



File Code: 1950

Date: April 14, 2006

Dear Forest User:

The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest invites you to comment on the proposed Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Invasive Plants Treatment project. The Forest proposes to treat approximately 25,000 acres of invasive plants located across the 2.3 million acre National Forest. It is anticipated that approximately 4,000 acres of both existing and newly discovered sites would be treated in any year. The proposed treatment methods include: manual pulling or use of hand tools, use of mechanical hand tools, herbicide, cultural methods such as grazing or mulching, and biological controls. The method used would depend on resource protection concerns for a given site. A detailed project description is enclosed.

The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest has been treating invasive plants under direction found in the 1992 decision implementing the *Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Environmental Assessment for the Management of Noxious Weeds and Forest Plan Amendment 4* (1992 EA) and a 1994 *Wallowa-Whitman Management of Noxious Weeds Environmental Analysis* (1994 EA).

Ten years of monitoring has shown an increase in invasive plant populations and target invasive plant species. Though some of the initial invasive plant sites identified in the 1992 and 1994 EAs have been successfully contained or controlled, many new sites have appeared, and existing sites have expanded in size. This, along with the identification of 19 new invasive species, has limited the application and effectiveness of the two EAs.

In 2005, the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Region completed and implemented the *Pacific Northwest Region Invasive Plant Program FEIS* providing new direction and updating the herbicides that would be permitted for use in the Region. The new herbicides offer many advantages over the more limited set allowed previously, including greater selectivity, less harm to desired vegetation, reduced application rates, and lower toxicity to animals and people. The proposed treatments will be guided by this FEIS. The most useful comments to developing or refining the proposed action would be site specific concerns and those that can help us develop treatments that would be responsive to our goal to control, contain, or eradicate invasive plants as well as being cost effective. Prevention measures have already been built into the Regional Invasive Plant EIS and will be implemented with all actions occurring on the Forest. The purpose of this proposed action is to begin treatments on known invasive plant sites and provide a mechanism to respond rapidly when new infestations are discovered.

The Forest Supervisor will make the following decisions based on the interdisciplinary analysis:

- Whether to select the proposed invasive plant treatments with any modifications from public scoping or comments or as described in an alternative.
- What mitigation measures are needed.
- What monitoring is required.



**Instructions for making comments:**

We want to be aware of and responsive to issues, comments, or concerns you may have specific to this project. Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted until **May 17, 2006**. Written comments should be submitted to: Steven Ellis, Forest Supervisor, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, 1550 Dewey Avenue, Baker City, OR 97814. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Comments can be faxed to 541-523-1315. Electronic comments should be submitted as part of the actual e-mail message or as an attachment in Microsoft Word, rich text format, or portable document format only and sent to [comments-pacificnorthwest-wallowa-whitman@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-pacificnorthwest-wallowa-whitman@fs.fed.us). If you choose to contact us by phone, the number is 541-523-1385.

Additional information including treatment strategies, invasive plant sites, and proposed prescriptions can be viewed at [www.fs.fed.us/r6/w-w/projects](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/w-w/projects). Project maps or related information will be available upon request on CD in Adobe reader format and will be available by contacting Mitchel Bulthuis, P.O. Box 907, 1550 Dewey Ave., Baker City, OR 97814, phone 541-523-1385, or e-mail [mbulthuis@fs.fed.us](mailto:mbulthuis@fs.fed.us).

Project maps in paper format are available for viewing at:

- Whitman Unit, Baker Office, 3285 11th St., Baker City, OR 97814
- Wallowa Mountains Visitor Center, 88401 Hwy 82, Enterprise, OR 97828
- La Grande Ranger District, 3502 Hwy 30, La Grande, OR 97850
- Hells Canyon NRA Clarkston, 2535 Riverside Dr., Clarkston, WA 99403
- Hells Canyon NRA Riggins, Hwy 95, Riggins, ID 83549

Thank you for taking time to review this project. Your comments, concerns, and observations about this area are important to the development of the final project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Steven A. Ellis*  
STEVEN A. ELLIS  
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure