

USDA Forest Service Update

July 2008



SUBJECT: Invasive Species Management Program

Summary: The Forest Service works extensively with public and private partners (both on and off National Forests), and the member agencies of the National Invasive Species Council to address invasive species problems within our purview and jurisdiction. The long-term vision for the invasive species program is to interrupt the increasing trend, and begin to reduce the impacts and spread of invasive species across the National Forest System and other public and private lands and waters using a number of integrated techniques. Invasive species management activities across the National Forest System address a wide range of plant, pathogen, vertebrate, and invertebrate invasive species which threaten our agency mission and the health of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and associated native fish and wildlife. Program expansion and funding emphasis has moved the agency closer to reaching the program goal identified in the *National Strategy and Implementation Plan for Invasive Species Management*.

Program Overview: Forest Service activities to address a wide range of plant, pathogen, vertebrate, and invertebrate invasive species are guided by the *National Strategy*, an aggressive approach to manage invasive species using our research and management capabilities, including our land management abilities across the National Forest System. The *National Strategy* is built around 4 program elements: 1) Prevention, 2) Early Detection and Rapid Response, 3) Control and Management, and 4) Restoration and Rehabilitation. The long-term vision for the invasive species program is to interrupt increasing trends and reduce the impact and spread of all invasive species across the National Forest System lands and help prevent and control infestations impacting aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems throughout the country. In addition, the Forest Service is expanding its partnership activities to work in multiple jurisdictions and address problems in a holistic, ecosystem-based manner across the landscape, including the building of stronger partnerships between, agricultural organizations, forestry organizations, and fish and wildlife management organizations, as well as with volunteer organizations and the private sector.

Highlights of the Invasive Species Management Program - 2008

- Completing the draft **Invasive Species Management Policy** for internal review in FY2008. This policy will be part of the Forest Service Manual and accompanying Forest Service Handbook for National Forests and Grasslands. This effort was identified in the *National Strategy* as a priority action.
- In cooperation with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Wildlife Forever-Inc., the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and many other partners, the Forest Service continues to expand invasive species management awareness and education activities, including educational videos, public service announcements, billboards and kiosks, television and radio programs, and websites to help spread the word to target audiences. In CY2008, the Forest Service will complete the production of a DVD on invasive species best management practices **which targets hunters and anglers, and fish and wildlife agencies.**
- Cooperating with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Weed Science Society of America, Wildlife Forever, Inc., and others to **develop and jointly support a partnership position** to raise public awareness for action against invasive species and support the activities of the supporting partners.

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