

Pend Oreille Conservation District Spring Newsletter



Photo courtesy
Heather Wendt



CELEBRATING OUR NATIVE PLANTS

By Heather Wendt

Happy Spring! April 1st marked the beginning of Native Plant Appreciation Month (NPAM). The idea for this celebration was introduced by members of the Washington Native Plant Society in 2003.

(Continued on pg. 2)

EARTH DAY IN PEND OREILLE

By Mary Malone, POCD Executive Director

Earth Day is celebrated each year on April 22 as a way to bring awareness and appreciation to our environment. There are many ways to celebrate, from larger events in your community, to just getting outside and enjoying nature, maybe picking up a few pieces of trash while you're at it. Earth Day started as a vision in 1969 by

Senator Gaylord Nelson, who was considered one of the leaders of the modern environmental movement at the time, according to history.com.

(Continued on pg. 2)



-Photo: POCD Staff getting ready for our Earth Day Tree Sale. See flyers on pages 2 & 3 for details of the activities happening here in Newport on April 20.

NATIVE PLANTS, CONT.

What started as a week-long celebration, formally recognized by the governor's office, turned into a month-long event in 2020. NPAM is celebrated by chapters of native plant society and their partners across the state in the form of wildflower hikes, presentations, habitat restoration activities, and more.

Why celebrate native plants? Native plants and ecosystems provide homes for wildlife including pollinators. Native plants are integral to protecting our soil and keeping our water and our air clean. They have and continue to provide food, medicine, and fiber products to our State's indigenous peoples. This year's celebration focuses on Washington State prairies and prairie preservation activities.

I encourage you to join in the celebration of native plants by attending one of the State's virtual events that can be found here: <https://www.wnps.org/wnps-annual-events/npam>. You can view local wildflower hikes and presentations of the Chapter nearest you here: <https://www.wnps.org/chapters>. Or you can simply take a walk outside, enjoy the spring sunshine, and appreciate the plants that call our state home.

Heather Wendt is the Director of Development & Engagement for the Washington Association of Conservation Districts, as well as a Board member for the Washington Native Plant Society.



Pend Oreille Conservation District &
the Creative Arts District
EARTH DAY
**Plant Sale
Pickup &
Artwalk**



Come Join Us!

**April 20th
10am - 2pm**

Learn all about:

1. Essential care and maintenance practices
2. How to plant a seedling. (First 30 kids will be able to take a Western Larch Seedling home).

Come see amazing Earth Day themed art and so much more!

(509) 447-1155 121 N. Washington, Newport, WA 99156
(across the street from the post office)

EARTH DAY, CONT.

The first Earth Day was subsequently held on April 22, 1970, with rallies in Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles and many other American cities to raise awareness about environmental issues. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "Public opinion polls indicate that a permanent change in national priorities followed Earth Day 1970. When polled in May 1971, 25 percent of the U.S. public declared protecting the environment to be an important goal, a 2,500 percent increase over 1969."

By 1990, Earth Day had gone global and, today, the official Earth Day Network collaborates with more than 17,000 partners and organizations in 174 countries. According to EDN, more than a billion people are involved in Earth Day activities, making it "the largest secular civic event in the world."

DO YOU HAVE NOXIOUS WEEDS?

By Tommy Crossman, POC Weed Board

Noxious weeds are non-native plants that are highly competitive and difficult to control or eliminate. They have been introduced accidentally or spread from gardens. Some are poisonous to people and livestock and most grow rapidly, overwhelming desirable vegetation. Often referred to as invasive, noxious weeds can reduce crop yields, destroy beneficial native habitat, damage recreational opportunities, clog waterways, and diminish land values.

Class A Noxious Weeds in Washington State are required by Law to be eradicated. Washington State has 36 Class A Noxious Weeds.



Figure 1. Cattle grazing around Common Bugloss, Class B Designate near Spring Valley Road.

Impacts of Noxious Weeds

Each year, these plants cost Pend Oreille County millions of dollars in lost agricultural production, environmental degradation, maintenance, and control costs. Once invasive species become established, it is very expensive and time consuming to remove them. Noxious weeds are one of the major threats to Pend Oreille County's natural environment because they reduce biodiversity and change the balance of ecological communities. These invasive species crowd out the native plants on which fish and wildlife depend.

Total Costs of Invasive Species

Crops: Cropland has the potential to be quickly infested by invasive plants which reduce yield and require resources for their control. Furthermore, crops are directly lost through invasive animal consumption. The direct economic impact of invasive species on crops grown in Washington is estimated to be \$239.5 million per year.

Livestock: Noxious weeds in pastures and rangeland displace desirable forage that sustains livestock. In some cases, these plants are also toxic to livestock and horses and can be fatal. The direct economic impact of invasive species on the livestock industry is estimated to be \$120.1 million annually.

2nd Annual Newport, WA
Earth Day
ArtWalk
Saturday, April 20, 2024
11 am - 3 pm

14 venues hosting art exhibits
and demonstrations
Kids art activities
Community art collaboration
Music Crafters booths
Raffle Dancing
Prizes

Newport CREATIVE DISTRICT Evergreen ARTS ASSOCIATION ARTS WA

What can be Done

Weed management strategies may include physical removal, applying herbicides, or biocontrol agents (natural enemies). Creating a weed management plan begins with identifying and understanding the invasive species on your property. If you believe you have Noxious Weeds, visit the Pend Oreille County Noxious Weed Control Board website, or contact us at 509-447-2402 or noxweedinfo@pendoreille.org. We are here to help protect everyone's use and economic benefit of the Pend Oreille ecosystem.

Tommy Crossman is the Lead Field Inspector for the Pend Oreille County Noxious Weed Board.

Visit www.pocd.org for more information about the Conservation District!

Email: admin@pocd.org \ Phone: 509-447-1155