



April 2018

Colorado Department of Agriculture, Noxious Weed Management Fund (NWMF) & State and Private Forestry Fund (SPF)

-Steve Ryder, State Weed Coordinator

NWMF:

- 35 grant proposals received (requests over \$1.1 million)
- 6 fully funded
- 22 partial funding
- 7 no funding
- \$700,000 plus will be rewarded

SPF:

- 11 grant proposals (\$180,000 requested)
- 4 full funded
- 7 partial funding
- \$160,000 will be rewarded

We are currently (March 30) in the process of developing and finalizing statements of work for all grants, and once that's done, we'll submit them to our procurement office for contracting. This year, the state will have new grant agreement forms. For governmental entities, including conservation districts, a new document called an "interagency grant agreement" will be used. It looks like a contract, but needs only to be signed by CDA then sent to grantees. For NGOs, a new form is still in the works, so until then, purchase orders will be the grant agreement. As of today, we have about one-third of the grants submitted to procurement, and the first completed ones should be sent out next week.

Non-Native Grasses and their Effects

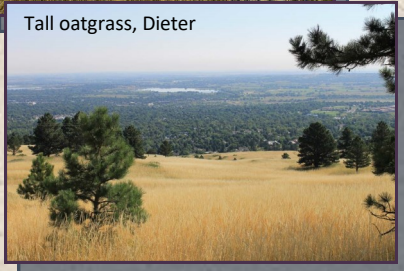
-Alicia Doran, Invasive Species Management Coordinator, Jefferson County



Colorado has a number of introduced invasive grasses that are not on the state's list but that should be controlled. These grasses out-compete and displace native vegetation that wildlife need for nesting or shelter.

Most landowners are aware of cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) but may not be aware of Japanese brome (*Bromus japonicus*) that can be growing alongside in the same patch. A good site for ID pictures is Missouri State University Midwest Weeds [ID Info](#).

Tall oatgrass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), is a short lived perennial that can form monocultures in pastures and meadows. The City of Boulder's OSMP staff are undertaking a multi-year control project. [Link to BOSMP](#)



Tall oatgrass, Dieter

Reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) is a perennial that likes moist areas near stream banks and ponds but is also drought and flood resistant. It is thought to be native in temperate North America but many cultivars from Europe have been planted. It is one that some landowners prefer to control. [Link to DNR Wisconsin identification](#)

Thinking Differently about our Soils

-Clark Harshbarger, Area Resource Soil Scientist, NRCS

One might ask "What is soil health?" Soil health can be defined many ways. One definition is that, "A healthy soil provides an environment where the appropriate amounts of water, air and nutrients are available for the species we are trying to produce and for the species that help them to grow." Another definition paraphrased from a wise and world renowned natural farmer, Masanobu Fukuoka, is that soil health is achieved by, "One's ability to farm in the image of nature." Currently the USDA-NRCS defines soil health as, "The continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans." Regardless of the definition of soil health, we can all agree that the soils ability to function as a healthy ecosystem is a good indication that soil conservation is at work on the land.

The conservation plan has always been at the foundation of the NRCS core mission, which is, "Helping people help the land." The NRCS is promoting soil health in conservation plans as Soil Health Management Systems (SHMS). SHMS is a farming system that uses a combination of conservation practices to achieve the following principles; **keeping the soil surface covered with residue, keeping a living root system throughout the growing season, diversifying plant composition and rotations, minimizing soil disturbance, and incorporating livestock whenever possible.**

Every soil's health has the ability to either improve or degrade by the practices we choose to implement into a farming system. Practices such as residue management, cover cropping, grazing plans, cropping rotations and reduced tillage will help build soil health by increasing diversity and strengthening community dynamics, while improving upon the water and mineral cycles. The key to managing for soil health is to create a habitat and food source for the soil food web. This can be done by allowing plants to harvest the sun's solar energy through photosynthesis. Plants leak exudates into the soils as chemical energy, which feed the microscopic organisms. The organisms in the soil food web, mineralize nutrients, which makes them plant available for the crops and grasses to absorb. Lastly, those nutrients become available for animals and humans to absorb when we consume meat and vegetable products grown using these principles.

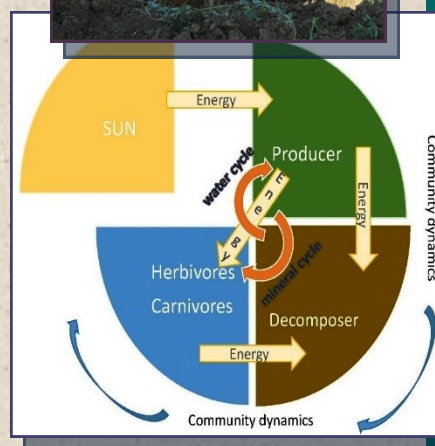


Figure 1: The illustration is adopted from Alan Savory's Holistic Management: A new framework for Decision Making. Producers consist of grasses, forbs and trees and our crops we plant. Decomposers consist of saprophytic fungi, bacteria and multitude of invertebrates that feed on detritus (dead plant material). Herbivores and carnivores consist of prey and predators in the soil food web, ruminants, wildlife and humans.

CWMA 2019 Calendar

CWMA is busy preparing the 2019 calendar. The focus of the 2019 calendar will be noxious weeds and their biocontrols. If you have any good photographs of biocontrols in actions or their associated noxious weeds and would like to submit them for potential use in the 2019 calendar, please send to Michael Cunningham: michaela.cunningham@state.co.us Include your contact information and the correct citation.

Area Events

Join neighbors and local experts for everything you need to manage healthy vegetation on your land.
2nd Annual Healthy Lands Open House hosted by Upper Arkansas Cooperative Weed Management Area
Saturday, May 19, 2018
9am—noon
[Event flyer](#)



Contact us:
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