Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board Update

Mary Fee, Executive Secretary

Columbia Gorge Cooperative Weed Management 2025

Washington State
Noxious Weed
Control Board

Noxious Weed Listing Process

State Noxious Weed List R.C.W. 17.10.180

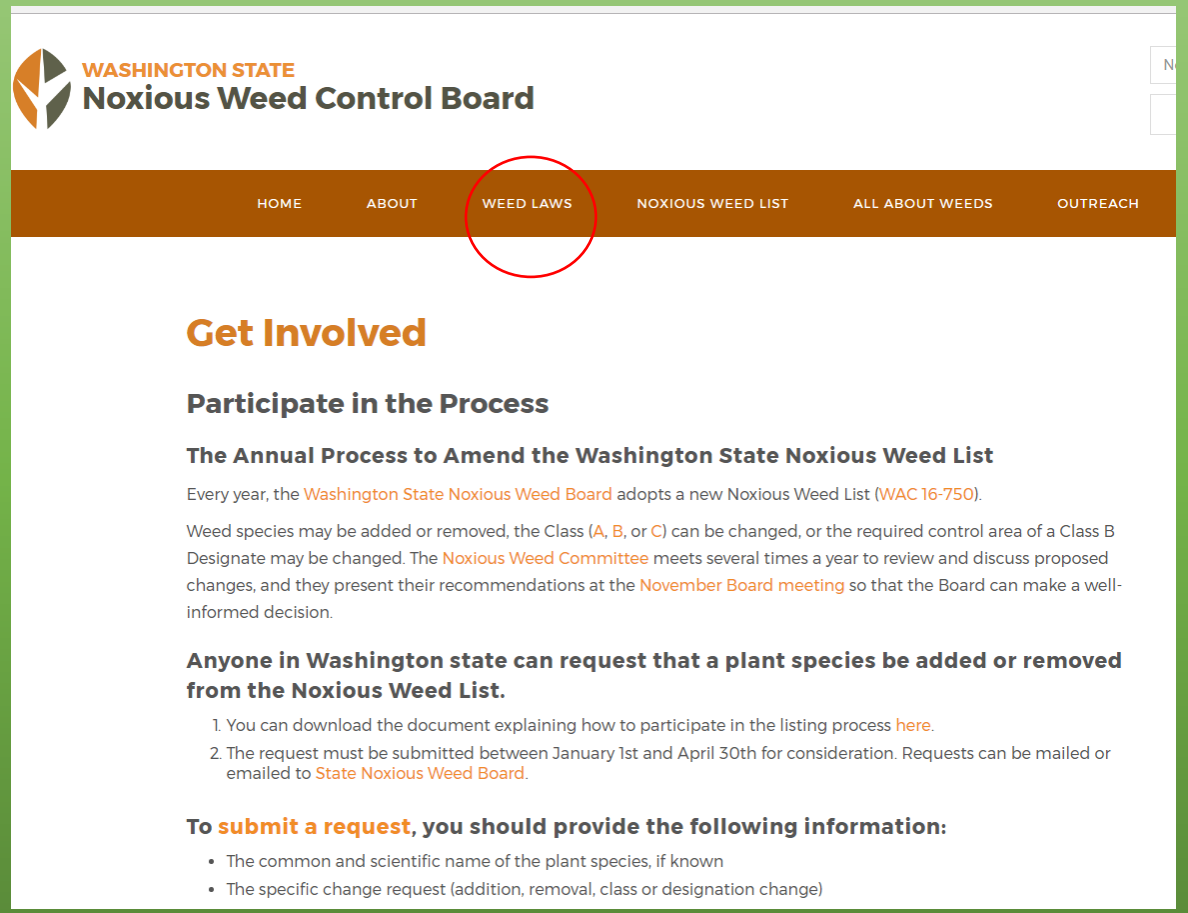
- Comment period for proposals
- Reviews of proposals
- State Board adopts a state noxious weed list annually

County Noxious Weed List R.C.W. 17.10.090

- Within 90 days, county weed board selects additional class B and class C noxious weeds to be controlled
- All Class A weeds, class B and C designated weeds, and county selected B and C weeds comprise the county noxious weed list

Noxious Weed Listing Process

- **Jan-April:** submission of proposals
- **May:** Noxious Weed Committee (NWC) begins to review requested changes
- **September:** NWC makes recommendations to State Weed Board
- **November:** Public hearing, State Weed Board votes on changes
- **January:** New changes take effect in new Noxious Weed List



Class A Noxious Weeds

- **Class A consists of those noxious weeds**
  - **not native to the Washington**
  - **of limited distribution or are unrecorded in the state and**
  - **that pose a serious threat to the state**
- **Eradication is required of all Class A noxious weeds**
- **Currently 36 species**

