

**ANTLERS RANGE
NOXIOUS WEED MANAGMENT PLAN**

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PREPARED FOR:

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Noxious Weed Management Plan

This document has been prepared to provide guidance for the developer during development and ultimately for the Antler Range Metro District for long term maintenance and control of Noxious Weeds.

Summary of Proposed Subdivision

Antler Range is a proposed residential development on 244.496 acres consisting of 84 single family detached units. The proposed Preliminary Plan is north of Ayer Road and east of Meridian Road in El Paso County.

A. Geology and Soils

According to the Soil and Geology Report prepared by RMG, the soil types of this area are comprised of several different soil types; the site falls into the following soil types:

1. Sandy clay (CL)
2. Clayey sand (SC)
3. Silty sand (SM)
4. Well graded sand with silt (SW-SM)
5. Siltstone (anticipated to classify as ML)

There is no evidence of mining material in the area according to the Master Plan for the Extraction of Mineral Resources.

B. Vegetation and Wildlife

a. Vegetation

An array of native and nonnative plants were observed during the site assessment. Dominant species included blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*), ponderosa pine, little bluestem, and buffalograss (*Bouteloua dactyloides*) in the uplands, and Nebraska sedge (*Carex nebrascensis*), Baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*) and sandbar willow (*Salix exigua*) in the creek channel. Other common upland plant species observed were fringed sage (*Artemisia frigida*), tenpetal blazingstar (*Mentzelia decapitata*), Thurber's fescue (*Festuca thurberi*), soapweed yucca (*Yucca glauca*), Wood's rose (*Rosa woodsii*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), prickly Russian thistle (*Kali tragus*), yellow indiagrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*), Canada wildrye (*Elymus canadensis*), smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), and hairy false goldenaster (*Heterotheca villosa*).

Within the Project site, wetland vegetation is primarily associated with Black Squirrel Creek, which appeared to contain high-quality wetlands based on the wintertime assessment. The creek featured a broad floodplain, braided channels, and minimal erosion, creating favorable conditions for a diverse and robust wetland plant community. In-channel vegetation included sandbar willows, plains cottonwoods (*Populus deltoides*), speckled alders (*Alnus incana*), and the occasional peachleaf willow (*Salix amygdaloides*) along the banks, with an understory of hydrophytic species such as rushes, sedges, and cattails including Nebraska sedge, Baltic rush, duckweed (*Lemna* sp.), common rush (*Juncus effusus*), broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*), and fireweed (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*). The western swale, which may act as a small tributary to Black Squirrel Creek, also supported Nebraska sedge and Baltic rush, conveying irregular flows from precipitation events and snowmelt to the larger system.

The upland portions of the site were relatively intact, disturbed only moderately by ongoing cattle grazing. Diversity was moderate for this ecoregion, and the structure of vegetation in the uplands was somewhat underdeveloped, likely owing to grazing. Overall, the site was a healthy foothill grassland system with only minor disturbance. A few varieties of noxious weeds were present at the site, mostly scattered throughout the property in low densities. Noxious weed species observed included common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), and diffuse

knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*). The most prominent noxious weed species observed was common mullein, a List C noxious weed in El Paso County.

Wildlife

Similar to the impacts for vegetation, some wildlife will inevitably be affected by development of the Project area. Some species that prefer suburban habitats, including some species of birds, are expected to benefit from an increase in planted trees and bird feeders in yards. Any designated open spaces may also conserve some of the grassland, wetland, and woodland habitats that are currently available, but open, undisturbed grasslands are expected to be reduced overall.

Since grasslands are the most dominant habitat type, grassland species are expected to experience the greatest adverse impacts. Deer, foxes, bears, and coyotes may experience adverse effects from the increase in urbanization in close proximity to wildland areas. Few sensitive species were present and only in small numbers, and thus are not expected to be affected any more than other species. State SC black-tailed prairie dogs were not present, and thus the state-threatened burrowing owl is also not anticipated to use the Project site.

Implementation of a stormwater management plan will assist in protecting water quality downstream, which will provide some benefits to aquatic species including invertebrates. Detention facilities may add seasonal water features that could support additional wildlife such as waterfowl and amphibians.

b. Wetlands

Wetlands have been found on the site. These wetlands have been mapped and presented to the US Army Corps of Engineers for a determination of jurisdiction. The acceptance of the mapping and statement of Jurisdiction are attached for reference. This development will preserve and protect these mapped wetlands.

C. Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds are present on the Project site in several areas but in limited quantities, mainly in more disturbed areas where weeds tend to congregate. List A Species, which require reporting and eradication by Colorado law (Colorado Department of Agriculture [CDA] 2006), were not detected. List B Species require either eradication, containment, or suppression; List C Species require control through either public education or chemical control. List B and List C noxious weeds that were detected during the site reconnaissance included:

List B:

- Canada thistle
- Diffuse knapweed

List C:

- Common mullein

It is possible that additional noxious weed populations may be present on the site. A site inventory to identify and map noxious weeds during the growing season would be required to accurately catalogue all populations. In accordance with EPC requirements, a Noxious Weed Management Plan should be developed detailing recommendations for identifying and controlling the spread of noxious weeds prior to, during, and following construction. Both the developer short term and the Metropolitan District long term should keep in contact with El Paso County representatives to

maintain awareness concerning noxious weeds in El Paso County generally and in Antler Range specifically.. During development while land is temporarily vacant and after development in the various open spaces there is potential for proliferation of noxious weeds if not addressed properly, particularly detention pond sites.

D. Management Procedures

Reference should be made to the El Paso County Noxious Weed Management Plan approved by the Board of County Commissioners on December 28, 2017. This plan serves as guidance and a starting point for identifying and managing noxious weeds on this project.

By following these steps and utilizing science-based methods, a noxious weed management plan can effectively prevent the introduction and spread of invasive plant species, protecting the environment, economy, and human health.

A noxious weed management plan is crucial for land development to prevent the spread of invasive species and maintain ecological balance.

Step 1: Identify Noxious Weeds

- Conduct a thorough survey of the land to identify noxious weeds, including their species, distribution, and population density.
- Consult with local land managers, extension specialists, and weed control specialists for guidance on control methods and local concerns.

Step 2: Develop a Control Strategy

- Based on the survey results, develop a control strategy that includes a combination of methods such as:
 - Burn and reseed in the first year.
 - Spot treat remaining plants with herbicides in the second year.
 - Change to fall grazing and restrict vehicle use in the area.
- Consider the specific needs of the land, including soil type, climate, and vegetation, when selecting control methods.

Step 3: Implement Control Measures

- Implement the control strategy, taking care to follow local regulations and guidelines.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the control measures and adjust as needed.

Step 4: Restore the Land

- After performing weed control, restore the land to its natural state by replanting native vegetation and improving soil health.
- Consider using beneficial insects to control noxious weeds, such as biological control agents.

Step 5: Maintain the Land

- Regularly monitor the land for signs of noxious weed re-infestation and take prompt action to control any new outbreaks.
- Continue to maintain the land through regular maintenance and management practices, such as mowing and grazing.

Implementation of this plan will effectively manage noxious weeds and maintain a healthy, sustainable environment within this development.