Vegetation Management To Improve Your Property ... and Increase Property Values!

"Noxious" or "invasive" weeds contain enormous quantities of seeds and lack natural predators in California, which enables them to dominate entire landscapes. The resiliency of these highly invasive species and their ability to flourish, can thereby reduce the geographic distribution of many productive plant species.

Invasive weeds are unpalatable as livestock forage and often reduce or totally eliminate entire range areas. These noxious weeds are also responsible for overtaking our open space and recreational areas, often times leaving them totally inaccessible. In addition, noxious weeds contribute to the threat of catastrophic wildfire, providing "ladder fuels", which allows fire to move from the ground to the trees.

These Star Thistle skeletons along a roadside are evidence of the invasive capabilities of noxious weeds at disturbed sites.

The benefit to maintaining your landscape will not only provide an environment that will improve the ecological function and aesthetic value, but likely increase your property value, at a low cost to you.

This brochure will assist landowners, farmers and ranchers to better understand which plants are available and appropriate for the various land uses in El Dorado County and the Sierra Foothills. Information describing these specific plant species, including general range, forage quality and management requirements is provided. Also included is a list of seed and plant providers.

The Importance of Proper Vegetation Management

Once a site has been disturbed, highly opportunistic weeds such as Scotch Broom, Star Thistle and other undesirable varieties are able to establish early and then out compete more desirable plants. When you begin the process of eliminating noxious weeds and establishing more appropriate vegetation on your property, it's important to understand that without continued management of your landscape, the plants you establish will merely revert to their previous condition. Various methods are currently being evaluated to combat noxious weeds, including properly timed mowing, appropriate and responsible herbicide applications and various grazing techniques. For more information on what methods might be appropriate for your land use, contact the El Dorado County Department of Ariculture at (530) 621-5520 or UC Cooperative Extension at (530) 621-5528.

About this brochure

The information provided in this brochure was taken in part from the publication titled "Know your natives, A Pictorial Guide to California Native Grasses," published by the Yolo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) and "Seeded Range Plants for California," published by the University of California Cooperative Extension, as well as consultations with the El Dorado chapter of the California Native Plant Society. For more information on either publication or this brochure, contact the El Dorado County RCD at (530) 295-5630.

Cover photo: Proper vegetation management is both aesthetic and allows more productive forage material to establish.

Species	Range	Water regime	Forage Quality	Habitat	Comments
Meadow Barley – native	0 - 11,155 ft.	moist soils	excellent	meadows, pastures	full sun to part shade
Creeping Wildrye – native	0 - 7,546 ft.	moist soils	good	valleys, foothills & Mt. Flats	full sun to partial sun
Deergrass – native	0 - 7,054 ft.	dry, damp, or moist soils	poor	along streams & meadows	full sun to part shade
Foothill Needlegrass – native	0 - 5,577 ft.	drought tolerant	undetermined	dry hills, open woods	full sun to part shade
Purple Needlegrass – native	0 - 4,265 ft.	drought tolerant	good early forage	foothills	full sun to part shade
California fescue – native	0 - 5,906 ft.	drought tolerant	fair to good	mixed evergreen forests	full sun to part shade
Perlagrass – non native	0 - 2,500 ft.	drought tolerant	good	foothills/rangelands	Full sun to part shade
Blue wildrye – native	0 - 8,202 ft	prefers moist / drought tolerant	good early forage	foothills & low Mt. Slopes	full sun to part shade
California brome – native	0 - 11,483 ft.	moderately dry / moist	good to excellent	canyons hillside & meadows	full sun to part shade
Orchard grass – non native	0 - 6,000 ft.	moderately dry / moist	good	foothills/rangelands	full sun to part shade

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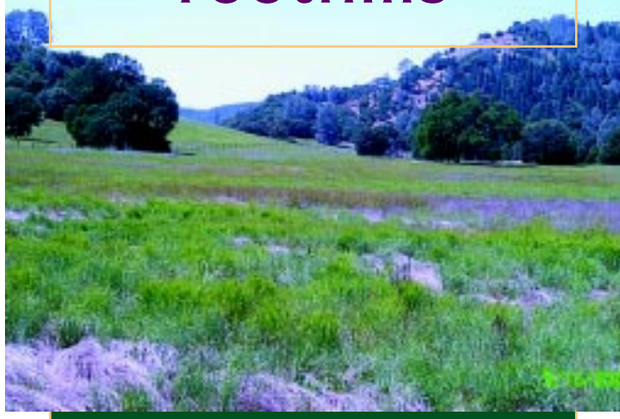
Improving Your Investment:

Weed & Vegetation Management in the Sierra Foothills



El Dorado County Noxious Weed Management Group

Bethell-Delfino Agriculture Building
311 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
Phone: (530) 621-5528
Weed Website: www.atasteofeldorado.com

Plant List & Species Descriptions

The following is a list of various perennial plant species that are productive in the region and provide competition with noxious weeds species, as well as forage material for livestock and wildlife. Establishment of the species described herein requires special cultural practices and ongoing management if success is to be achieved.

