RESEARCH PROJECTS

The MRWC is developing a regional-scale, early detection and rapid response (EDRR) system. Other potential areas for project-specific research and broad-scale investigation are:

- Saltcedar biological characteristics
- Interactions of native and non-native plants in the riparian habitat
- Comparison of invasive plant treatments and native species revegetation success along the mainstem and tributaries of the Missouri River basin
- Evaluation of the effect of saltcedar on soils

ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS

On-the-ground projects investigate new integrated invasive plant management tools for prevention or control that directly benefit natural resource managers and that have watershed-level application. Examples of projects are:

- Developing a saltcedar and Russian olive control and restoration projects database
- Partnering with universities to help locate and provide data to regional and national Phragmites genotype databases
- Leading an effort to implement and showcase invasive species management and restoration projects and tying them to Best Management Practices for the watershed

OUTREACH AND AWARENESS

Prevention is the most efficient and economical invasive plant management strategy. Coalition partners are meeting public demands to participate in prevention actions by launching a public relations campaign and outreach and awareness program. These outreach efforts are drawing on successful state-based programs in the region to maximize the effectiveness of available resources without duplicating efforts.

executive committee

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With the overwhelming challenges that non-native, invasive species pose, it is essential that headwater states coordinate efforts, share information and maximize resources. The Missouri River Watershed Coalition provides a mechanism to do just that.

- Andrew Canham, MRWC President
Invasive plants, saltcedar and Russian olive in particular, threaten the many uses provided by the Missouri River watershed. The establishment and spread of invasive plants can result in significant ecological and economic impacts. Saltcedar infestations can restrict access for irrigation, wildlife, and outdoor enthusiasts; degrade or eliminate habitat for threatened and endangered species; and may reduce the amount and quality of water essential to agriculture, recreation and tourism, wildlife, power generation, and human consumption.

States spend millions of dollars annually to manage invasive plants within the Missouri River watershed. In addition to direct costs of monitoring, mapping, and controlling invasive plant populations, there can be significant costs associated with loss of recreation, tourism, agricultural production, and quality and quantity of natural resources.

Recognizing the critical need for protecting natural resources of the Missouri River headwaters, six state weed coordinators from Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado and Nebraska and other interested parties formed the Missouri River Watershed Coalition. The purpose of forming the coalition was to develop management strategies and priorities for invasive plant species and water resources in this region. The Missouri River Watershed Coalition coordinates its efforts with state Departments of Agriculture, Native American sovereign nations, weed districts, county weed boards, other county, state, and federal agencies, and private land owners concerned with the spread of invasive plants throughout watersheds that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

**Mission**
To maintain productive, biodiverse riparian ecosystems that provide quality water, habitat, recreation, and power to meet the economic and ecological needs of the Missouri River Watershed region.

**Goals**
- Reduce the introduction and spread of saltcedar and other invasive plants in the Missouri River Watershed region
- Increase regional coordination and communication, and develop regional management strategies and priorities for invasive plant species and water resources
- Maximize funding efficiency for public education, prevention, management, and restoration projects on riparian corridors
- Team government, businesses, universities, tribes, conservation groups, water users, and sportsmen in private-public partnerships

**Saltcedar acres by county**
- no infestation
- under 100 acres
- 101 to 1,000 acres
- over 1,000 acres