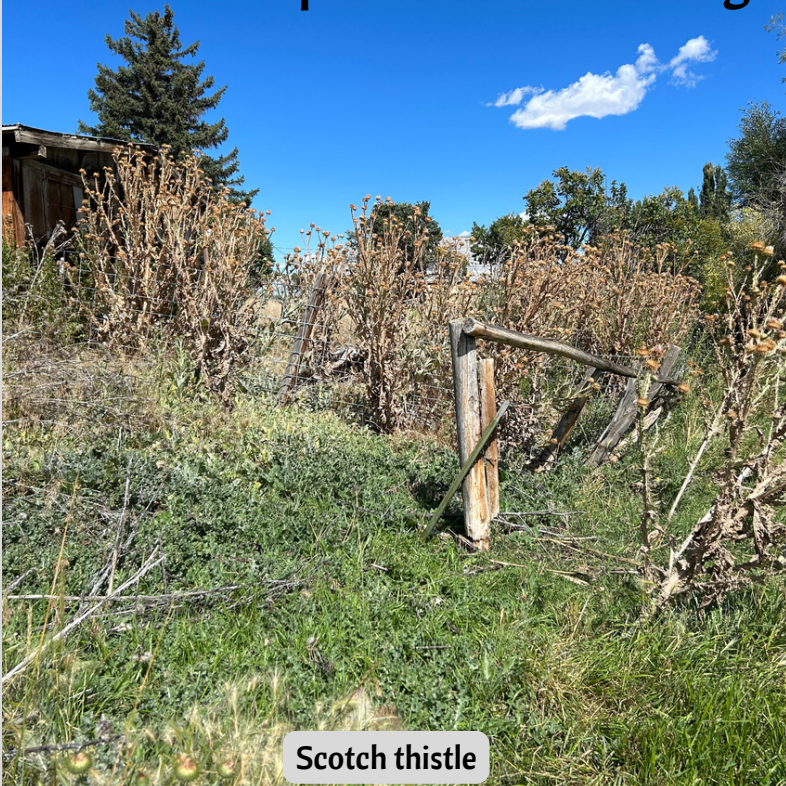
UTV booming large infestations

**The FCWP Right-of-Way Crew covers
over 1,000 miles of road, twice per
season!**



**Many sites require "spot treating"
with handguns and backpack
sprayers**

A few species that are being managed in Fremont County



Scotch thistle



Oxeye daisy



Salt cedar



Spotted knapweed

FCWP Spray Drone Program

In the ongoing efforts of the FCWP Spray Drone Program, we are excited to share the progress made during the 2023 season. This year, our focus has been on identifying suitable sites for drone spraying and further honing our piloting skills.

We are thrilled to announce that the FCWP Spray Drone team has successfully treated a total of 550 acres in 2023. This significant milestone showcases the program's effectiveness in precision spraying, contributing to environmental and agricultural advancements.

The two-person team, comprising a skilled pilot and a dedicated ground assistant, has diligently worked on expanding the program's capabilities. The drone is programmed to fly at a fixed height, speed, and area, following the pilot's input. With advanced sensors, the drone intelligently avoids unforeseen objects and autonomously returns to the landing zone when the battery is low.

As we move forward, the FCWP Spray Drone Program remains committed to further development. Stay tuned for more updates and opportunities as we continue to expand the program's acreage and impact in the 2024 season!



In Dubois, the month of June was dominated by rain, which slowed some of the spraying efforts, causing the work to be about a week behind normal for much of the summer. It seemed that the extra moisture made the weeds really prolific this year, so hopefully we were able to get more seeds germinated and then kill those extra plants! There was quite a bit of retreating needed in several areas and some weekends were employed doing that.



A helicopter retreatment of cheatgrass took place on August 28th on the Duncan Bench up East Fork Rd. outside of Dubois. 800 acres were treated in just a few hours by the capable crew of Hammond Helicopters. This was in coordination with efforts and grants from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Right of Way cheatgrass program

In 2022, FCWP and many contributing partners developed a countywide annual invasive grass management strategy. A goal of this strategy is to control cheatgrass along roadsides traveling through public, private, and tribal lands to limit further cheatgrass expansion into otherwise healthy rangeland. FCWP controlled 2,400 acres of cheatgrass and traveled 2,300 miles of dirt roads during late Aug. – Sept. in 2023. This Program is funded through partnerships with the WY State Allocations Committee, WGF Dept. through the Sweetwater/Lower Wind River Sage Grouse Local Working Group, BLM, and FCWP District. These roads are primary vectors for new cheatgrass introductions and are often the only areas that cheatgrass has established within large tracts of healthy rangeland.