Meadow barley – *Hordeum brackyantherum*

This native grass ranges in elevations from 0 to 11,155 feet and is considered medium sized and fast growing perennial bunchgrass. This grass prefers moist soils in meadows and floodplains where rainfall is between 10 to 36 inches per year. It does well in erosion control with roots extending to deeper levels, where moisture is stored. It is considered to be excellent livestock forage and waterfowl habitat.

Creeping Wildrye – *Leymus tridicoites*

Seeds of the *Leymus tridicoites* experience growth mainly in cool to warm seasons, maturing in late spring to early fall and range in elevation from 0 to 7,546 feet. Habitat for this native occurs mainly in heavy soils meadows in the foothills and mountain flats. It recovers well from grazing and is valuable as such, especially in meadows that become dry and are grazed through the summer months.

Deergrass – *Muhlenbergia rigens*

This large and attractive bunchgrass is typically found along streams, the edge of meadows and hillsides, from the valley to the Sierras. It ranges in elevation from 0 to 7,054 feet.

Foothill needlegrass – *Nassella lepida*

Nassella lepida ranges in elevation from 0 to 5,577 feet and seed maturation occurring in mid to late spring. It is adapted to dry hills, chaparral, open woods and rocky slopes alike, doing best with no summer water once established.

California Fescue – *Fescuta californica*

Seeds of *Fescuta californica* mature from late spring to early summer, but typically have a low germination rate. They like north facing slopes with part shade to full sun and particularly woodland areas. This bunchgrass is considered fair to good as forage for grazing and can stay green year round if watered.

Purple needlegrass – *Nassella pulchra*

This is considered to be a great plant for dryland restoration and pasture improvement. It has a strong root system which is valuable for erosion control, but can cause injury to livestock due to awns located on the seeds. The seeds generally mature in the mid to late summer and range in elevation from 0 to 4,265 feet.

Perlagrass – *Phalaris stenoptera*

Adapted to the Mediterranean climate zone below 2,500 feet elevation. Where rainfall is low, soil waterholding capacity should be high, otherwise requiring at least 16 inches minimum rainfall. It is a long lived bunchgrass with loose branching and a weak rhizomatous base. It cannot withstand severe competition the first year, but does well once established and with proper management.

California brome – *Bromus carinatus*

This species is typically found in elevation ranges between 0 to 11,483 feet. It is typically most productive in the cool season, but is active during summer, at elevations above 5,000 ft. Seeds of this grass mature in spring to summer. This grass is usually found in dry open areas along hillsides, meadows and disturbed areas. *Bromus carinatus* is useful in ranges and pastures but becomes fibrous when mature and will decline if overgrazed. This grass is inexpensive, easily maintained and can be a productive turf in unirrigated areas, responding well to early spring and late summer mowing.

Blue Wildrye – *Elymus glaucus*

This species of large perennial bunchgrass typically ranges in elevations between 0 and 8,202 feet. Seeds of *Elymus glaucus* mature in late spring to summer, germinate easily and have vigorous seedlings. This grass tends to prefer moist soils but grows in a wide variety of conditions and is a good competitor. It provides good forage early in the season, also providing excellent wildlife habitat. Seed of the *Elymus glaucus* are inexpensive and common.

Orchard grass – *Dactylis glomerata*

There are two types of Orchard grass, including irrigated and dryland. They are long lived bunchgrasses and can grow to a height of two to four feet. It begins to grow with the first fall rains and will remain green until the soil moisture is depleted. The leaves are broad and flat, about 1/2 inch wide, and rough to the touch.

Cattle grazing in a pasture reveals one benefit of conducting vegetation management practices.

Some Seed & Plant Providers

Cornflower Farms
P.O. Box 896
Elk Grove, CA 95759
Phone: (916) 689-1015
Fax: (916) 689-1968
E-mail: natives@cornflowerfarms.com

Clifton Warren Feed & Ranch Supply
574 Placerville Drive
Placerville, CA 95667
Phone: (530) 622-6771

Steve Dowty
(530) 626-4833
E-mail: perigyn@jps.net

Peaceful Valley Farm Supply
110 Springhill Boulevard
P.O. Box 2209
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 272-4769
www.groworganic.com

or contact the
El Dorado Chapter of the
California Native Plant Society, at:
P.O. Box 1948
Placerville, CA 95667