Minnesota Noxious Weed Risk Assessment

Developed by the Minnesota Noxious Weed Advisory Committee

Assessment information

Common name: Purple loosestrife

Scientific name: *Lythrum salicaria* L. and *L. virgatum* L. (both species use common name purple loosestrife)

Family name: Lythraceae

Current reviewer name and organizational affiliation: Emilie Justen, Minnesota Dept of Agriculture
Date of current review: 8/5/2025
Previous reviewer name and organizational affiliation: Laura Van Riper, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Date of previous review: 08/13/2013

Species description

Photos

Photo caption: Purple loosestrife flower stalk with a tan background.
Photo credit: Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Photo caption: Purple loosestrife infestation near a wetland.
Photo credit: Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Why the plant is being assessed

- The previous risk assessment was written over 10 years ago.
- Purple loosestrife has widespread biological control insects in Minnesota.

Identification, biology, and life cycle

Quoted from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (2025):

- A semi-aquatic perennial species that typically forms a dense bushy growth of many erect stems reaching heights of approximately 4- 7 feet tall. It is highly visible from July through September because of its robust purple flowering spikes.
- Leaves are smooth-edged, slender, pointed and arranged in opposite pairs along ridged stems.
- Showy spikes of flowers develop at the tops of each stem consisting of many individual 5- 7 petaled purple flowers.
- Large roots develop over time and store high levels of nutrients providing the plant with reserves of energy early in the spring or during stressful periods.
- Habitat: Purple loosestrife prefers wet soils or standing water. Loosestrife plants are typically found in poorly drained soils of road right-of-ways and trails, drainage ditches, culverts, lake shores, stream banks, and a variety of wetland habitats.

- Means of spread and distribution: Purple loosestrife reproduces both by seed and vegetative propagation which allows it to quickly invade new landscapes. Each flower spike can produce thousands of tiny seeds that are easily dispersed by wind, water, snow, animals, and humans.

Current distribution

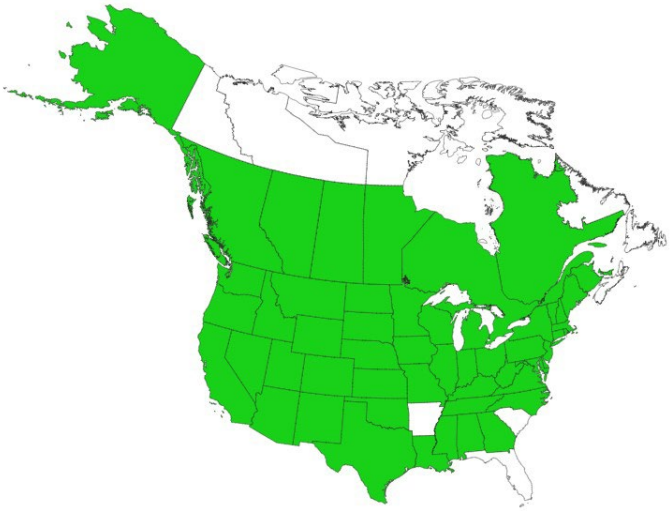

Image caption: National level map from EDDMapS (2025). Map accessed on 4/8/2025.
Description of where the plant is found in the United States: Purple loosestrife is documented in all states except Arkansas, South Carolina, and Florida.