Right of Way cheatgrass program Before and After



FCWP Biological Agent Weed Control Program

FCWP has a long history of supporting and utilizing biological control as a component of integrated weed management.



Canada thistle “rust” is a fungal spore that impacts the plants root system and reduces the plants overall health.



Hoary cress or “whitetop” biological control agents appear to be impacting flowering parts of the plant. This is a new agent so we will continue to monitor the impacts of this insect on hoary cress populations.



Russain knapweed biocontrol consists of two different insects that create “galls” on the plant. These galls inhibit seed production and translocation of nutrients. Monitored release sites are showing positive results in reductions of plant density and stem height.

Mormon Crickets were observed “marching” on Limestone Mtn. Road. While this may look terrifying to some, their impact on native range has not been significant in this area and the risk to crops in this area was low.



Certified Forage and Gravel Programs

- Question: Where can you find it?
- Answer: Check out the Wyoming Weed and Pest Council website: [_ Wyoweed.org](http://Wyoweed.org). Click on the "How Do I" tab. From there you will find an interactive map link showing certified hay producers and gravel pits throughout the state. If you have trouble with the website, simply call your local weed and pest office and they will help you find any certified hay or gravel available.
 - Question: How do I produce certified weed-free forage or gravel?
- Answer: If you are a producer in Fremont County, just give the FCWP office a call and they will survey your field and adjacent areas for noxious weeds and provide you with management solutions if needed. The same protocols are applied to gravel pits. Please call and schedule a week prior to needing an inspection. That's a very busy time of year for our staff!!

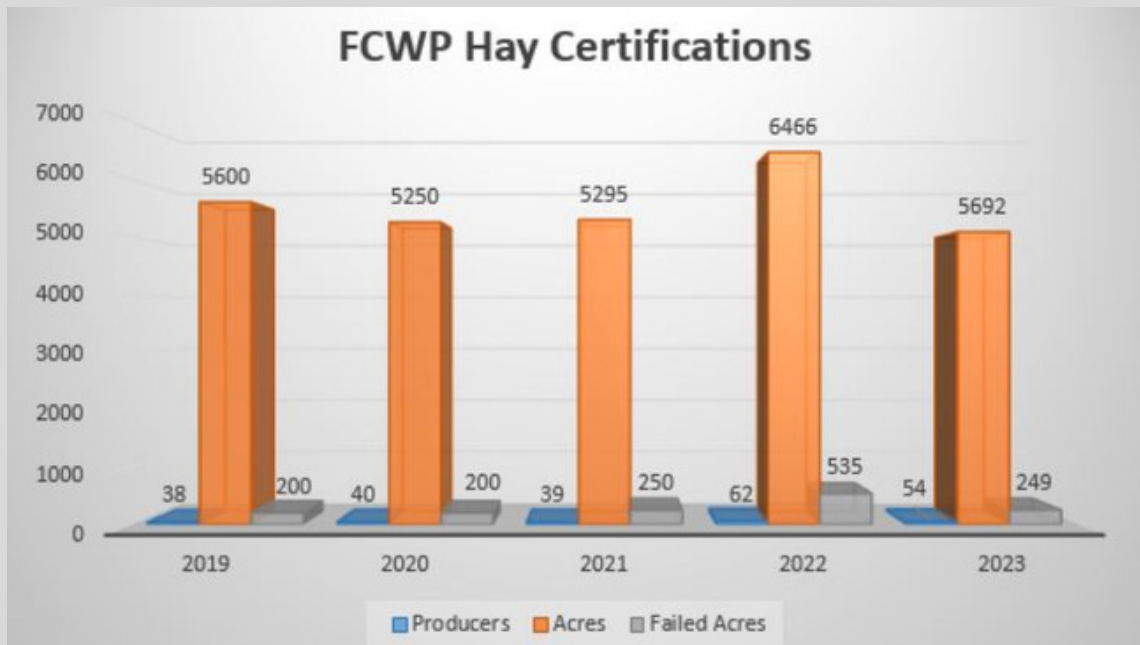


2023 Certified Forage Summary

2023 forage season started off very unusual compared to years past. Heavy winter snowpack and a very wet and cool June caused forage growth to be delayed with producers not seeing quality first cutting growth until late June to early July. With the delay of first cutting, second cutting was delayed as well. These conditions increased forage damage and contributed to loss.

