

# Hemlock control spraying coop effort in Heppner



Volunteer crew gets equipment ready for spraying Poison Hemlock along Willow Creek inside Heppner city limits. The project was a cooperative effort between Jim VanWinkle, Morrow County Weed Control Supervisor and the Heppner city maintenance crew.

The extremely dangerous poison hemlock has been sprayed along the banks of Willow Creek within the city limits of Heppner. The combined effort between the city and Jim VanWinkle, Morrow County Weed Supervisor was aimed at eradicating the noxious weed because it is fatal both to people and livestock.

All parts of the plant are poisonous. It grows like a wild carrot and ranges from 4 to 10 feet tall. The stem is generally stout, erect, hollow, rigid and with purple streaks or blotches and the flowers are small, white and look like umbrellas.

Poison Hemlock has been found not only along Willow Creek but in pastures and alfalfa fields, on roadsides, idle fields, and even in home yards.

Jim VanWinkle, along with city foreman Dave Winters sprayed the weed on portions of Willow Creek in April.

Mayor Cara Costa praised the operation as a joint effort between the two parties. "We didn't have the money in the budget to hire spraying done and Jim VanWinkle donated his time and provided the equipment," stated Costa.

It cost the city \$48 to buy the chemicals, 2-4D and Banvel, used on the weed. VanWinkle and Winters, armed with backpack sprayers, sprayed 50 gallons in three and one-half hours.

"City residents also have taken an interest in eliminating the weed and have called me to inquire what kind of chemicals to spray," VanWinkle said.

Scott Madison, member of the weed advisory board and a director of Morrow Soil and Water district also praised the project saying, "Jim is available to the public to help identify and make recommendations on weed problems, and earlier this year Jim worked with the city of Irrigon

to spray thistles."

VanWinkle suggested that the city of Heppner could also develop their own weed program. "For a very small amount of money, the city could invest in a backpack sprayer and chemicals," he said.

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