

# Tule River takes a stand against noxious weeds



## Tribal project demonstrates noxious weed control

By Emily Shapiro

Maintaining a weed free yard is almost impossible, just when you think you have pulled out every weed, more keep popping up. Imagine trying to maintain acres and acres of weed free land for livestock, the task is mind boggling.

Noxious weeds, non-native plants that take over rangeland, are a problem in many areas including the 55,000-plus acre Tule River Reservation. Troublesome weeds include milk, bulk and Italian Thistle.

Dr Roselynn Lwenya, Tule River's Natural Resource Director, led a field day Monday, inviting tribal members and other interested people to join her at an area on the reservation known as Oak Flat, to learn about tribal efforts to keep noxious weeds in check.

The purpose of the field day was to inform the public of the problem, to explain how the problem is being addressed, and to illustrate the research findings of the Noxious Research Team; made up of the Tule River Natural Resources Department (NRD), the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) and the UC Davis Extension Services.

The day began with a speech by Kevin Barnes of the Natural Resources Department. According to Barnes, the NRD prayed for thistles on the reservation,



PHOTO BY EMILY SHAPIRO

Banners helped draw attention to Monday's Noxious Weeds Awareness Day on the Tule River Reservation. Pictured on the front page, Jim Sullins of the University of California Cooperative Extension (center) and Dr. Roselynn Lwenya (on the right).

on the Joaquin flat, the campgrounds, and Black Mountain. About 1,000 acres were sprayed beginning in late April and continuing into early May. Two herbicides were used—Transline (at a rate of 5 pints per 200 gallons of water) and Ciltac.

"The crews did a good job and the thistles are all dying," Barnes said.

A representative of the NRCS then explained the evaluation of the noxious

weeds.

"Weed control is expensive. We need to find ways to control weeds and cut costs," said David Witt of NRCS. According to Witt, mechanical methods (or pulling

*Continued on page 5*

## UC Extension, NRCS, cooperate with tribe in noxious weed project

*Continued from page 3*

out weeds by hand) is "not viable," using insects is "not very effective" and animal control like sheep and goats has been met with "limited success."

Something had to be done to control this ever present danger, so the UC Davis Extension Service, decided to undertake a study using two main herbicides, Transline and Milestone. A result chart was then handed out to all present, explaining the types of chemicals used, the acreage/and chemical ratio and the percent of control.

This part of the meeting was led by Jim Sullins and Steve Wright.

For example the Italian Thistle was sprayed on March 8, with Transline, at a rate of 6.0 ounces+1%v/v per acre, that controlled 25 percent of the weeds. The same patch was tested again on April 19 and 100 percent of the weed growth had been contained.

Another patch of Italian thistle was sprayed using Milestone 7oz, per one acre. On March 8, 90 percent of the weeds were controlled. On April 19, all of the weeds were gone.

Wright explained some of the differences between these two herbicides.

"Transline gives residual control and is easy on beneficial plants such as filarees, and clovers," he said.

"Milestone picks up fiddleneck," said Witt.

After a few minutes of going over the rest of the results, a few key people were given the chance to show their appreciation and gratitude for this project.

"This project is part of the program that the Tule River Tribal Council has sponsored to protect wildlife," stated Vernon Vera, a representative of the council. Vera then introduced Randy Christman, "the provider of money from the council" stated Vera, which brought in a few chuckles from the crowd. Christman is the tribal treasurer.

"I'd like to thank all of the employees for preserving the natural beauty of this land," said Rodney Martin, a Tribal administrator.

Dr. Lwenya then invited all present for a walk to the bridge, where cars awaited to take those present, up to the test site.

After reaching the testing grounds, those

present gathered under a tree to listen to Sullins explain the demonstration project. A map of the testing plots was handed out, which illustrated the difference between grazed and ungrazed areas.

A total of eight plots were used, which were then divided up into four sections. The plots were 15 feet wide. Each section was numbered and at the bottom a key was provided to illustrate the differences between the herbicides.

The public was then invited to go and observe the effects of the herbicides. From the pictures and the map one could see that Millstone 7 oz. was the most effective chemical to use. Not one weed was seen in this plot.

The field day ended with attendees gathered once more under the tree for the closing remarks by Dr. Lwenya.

"I want to thank you for the involvement of each and every team member. I

hope we'll achieve a favorable result. Based on the outcome, we hope to spray between 5,000 and 10,000 acres. We cannot completely eradicate the weeds, but we will do the best we can," she said.

An outdoor lunch was provided to all attendees.

EMILY SHAPIRO is a journalism student at Cal State Bakersfield. She is spending the summer with her parents in Springville.