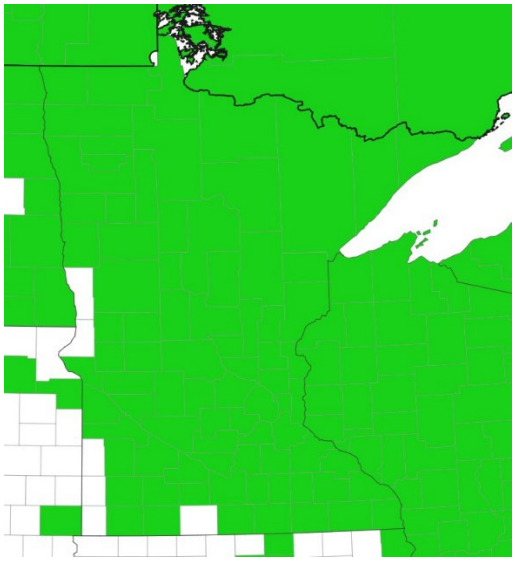

Image caption: State level map from EDDMapS (2025). Map accessed on 4/8/2025.
Description of where the plant has been documented in Minnesota: Purple loosestrife has been documented in EDDMapS in all counties in Minnesota except Wilkin, Traverse, Lincoln, Pipestone, Rock, and Martin.

Current regulation

Currently listed in Minnesota as a Prohibited-Control noxious weed by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*, *Lythrum virgatum*, or any variety, hybrid, or cultivar thereof) is also listed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025a) as a Prohibited Invasive Species. It is unlawful (a misdemeanor) to possess, import, purchase, transport, or introduce Prohibited Invasive Species except under a permit for disposal, control, research, or education (Minnesota Department of Natural Resources 2025f).

Purple loosestrife is not a federally listed plant species.

A 2025 review of information compiled by the National Plant Board (2025) listed the following states as regulating purple loosestrife: Alabama, Alaska, Connecticut, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, West Virginia.

Risk assessment

Box 1:

Is the plant species or genotype non-native?

Answer: Yes
Outcome: Go to Box 3
Native to Europe and Asia (Thompson et al. 1987).

Box 2:

Does the species pose significant human or livestock concerns or have the potential to significantly harm agricultural production?

Question 2A: Does the plant have toxic qualities that pose a significant risk to livestock, wildlife, or people?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 2B: Does the plant cause significant financial losses associated with decreased yields, reduced quality, or increased production costs?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Box 3:

Is the species, or a related species, documented as being a problem elsewhere?

Answer: Yes
Outcome: Go to Box 6
A 2025 review of information compiled by the National Plant Board (2025) listed the following states as regulating purple loosestrife: Alabama, Alaska, Connecticut, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, West Virginia.

Box 4:

Are the species' life history and growth requirements understood?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Box 5:

Gather and evaluate further information

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Box 6:

Does the species have the capacity to establish and survive in Minnesota?

Question 6A: Is the plant, or a close relative, currently established in Minnesota?

Answer: Yes

Outcome: Go to Box 7

It was first documented in University of Minnesota herbarium records in 1924 in Ramsey County (Skinner et al. 1994). It is now documented in nearly all counties in Minnesota.

Question 6B: Has the plant become established in areas having a climate and growing conditions similar to those found in Minnesota?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 6C: Has the plant become established in areas having a climate and growing conditions similar to those projected to be present in Minnesota under future climate projections?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Box 7:

Does the species have the potential to reproduce and spread in Minnesota?

Question 7A: Are there cultivars of the plant that are known to differ in reproductive properties from the species?

Answer: No

Outcome: Go to Question 7B

The following cultivars are listed on the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025d) website: Atropurpureum, Brightness, Columbia Pink, Dropmore Purple, Firecandle, Flashfire, Floralie, Florarose, Gypsy Blood, Happy, Lady Sackville, Morden Gleam, Morden Pink, Morden Rose, Pink Spires, Purple Dwarf, Purple Spires, Robert, Rose Gleam, Rose Queen, Roseum superbum, Rosy Gem, Rosy Glow, The Beacon, The Rocket, and Tomentosum.

The risk assessment author did not find any information that the cultivars differ in reproductive properties.

Question 7B: Does the plant reproduce by asexual/vegetative means?

Answer: Yes

Outcome: Go to Question 7C

Significant clonal growth has not been found (Thompson et al. 1987), but there is localized clonal growth with annual shoots produced each spring from overwintering, spreading root buds (Mal et al. 1997). If pieces of the root crown are spread to new sites (such as through movement of soil), the plants could establish.

