

Noxious weed control on two utility rights-of-way: 10-year comparison and contrast.

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Abstract : Noxious weeds have invaded many areas of the United States. Linear facilities such as pipelines, power lines, roads, and railroads are often cited as vectors for weed invasion. Utilities are often tasked with managing noxious weeds on the right-of-way (ROW) before, during, and after construction. A variety of management tools are used to prevent the spread of noxious weeds via ROW during construction such as segregation, wash stations, route variations, and weed removal. We analyzed two adjacent linear facilities to determine if post-construction noxious weed severity was influenced by construction-phase management tools. Intensive construction-phase management was implemented on the Alturas power line, while less intensive construction-phase management was implemented on the Tuscarora pipeline. We did not determine an improvement in post-construction weed density or severity due to intensive construction-phase weed management efforts. Weeds were more dense on both projects post-construction than in adjacent areas, although intensive construction weed management has prevented even more severe infestations. The primary determinant of weed infestation on ROW is probably soil disturbance during construction-phase management.

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