



PHRAGMITES (COMMON REED)

Phragmites australis

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE? Phragmites can be easy to spot because of its height and distinctive "fluffy" seedheads. It is a perennial grass growing up to 15 feet tall with large grasslike leaves up to 1.5 inches wide and 16 inches long.

WHERE DOES IT GROW? It invades wetland and riparian areas and other wet areas like ditches and depressions.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD? This perennial reproduces not only by seed but also vegetatively through lateral creeping rhizomes and stem fragments.

WHY IS IT A NOXIOUS WEED? Phragmites forms dense stands in wetlands displacing wildlife, disrupting currents and affecting water quality.

HOW DO I CONTROL IT? See the reverse side for information on mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical control options for Phragmites. Also see our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on using herbicides.



For more information please contact:

Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control
10905 N. Ramsey Road
Hayden, ID 83835
208-446-1290
kcnoxiousweeds@kcgov.us or www.kcweeds.com

Kootenai County does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment in, its public meetings, programs, or activities. Requests for assistance or accommodations can be arranged by contacting the Noxious Weed Control Department at (208) 446-1290 or County Administration Office TTY (208)446-2145 with 3 days advance notice.

How to Control Phragmites

Phragmites is a perennial that reproduces not only by seed but also vegetatively through rhizomes and stem fragments.

Mechanical Well timed mowing can reduce seed production but will not kill existing plants or stop the spreading rhizomes, and it is usually difficult to mow in the wetland sites where Phragmites grows. Digging and pulling are not effective because rhizomes are left in the ground to resprout.

Cultural The best long term weed control is to get your desirable native plants thriving. Seed and fertilize so your grass can take nutrients away from the weeds and not leave available open soil for new weeds to germinate. Draining the site, if possible, can be beneficial in controlling Phragmites.

Biological No biocontrol agents have been deliberately released for control of Phragmites in the US. However, at least 21 species of European insects that feed on Phragmites have been accidentally introduced to North America.

Chemical ** Any control attempt that only treats top growth will not be effective against Phragmites. You must choose a chemical that will translocate to kill the root system. See our Chemical Treatment handout for more information.*

- **Imazapyr** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Habitat**. It is non-selective and can be effective against Phragmites if applied during the summer once plants are fully leafed out.
- **Glyphosate** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **RoundUp, Honcho, Gly-Star**, etc. It is non-selective (will kill grass) and can be effective on Phragmites if applied when plants are in full bloom.

Chemical recommendations are based on University of Idaho Extension Bulletin 865 [Idaho's Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines Noncrop and Rangeland Sites](#), the book [Weed Control in Natural Areas in the Western United States](#) published by UC Davis Weed Research & Information Center, and herbicide labels.