Highest Priority

Images: Sue Bird, Yakima County NWCB

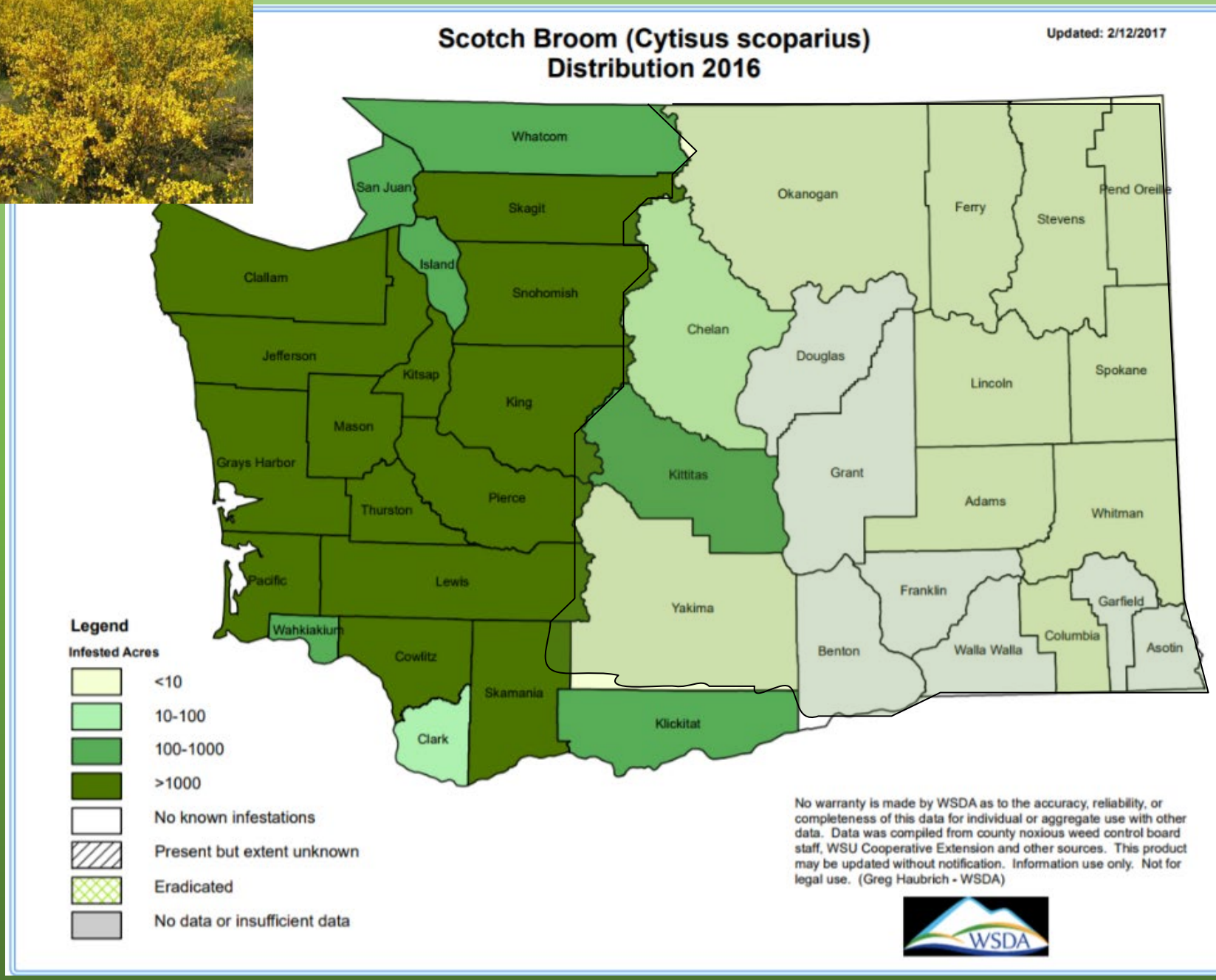
Class B Noxious Weeds

Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius)*

Danielle Blevins,

- Class B: not native to the state and are of limited distribution or are unrecorded in a region of the state and that pose a serious threat to that region.
- "Class B designate" means those Class B noxious weeds whose populations in a region or area are such that all seed production can be prevented within a calendar year. WAC 16-750.003(2g)
- Currently 66 species

Class B example



Class B Designate Weeds

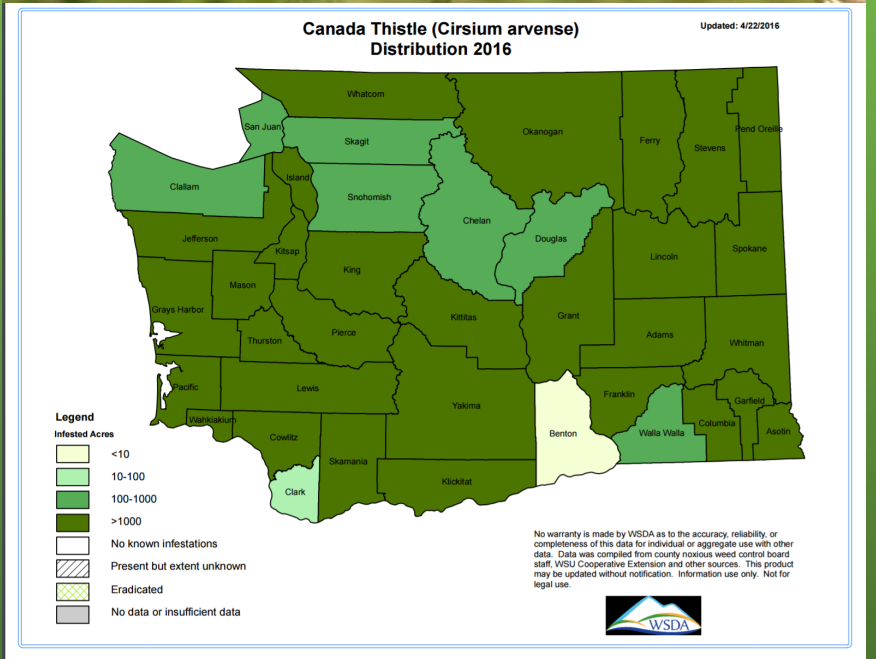
- Automatically placed on county weed list
- Goal: Containment, control and eventual eradication

Class B Non-Designate Weeds

- County weed boards have ability to place on their weed list
- Goal: prevent spread to designated areas

