

**For Immediate Release  
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## **CITIZEN WEEDS WARRIORS ATTACK PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE**

*Rapid Response at Westchester Lagoon Planned*

Dedicated Citizen Weeds Warriors and volunteers from the Anchorage Waterways Council plan a rapid response with waders, gloves and bags on Thursday, Aug. 21 from 3 to 5 pm at the Westchester N Trail (corner of Spenard Road and 19th Avenue) to combat 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 the wild, and can quickly displace other native vegetation. The result can be choked waterways and deplete fish habitat. A sharp eyed walker who at first thought the pretty plant was fireweed realized it was 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 and

Citizen Weeds Warriors has become a popular and effective Municipality of Anchorage program to help reduce the spread of invasive plants. Citizen Weeds Warriors conducted Weed Pulls throughout the city in Anchorage Parks, beginning on June 23rd with “Weed Awareness Week”. These weekly weed pulls focused on Orange Hawkweed, Canada Thistle, White Sweetclover, Bird Vetch, Toadflax, and Common Tansy. Over 100 citizens have volunteered for this effort.

“Stopping the introduction and spread of invasive weeds will protect the three E's -- Alaska's Environment, Ecology and Economy,” commented Lori Zaumseil, founder of the non-profit Citizens Against Noxious Weeds Invading the North (CANWIN).

Citizen Weeds Warriors is a program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department. Funding for the 2006 – 2008 programs has been provided by a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To get involved, contact Wade Collins, Volunteer Coordinator, at 764-2111 or view the Citizen Weeds Warrior webpage:

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

August 21st event partners include:

Anchorage – Cooperative Weed Management Area

USDA Forest Service

UAF Cooperative Extension Service

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Alaska Committee for Noxious & Invasive Plants Management  
(CNIPM)

Citizens Against Noxious Weeds Invading the North

National Park Service

U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Municipality of Anchorage Salmon in the City

Anchorage Fire Department

Alaska Community Foundation – Anchorage Park Foundation

Anchorage Waterways Council

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