



Washington State Department of Agriculture

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Hunt for invasive spartina begins next month in multiple counties

OLYMPIA – The Evergreen State’s spartina treatment season starts June 1 and continues through November, the [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) announced today. Survey and eradication efforts will take place at the mouth of the Columbia River, Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, the Olympic Peninsula, Hood Canal and Puget Sound.

Spartina, commonly known as cordgrass, is an aggressive noxious weed that severely disrupts the ecosystems of native saltwater estuaries in Washington. If left unchecked, spartina outcompetes native vegetation and converts ecologically productive mudflats into solid spartina meadows. This invasive species destroys the habitat of migratory shorebird and waterfowl, increases the threat of flooding and ruins shellfish beds, hurting the state’s shellfish industry.

In Washington, spartina eradication efforts have been extremely effective over the past 12 years with the state’s infested areas plummeting from a high of more than 9,000 acres in 2003 to an estimated eight acres this year. WSDA is the lead agency for [spartina eradication](#), facilitating the cooperation of local, state, federal and tribal governments; universities; interested groups; and private landowners.

WSDA and cooperator participants last year located and treated nearly 20,000 spartina plants. This year, project partners expect to survey more than 80,000 acres of saltwater estuaries and 1,000 miles of shoreline in 12 counties. The goal is to identify any new infestations and prevent spartina from returning to cleared areas.

The latest progress report on spartina control and eradication efforts is available at www.agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/weeds/spartina as are all the annual progress reports since 1998.

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