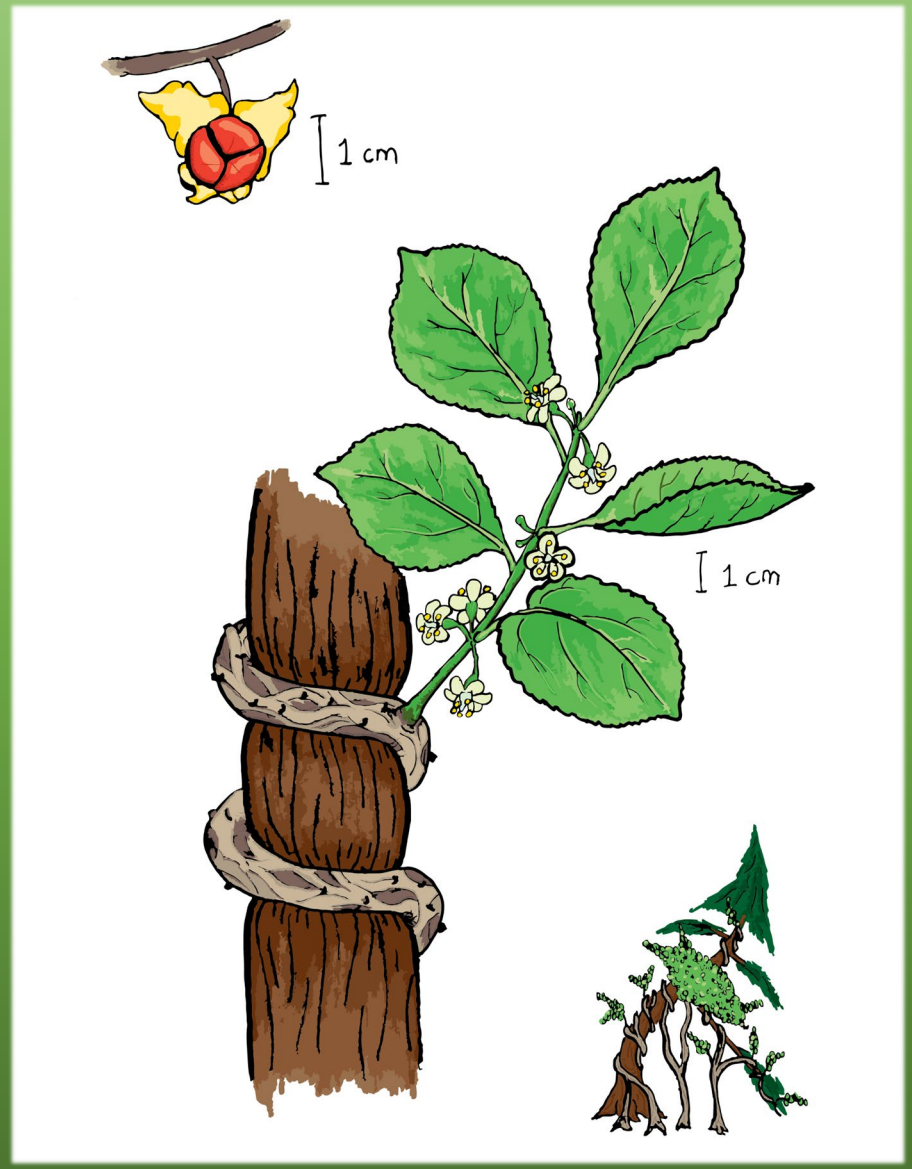
Class C Noxious Weeds

- All other noxious weeds
  - Already widespread in Washington or are of a special interest to the agricultural industry
- Some counties may select for control, but many choose to pursue education
- Currently 51 species



Round leaf bittersweet, *Celastrus orbiculatus* 2025

- Proposed for: Class A
- Proposed by: King County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Family: Celastraceae, stafftree family
- Life cycle: perennial
- Growth type: woody vine
- Reproduction: Seed, vegetative spread
- Listings: Most states across the Eastern half of the US have some sort of listing



Identifying round leaf bittersweet

- Size: Over 60 feet long
- Leaves: Rounded, coming to a narrow tip, with toothed serration. Alternate along stem.
- Stems: Woody vines. Can be up to 10 inches in diameter
- Flowers: Diecious, male and female plants are separate. Bundles of white-green come from stem, not end of branches
- Seeds/fruits: Start green and mature to yellow-orange capsules. Red fruit breaks out in the winter
- Roots: Rhizomes send up new vines

