New York State Giant Hogweed Control Program

Giant Hogweed Control

Giant hogweed is an invasive plant with sap capable of causing injury to humans. In addition to being a public health hazard, giant hogweed plants decrease plant diversity and can lead to soil erosion. Giant hogweed plants are located in a variety of settings (e.g. riparian areas, fields, yards, forests). Control of these plants is very manageable when the plant numbers are few but a site can quickly grow from a few plants to many within a short time period. NYSDEC Forest Health & Protection’s giant hogweed control project assists landowners, town, county and state highway departments by controlling the giant hogweed on their properties for them or providing training to them on how to control it themselves. More information about giant hogweed and DEC’s statewide control program can be found online at http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html.

Four one-person manual control crews and four two-person herbicide control crews within the Division of Lands & Forests, Forest Health and Protection, will be located out of several possible Regional DEC offices in Regions 7, 8 and 9 (Allegany, Avon, Buffalo, Cortland, Depew, Savannah). The position’s duties involve fieldwork collecting information on and implementing control of giant hogweed within central and western NY. As a member of a team, each crew member will be responsible for assisting with the implementation of a giant hogweed control strategy on public and private lands. Appropriate safety equipment and safety training will be provided at the outset of employment.

Principal Duties

- Contact property owners to obtain permission to enter private property.
- Locate specific control sites using maps and GIS products.
- Implement manual control of giant hogweed. This is a labor intensive process and involves using a shovel to cut the plant taproot 5 inches below ground level. Manual crew sites may contain up to 400 plants. Herbicide crews will use manual control cutting in sensitive portions of larger sites and also at small sites with less than 100 plants.
- Removal and safe disposal of all giant hogweed flower heads found. Cut and hold pruners will be provided.
- Scout each site for additional giant hogweed plants within a 500 square foot radius of the known, visible giant hogweed plants.
- Conduct field surveys with the use of a hand-held GPS and mobile mapping unit, and plot giant hogweed location polygons and records on digital maps.
- Acquire and inventory digital photographs of specific control sites to monitor yearly progress.
• Maintain accurate records of the control activities on each site.
• Collect additional data about each site.
• Herbicide crews will control giant hogweed using Accord XRT II at sites ranging from 0.6 acres to 5.5 acres in size while working under supervision of a certified commercial pesticide applicator. Herbicide will be applied using an appropriate backpack sprayer and nozzle to minimize non-target effects, or other sprayer if more appropriate for the site, according to the product label and manufacturer’s safety instructions. The recommended manufacturer’s dose will be used and label instructions followed. All necessary equipment and herbicide will be provided. Landowners will need to be notified prior to herbicide application and provided with a copy of the herbicide label.

Required knowledge and skills
• Knowledge of accepted safety practices by which to prevent injury to self, staff and public and/or private property.
• Ability to identify giant hogweed and associated plants with minimal training.
• Skill in using and understanding maps, GPS, GIS and digital cameras to assist in locating and recording survey sites.
• Physical ability to dig, cut and/or spray hogweed roots for four months!
• Ability to interact well with the public and provide accurate information about giant hogweed to interested persons.
• Herbicide crews:
  o NY State Certified Pesticide Technician, certification categories 3a and/or category 2 preferred.
  o Knowledge of pesticide application rules and regulations according to Part 325 of 6 NYCRR and Article 33 of the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL).
  o Ability to follow direction regarding safe pesticide application. Prior experience a plus.

Minimum Qualifications
• Must be physically able to perform the duties assigned.
• Candidates must possess a valid New York State driver’s license at the time of appointment, or demonstrate their ability to meet the transportation needs of the job.

Duration of Employment
The duration of employment will be four consecutive months with a preferred starting date of April 20, 2015. Successful applicants will be required to take a 3-day training course designed and presented by the Division of Lands & Forest in Albany & New Paltz. This course will be included in the duration of employment.

Primary Work Location
Employees will be assigned a primary work location (Allegany, Avon, Cortland, Reinstein Woods (Depew), or Savannah) that is geographically convenient to the giant hogweed sites they will be visiting. Room and board is the responsibility of the employee. Accommodation and living expenses for work outside the primary area will be reimbursed at the standard State rates prescribed for the area.
**Standard Work Week & Salary**
The standard workweek runs from Thursday to Wednesday, ten hours per day, four days per week. Overtime must be approved in advance and is paid for time worked over forty hours. The compensation rate as of April 1, 2015 is $13.82 per hour.

**To Apply**
Applicants should supply a letter of intent, resume, and contact information for three professional references to Naja Kraus at naja.kraus@dec.ny.gov or 845-255-3414 (Fax). Please note which position you are applying for (manual and/or herbicide) and which office locations you are able to work out of. First review of applications to begin March 4th.

Successful applicants will need to complete NYSDEC’s Employment Application Form (HR-1), available at any DEC Office or at the Department’s web site at [http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/38596.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/38596.html).

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is an equal opportunity employer.