

MRCDC Coordinator's Meeting Report

Who:	Ft Peck Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force Council members included Laurie Riley, John Chase, Buzz Mattelin, Ron Garwood
What:	Primarily agencies organizing to address recent discovery of EWM in Ft Peck Reservoir
Where:	The boundary for this task force is as follows: On Missouri River - Ft Peck to confluence with Yellowstone River On Milk River - Havre to confluence with Missouri River
When:	January 25 2011 was the first meeting of the new task force
Why:	EWM decreases species diversity, alters waterbody hydrology, forms dense mats, is very poor habitat, impedes fish passage, clogs irrigation intakes/canals/gates, forms stagnant water for mosquito breeding. In Aug 2010 EWM was found in Ft Peck dredge cuts. In Oct 2010 divers found a 1.5 acre infestation that was estimated to be 5-years established. EWM has been found in Big Dry Arm, Timber Creek, Fourchette Bay, The Pines, Ft Peck marina, Duck Creek.
Accomplished:	<p>Presentation from COE on possible treatments and management actions. Education is the key to prevent further spread via boats. Discussed the Task Force Mission (collect resources, share technology, share resources, create goals, assist management plans, recommendations to agencies, educate the public). Discussed task force structure - include DNRC, MFWP, BLM, USFWS, COE, Tribes, BOR, Extension, Weed Districts from 6 counties, MRWA, MRCDC, CDs from 6 counties, Irrigation Districts, MT Dept of Ag, Walleyes Unltd. Treatment options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herbicides - \$500-\$1200/ac, non-selective on broad leaf, ramifications to irrigators, endangered spp issues • Diver Dredge/Hand Suction – \$4,200/ac, labor intensive, can spread fragments (propagation) • Bottom Barriers - \$43,560/ac (but re-usable), smother plant, ltd to small areas, not selective • Lake Drawdown - snowfall can insulate plants and they don't freeze & die) • Rototill – not considering, (I don't understand this one because of reproduction thru veg propagation, stolons & fragments) • Bio-Control – expensive, not proven. <p>Actions include: ID and map infestations, establish tolerable thresholds, prioritize areas, undertake management options, monitor, education. Control and limit spread is the primary goal of the task force. We can get involved in sampling, learn to identify, keep educated, report infestations.</p>
Follow Up:	Next meeting on Feb 23 in Lewistown (same day as Aquatic Invasive training). Create education plan. Get approval from potential structure groups. I definitely think the Council should become a member of the Task Force.