



Parks & Open Space

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PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Time/Date of Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 20, 2025

Location: Boulder County Courthouse

1325 Pearl Street, Third Floor, Boulder

TO:	Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee
FROM/PRESENTER:	Joe Swanson, Invasive Plant Supervisor
AGENDA ITEM:	Integrated Weed Management Plan Implementation Update for 2025 Season
ACTION REQUESTED:	Information Only

Agenda

Integrated Weed Management Plan Implementation update for 2025 season.

Goal Statement:

Provide Parks & Open Space Action Committee (POSAC) with an informational update of the Boulder County Parks & Open Space (BCPOS) Invasive Plants Group implementation of the 2024 revised Integrated Weed Management Plan (IWMP) as it applies to BCPOS Natural Areas.

Objective:

- Provide general information and overview of IWMP implementation and revised staff organization accomplished in 2025.
- Provide overview of implementation of Goal 6: Update reporting methods to increase availability of BCPOS integrated weed management activity data.
- Provide overview of implementation of Goal 3: Implement a range of pilot projects to evaluate effectiveness of select noxious weed management treatments and their applicability to BCPOS natural lands.
 - Weed Warriors volunteer program at Walker Ranch.
 - Goat browsing at Harney-Lastoka.
 - Steam weeding at the Rabbit Mountain Trailhead.
 - Novel soil amendment treatments at Rabbit Mountain
 - Hand-pulling Hairy willow herb (List A) with volunteers at Pella Crossing and along ditches

Background:

On November 6th, 2024, after approximately 20 months of BCPOS staff review and public comment of the Boulder County Integrated Weed Management Plan (IWMP), the revised plan was adopted by the BOCC.

This IWMP fulfills the State of Colorado requirement for a County Wide Noxious Weed Management Plan, and includes the Boulder County Parks & Open Space (BCPOS) Natural Areas implementation plan found in Appendix B.

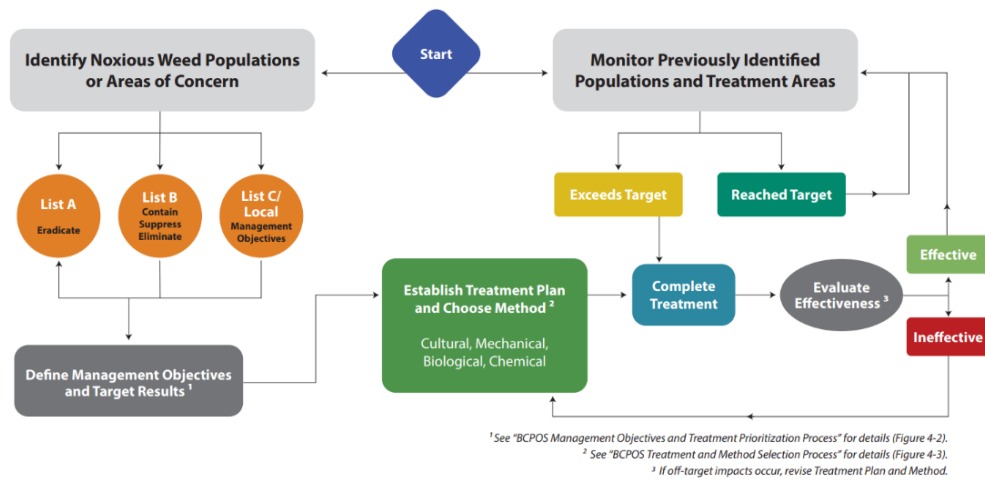
Following the approval of the plan, BOCC approved an additional Resource Technician to the Invasive Plants group to assist in implementation of the revised plan. This increased the Invasive Plants group from four (4) full-time staff to five (5). With an additional full-time staff member, a reorganization of staff responsibilities was completed to improve efficiency and reduce individual workload.

