

News Release

USDA Forest Service
Pacific Northwest Region
PO Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208-3623



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USDA Forest Service seeks comments on invasive weed plan

PORTLAND, August 27, 2004 - The Pacific Northwest Region has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) addressing the growing problems caused by invasive plants in National Forests. When completed, this EIS will amend all Forest Plans to improve invasive plant prevention and provide new tools to tackle more than 420,000 acres infested with yellow star thistle, leafy spurge, and Japanese knotweed. Public comments on the DEIS are requested by November 24, 2004, after which they will be analyzed, leading to a Final EIS and Record of Decision to be issued next Spring.

The EIS team will host eight open houses throughout the Region. [See attached schedule for details]. Members of the team will be available to provide information on the DEIS, answer questions and accept comments from the public.

The "biological wildfire" of non-native invasive plants impacts ecosystems in every National Forest in the Pacific Northwest, from rare plant bogs of the Olympic peninsula to the rugged forested rangelands of Hells Canyon, so a variety of prevention and treatment strategies have been considered. Among the possibilities are: 1) prevention practices (e.g., cleaning equipment or assuring only weed-free hay goes into uninfected areas), and 2) treatment methods including manual treatment (e.g., hand pulling plants), biological controls (insects that feed on undesirable plants), and herbicides.

Most invasive plant species enter North America from Europe or Asia, accidentally or on purpose. Examples of accidental introduction include seeds or plants transported in the ballast of ships, in the fleece and hair of livestock, in clothing, and as contaminants in seed lots. Intentional introductions include medicine, dyes, forage, erosion control, and ornamental plants.

Additional information about the DEIS and the invasive plant problem can be found at www.fs.fed.us/r6/invasiveplant-eis or by contacting Gene Skrine at 503-808-2685. Comments can be submitted by email to: r6_IPEIS@fs.fed.us, or by writing the team at: Invasive Plant Project, USDA Forest Service, PO Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208.

Attachment:

Open Houses-Dates, Times, and Locations

Date	Location
September 16, 2004 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Gresham, Oregon Silver Cloud 11518 NE Glenn Widing Drive Columbia Trail and Columbia Gorge Rooms
September 21, 2004 6:00pm – 9:00 pm	Colville, Washington Spokane Community College 985 S Elm Street Dominion and Monumental Rooms
September 22, 2004 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Wenatchee, Washington, Red Lion 1225 N Wenatchee Ave. Cascade Room
September 23, 2004 6:00pm-9:00pm	Olympia, Washington Olympic NF Supervisors Office 1835 Black Lake Blvd, SW ,Olympia
September 27, 2004 6:00pm-9:00 pm	Medford, Oregon Red Lion 200 N Riverside Douglas Fir Room
September 28, 2004 6:00pm-9:00pm	Lakeview, Oregon Lakeview Interagency Office 1301 South G Street
September 29, 2004 6:00pm-9:00pm	Bend, Oregon Shilo Inn 3105 O.B. Riley Road Sapphire-Emerald Rooms
September 30, 2004 6:00pm-9:00pm	La Grande, Oregon Eastern Oregon University One University Blvd. Rooms 201-203 Hoke Hall