shade our streams

A CLACKAMAS RIVER BASIN COUNCIL PROJECT

The High Cost of Weeds

Invasive, noxious, nonnative, introduced, whatever you want to call them, weeds are wreaking havoc in Oregon. **Invasive weeds** can deprive local rangelands, farmlands, forestlands, and wildlands of revenue. According to a 2014 study, 25 of Oregon's worst invasive weeds cause an estimated annual loss of about **$83.5 million** to the state's economy. 95% of that is from blackberry and Scotch broom alone, two weeds that have taken hold all over the state and here in the Clackamas watershed. That is why it's so important to have programs like Shade Our Streams treating hundreds of acres of weeds a year.

Oregon's **weed prevention programs** have a benefit-to-cost ratio of 34 to 1, which means for every $1 spent on these efforts, $34 is saved by minimizing potential losses caused by weeds.*

*www.oregon.gov/ODA/shared/Documents/Publications/Weeds/ORNoxiousWeedEconomicImpact.pdf

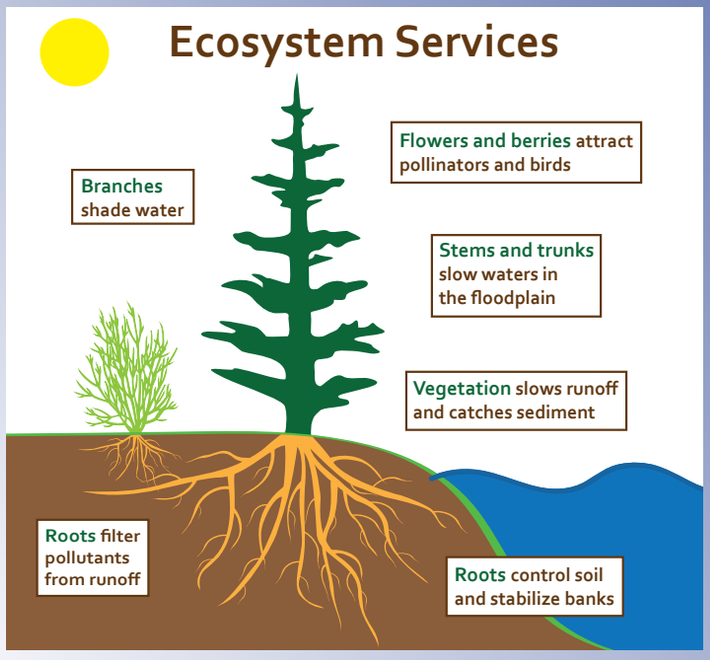
Monoculture of Himalayan blackberry

Japanese knotweed, a tough invader in the watershed

Treatment Tools of the Trade

At CRBC, our number one goal is healthy streams. That's why measures are taken to ensure that weed treatments have minimal impact on fish and wildlife. A combination of cutting and spraying is used to reduce the use of chemicals. Restoration crews will cut weeds back before spot-spraying them. When chemical methods are used, herbicides approved for use near streams are used in low concentrations. Environmental factors such as precipitation and wind dictate when it's safest to spray. Lastly, weeds are treated at the optimal time of year using the best method, increasing overall effectiveness of treatments.

Progression of crews cutting blackberry with chainsaws over the course of a morning



Plants Hard at Work

We are lucky to live in the Pacific Northwest. Plants native to Oregon are beautiful and diverse, providing food, flowers, and fall color. Sadly, weeds threaten that **diversity**. An area that would historically have been a healthy mixture of native plants can be invaded and overtaken by a single nonnative species, creating a **monoculture**. On top of being crucial to wildlife, native plants provide invaluable benefits to people, called **ecosystem services**, resulting in:

- **Cleaner drinking water**
- **Slower flood waters**
- **Reduced stream bank erosion**
- **Increased pollinators**

My Role as a Landowner: Keeping Invasives at Bay

CRBC will take care of the weeds in your planting area for the next few years, but we'd love your help! Here are some things you can do:

1. Manage the weeds outside of the Shade Our Streams planting area. The scary thing about invasive weeds is that they spread – quickly. By managing the weeds on the rest of your property, you're preventing them from continuing to encroach on your streamside buffer.

2. Learn how to identify invasive and native plants. Restoration crews are managing the weeds now, but upon completion of the program, we hand the planting area back over to you. The best thing you can do until then is learn how to distinguish the weeds from the native plants so you can catch them early as they return to the area. Contact us for a free guide to identifying native plants or weeds.

Healthy streamside area with a diverse mix of native plants

What Happens Next? Natural Defenses

Through Shade Our Streams, you are not only removing weeds from your streamside area, but planting a shield against future weeds. That's because the most effective long-term strategy for controlling weeds is to replace them with native plants. Most invasive plants love sunlight and open spaces. That's why the blackberry, reed canary grass, or Japanese knotweed on your property is clustered in sunny areas instead of the wooded areas. A mixture of trees and shrubs helps form a tree canopy and understory, outcompeting and providing defense against weeds at varied levels.

Contact us

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