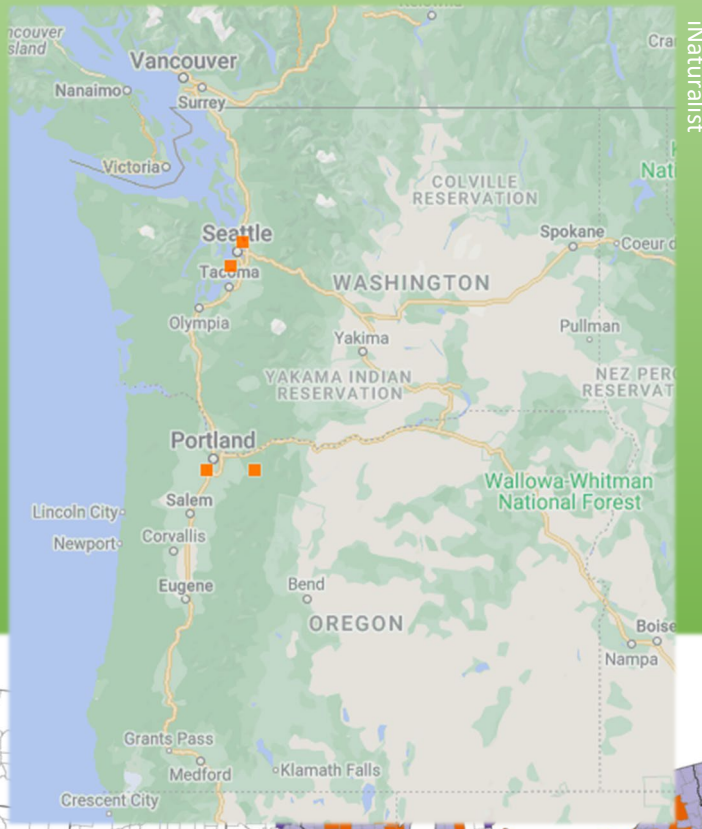
James Miller, USDA Forest Service

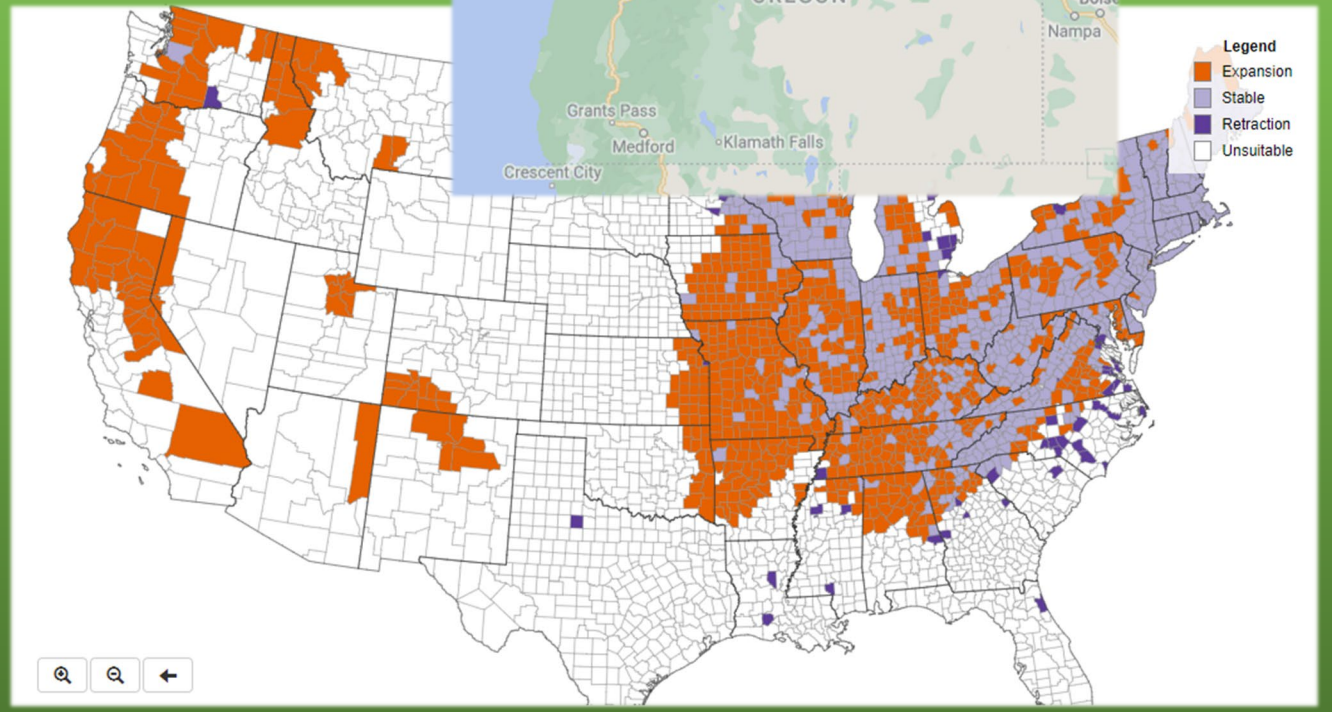
Sam Leininger

Leslie Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut

Round leaf bittersweet impacts

- Habitat: Forests, forest edges, fields, open areas, disturbed sites
- Where in Washington: One site known, on Vashon Island.
  - Also one near Portland in Oregon
- Native range: East Asia
- Impact: Climb to and dominate canopy, choking and shading out lower plants. Birds readily spread seed
- Listings: Most Midwest and Atlantic coast states.





EDDMapS predicted expansion and future range

Marsh thistle, *Cirsium palustre* 2025

- Proposed for: Class A
- Proposed by: Stevens County Noxious Weed Control Board and Thurman Johnson.
- Family: Asteraceae, daisy family
- Life cycle: Perennial, biennial, or longer lived, but only flowers once
- Growth type: herbaceous
- Reproduction: Seed only, spread readily on wind
- Listings: Wisconsin, New Hampshire

Ian Shackleford

Steve Chilton

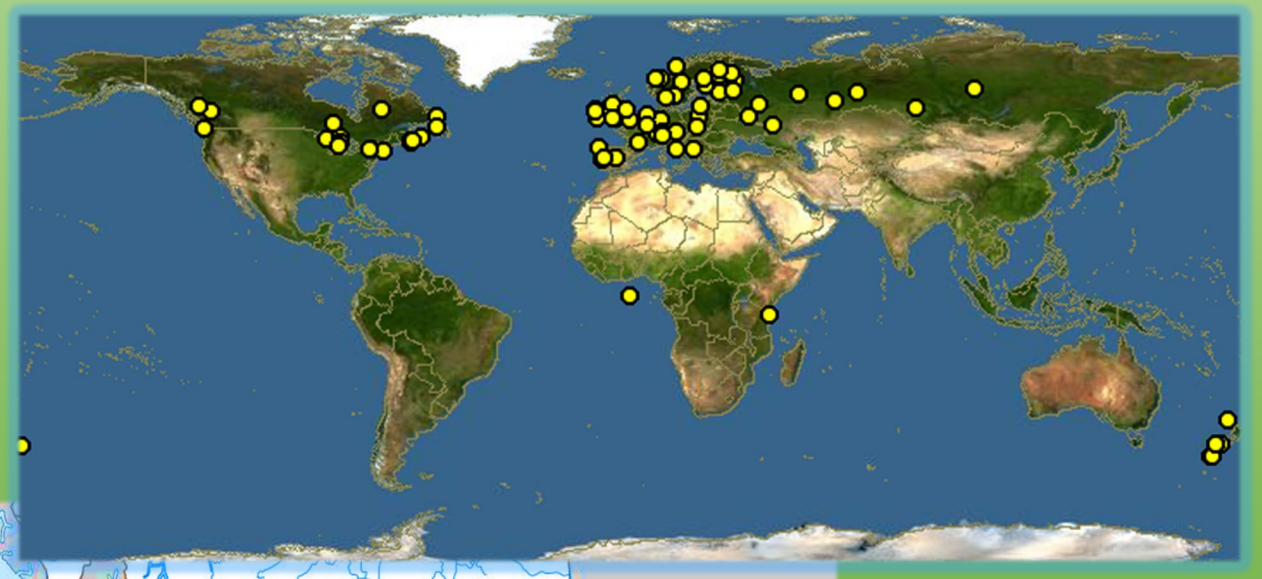
Identifying marsh thistle

- Size: 2 to 7 feet tall, 1-2 feet wide rosette
- Leaves: deeply, triangularly, lobed, with spines on end of each lobe
- Stems: green to purple-brown, with many slender spines. Covered in bristly hairs.
- Flowers: clusters and clumps of purple to pink thistle flower.
  - Similar in appearance to creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)
- Seeds/fruits: Fluffy pappus connected to seed
- Roots: Deep, strong taproot with fibrous lateral roots

