

# Invasive Species Inventory & Control Project

WRSCD partnered with Lower Weiser River Cooperative Weed Management Area to inventory, quantify, prioritize and control jointed goatgrass within the West Central Sage Grouse Planning Area. The district technician traveled along county roads and the Weiser River Trail in portions of Payette, Adams, and Washington counties to record locations of jointed goatgrass infestations with a GPS unit. A map was generated using the points of jointed goatgrass infestations and the priority point information. Priority was given to the roads that were near sage grouse lek areas, sage grouse nesting areas, and roads leading to the forests. Once the extent and location of the infestation was determined, priority could be given to county roads for control and containment. With the project funds, chemical control began around October 2011 and ended November 2012.

There were two fall applications and one spring application within that time period. Plateau was applied in the fall and a glyphosate product was applied in the spring. Biological control methods have also begun; including trial plot areas to grow competitive grasses and plots of an introduced bacteria that will slow down the growth of jointed goatgrass. These are the partners for this project:

**Weiser River Soil Conservation District**

**Lower Weiser River Cooperative Weed Management Area**

**South West Idaho Resource Advisory Committee**

**Natural Resource Conservation Service**

**Idaho Department of Fish and Game Bureau of Land Management**

**West Central Highland Resource Conservation and Development**

**Adams County Cooperative Weed Management Area**

**Washington County Farm Bureau**

**Friends of the Weiser River Trail**

The inventory map and final report that came from this project can serve as an educational reference. Even though the project funds have run out, WRSCD hopes that landowners will continue the efforts of controlling and containing this noxious weed. And if nothing else, this project will serve as an awareness tool.



Jointed goatgrass seeds in wheat seeds.

*Photo by Phil Westra of Colorado State University, Bugwood.org*

## Weiser River Soil Conservation District

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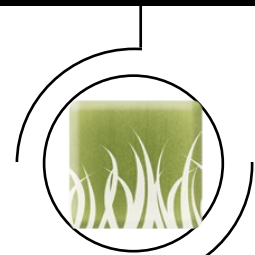
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*Noxious Weed Identification.*

## Jointed Goatgrass



**Weiser River Soil Conservation District**

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# Jointed Goatgrass

Jointed goatgrass is a winter annual grass noxious weed. It is found in fields, along roadways, and in the rangeland. Jointed goatgrass infestation threatens wheat and other grass industries, wildlife habitat, rangeland, and forests. The flower spike is cylindrical and contains many joints, called spikelets. In the early spring it is a lighter green color. As it grows it turns a deeper shade of green, and then as it further matures it will turn kind of purplish-brown before it dries up all the way to a straw color.



Notice the different, lighter color of green in the forefront. The lighter green plants are young jointed goatgrass plants.

## Jointed Goatgrass Reproduction

One single jointed goatgrass plant can produce over 100 spikes. A single spike can have 15 spikelets (or joints), that equals 1500 spikelets in all. Each spikelet contains two seeds. That adds up to 3000 seeds being produced by one jointed goatgrass plant. Some jointed goatgrass seeds will germinate in the fall and some will germinate in the spring, the rest of the seeds can remain viable in the soil for three to five years. The seeds can also germinate on top of the soil and as deep as four inches. This noxious weed is highly competitive and invasive in a short amount of time. Once it invades, it is extremely hard to get rid of.

## Identification

If you suspect that you have found jointed goatgrass, the best way to determine if it is jointed goatgrass, is to pull out a plant by the root. This is an especially useful method of identification when the weed is not headed out and the joints are not visible. Once the root is exposed, you can tell for sure that it is a jointed goatgrass plant if the spikelet, or joint, is still attached to the root.



A jointed goatgrass seedling still attached to the roots.  
*Photo from a March 2003 Oregon State University Publication*

## Control & Containment

The best way to control and contain jointed goatgrass is to prevent it. That is easier said than done, as we have found out with our Invasive Species Inventory & Control Project. We found jointed goatgrass growing somewhere on the side of every county road that was traveled for the project.

We also found from the project that early identification and persistence in control is essential to be able to contain this invasive weed. It has been found from landowner experience and studies, to control jointed goatgrass chemically it must be applied 3 or more years consecutively in that infested area.

There are also some biological control trials that are being conducted for competitive plant species against jointed goatgrass and soil bacteria.



Jointed goatgrass spike.  
*Photo by Sam Brinker, OMNK-NHIC, 2008*

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