



MONTANA  
BIOLOGICAL WEED CONTROL  
COORDINATION PROJECT

# 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Providing the leadership, coordination, and education necessary to enable land managers  
to successfully incorporate biocontrol into their noxious weed programs.

## 2015 IN NUMBERS

### WORKSHOPS

15 workshops  
15 locations

### INSECT DISTRIBUTION

1.76 million insects distributed  
32 days collecting  
35 counties received insects

### FUNDRAISING

18 Counties  
2 Federal Agencies  
2 State Agencies  
1 City  
3 Conservation Districts  
Many Others



## THE MONTANA BIOCONTROL COORDINATION PROJECT

is ever-evolving and will provide deliverables that land managers are currently interested in. Based off of feedback from our first year of The Project, we concentrated on 3 main areas of focus in 2015: Workshops and Education, Insect Collections and Distribution, and Coordination and Communication with MT and neighboring land managers.

### COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION

We are working with researchers and land managers in Montana to establish insectaries for Dalmatian toadflax, leafy spurge, and spotted knapweed biocontrol in all parts of the state. This will lead to locally adapted insect populations that will better survive in the variety of conditions throughout Montana. These insectaries will also be much more convenient to travel to for collections if they are located throughout Montana rather than primarily in the western part of the state. We are also working with researchers and land managers in Montana and neighboring states to establish insectaries for newer biocontrol agents for yellow toadflax and Russian knapweed.

Staying up to date on the status of biocontrol agents being researched is a focus of the Fall Biocontrol Meeting. This year we were lucky enough to have Harriet Hinz, Head of Weed Biological Control at CABI Switzerland, in attendance. CABI does a majority of the overseas host specificity testing for our potential biocontrol agents. At this same meeting, we learned troubling details concerning the delays in permitting potentially beneficial weed biocontrol agents that is occurring at the national level. There are presently 8 petitions that have passed the stringent requirements for approval by the USDA-APHIS Technical Advisory Group for Biological Control Agents of Weeds (TAG). This newly acquired information has resulted in many meetings with stakeholder groups that benefit from biocontrol in Montana to inform them of the issue. Working to resolve the permitting delays could potentially be a new area of focus for The Project in 2016.



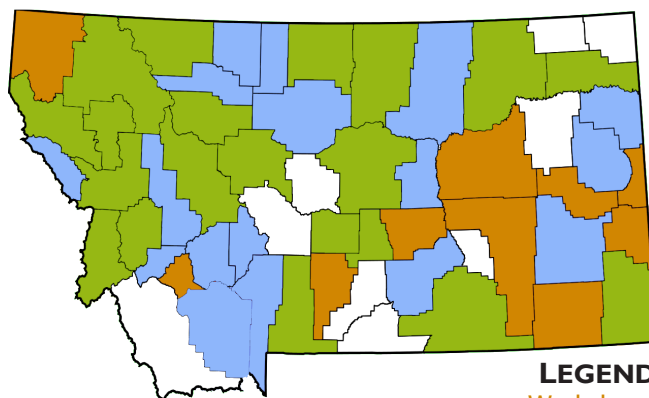
*"She delivered a high quality, hands-on program that gave our participants first-hand experience in monitoring weed populations when utilizing biological control. This was one of the best presentations we have had over the years related to biological control."*

- Sharla Sackman, Prairie County Extension Agent

### WORKSHOPS & OTHER EDUCATION

The Project coordinated or presented at 15 workshops in 2015 at 15 locations throughout Montana. Locations included: Butte, Roundup, Libby, Browning, Livingston, Rock Creek, Lincoln, Phillipsburg, Dixon, Harlowton, Terry, Great Falls, Nine Mile, Condon, and Kalispell.

