Cow Parsnip

*Heracleum lanatum*  
Parsley Family

**Key identifying traits**
- Large, 6-12” across, leaves have serrated edges and are sometimes hairy
- Flower stalks can grow 2-8’ tall
- Stems are somewhat hairy and grooved
- Flowers are white to a cream color and grow in 5-petal umbels at the top of the stalks; flower clusters are flat

**Biology and ecology**
- A perennial plant spreading by seeds
- It forms a low growing rosette and does not flower in the first year
- It is has a large, fleshy taproot
- Cow parsnip is a native species
- Grows in disturbed areas, along roadways, and often found growing along waterways. It also grows in mountainous regions.

**Control**

*Prevention* - Learn to identify plants; start monitoring early in the season

*Biological* - No known biological control in our area

*Cultural* - Plant competitive grass or other crop

*Mechanical* - Cutting the plants will slow it down but it will regrow. Digging plants out is effective but labor intensive due to the large taproot

*Chemical* - Cow parsnip is not often thought of as a problem weed so there is not any information for control in the PNW Weed Management handbook. Weed board personnel has treated a small area using dicamba plus 2,4-D with fairly good success if treated before it gets too big

**Where found** - Scattered areas throughout Stevens County mostly seen close to streams and creeks from the valley floor up into the mountains.