

Mountain Bikers, Hikers, Paddlers: You can help prevent the spread of Noxious Weeds!

Diana Roberts, PhD - Regional Extension Specialist, WSU Extension
Phone: 509-477-2167 Email: robertsd@wsu.edu

What is a Noxious Weed?

- Noxious weeds are plant species that are **not native** to the area of concern.
- They **grow vigorously**.
- Because they have no natural enemies in the area **they outcompete native species and are difficult to control**.
- They may pose a threat to farm crop economics, wildlife and plant habitat, or to recreational areas.
- Some (not all) noxious weeds are poisonous.
- **Noxious weeds are usually introduced to new areas by human activity.**



This noxious weed (Common bugloss) was found beside a trail on the Spokane High Drive Bluff. As there were no other bugloss plants in the park, it is likely **the seed was brought in by a mountain biker or hiker.**



Many noxious weeds - like Purple loosestrife (left) and Common bugloss (right) - are attractive. But they are also highly effective in crowding out natural vegetation that provides food for wildlife – plus they may “take over” recreational areas and farm fields.



Weed seeds are often tiny! **Muddy shoes and bike tires** may transport a multitude of seeds...



Bikes have lots of moving parts that collect plant material, especially seed heads!



How can You prevent introducing new noxious weeds into an area?

- **Check your clothing, your dog, and your gear** at the trailhead after each and every hike bike ride, or boat trip.
- **Clean mud and plant material** from your shoes, dog, bike, or boat before you leave the trailhead, or at the very least, at your home before leaving for another recreation area!
- **Read and follow trailhead signs** about noxious weeds.