### COUNTIES ASSISTED (2014-2015)



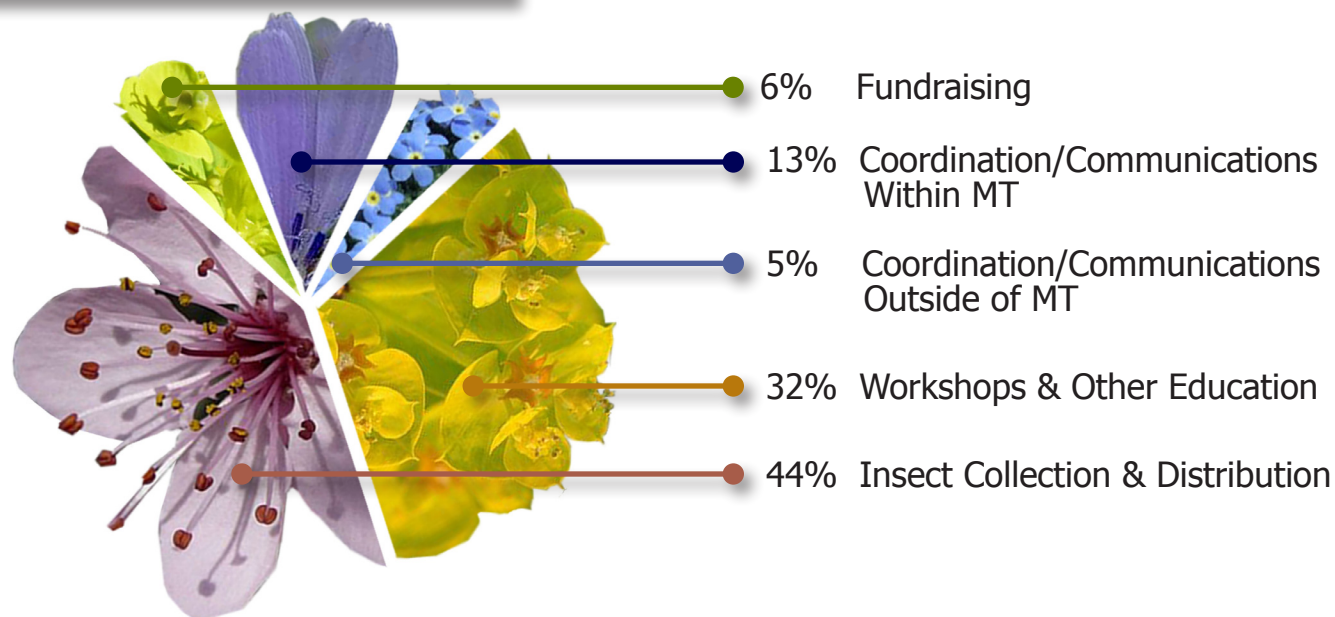
#### LEGEND

Workshops

Received Insects

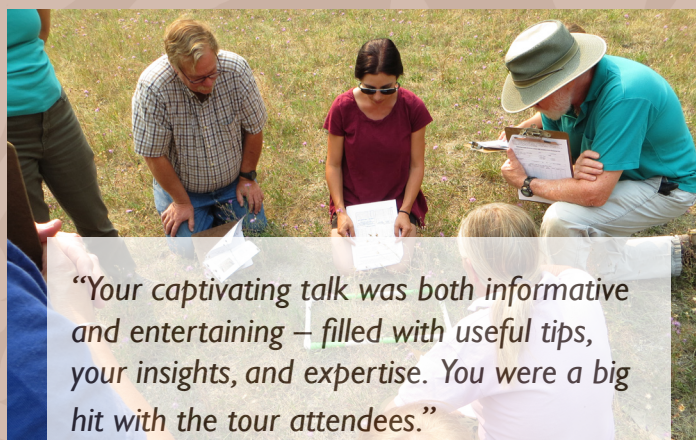
Both Workshop & Insects

## 2015 EXPENSE BREAKDOWN



### INSECT COLLECTIONS & DISTRIBUTION

Thirty-two days were spent collecting biocontrol agents for yellow toadflax, Dalmatian toadflax, leafy spurge, and spotted knapweed. Approximately 1.76 million agents were relocated to new homes through these efforts. If these insects were purchased commercially, they would have cost roughly \$260,000. Thirty-five counties (BLM, FS, Weed Districts, Conservation Districts, Extension, and Land Trusts) and 7 other states (South Dakota, North Dakota, West Virginia, Colorado, Idaho, Washington, and New York) were able to release biocontrol agents because of Project coordinated collections and/or shipments. Around half of these recipients attended collections to bring insects home and the other half received shipments from The Project.



*"Your captivating talk was both informative and entertaining – filled with useful tips, your insights, and expertise. You were a big hit with the tour attendees."*

-Missoula Conservation District

### PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

(National Bison Range: Amy Lisk & Callie Puntteney)

The National Bison Range (NBR) would like to extend a huge Thank You to the Missoula County Weed District (MWCD), the MT Biocontrol Coordination Project (MBCP) and the participants of the 2015 Biocontrol Workshop for sponsoring, facilitating and attending the NBR biocontrol tour on June 4th.

The day of the tour, the 20 participants, along with MWCD, MBCP and NBR staff, traveled out to a stretch of Dalmatian toadflax speckled with *Mecinus janthiniformis* (MJ) weevils and bearing significant signs of their herbivory. Everyone was enthusiastic about collecting and, despite the rocky slopes, folks willingly clambered up toward the tops of ridges, where collection is best, to gently tap MJ into containers. The collection efforts were a great success and spirits were high after counts came in at 13,000 agents. Such a large number was quite an accomplishment for one day; one that would've taken bison range staff several collections to obtain on their own. The amount of collected weevils and the many helping hands allowed us to make releases across a large area on the refuge where MJ numbers were lower and the vigor of the toadflax was stronger.



MT BIOCONTROL PROJECT  
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59801

Permit No. 402

## THANK YOU!

Thank You! Without both the financial contributions and technical support we receive from our partners, the Montana Biological Weed Control Coordination Project would not be possible.

### FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS:

Fergus County Weed District  
Musselshell County Weed District  
Daniels County Weed District  
Park County Weed District  
Stillwater County Weed District  
Yellowstone County Weed District  
Silverbow County Weed District  
Jefferson County Weed District  
Lewis & Clark County Weed District  
Toole County Weed District  
Granite County Weed District  
Lewis & Clark Conservation District  
Powder River Conservation District  
Missoula County Weed District

Golden Valley County Weed District  
Wheatland County Weed District  
Richland County Weed District  
Park County Extension  
Sweet Grass County Weed District  
Beaverhead County Weed District  
Gallatin County Weed District  
Blaine County Weed District  
Liberty County Weed District  
Flathead County Weed District Lake  
Lincoln County Weed District  
Missoula Conservation District  
Sanders County Weed District

BLM  
APHIS  
MDT  
City of Helena  
Nature Conservancy  
Whitehall Biocontrol Project  
NWTF  
Hill County Weed District  
Teton County Weed District  
County Weed District  
Mineral County Weed District  
Ravalli County Weed District  
Missoula County Extension

Majority of the **TECHNICAL SUPPORT** we receive comes from the MWCA Biological Weed Control Working Group.  
**THANKS** to all of the members for your support and assistance on a variety of topics!