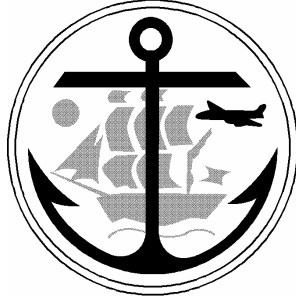


Municipality of
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITIZEN WEEDS WARRIORS ATTACK PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE
Rapid Response at Westchester Lagoon Planned

Dedicated Citizen Weeds Warriors plan a rapid response with waders, gloves and bags on Thursday, Aug. 23 from 2 to 5 pm at the Westchester Nature Trail ([corner of Spenard Road and 19th Avenue](#)) to combat the Purple Loosestrife.

In 2005 purple loosestrife was found growing in an Alaskan wetland – Westchester Lagoon, right in the heart of the Chester Creek Greenbelt. Purple loosestrife is a pretty garden plant that has escaped into the wild, and can quickly displace other native vegetation. The result can be choked waterways and degraded fish habitat. A sharp eyed walker who at first thought the pretty plant was fireweed realized it was too late in the season for fireweed to be blooming so a call came for action. Multiple agencies and Citizen Weeds Warriors nipped this rogue plant in the bud in the fall of 2005 and continued their work in 2006.

Citizen Weeds Warriors has become a popular and effective Municipality of Anchorage program to help prevent the spread of invasive plants. Citizen Weeds Warriors conducted Weed Pulls throughout Anchorage Parks during June's "Weed Awareness Week" at Margaret Egan Sullivan Park, Goose Lake Park, Taku Lake Park, Earthquake Parks and Kincaid Park. Over 160 citizens have volunteered for this effort.

"Invasive Plant control in our parks is where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," commented Jamie Nielsen, Invasive Plant Coordinator for the UAF Cooperative Extension Service. "Invasive plants are not an issue that will go away. We want to encourage people to be informed and have an opportunity to make a difference."

MORE

Citizen Weeds Warriors is a program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department. Funding for the 2006 and 2007 program has been provided by a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To get involved contact Wade Collins, Volunteer Coordinator at 764-2199 or view the Citizen Weeds Warrior webpage:

<http://www.anchorageparkfoundation.org/projects/weedwarriors.htm>.

August 23 event partners include:

USDA Forest Service

UAF Cooperative Extension Service

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

National Park Service

Municipality of Anchorage Salmon in the City

Anchorage Audubon Society

Anchorage Waterways Council

Alaska Women's Environmental Network

UAA Alaska Natural Heritage Program

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