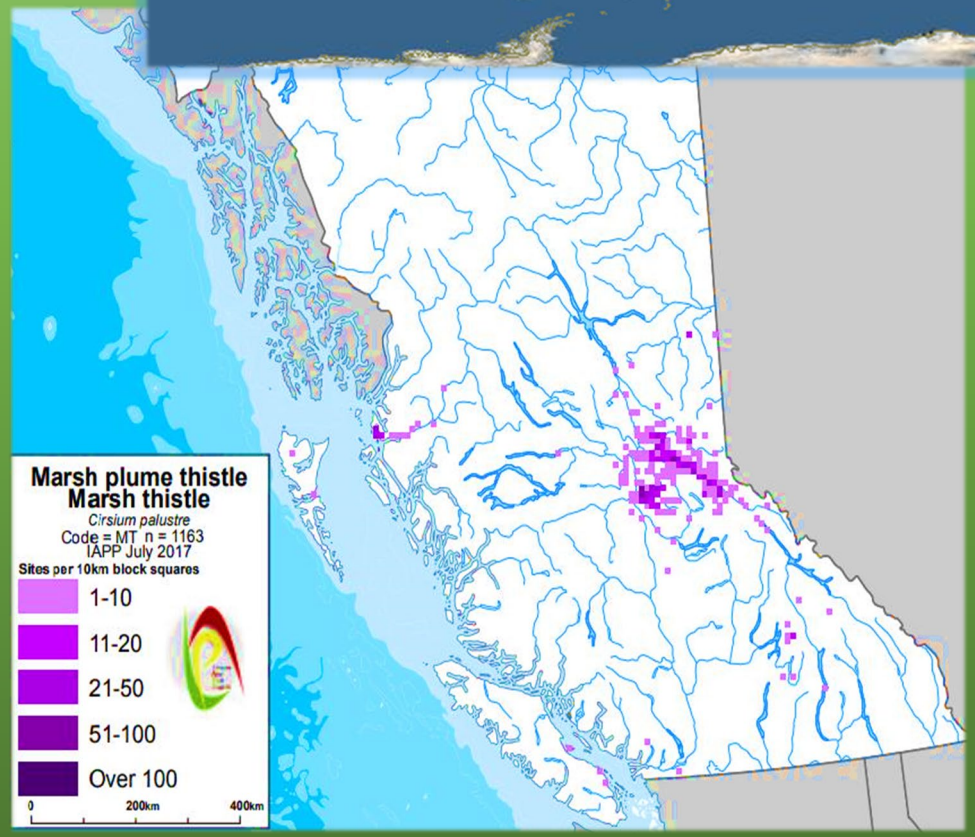
Photos by Thurman Johnson

Marsh thistle impacts

- Habitat: Riparian, wetland, ditches, woodland, pasture, both intact and disturbed.
- Where in Washington: Known in Spokane, Whatcom, and Island counties
  - British Columbia has large infestations
- Native range: Europe, Eurasia, Siberia, Northern Africa
- Impact: Very quick to infest and expand.
  - Forms monocultures
  - Hybridizes with creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)



Discover Life



Invasive Species Council of British Columbia

Variable-leaf watermilfoil hybrids, *Myriophyllum heterophyllum* 2024

- Hybrids:
  - *Myriophyllum heterophyllum* × *Myriophyllum hippuroides*
    - Hybridized with Western Watermilfoil
- Proposed for: Class A, as addition to current variable-leaf watermilfoil listing.
- Proposed by: Department of Ecology and Clark County NWCB
- Proposal reason: The invasiveness of watermilfoils leads to great concern
- Family: Haloragaceae

Wesley Glisson

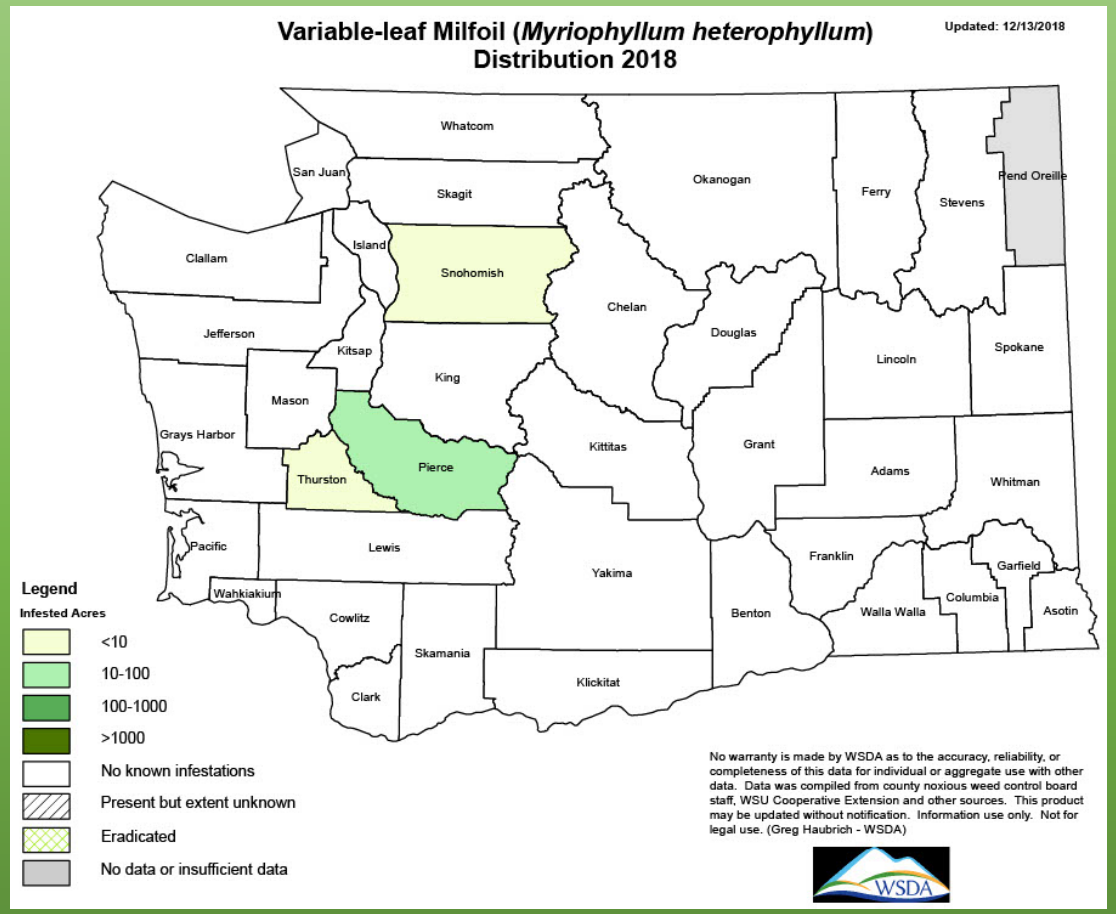
Identifying Variable-leaf watermilfoil hybrids

