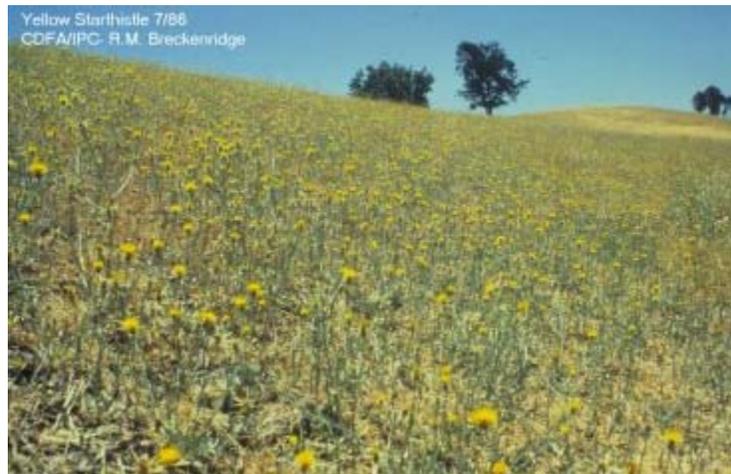




Yellow Starthistle-infestations not currently present in Socorro County



Socorro County's Invasive/Noxious Weed Rapid Response Plan

Socorro County Noxious Weed Committee
Socorro Soil & Water Conservation District

The best defense against the threat imposed by invasive and noxious weeds is early detection and rapid response. This plan will address how this will be implemented in the Socorro Cooperative Invasive/Noxious Weed Management Area.

Early detection of invasive/noxious weed species is an absolute necessity in our fight against weeds. The first step in this process is to have the Socorro Cooperative Weed Management Area current infestations of invasive/noxious weeds inventoried and mapped. This process is well under way and should be completed in the year 2001. This allows the Socorro County Invasive/Noxious Weed Committee to have first hand knowledge of the species present, the acreage infested, and the percent cover of the infestation. When treatment and monitoring of the current infestations begin, our weed team will continue to look for new species and unlocated infestations. To date, many of the smaller infestations have been eradicated due to the timely response of the agencies involved in the Socorro Cooperative Invasive/Noxious Weed Management Area.

The Socorro SWCD will continue to function as a contact for reports of new weed infestations. The staff of the Socorro SWCD will investigate all reports of invasive/noxious weed infestations. When a new infestation is verified, the Socorro SWCD will pull together a Rapid Response Team from the following agencies:

Socorro SWCD

Sierra SWCD

NM State Highway and Transportation Department

Bureau of Land Management-Socorro Field Office

USFWS-Bosque del Apache and Sevilleta NWR

USDA-NRCS

NM State Land Office

MRGCD

This will be based on the availability of the staff within these agencies.

When a new infestation (small population or new species) is found, the main goal will be eradication. In the eradication of these smaller infestations, the landowners or managing agencies will be contacted prior to any treatment. Any treatment will be based entirely upon the landowner or agencies' policies. All Federal, State, and

Local Government Agency mandates and guidelines will be strictly followed. Small infestations on private lands will require the writing of a weed management plan in cooperation with the landowner. The Socorro SWCD staff will be assisting the private landowners in the development and implementation of these plans. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used in the eradication of these small weed infestations.

Best Management Practices include:

Mapping-the new infestation will be immediately mapped so that a monitoring program can begin.

Digging-if the plant is an annual, eradication can be accomplished by simply digging the plant up.

Herbicide treatment-species that spread not only by seed but also rhizomously require application of an appropriate herbicide.

Cutting-the seed heads can be cut off to prevent the spread of the seed.

Our goal is to maintain and to ultimately decrease the invasive/noxious weed infestations within Socorro County. This will require the continued cooperation of the agencies and increased manpower efforts from the private landowners.