Question 7C: Are the asexual propagules - vegetative parts having the capacity to develop into new plants - effectively dispersed to new areas?

Answer: Yes

Outcome: Go to Question 7I

Vegetative parts can move through human activity – excavation, contaminated soil, etc.

Question 7D: Does the plant produce large amounts of viable, cold hardy seeds? For woody species, document the average age the species produces viable seed.

Answer: Yes. ***This information is supplemental and is not part of the flow chart pathway for this risk assessment.***

Seed production of 2.7 million seeds per plant has been reported (Thompson et al. 1987). Welling and Becker (1990) reported an extensive seed bank of 410,000 seeds/m^2 in the top 5 cm of soil.

Question 7E: For species that produce low numbers of viable seeds, do they have a high level of seed/seedling vigor or remain viable for an extended period (seed bank)?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 7F: Is the plant self-fertile?

Answer: No. ***This information is supplemental and is not part of the flow chart pathway for this risk assessment.***

Purple loosestrife is cross pollinated by insects (Munger 2002).

Question 7G: Are sexual propagules – viable seeds – effectively dispersed to new areas? List and consider all vectors.

Answer: Yes. ***This information is supplemental and is not part of the flow chart pathway for this risk assessment.***

Means of dispersal likely largely by floating seedlings and ungerminated seeds. Also likely to spread in mud adhering to wildlife, livestock, treads of vehicles, equipment, and other activities that move soil. May spread by ingestion of seeds by birds (Thompson et a. 1987). Seeds may also spread by wind (Mal et al. 1997), particularly during the winter.

Question 7H: Can the species hybridize with native species (or other introduced species) and produce viable seed and fertile offspring in the absence of human intervention?

Answer: Possible. ***This information is supplemental and is not part of the flow chart pathway for this risk assessment.***

Minnesota has a native *Lythrum*, winged loosestrife (*Lythrum alatum*). Houghton-Thompson et al. (2005) found some evidence that a small fraction of *L. salicaria* and *L. alatum* may have hybridized in Eastern North America.

Question 7I: Are there natural controls (species native to Minnesota) which have been documented to effectively prevent the spread of the species in question?

Answer: No

Outcome: Go to Box 8

Surveys conducted in the northeastern U.S. found 59 species of phytophagus insects on purple loosestrife, but none reduced populations or caused appreciable damage (Hight 1990).

There are widely distributed introduced (non-native) biocontrol insects (the leaf-feeding beetles *Galerucella calmariensis* and *Galerucella pusilla*) that are providing some control (Invasive Species Program 2012). Long term biocontrol studies can vary site to site and have a variety of outcomes, and reasons for this include site soil fertility, tidal flooding, insufficient time for beetle establishment, and insufficient beetle densities at the time of release (McAvoy 2016, St. Louis et al 2020). However, a 20-year monitoring study in New York to document stem densities following insect releases observed consistent sustained suppression of purple loosestrife plants from the biocontrol insects (Blossey et al. 2024). Releases of biocontrol insects in Minnesota began after the species were approved for release in the United States in 1991 (Minnesota Department of Natural Resources 2025b).

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025b) maintains an active educational program on purple loosestrife biocontrol insects. They state:

- "The long-term objective of biological control is to reduce the abundance of purple loosestrife in wetland habitats throughout Minnesota. Biological control, if effective, will reduce the impact of purple loosestrife on wetland flora and fauna. Purple loosestrife will not be eradicated from most wetlands where it presently occurs, but its abundance can be significantly reduced so that it is only a small component of the plant community, not a dominant one. Leaf-eating beetles released since 1992 have established reproducing populations at more than 90% of the sites visited. They have also dispersed from release sites and established at new sites. Leaf-eating beetles have been found on unmanaged purple loosestrife infestations more than 12 miles away from where they were released."
- "When leaf-eating beetles successfully limit the abundance of a purple-loosestrife infestation, the beetles disperse to sites with higher abundances of the plant. So, to continue to limit purple loosestrife in Minnesota, managers and volunteers work to facilitate beetle dispersal to purple loosestrife sites without established beetle populations."

There are two additional species that have been released for purple loosestrife biocontrol, but they are not as widespread in Minnesota as the *Galerucella* beetles. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025) states: "*Hylobius transversovittatus* is a root-boring weevil that deposits its eggs in the lower stem of purple loosestrife plants. Once hatched, the larvae feed on the root tissue, destroying the plant's nutrient source for leaf development, which in turn leads to the complete destruction of mature plants. The flower-feeding weevil, *Nanophyes marmoratus*, severely reduces seed production of purple loosestrife."

Question 7J: Was the answer to Question 7A (Are there cultivars that differ in reproductive properties from the original species) "Yes"?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Box 8:

Does the species pose significant human or livestock concerns or have the potential to significantly harm agricultural production, native ecosystems, or managed landscapes?

Question 8A: Does the plant have toxic qualities, or other detrimental qualities, that pose a significant risk to livestock, wildlife, or people?

Answer: No

Outcome: Question 8B

No information found on purple loosestrife as a risk to livestock or people.

Blossey et al. (2001) cite a number of studies relating to reduction of high-quality bird habitat due to purple loosestrife (Rawinski and Maleki 1984, Whitt et al. 1999, Hickey 1997, Hickey and Malecki 1997, Lor 2000). Studies have found a reduction in the development and survival rate of American toad (*Bufo americanus*) tadpoles due to purple loosestrife (Maerz et al. 2005, Brown et al. 2006). Lavoie (2010) cites 10 studies of impacts of purple loosestrife on bird species; four showed negative impacts, one showed positive impact, and five had no impact.

Question 8B: Does, or could, the plant cause significant financial losses associated with decreased yields, reduced crop quality, or increased production costs?

Answer: No
Outcome: Go to Question 8C
When purple loosestrife is present in pastures it has been found to reduce the forage value to livestock (Thompson et al. 1987). No reports of significant financial losses to crops were found.

Question 8C: Can the plant aggressively displace native species through competition (including allelopathic effects)?

Answer: Yes
Outcome: Go to Box 9
Blossey et al. (2001) cite a number of studies relating to displacement of native species and reduction in plant biodiversity, including:

- Reduction in native plant species (Gabor et al. 1996)
- Domination of seed bank (Welling and Becker 1990)
- Superior competitive ability of purple loosestrife (Weiher et al. 1996)
- Replacement of cattail (*Typha*) (Mal et al. 1996, Mal et al. 1997, Weiher et al. 1996, Weihe and Neely 1997)
- Reduction in pollination and seed set of native plant *Lythrum alatum* (Brown 1999)

Lavoie (2010) cites 20 studies of impacts of purple loosestrife on plant species: eight showed negative impacts, seven had no impact, four had null or negative impacts, and one had null or positive impacts.

Question 8D: Can the plant hybridize with native species resulting in a modified gene pool and potentially negative impacts on native populations?

Answer: Possible. ***This information is supplemental and is not part of the flow chart pathway for this risk assessment.***
Minnesota has a native *Lythrum*, winged loosestrife (*Lythrum alatum*). Houghton-Thompson et al. (2005) found some evidence that a small fraction of *L. salicaria* and *L. alatum* may have hybridized in Eastern North America.

Question 8E: Does the plant have the potential to change native ecosystems (adds a vegetative layer, affects ground or surface water levels, etc.)?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 8F: Does the plant have the potential to introduce or harbor another pest or serve as an alternate host?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Box 9:

Does the species have clearly defined benefits that outweigh associated negative impacts?

Question 9A: Is the plant currently being used or produced and/or sold in Minnesota or native to Minnesota?