- Difficult to ID without genetic analysis.
  - Due to this, the following description is for the non-hybrid variable-leaf watermilfoil:
- Size: Up to 3 meters long.
  - Forms large tangled masses
- Leaves: whorls of 3+ leaves per node.
  - Fringed and feather-like to lance shaped. All submerged
- Stem/branches: Long, thin, and submerged
- Flowers: not showy, white, 4 petals

Jennifer Parsons

Variable-leaf watermilfoil hybrids Impacts

- Habitat: Lakes, rivers, and streams
- Where in Washington: Many locations in Clark County have genetically confirmed hybrid infestations
  - Variable-leaf Milfoil is known in a few Western Washington locations
- Native range: Variable-leaf milfoil is native to the Eastern U.S.
  - Western Watermilfoil is native throughout Washington
  - Piedmont Watermilfoil is native to the Southeast U.S.
- Other listings: Variable-leaf milfoil is a Class A in Washington
- Impact: Rapid growth reduces oxygen and sunlight
  - Impacts to our native milfoil species though hybridization



Controlling Variable-leaf watermilfoil hybrids

- Unknown for hybrids. The following is the control methods for variable-leaf milfoil:
- Mechanical/manual: Hand pulling has been effective for small populations or in tandem with herbicide
  - Benthic barriers with herbicide is also effective
- Chemical: 2,4-D, endothall, triclopyr, diquat, and florpyrauxifen-benzyl have been effective

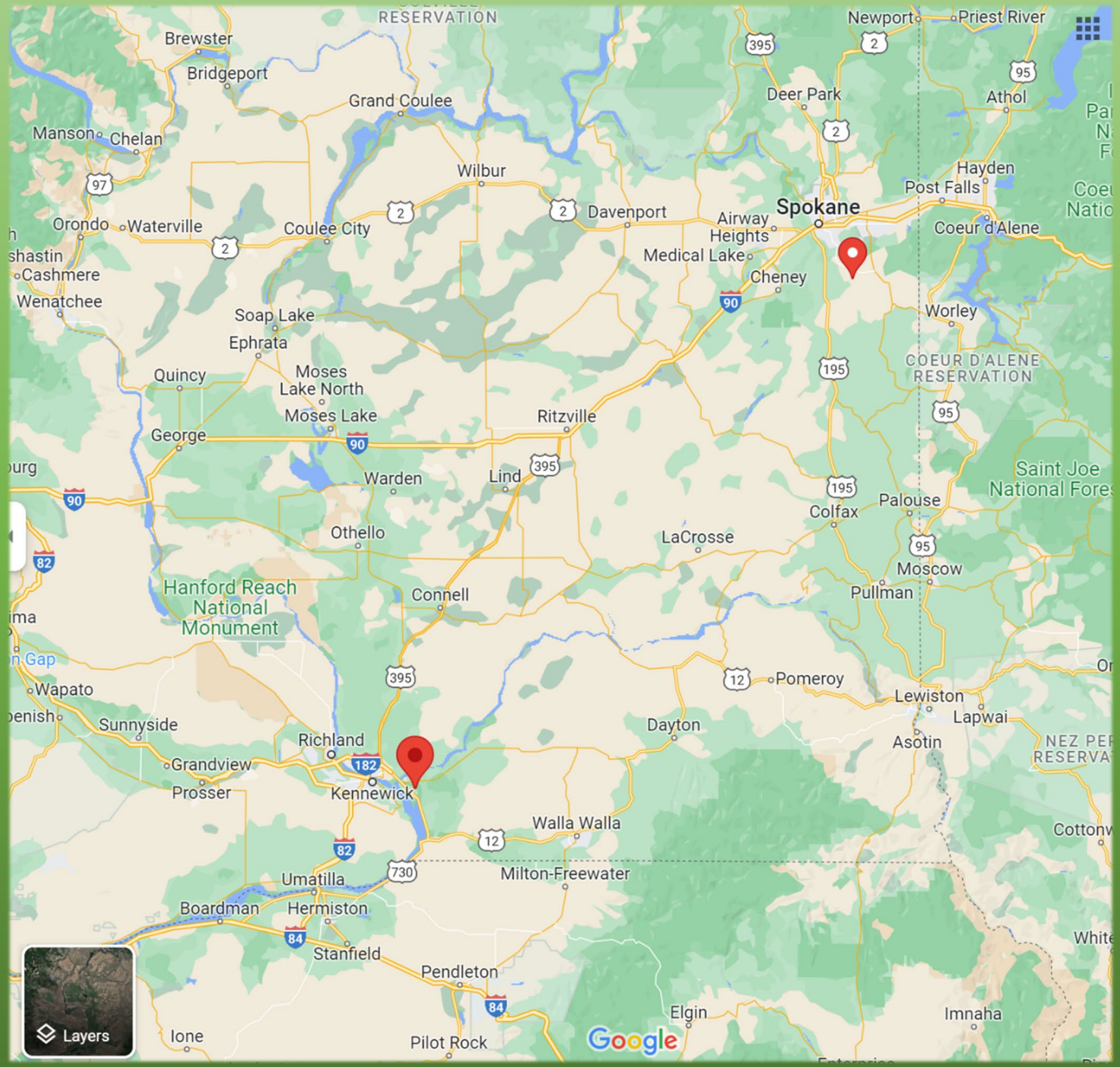
Jennifer Parsons

Palmer amaranth, *Amaranthus palmeri* 2024

- Late addition to the process.
  - Proposed as Class A
- Highly problematic in agriculture.
- Many herbicide resistances.
- Seed and young plants impossible to ID from other amaranth, without genetics.
- Very fast growing.
- Very prolific seed producer.

