

October 3, 2016

Contact Alison Halpern, Executive Secretary, at [ahalpern@agr.wa.gov](mailto:ahalpern@agr.wa.gov) or 360-902-2053 for more information or photos of proposed noxious weed list changes.

### **For immediate release**

## **State Noxious Weed Control Board sets public hearing to consider changes to the 2017 noxious weed list**

**OLYMPIA** – The Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB) will hold a public hearing on Nov. 1 in Wenatchee to take comments on proposed rule-making changes to the 2017 state noxious weed list. The reclassification of the Class A noxious weed Ravenna grass (*Saccharum ravennae*) to a Class B noxious weed would be the most significant change to the list, along with a few adjustments to Class B designations in Pierce County.

**When: 1 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 1**

**Where: The Confluence Technology Center, 285 Technology Center Way, Wenatchee, WA 98801.**

### **How to comment:**

- Mail written testimony to: WSNWCB; P.O. Box 42560; Olympia, WA 98504-2560.
- Send comments by email to [noxiousweeds@agr.wa.gov](mailto:noxiousweeds@agr.wa.gov).
- Attend the public hearing to provide written or verbal testimony in person.

Written testimony should be submitted by 5 p.m. Monday, October 31, 2016 or brought to the public hearing on November 1. At the hearing, verbal testimony will be limited to three minutes per person, with an additional opportunity to speak if time allows.

At the same location, the WSNWCB will vote on the proposed rule changes during its regular board meeting, which will be held after the public hearing at 2:00 pm on Tuesday, November 1. This meeting is also open to the public.

### **Proposed changes to the 2017 state noxious weed list:**

The WSNWCB is considering its reclassification of Ravenna grass (*Saccharum ravennae*) from a Class A to a Class B noxious weed

- Ravenna grass is a large, nonnative, perennial, ornamental grass that has recently been escaping cultivation in eastern Washington, particularly in Benton and Franklin counties.
- It was added as a Class A noxious weed in 2015, which required that all plants be eradicated (destroyed) to eliminate the limited populations and prevent further spread in the state. However, after Ravenna grass was listed, we learned that it was more widely ornamentally planted than originally thought and that it wasn't escaping cultivation as quickly in areas outside of Benton and Franklin counties.

- If the Ravenna grass listing is changed to a Class B, it would be designated for control in eastern Washington, except for Benton, Chelan, Grant, and Yakima counties. Those four county weed boards would have the option of requiring selective control of Ravenna grass at the local level, such as targeting escaped plants only. In western Washington, control would only be required in Cowlitz County, where a few escaped plants were recently found.
- The WSNWCB encourages and promotes the use of non-invasive alternatives to this increasingly invasive ornamental grass and will provide this information to nurseries, landscapers, and gardeners. To learn more about non-invasive gardening plants, please see our Garden Wise publications at [http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/nwcb\\_publications.htm](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/nwcb_publications.htm) .

The WSNWCB will also be considering the designation changes of three Class B noxious weeds in Pierce County:

- It may designate the Meadow subgenus of hawkweeds (which includes such hawkweeds as mouseear and yellow, *Hieracium pilosella* and *H. caespitosum*) and meadow knapweed (*Centaurea x moncktonii*) in Pierce County. Landowners in Pierce County would be required by the WSNWCB to control these species, which are still limited in distribution in Pierce County.
- It may un-designate myrtle spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinites*) in Pierce County, meaning that its control would no longer be required by the State.

Visit [www.nwcb.wa.gov](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov) for more information about these listing proposals and other noxious weeds.