The Implementation Appendix provides the framework and details for noxious weed treatment planned for implementation by the BCPOS Noxious Weeds Work Group on BCPOS natural lands from 2025 through 2027. The strides taken in 2025 are in line with the overall timeline.

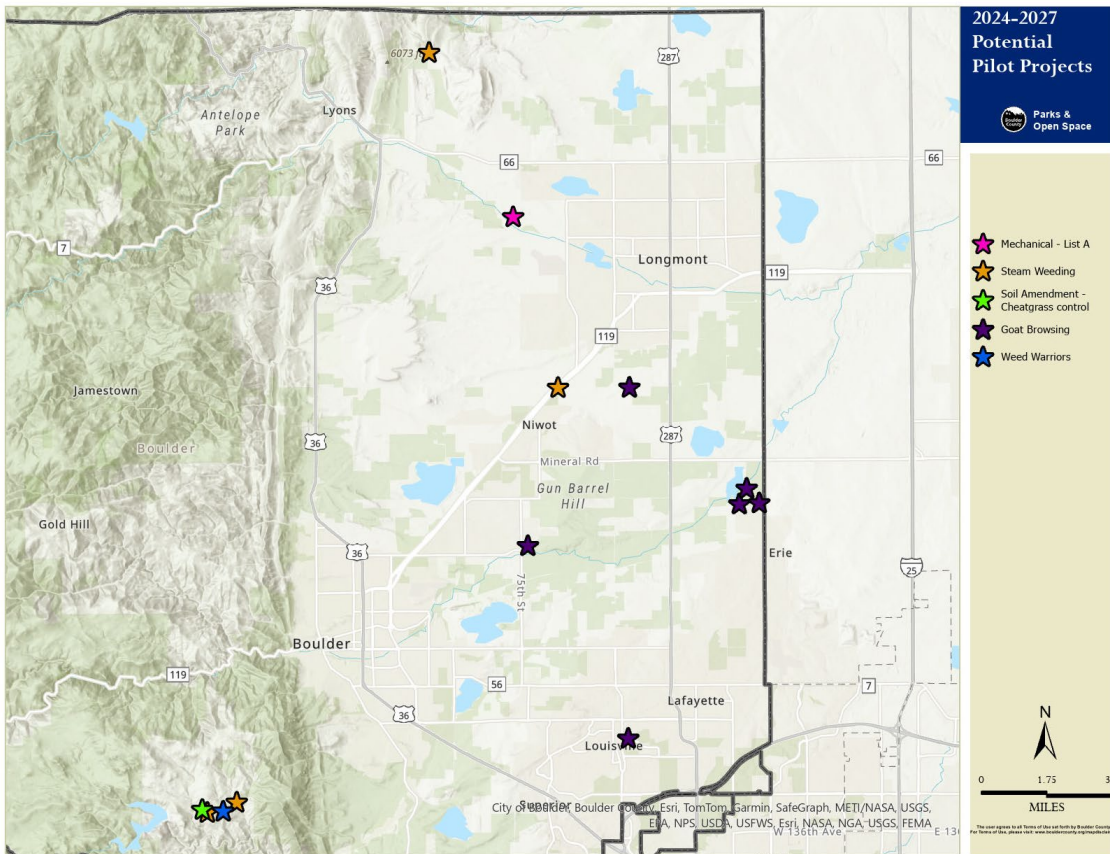
The 2025 IWMP Implementation Annual Report will be provided to BOCC in January of 2026. This report will include all the requirements of Section 5.2 of the IWMP and provide details on all work completed in 2025 in accordance with implementation.

ATTACHMENT ONE: BCPOS Integrated Weed Management Plan Implementation Decision Model

BCPOS Integrated Weed Management Plan Implementation Decision Model



ATTACHMENT TWO: 2024-2027 Potential Pilot Projects Map



ATTACHMENT THREE: Boulder County Integrated Weed Management Plan, 2024
[Integrated Weed Management Plan](#)

ATTACHMENT FOUR: Section B1, Implementation Goals

Implementation Goal 1. Reduce herbicide applications by 50% by 2030.