Palmer amaranth

- 2 populations found in Washington, both in August
  - Additionally found very recently in Idaho
- Not allowed in seed in Washington.
- Being added to the prohibited plants list/quarantine list



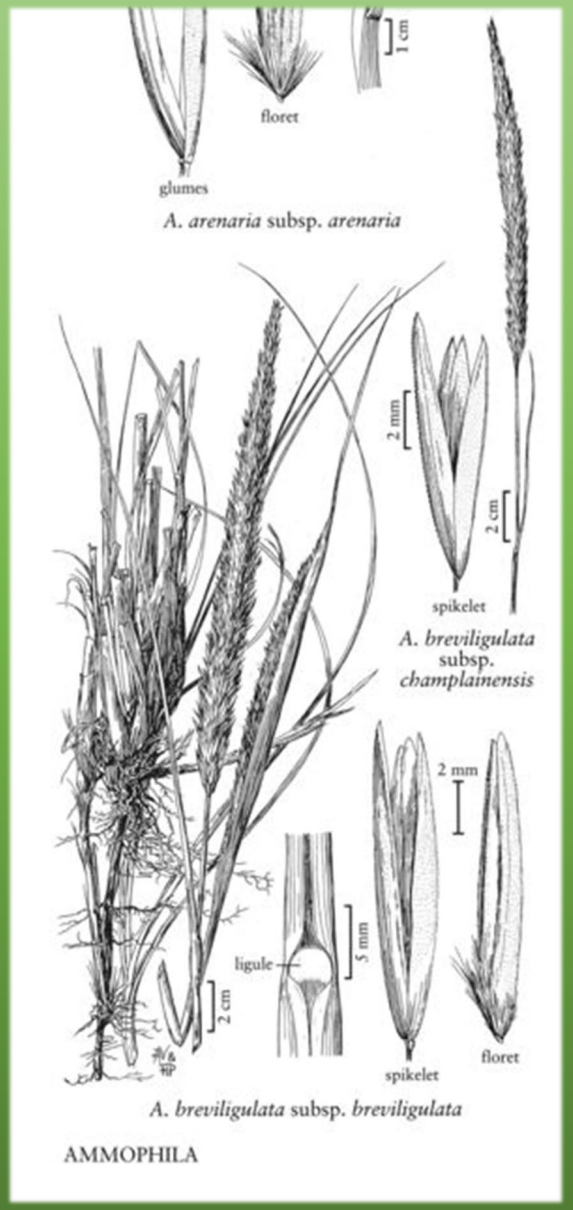
European & American beach grass, *Ammophila arenaria, A. breviligulata* 2024

- Proposed for: Class C
- Proposed by: Bill Blackwell, private citizen
- Proposal reason: Highly invasive and outcompete native plants
- Family: Poaceae, grass family
- Life cycle: Perennial
- Growth type: grass
- Reproduction: Extensive rhizome system, seed, basal buds, and clumps can break and float off forming new infestations

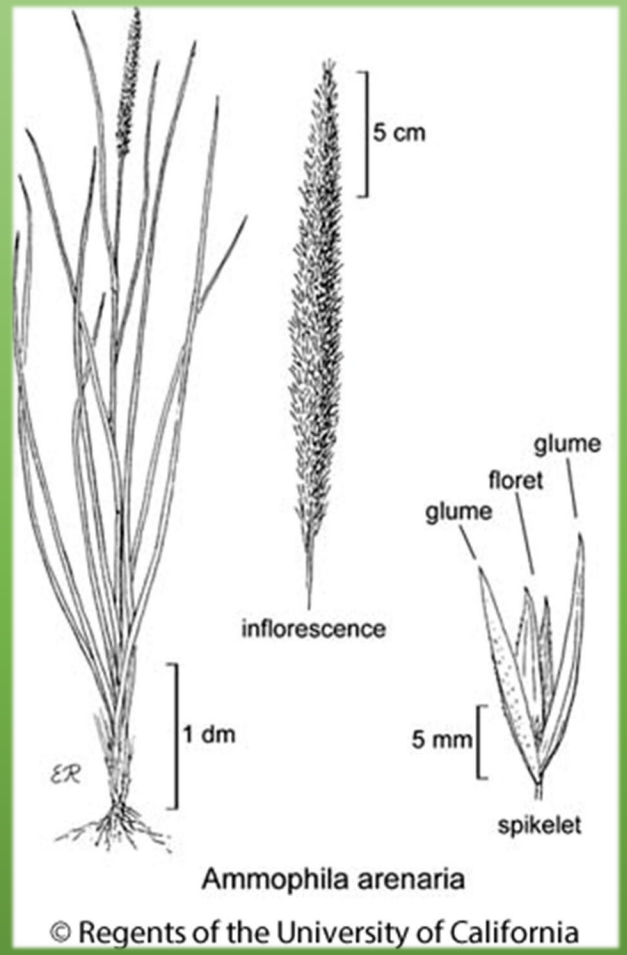
Identifying beach grass

- Hybrids of European x American Beach Grass have traits that overlap both species
- Size: 1-4 feet tall, clumps almost 3 meters wide
- Leaves: Sharp leaf blades can be up to 5ft long.
  - Often curl inward, lengthwise, especially during drought.
  - Furrowed upper surface, and smooth underside
  - American beach grass (*A. arenaria*) generally has less rolled leaves
- Flowers:
  - European beach grass (*A. breviligulata*) usually flowers May-August and has a flowering spike around 1 foot long.
  - American beach grass (*A. arenaria*) generally has a shorter flowering spike, around 6in, and can bloom from March to September
- Roots: rhizomes over 6 ft long, and reach very deeply

European beach grass (*A. breviligulata*)

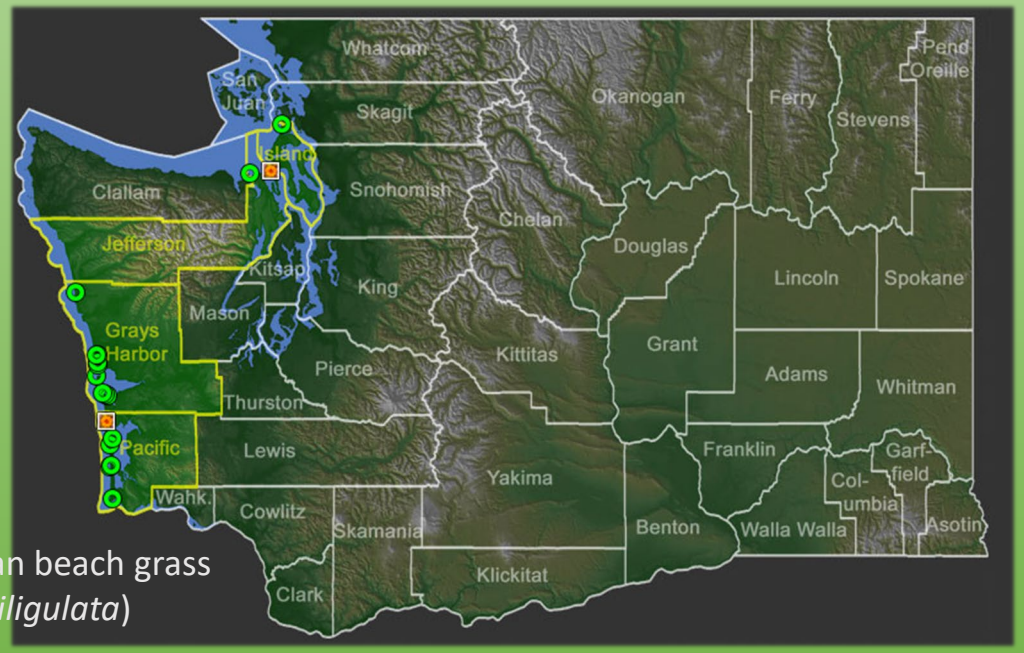


American beach grass (*A. arenaria*)



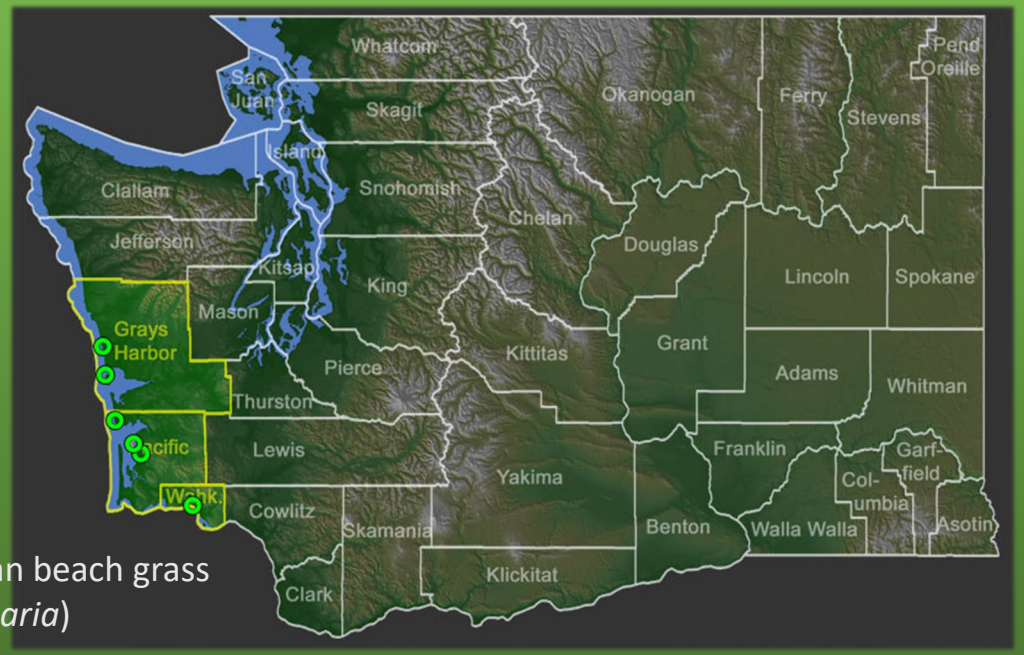
Beach grass Impacts

- Habitat: sand dunes and bluffs.
  - Can survive buried in sand for over a year
- Where in Washington:
  - Hybrids of European x American Beach Grass have been found in Oregon and Washington
- Native range:
  - European beach grass (*A. breviligulata*) is native to Europe
  - American beach grass (*A. arenaria*) is native to the East coast
- Other listings:
  - European beachgrass (*A. breviligulata*) is considered invasive in the Eastern U.S., California, New Zealand, and Australia.
  - American beach grass (*A. arenaria*) is considered invasive in California, British Columbia, and Oregon
- Impact:
  - Hold onto sand well for beach and dune stabilization is good for homeowners and business owners nearby
  - This stabilization is bad for native beach, dune, and bluff plant and animal species, and lowering their diversity and populations



European beach grass
(*A. breviligulata*)

Burke Herbarium



American beach grass
(*A. arenaria*)

Controlling Beach grass

- Mechanical/manual: Ongoing pulling and digging, for at least 2 years
- Biological: A few fungal rust species and other pest species kill both species of beach grass, but have only been observed in Europe, New Zealand, and Australia so far
- Cultural: Controlled burns in fall can assist with other control methods
- Chemical: Glyphosate and/or Imazapyr from September to February

WSNWCB Resources

Class A Eradication Project Grant Funding

Contributions to WA State Biocontrol Program

Outreach to Counties and Agencies organizations

County Noxious Weed Control Board Support

Publications and Brochures

www.nwcb.wa.gov

Thank you

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