

Budworm causes severe defoliation in Co.

By the OREGON
STATE FORESTRY DEPT.

The Fossil Unit administers Oregon State Forestry Department Programs in Morrow, Gilliam, and Wheeler Counties. These programs include Protection From Fire, Protection From Insect and Disease, State Land Management, Service Forestry, Cooperative Programs,

and Forest Practices.

Last fire season got off to a slow start with a wet spring. Seasonal firefighting crews were not hired until July 2nd due to the wet conditions. Once conditions started to dry, fire danger increased quickly. We experienced twelve days of extreme fire danger.

Action was taken on 38 fires last season, 26 fires on State Protected Land and 12 fires where assistance was provided to the U.S. Forest Service. A total of about 98 acres burned on private land. Action was taken on a 1780 acre fire outside the

Protection District near Service Creek to stop that fire from reaching protected forest land. Private landowners and the BLM assisted in that effort. In addition to these fires, crews were dispatched to about 33 other reported fires that were either not found, or were determined to be outside the Protection District. All but six of the fires were caused by lightning. 1984 was a fairly busy fire season. Our average fire load is about 33 fires per year.

The areas sprayed for Western Spruce Budworm Control during 1983 showed very little damage

during 1984. Those portions of Morrow County not sprayed in 1983 continue to show severe defoliation from the insect. Because of anticipated increased costs, and lower projected values for timber used by the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Forest Service decided that a control project for Western Spruce Budworm would not be cost-effective

in 1984. Therefore, no control action was taken for the pest.

A great deal of work is being accomplished through the Service

Forestry Program. Site IV timber land in Eastern Oregon became eligible for cost-sharing under the Forestry Incentive Program (FIP) for precommercial thinning. Up to \$10,000.00 can be received by a landowner annually to accomplish thinning on qualifying timberland under FIP. This translates to a maximum of about 150 acres of thinning possible per year. In addition, cost-sharing is still available under the Agricultural Conservation

Program (ACP) to accomplish thinning and tree planting. Over 1200 acres of precommercial thinning and 20 acres of tree planting were accomplished during 1984.

The Forest Practices Act is administered on private land in Morrow, Gilliam, and Wheeler Counties by the Fossil Unit. Commercial logging operations are inspected to ensure that they are conducted in a responsible manner consistent with the law. Inspections are also made to make sure fire prevention requirements are being met during fire season.

We look forward to the continued cooperation of the people of Morrow County and the Morrow S.W.C.D.

Virus disease of wheat studied in Morrow County

By BOB COSTA

Oregon State University Extension agents and researchers are studying a serious wheat disease in Morrow County.

Winter wheat planted in early September provides greater protection from wind and water erosion and has a higher yield potential than later fall seedings. But watch out, early seeded wheat can also get riddled with barley yellow dwarf virus (BYDV), a serious disease that can substantially cut yield.

BYDV is a virus disease that infects most cereal crops and a long list of other grasses. The virus can only enter crop plants when disease carrying aphids feed on them. Wheat or barley planted in the early fall or late spring are most vulnerable to the disease because that's when aphids are most abundant and active. Irrigation development in the region has increased aphid numbers by providing green host plants virtually every month of the year.

BYDV was responsible for serious yield losses in many Morrow County wheat fields in the 1984 crop. Insecticides offer a possible solution to the BYDV problem by controlling the disease carrying aphids. The OSU

Extension Service has established two research trials in Oregon to study BYDV. One trial is at the Hyslop Field Laboratory in Corvallis and the second trial is in a wheat field at the Eric Anderson farm in Ione.

Extension agents in Morrow County are cooperating with Russ Karow, Extension Cereal Crop Specialist, and Glenn Fisher, Extension Entomologist in studying the effect of various insecticide treatments on BYDV at the field trial on the Anderson farm.

Four different insecticides and four different application methods are being evaluated for BYDV control. Application treatments include insecticides placed near the seed at planting, broadcast on the soil surface at planting, and sprayed on month-old plant. A new group of foliar-applied, synthetic pyrethroid insecticides are included in the project because they have shown promising results in research work in Washington.

The bottom line will be whether or not insecticide treatments can reduce BYDV and increase yields enough to cover application costs and return some profit to growers. Effective and profitable control of BYDV with early seedlings will also help save valuable topsoil.





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Ranchers fight back against knapweed

By STEVE CAMPBELL

For the first time in several years, a coordinated program of knapweed control was initiated in Morrow County. Bob Van Schoiack, a live-

stock producer in southwestern Morrow County, approached the extension office in January seeking assistance in organizing a group of landowners to begin knapweed control efforts in southwestern Morrow County. As a result of this initial

meeting, the agent contacted the Agricultural Economics specialist at Oregon State University to obtain information for forming a working group. This information was then transmitted to all of the involved

landowners and an organizational meeting was held.

Eighteen landowners and four public agencies agreed to cooperate in applying herbicides on 1,500 acres of knapweed infested land. A five-member working committee was elected by the cooperators and met several times with the extension agent to finalize the application process. The extension agent obtained any necessary information from Oregon State University and provided it to the members of the committee.

Maps were prepared and each grower outlined the extent of his infestation and returned the charts to the extension office. A helicopter was hired to apply the herbicide. Each landowner flagged the areas to be treated and arranged to be

available to direct the applicator. The extension agent coordinated the timing of application, made the herbicide recommendations, scheduled the applicator, and arranged delivery of the chemicals.

Once a date was set and everything was organized the only concern was the weather. On the day the application was to begin, it was clear and windy. The wind died down at noon and the program was underway. Two days and 1,646 acres later the application part of the project was completed.

The extension agent evaluated the effectiveness of the program three weeks following application and again a month later. In general there was 90 percent to 100 percent kill of the existing knapweed plants with good residual kill for three to

six weeks. Rain in late May and early June started a new crop of seedlings most of which did not reach maturity and produce seeds. Overall, the treated areas had a substantial reduction in the number of mature plants and an increase in grass production when compared to areas not treated.

This type of program is a good beginning to a longer term program that will hopefully lead to an effective control effort for diffuse knapweed in many parts of Morrow County. This effort would have been impossible without the cooperation of many individuals and agencies

working together as a team. The extension service is proud to be associated with the many people that made this program a success. As an education arm of Oregon State University, the extension service provides the information to help solve local problems. However, much of the real work is done by those who benefit the most from the information, in this case the landowners in southwestern Morrow County and adjacent areas of Gilliam County.

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