

Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program  
2008 HIGHLIGHTS

**FRTEP UNIT:** Idaho Fort Hall Extension Project

**PROGRAM AREA:** Natural Resources and Youth Development

**PROGRAM TITLE:** Tribal Youth Weed Mapping and Noxious Weed Control

**ISSUE(S) ADDRESSED:** Noxious weeds include any plant of foreign origin that can directly or indirectly injure crops, natural resources, livestock, wildlife and/or the general public. Noxious weeds cost the Fort Hall Reservation thousands of dollars every year due to decreased land and forage values, injury to people and animals and degradation of natural resources. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe and tribal members derive a majority of their income from tribal land leases and grazing permits. Noxious weeds have decreased tribal farm and rangeland values, decreased water quality and forage availability for livestock and wildlife and reduced the overall aesthetic value of the Reservation. If nothing is done about this issue, the Reservation could lose thousands of acres to noxious weeds. The financial implications of decreased land lease values, grazing permits and cultural uses of the Reservation has a tremendous impact on the well being of the community. A key solution is to provide public noxious weed education to all tribal members. Mapping existing weed infestations will identify problem areas so control strategies can be implemented. To begin a weed project, trained, knowledgeable people are needed. Tribal youth are in need of employment opportunities, positive experiences and opportunities for skill development. Recruiting and training youth was crucial to the project because youth are willing to learn and work. They also help teach adults, particularly their parents, through their work experiences and knowledge. Funding was needed to train tribal youth how to identify, GPS, map and control noxious weed infestations and implement public education about weeds and the effect they have on tribal lands.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** Fort Hall Extension partnered with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Agricultural Resource Management Program (ARM), GPS and Cultural Resource Departments and UI Weed Scientist, Dr. Pam Hutchinson, to obtain a Conservation Innovative Grant (CIG) from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The funding was used to develop weed control test plots and to recruit tribal youth to participate in the program. Programs were conducted at four local high schools that taught noxious weed identification, chemical use, GPS/GIS technology and cultural resources. The programs reached over one-hundred students. Fifteen tribal youth were then selected to identify and GPS weed infestations on the Fort Hall Bottoms. The youth attended a variety of botany, weed identification and GPS/GIS technology trainings. UI Weed Scientist, Dr. Tim Prather, conducted a youth weed identification seminar as well. The Bingham County Weed Program assisted with GPS training and mapping. Currently, the youth have been identifying and mapping weed infestations on the Bottoms. The youth will be given a certificate at the end of the program and are paid an hourly wage to complete mapping work. The desired result of this program is to increase

youth knowledge in weed identification, botany and GPS/GIS technology and to increase public awareness regarding noxious weeds and their effects on the land.



Tribal youth learning how to calibrate sprayers.



Jahnee and Trey mapping on the Fort Hall Bottoms.

### **PROGRAM IMPACT:**

Over one-hundred tribal youth were taught noxious weed information. Fifteen tribal youth were formally trained in weed identification, mapping and GPS technology. They are responsible for identifying and mapping noxious weeds on the Reservation. They also assist with weed plot selection for each year's control demonstrations and adult weed awareness seminars. The youth participated in the Fort Hall Festival parade and distributed weed brochures to the public. The youth began the program with very little knowledge of weeds, mapping technology or how they could benefit the Tribe through their actions. Through the project, youth have gained invaluable skills, awareness and knowledge. They are spreading the word about noxious weeds to tribal adults. One youth stated, "I will never look at these weeds the same-I have learned so much in this program!" The public is now more aware of the issue and how it affects individuals as well as the entire community. Since the project began, weed infestation reports to the extension office have increased by 25 percent! Over five-hundred acres of weeds have now been treated. This program has given tribal youth an opportunity to gain education and marketable skills. They now have a chance to earn money and do a service through the Tribe. The Tribe has benefitted because they now have good data on weed infestations on the Fort Hall Bottoms and can use that data to begin and implement more effective control measures.

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