



WSDOT Vegetation Management

Roadside vegetation management involves caring for and/or controlling plants along the highway. If managed properly, roadside vegetation can become self-sustaining over time and require less maintenance. This helps reduce costs and minimizes herbicide use.

Why is Roadside Vegetation Management Important?

Safety is a high priority at WSDOT. Vegetation, if left alone will grow out of control, blocking visibility (signs, traffic, wildlife) which could endanger motorists. Weeds must be controlled to avoid impacts on the farming community and native ecosystems. Pride of ownership and the beauty of Washington are also important factors.

What is a Roadside Vegetation Management Plan?

Roadside vegetation management plan is a "how to" guide for the best way to manage roadsides in any given area. Washington has diverse climates and the highways have many neighbors, so the plans vary depending on location. The plans determine the right tool or combination of tools, for the right plant at the right place and time. WSDOT often uses the term Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) in reference to this process. Vegetation management tools include:

- Mowing and trimming
- Selectively using herbicides
- Release of weed-eating insects
- Improving Soils
- Planting native plants

Using IVM and roadside vegetation management plans help reduce herbicide use and maintenance costs.

Roadside Design and Construction

One of the keys to successful roadside vegetation management is treating the roadside when the highway is first built or when improvement projects are designed and constructed. Soil improvement and plant establishment must be addressed through the design and construction process before maintenance takes responsibility of the roadside. For information on how WSDOT design and builds roadsides see Roadside and Site Development.

For more information on maintenance of roadside vegetation, contact Ray Willard at (360) 705-7865 or James Morin at (509) 577-1912.

Detailed Information

- Roadside Vegetation Management Plans
- Herbicide Use
- Roadside Maintenance Costs
- Studies and Research

Copyright WSDOT © 2011