The metric used to measure this goal is annual acres treated . The 3-year average of 1,120 acres treated in 2021- 2023 will serve as the baseline . The goal is to reduce the number of acres treated annually to 560 acres by 2030 . Note that progress on this goal may not appear incremental or linear given the cheatgrass elimination goal that follows under Goal 2.

Implementation Goal 2. Eliminate about 3,000 acres of cheatgrass infestations within High Biodiversity Areas located along the foothills by 2030.

Metric: Conduct drone applications of herbicide to cheatgrass infestations located in High Biodiversity Areas characterized by rugged foothill terrain unsuitable for treatment using any other method . Treatment areas include Rabbit Mountain (500 acres), Hall Ranch (800 acres), and Heil Valley Ranch (1,100 acres)³ . Refer to Section B-4 . Biodiversity Preservation Management Areas, Protection of High Biodiversity Areas Threatened by Cheatgrass Dominance below for more details.

Implementation Goal 3. Implement a range of pilot projects to evaluate effectiveness of select noxious weed management treatments and their applicability to BCPOS natural lands.

Metric: For the seasons of 2025 through 2026, conduct at least 5 pilot projects to evaluate the effectiveness and scalability of tools that are alternatives to herbicide treatments including:

- Weed Warriors volunteer program at Walker Ranch.
- Goat browsing at Harney-Lastoka.
- Steam weeding at the Rabbit Mountain Trailhead.
- Novel soil amendment treatments at Walker Ranch.
- Hand-pulling Hairy willow herb (List A) with volunteers at Pella Crossing and along ditches.

Staff will monitor pilot projects for effectiveness and scalability. Monitoring will include weed population density, spread, staff time, and costs. At the time of the Annual Review, staff will report pilot project results, potential for scalability, and any plans for expansion of use of tools. Refer to section B-2. Pilot Projects below for additional detail. Implementation

Goal 4. Conduct surface water impacts study.

Metric: Conduct one study of three sites to evaluate the impacts of BCPOS' herbicide applications on surface water that will inform adaptive management strategies.

Potential study sites: Walden Ponds, Pella Crossing, and Western Mobile Lakes 3 and 4.

The study will test water before and after herbicide use in those areas. At the Annual Review, staff will report on study findings and any adaptive actions taken or planned.

Implementation Goal 5. Continue supporting integrated weed management research on BCPOS natural lands.

Metric: Support one or more funded and/or non-funded academic and small grant research efforts annually that will inform BCPOS natural resource management decisions. Share research reports on IWM Plan-related topics through the IWM Plan web page to serve as a community resource. Share the results of any new research at Annual Reviews.

Implementation Goal 6. Update reporting methods to increase availability of BCPOS integrated weed management activity data.

Metric: Increase availability of weed management activity data on the Boulder County web site to report on treatment locations and descriptions. Collaborate with staff developing BCPOS Asset Management System on opportunities to use this emerging technology to improve tracking and reporting. Share process improvements at Annual Reviews.

Implementation Goal 7. Implement Integrated Weed Management actions in fulfillment of the BCPOS Management Objectives discussed in Section 4.

Each of the four BCPOS Management Objectives discussed in Section 4 has a corresponding Management Area. Actions planned under each Management Objective are summarized below in Sections B3 through B6. Implementation Map B-1 provides a summary of the Management Areas. Here are the goals for each Management Area:

- Reduce populations of Eradicate species within Eradication Management Areas. By 2030, eliminate 10 species from BCPOS natural lands and rights-of-way. Four species can be eliminated by mechanical methods, 6 species would need herbicides to be successfully eliminated
- Preserve Biodiversity on BCPOS natural lands by conducting and maintaining restoration projects in Biodiversity Protection Management Area.
- Suppress designated noxious weed populations in Suppression Management Areas.
- Protect Roads, Trails, and Other Infrastructure by managing vegetation to increase public safety and preserve structure integrity