

Colorado State Conservation Board 2007 Matching Grants Project:
Kiowa Conservation District: Running Creek Leafy Spurge Project

What natural resource problem(s) did the project address?

Running Creek is a waterway that runs through the town of Elizabeth in Elbert County. **Leafy spurge, a B-listed on the Colorado Noxious Weed Act, has invaded along the creek.** It is a highly competitive species that crowds out almost all other vegetation and spreads rapidly both by seed and creeping roots. Control is difficult and requires an integrated approach to exhaust the extensive root system and deplete the soil seed bank over time. Colorado B-listed species require eradication, control or suppression according to the local infestation level. **By identifying and enlisting the cooperation of the landowners along Running Creek who have leafy spurge on their land, the Kiowa District hopes to contain and then eradicate or suppress the leafy spurge in that area.**

What was achieved?

- In October 2006 Kiowa Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Colorado University Extension Office met to **identify landowners on whose land the leafy spurge was growing along Running Creek.**
- All affected landowners contacted and invited to two spring 2007 meetings where the **importance of an integrated approach was explained and that treating adjacent lands** is the best way to contain the infestation and reduce its size.
- **Education, technical assistance, information on obtaining resources and cost-share provided to landowners to adopt integrated approach to leafy spurge control.**
- **Biological agents (beetles/goats), mechanical and recommended chemical used to treat leafy spurge**
- **357 acres treated by 8 landowners** - greater participation is expected in the future as neighbors see benefits of treatments.
- Kiowa Conservation District will continue to contact landowners controlling leafy spurge to ensure they recognize **importance of continuing treatment.**



Photo: Steve Dewey, Utah State University, United States.



Photo:: Team Leafy Spurge: USDA-APHIS

Leafy spurge is highly invasive and can seriously impact land ecological and economic value. It has a milky sap that irritates the skin and makes it unpalatable to most animals.