



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

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## 2014 Spartina treatment season begins next month

**OLYMPIA** – The 2014 spartina treatment season will start June 1 and continue through October, the [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) announced today, with survey and eradication efforts this year taking place in Grays Harbor, Hood Canal, Willapa Bay, Puget Sound, the north and west sides of the Olympic Peninsula and the mouth of the Columbia River.

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. The invasive species destroys important migratory shorebird and waterfowl habitat, increases the threat of flooding and hurts the state's shellfish industry.

Spartina eradication efforts have been extremely effective over the past 11 years with the state's infested areas plummeting from a high of more than 9,000 acres in 2003 to an estimated seven acres this year.

Since 1995, WSDA has served as the lead state agency for [spartina eradication](#), facilitating the cooperation of local, state, federal and tribal governments; universities; interested groups; and private landowners.

In 2014, these project partners expect to survey more than 80,000 acres of saltwater estuaries and 1,000 miles of shoreline in 13 counties. WSDA and other cooperators will use techniques such as digging out small infestations, or treating larger sites with the herbicides glyphosate and imazapyr. The goal is to find new infestations and prevent spartina from returning to eradicated areas.

"The cooperative effort to eradicate spartina is saving some of the state's most productive shoreline habitat from certain loss," said Jim Marra, manager for WSDA's Pest Program. "Because of our success in combating this invasive species, activity has shifted from large-scale eradication to the critical, detailed work of detection and targeted eradication."

The latest progress report is available at [www.agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/weeds/spartina](http://www.agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/weeds/spartina) as are all the annual progress reports since 1998.

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