Answer: No
Outcome: Go to Box 10
Lythrum salicaria and *Lythrum virgatum* (both are called purple loosestrife) are prohibited noxious weeds on the control list and therefore producing or selling plants is prohibited (Minnesota Department of Agriculture 2025). Additionally, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025a) also regulates purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*, *Lythrum virgatum*, or any variety, hybrid, or cultivar thereof) as prohibited invasive species which means it is unlawful (a misdemeanor) to possess, import, purchase, transport or introduce this species except under a permit for disposal, control, research or education.

Question 9B: Is the plant an introduced species and can its spread be effectively and easily prevented or controlled, or its negative impacts minimized, through carefully designed and executed management practices?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 9C: Is the plant native to Minnesota?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 9D: Is a non-invasive, alternative plant material or cultivar commercially available that could serve the same purpose as the plant of concern?

Answer: ***This information is supplemental and is not part of the flow chart pathway for this risk assessment.***
The Midwest Invasive Plant Network (2025) landscape alternatives for invasive plants brochure lists the native species *Asclepias incarnata* (swamp milkweed), native *Liatris* species (blazing stars), *Vernonia fasciculata* (prairie ironweed), and *Lobelia cardinalis* (cardinal flower) as alternatives.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025e) lists fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*) and blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*) as two native lookalike species.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (2025) lists Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*), great blue lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica),* and swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) as native alternatives to purple loosestrife.

Question 9E: Does the plant benefit Minnesota to a greater extent than the negative impacts identified at Box #8?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question

Box 10:

Should the species be regulated as Prohibited/Eradicate, Prohibited/Control, or Restricted Noxious Weed?

Question 10A: Is the plant currently established in Minnesota?

Answer: Yes
Outcome: Go to Question 10D
Purple loosestrife has been documented in Minnesota since the 1920s (Skinner et al. 1994). The Minnesota Legislature established the Purple Loosestrife Program in 1987 to protect the state's wetlands, lakeshores, and streams (Skinner et al. 1994).

Question 10B: Would prohibiting this species in trade prevent the likelihood of introduction and/or establishment?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 10C: Does this risk assessment support this species being a top priority for statewide eradication if found in the state?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 10D: Does the plant pose a serious human health threat?

Answer: No
Outcome: Go to Question 10F
No serious human health threats documented.

Question 10E: Is the health threat posed by the plant serious enough, and is the plant distribution sufficiently small enough to be manageable, and are management tools available and effective enough to justify listing as Prohibited / Eradicate species?

Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Question 10F: Is the plant known to cause significant ecological or economic harm and can the plant be reliably <u>eradicated</u> (entire plant) on a statewide basis using existing practices and available resources considering the distribution, reproductive biology and potential for spread?

- *For distribution, note if the distribution is well documented, the number and acreage of known infestations and how widespread they are in the state. Note if there are infestations in border areas.*
- *For reproductive biology, note if there are reproductive biology factors that make the plant easier to control and eradication more likely (for example, long pre-reproductive period, self-incompatible pollination, short-lived seed bank).*
- *For potential for spread and re-invasion of controlled areas, note its potential to spread beyond places where it is being controlled such as deliberate planting by people, wildlife vectors, re-infestation from border states, or other factors that facilitate spread.*
- *For known management tools, note what management tools are available, potential non-target impacts, and the reasonableness of state management or mandating that landowners throughout the state use the management tools to eradicate or control existing plants.*

- *For available resources, consider the capacity of state and local personnel and availability of funding to respond to new and existing infestations.*

Answer: No

Outcome: Go to Question 10G

Purple loosestrife is too widespread to be eradicated on a statewide level.

Distribution: Purple loosestrife has been well documented in Minnesota for decades. It occurs in nearly every county in the state and in the surrounding states. A robust mapping and monitoring program began in the 1980s.