While FCWP was able to gain a few new weed free forage customers, overall total certified acres decreased in 2023. This year's total was 5082 acres. In 2022, Fremont County had around 6466 total certified acres. 2023 certified Weed Free Forage decreased by 23.9% compared to last year's numbers possibly due to the extended winter snowpack and wet rainy conditions in June.

We are hopeful the 2024 growing season will give producers a rebound. FCWP offers free inspections for certifying weed free forage. Anyone using hay on public lands needs to be using certified weed free forage for their livestock. Buying weed free forage is also a great way to prevent the introduction of noxious weeds on to your private land.



2023 PAWMA Noxious Weed Pull at Sinks Canyon



On June 29th, truck beds were filled with bags of houndstongue and spotted knapweed that have invaded Sinks Canyon State Park. Local resident volunteers as well as WGF, WY State Parks, USFS, BLM, WY State Lands, and FCWP-EDRR staff made for a very productive day of removing these invasive weeds from the many recreational sites along the Popo Agie River in Sinks Canyon.



Wyoming Weed and Pest Council



The annual Wyoming Weed and Pest Council spring workshop was held in Dubois for the first time ever on April 11-13, 2023. There were more than 75 participants who attended presentations and trainings in the wonderful facilities at the National Museum of Military Vehicles. The venue is very well equipped, and the event was a great success. A guided tour of the museum by owner Dan Starks was included in the program.



FCWP.. always learning, always improving!

Workplace safety



Team work



Public Outreach



Program diversity



Extensive training



Program Innovation



FCWP.. always learning, always improving!

Community events



Weed Identification



Public awareness



Building partnerships



Teaching the youth in the classroom and in the field

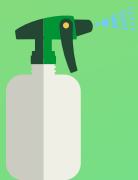


FCWP Services



Outreach and educational materials

The FCWP office has lots of free literature, and our staff is always happy to give presentations at your venue!



Herbicide recommendations and cost-share programs

FCWP offers a 40% cost-share to landowners in Fremont County who are managing a WY State Designated or Fremont County Declared noxious weed.



Site consultation and Weed Management Plans

Our staff will visit your site and develop an integrated weed management plan that aligns with your land use goals.



Surveying and mapping your property for invasive species

We will conduct a noxious weed inventory of your lands and build a map and management plan for you.



Sprayer rentals and sprayer calibration

FCWP offers a few different types of rental sprayers. Sprayers are rented on a per/day basis. FCWP will calibrate any landowner's sprayer for free.



Hay and Straw Certification

FCWP is the provider for Certified Weed Free Forage Certifications. Our staff will offer weed management strategies to help you achieve a weed-free forage crop.



Gravel Pit Certification

FCWP is the provider for Certified Weed Free Gravel Certifications. Our staff will offer weed management strategies to help you achieve a weed-free gravel pit.

Contact Info

FCWP Staff

Aaron Foster, District Supervisor
Penny Sauer, Office Manager
Renee Meyer, Admin Assistant
Kim Johnson, Assistant Supervisor
Cody Thrasher, Program Manager
Mike Wille, Assistant Supervisor-Riverton
Gordon Stover, Program Manager
Brian Greeves, GIS/Drone Ops Specialist
Bob Finley, Assistant Supervisor-Dubois
Bob Shellard, Assistant Supervisor-Lander
Olivia Maxwell, Program Manager
Craig Johnson, Program Manager

FCWP Board Members

Sollie Cadman, Chairman
Tom Massey, Vice-Chairman
Joe Crofts, Treasurer
Amy Anderson, Board Member
Daryn Fegler, Board Member
Rio Stafford, Board Member
Kip Post, Board Member

FCWP Office

450 N. 2nd St., Rm 325
Lander, WY 82520
307-332-1052
www.fcwp.org

The FCWP would like to thank **Tom Massey** for 8 years of public service as an FCWP board member!

Tom served as vice-chairman and was always willing to offer insight from the many years of experience he gained while working for FCWP as Asst. Supervisor in Lander. We wish you the best Tom!

The FCWP would also like to thank **Joe Crofts** for dedicating so many years to FCWP. Joe has been a board member since 1997 and brought a wealth of knowledge about WY agricultural needs to the district's attention. We wish you the best in your future endeavors, Joe!

The FCWP staff and Board of Directors would like to welcome the newest members to the FCWP Board of Directors. **Mark Hogan** was appointed to the board by the Fremont County Commission in January of 2023, and **Tiffany Hartpence** was appointed in February of 2024. We look forward to Mark and Tiffany's wealth of knowledge about land management issues in Fremont County. Thank you for stepping up to serve the community!



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