
TITLE: WEED FREE GRAVEL / AGGREGATE POLICY

Approved by Council:

Date: March 11, 2014

Revised by Council:

Date: June 25, 2019

Summary

The Municipal District of Pincher Creek is responsible for the effective management, on municipal lands, of designated prohibited noxious and noxious weed species under the *Alberta Weed Control Act; Weed Control Regulation*, and other weeds elevated to such status by Municipal District bylaws, and as such, carry out an annual integrated weed management program (including, but not limited to, appropriate herbicide treatments for these weeds) on municipal roadside right-of-ways (ROW), gravel pits, municipal reserves and environmental reserves.

With that in mind, the Agricultural and Environmental Services Department wants to be part of the decision of where the municipality distributes its gravel from, in order to control the spread of weeds from gravel pits.

Annual inspection of all municipal and participating private gravel pits (aggregate sources) may ensure all gravel, pit run, and aggregate products used within the municipal boundaries come from a municipally inspected gravel pit to assist in preventing the spread of invasive plants; (*Weed Control Act* Part 1: 4(1) and 5(1)).

Background

The Municipal District of Pincher Creek No. 9 has approximately 900 kms of gravel roads to maintain. Most roads are re-gravelled every three years (MD Draft Policy Road Maintenance) which makes taking this step important in the areas of not only weed control, but in budgeting and yearly costs as well.

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Requirements

There are four basic requirements to carrying out an effective policy.

- Yearly Inspections – depending on the weed species, there could be as many as four or five different inspections/control per year.
- Program of Integrated Weed Management, with chemical control being the most used component as noxious weed species often flourish in gravel pits, which are highly disturbed areas.
- Communication between all departments of the municipality so that a known weed infestation is not spread from a gravel pit with a viable alternative.
- Communication to anyone in the municipality that may be using gravel from a pit within our borders.

Resources

The Agricultural Fieldman will allocate the appropriate resources to implement this policy. Annually the Fieldman will,

- Designate a crew to inspect each gravel pit.
- Implement an Integrated Control Strategy for each pit, providing all the tools to each crew necessary to carrying out effective control.
- Maintain a list of all Prohibited Noxious and Noxious weeds (as represented in the Weed Act and as locally elevated species) present in the pit.
- Do a minimum of one annual inspection of all gravel pits in the municipality seeking ‘Weed Free’ status.
- Communicate all information to Public Works, Municipal Administration and whoever else makes an inquiry as to the status of their purchased gravel in the MD of Pincher Creek.

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DISCLAIMER

Due to the disturbed nature of the areas used for gravel/sand/borrow materials, there will be weed and weed seed present in any area certified in this process. Open soils are subject to exposure to weed seeds from uncontrolled machinery and circumstances. While all attempts to control the entry of weed seeds is taken for the 'Class A' certification, there is still the possibility of contamination from other sources, including but not limited to:

- i) all machines associated with the movement of soils and aggregate materials, and all machines used in the gravel crushing process;
- ii) vehicles used in the sale and transport of saleable materials;
- iii) windblown seeds;
- iv) waterborne seeds;
- v) seeds borne by the natural passage of wildlife through the area.

This program is put in place as a 'best practices' procedure, and is carried out with the intention to do everything possible to reduce the amount of seed spread by the movements of the materials in Appendix #2.

REQUIREMENTS

All Municipal District gravel pits and pit materials should be certified to Municipal District Policy 608 standards and inspected by Agricultural and Environmental Services Department officials. Inspection shall include, but not be limited to, surrounding ditches, top soil piles, gravel/sand piles, fence rows, roads, easements and right-of-ways, working areas, storage areas and a buffer zone surrounding the area. Certification shall be based on a reasonable and prudent visual inspection. Any private gravel pits wishing to be certified to these municipal standards of 'Weed Free Gravel' may sign up through the Agricultural and Environmental Services Department to be listed as participants in this program.

This certificate expires one year after date certified or if Prohibited Noxious weeds are detected by an inspector, at any time, in the crush pile, sand pile, borrow materials, pit run or direct access roads.

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CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

All certified pits will be inspected at a minimum of once per year by a qualified inspector to ensure that:

- i) there are no growing Prohibited Noxious (PN) or Noxious (N) weeds,
- ii) the spraying and picking of any PN or N weeds is done, with the intent of eradication,
- iii) the spraying or picking of any non-listed or annual weeds (as listed in Appendix #1),
- iv) that all Municipal District equipment entering a Certified 'Weed Free' gravel pit from a non-certified pit, be cleaned of all soil and aggregate materials.

Things NOT done include:

- i) inspection of machinery entering and exiting to guarantee the absence of soil borne weed seeds;
- ii) inspection of materials for the presence or absence of wind or water borne weed seeds.

APPENDIX #1 (weeds not listed in the Alberta Weed Act to be controlled if possible) – Bladder Campion (*Silene vulgaris*), Kochia (*Kochia scoparia L.*), Queens Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*), Wild Caraway (*Carum carvi L.*)

APPENDIX #2 (List of materials to be certified) – all aggregate materials (ie; crushed gravel, sand, pit run) or borrow materials (subsoil & topsoil piles).

Municipal District of Pincher Creek #9 – Certificate of Inspection yy/mm/dd

Inspections (consecutive years)

First Year ___ Second Year ___ Third Year ___ Fourth Year ___ Five or more years (specify) _____.

Weed Free (consecutive years)

One Year ___ Two Years ___ Three Years ___ Four Years ___ Five or more years (specify) _____.

Present Year Data:

Pit Operator _____ Phone #'s _____

Address _____ Town _____ Prov. _____ Postal Code _____ - _____

Pit Owner _____ Phone #'s _____

Address _____ Town _____ Prov. _____ Postal Code _____ - _____

Pit Name & Location _____ 1/4 Sec. _____ Sec. _____ T _____ R _____ Wof _____

Material Description (App.#2) _____

Weeds present _____

Certificate Class*

A. _____ EXCEEDS requirements and certification standards and all gravel/borrow material has no non-native plants noted, and no seed set, in the last _____ years (4 minimum).

B. _____ MEETS requirements and certification standards. This gravel/borrow material contains variable amounts of annual weeds BUT contains no Prohibited Noxious or Noxious weeds (as per Alberta Weed Act, and locally elevated weeds).

Weeds Noted: _____.

C. _____ MINIMUM requirements and certification standards are met. This gravel/borrow material contains no Prohibited Noxious weeds BUT has variable amounts of Noxious weed species which were immature, (no viable seed) when treated to prevent seed formation. These plant parts, although not usually desirable in the gravel/borrow material, are considered unable to begin new infestations.

Weeds Noted: _____.

D. _____ FAILED – Contained Prohibited Noxious weeds, had significant populations of Prohibited Noxious weeds go to seed in the last 3 years, had large concentrations of Noxious weeds present, or other, as explained.

Explanation: _____

Date Certified: _____ Inspector's Signature _____

Dates Inspected: _____

*Based on NAISMA (North American Invasive Species Management Agency) Weed Free Gravel Levels of Certification