Reproductive biology: it spreads both vegetatively and by seed, making eradication unlikely.

Potential spread: Though resurgence of populations is possible in areas where populations were diminished, the establishment of biocontrol agents and the continued success of those agents to maintain plant population levels at manageable levels indicates that purple loosestrife does not pose the risk of spreading that it once did.

Management tools: Biocontrol is the most effective management tool available. Biocontrol monitoring and collection can be done by many organizations and individuals to reestablish biocontrol populations in areas where they may be diminished.

A study of the effects of the herbicide Imazapyr on purple loosestrife showed that while initial treatments decreased purple loosestrife populations after one year, purple loosestrife rebounded in the second growing season after treatment (Caven and Wiese 2024). As Caven and Wiese (2024) state, “One-time Imazapyr treatments may provide purple loosestrife the opportunity to expand into previously uncolonized suitable habitats as the species is disturbance-tolerant, can be early successional, and generally outcompetes less tolerant native species for space after artificial disturbances like non-selective herbicide application”.

Question 10G: Is the plant known to cause significant ecological or economic harm and can the plant be reliably <u>controlled</u> to limit spread on a statewide basis using existing practices and available resources? Would the economic impacts or other hardships incurred in implementing control measures be reasonable considering any ongoing or potential future increase of ecological or economic harm?

- *Also consider all bullet points listed under 10F when evaluating 10G*

Answer: No

Outcome: Go to Question 10H

Purple loosestrife biocontrol has been a national success story. Blossey et al. (2024) conducted a long-term monitoring study to document stem densities following insect releases and observed consistent sustained suppression of purple loosestrife plants from the biocontrol insects. There is also evidence that purple loosestrife biocontrol can result in native plant recovery (Endriss et al. 2022). The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025b) notes that biocontrol *Galerucella* beetles have been extensively released in Minnesota since 1997 and have been documented 12 miles away from release locations. This indicates that the insects are widespread in the state.

Biological control has become the dominant method of purple loosestrife control in Minnesota. In the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025c) 2024 annual report, out of the 422 aquatic plant management permits issued in 2024, only one was for purple loosestrife. In the 2012 annual report (Minnesota

Department of Natural Resources 2012), they documented that before biocontrol became available there were much higher levels of herbicide treatments, such as 200 sites in 1991 and 227 sites in 1992.

With biocontrol insects as the dominant method of purple loosestrife control in Minnesota and with the insects being widespread and mobile, it poses the question of whether it is appropriate to keep purple loosestrife on the Prohibited-Control list.

While populations of purple loosestrife and the biocontrol insects fluctuate over time, Minnesota may have reached the point where it is no longer necessary to have the species as a Prohibited-Control noxious weed if the state is not expecting landowners to take active steps such as mowing or applying herbicides. Biocontrol has generally been accepted as a control mechanism for fulfilling the noxious weed law prohibited-control requirements. It is not clear if the listing as a Prohibited-Control noxious weed has forced more people to release biocontrol insects than would have otherwise voluntarily or if it would cause more people to release insects in the future.

Question 10H: Would prohibiting this species in trade have any significant or measurable impact to limit or reduce the existing populations or future spread of the species in Minnesota?

Answer: Yes

Outcome: LIST THE PLANT AS A RESTRICTED NOXIOUS WEED

Though cultivars are unlikely to become available, they were available in the trade before widespread prohibition from sale was enacted in many states. Because of the success of the biocontrol insects on keeping purple loosestrife populations manageable, and the long-term documented success of the biocontrol program, purple loosestrife is a good species to keep out of the nursery trade and move into the Restricted category.

Note that purple loosestrife is also regulated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (2025a) as a Prohibited Invasive Species. That regulation means it is unlawful (a misdemeanor) to possess, import, purchase, transport, or introduce purple loosestrife except under a permit for disposal, control, research, or education. The Department of Natural Resources regulation covers *Lythrum salicaria*, *Lythrum virgatum*, or any variety, hybrid, or cultivar thereof. A Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Prohibited Invasive Species and a Minnesota Department of Agriculture Restricted Noxious Weed have essentially the same limitations on the species.

