



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Chattahoochee-Oconee  
National Forests  
Blue Ridge Ranger District

P.O. Box 9  
1881 Highway 515  
Blairsville, GA 30514  
(706) 745-6928

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**File Code:** 1950/2080  
**Date:** October 3, 2008

Dear Forest User,

The Forest Service is seeking comment on the Non-Native Invasive (NNIS) Species Treatment Project Environmental Assessment (EA). This project is designed as an adaptive management approach to control or eradicate NNIS across the approximately 172,297 acres of the Conasauga Ranger District and across the approximately 301,867 acres of the Blue Ridge District, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests. This includes parts of Catoosa, Chattooga, Dawson, Floyd, Fannin, Gordon, Gilmer, Lumpkin, Murray, Towns, Union, Walker, and Whitfield Counties in North Georgia.

NNIS are rapidly spreading through the natural habitats across the Districts, displacing native plants, and disrupting natural ecosystem processes. The purpose of the proposal is to reduce or eliminate impacts from NNIS populations in order to protect the integrity of natural plant communities.

The preferred alternative for this project is the proposed action, which would allow for the use of the following on an annual basis on each District:

- 150 acres of manual or mechanical methods such as hand-pulling, cutting, and mowing,
- 30 acres of spot treatments using cultural methods such as fire and mulching, and
- 350 acres of herbicide treatments.

NNIS treatment would be prioritized based on those areas which pose the greatest threat to biodiversity and native plant communities. The EA provides a more detailed description of the proposal.

The 30-day comment period will begin October 14, 2008 and will end thirty days later on November 7, 2008. The EA is available online for review at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/conf/sopa/forest-health-nepa.htm>

Please review the EA and respond with comments if you have specific concerns, suggestions, or recommendations.

Please submit written comments to:

USDA Forest Service, Attn: Ruth Stokes  
3941 Highway 76,  
Chatsworth, GA 30705



You may send comments by fax at (706) 695-1872 or provide comments by telephone at (706) 695-6736 x 105. Oral or hand-delivered comments must be received within our normal business hours of Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm. Comments may be mailed electronically in a common digital format to [rbstokes@fs.fed.us](mailto:rbstokes@fs.fed.us).

Your comments should contain the following information:

- Your name, address, and (if possible) telephone number,
- The project name (**Non-native Invasive Species Treatment Project**), and
- Specific facts or comments along with supporting reasons that you believe we should consider in reaching a decision.

Only those who submit timely and substantial comments will have standing to appeal. For appeal eligibility, individuals or representative from organizations submitting substantive comments must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request. This 30-day comment period is being conducted pursuant to 36 CFR 215.5.

For additional information, please call Ruth Stokes at the Conasauga Ranger District (706) 695-6736 x 105, or Rachele Powell at the Blue Ridge Ranger District at 706-745-6928 x 121.

Thank you for your time and interest in the Conasauga and Blue Ridge Ranger Districts.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Alan Polk*  
ALAN POLK  
Blue Ridge District Ranger

*/s/ Michele H. Jones*  
MICHELE H. JONES  
Conasauga District Ranger