



NEWS

From the Gifford Pinchot National Forest
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Gifford Pinchot National Forest and Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Release Invasive Plant Environmental Impact Statement

VANCOUVER, WA – In response to spreading invasive plant populations, Forest Service officials have approved invasive plant treatments targeting species on more than 2,350 acres of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, and 360 acres on the Washington State side of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area over the next five to 10 years. The Record of Decision and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Site-Specific Invasive Plant Treatment Project and Forest Plan Amendment has been released and is now available.

"The Forest Service is working with our county and state partners to stop the spread of noxious weeds marching across all of our lands," said Lynn Burditt, Acting Forest Supervisor, Gifford Pinchot National Forest. "The work invested in this project will give us the necessary tools to treat this growing problem," she added.

Invasive plant populations have increased across the Pacific Northwest, and are threatening to permanently degrade thousands of acres of fish and wildlife habitat, harm rare and endangered plants and animal habitat, reduce water quality and watershed health, affect habitat for cultural plants, and adversely impact a wide variety of other resource values.

Among the measures taken in the plan is the implementation of regional policies including prevention practices such as cleaning heavy equipment prior to entering National Forest land, using weed-free straw and mulch, using pelletized or certified weed free feed, and restoration of disturbed forest areas.

To combat the invasive species that have already taken hold, a variety of manual and mechanical methods will be used. The use of herbicides will be used, but their use will primarily be focused on the plants that cannot be treated effectively using other methods.

The invasive species in this treatment project will target knapweeds, hawkweeds, knotweeds, bull thistle, herb Robert, reed canary grass, and many other invasive plants.

There is a 45-day appeal period that began April 14, 2008. Appeals must be filed with the Regional Forester of the Northwestern Region in Portland, Ore. The final environmental impact statement and record of decision for the project is available online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/gpnf>. Printed or CD copies may be requested by calling Carol Chandler at (360) 891-5106, or emailing her at cachandler@fs.fed.us.

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