It may be helpful to continue to keep purple loosestrife regulated by both the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has a nursery inspection program who would be the ones that would be most likely to encounter purple loosestrife being sold in trade. Moving the species to the Restricted category continues to keep it a regulated species, and under the purview of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Nursery Inspection program. The Department of Agriculture also educates county agricultural inspectors on the noxious weed list, so maintaining purple loosestrife as a noxious weed maintains attention on it from the county agricultural inspector side. Additionally, keeping it on the noxious weed list may help organizations seeking grant funding for managing purple loosestrife.

Conversely, there is an argument to reduce redundancy and only have the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regulate purple loosestrife. Having only one agency regulate purple loosestrife would also simplify applying for purple loosestrife permits as only one agency would need to be involved. It would also shorten the length of the noxious weed list allowing focus on other priority species.

Question 10I: Are there any other measures that could be put in place as Special Regulations which could mitigate the impact of the species within Minnesota?
Outcome: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Box 11:

The species is being proposed to be designated as a Specially Regulated Plant. What are the specific regulations proposed?

Answer: Decision tree does not direct to this question.

Final outcomes of risk assessment (2025)

NWAC Listing Subcommittee

Outcome: Change designation from prohibited control to restricted noxious weed.
Comments:

NWAC Full Committee

Outcome: Remain a prohibited control noxious weed.
Comments: The vote on 12/16/25 was a tie with 9 votes in favor of the recommendation, 9 against and 1 abstained.

MDA Commissioner

Outcome: Remain a prohibited control noxious weed.
Comments: No comments.

Risk Assessment Current Summary (08-04-2025)

- Purple loosestrife displaces native species and reduces plant biodiversity.
- Biocontrol is the most effective management tool available. Releases of purple loosestrife biological control insects began in 1992. Biocontrol monitoring and collection can be done by many organizations and individuals to reestablish biocontrol populations in areas where they may be diminished.
- After more than 30 years of biological control releases, the biocontrol insects are widespread in Minnesota. Biocontrol is now the dominant management tool for purple loosestrife.
- As of this writing, purple loosestrife is regulated by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture as a Prohibited Control Noxious Weed and by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as a Prohibited Invasive Species.
- Since the biocontrol insects are widespread in the state, and they are the main control action used for purple loosestrife to fulfill the Prohibited-Control regulations, it may be appropriate to change the noxious weed regulatory status for purple loosestrife to Restricted Noxious Weed.

Final outcomes of risk assessment (2013)

NWAC Listing Subcommittee

Outcome: List as a Restricted Noxious Weed
Comments: First review – 06/20/2013, Final Review 08/12/2013

This species was discussed in great length as to the validity of continued listing as a Prohibited Noxious Weed. Although counties and townships commented that not many enforcement issues occur for purple loosestrife on private lands, it still remains an issue in wet ditches and private lands adjoining public waterways.

The issue of biological control agents was discussed and there was concern that moving to the Restricted List would decrease the efficacy of the biocontrol program statewide. That said, the recommendation went through to the full committee to consider reclassifying as a Restricted Noxious Weed.

NWAC Full Committee

Outcome: Vote 3 - 9 to rejecting the Listing Subcommittee's recommendation and to continue listing as a Prohibited-Control Species
Comments: Reviewed 12/28/2013. Many members of the group voiced concern over reclassification of this species. Successful biocontrol releases and the advent of cost efficient and more effective herbicides. Several member representatives mentioned that they felt both biological controls and herbicide treatments effectively manage purple loosestrife when and where it becomes problematic.

MDA Commissioner

Outcome: Accepted NWAC's Recommendation to remain as a Prohibited-Control species
Comments: Reviewed 02_24/2014

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