

Swaner Preserve and Utah State University Extension Service Noxious Weed Control Goat Grazing Project



Situation:

Swaner Preserve includes 1200 acres of open space that serves as a refuge for wildlife in the area. Noxious weeds have invaded areas of the preserve, thus affecting the natural habitat. In order to help control the spread of the noxious weeds Swaner and Utah State University will be conducting a biological weed control project to determine the effectiveness of goat grazing in reducing the noxious weeds located on the preserve. Dyers Woad is the target weed for this project.

How Does Goat Grazing Reduce Noxious Weeds?

When used strategically, goat grazing can control noxious weeds without the use of herbicides. Goats generally prefer to eat plants that are forbs, like Dyers Woad, before they eat grasses. In this case, a group of goats will be rotated through small pastures and moved once the Dyers Woad has been eaten, but before the grasses have been damaged. Repeated grazing (key element of weed control) will weaken or kill the Dyers Woad plants and will keep them from going to seed and spreading. Depending on funding this project will be conducted for two years. Since the Woad is a biennial, the majority of the effects will be evident after 2-3 years.

Objectives of this Project:

1. Design a practical and effective grazing system with goats to control noxious weeds that other weed professionals can follow and implement.
2. Establish a large scale weed control grazing demonstration site for the public to view.
3. Determine what type of grazing system is the most effective in controlling specific target weeds.
4. Provide the partner organizations, area landowners, and the public with the results of the project.
5. Control the Dyers Woad in this project area using biological control techniques, thus reducing the need for herbicides.

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Cooperators for the Project are:

- Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter
- Utah State University Extension Service
- Willoughby Boer Goats
- Summit County Weed Department
- Summit County Cooperative Weed Management Area
- Utah Open Lands

Project Funded by:

- Utah State University Extension Service
- Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter
- Western Region SARE
- Western IPM Center



Project Coordinators:

Sterling Banks, Utah State University/Summit County Extension Agent
Nell Larsen, Director of Conservation, Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter, Utah State University

Map of Swaner Preserve Showing Project Area Location:

