

# Salmon-Challis National Forest

## North Zone Invasive Species FY2016 Program Accomplishments

### 2016 Season Highlights

The North Zone Invasive Species Program accomplished 3,106 acres of weed inventory and control on the Salmon-Challis National Forest with direct herbicide application on 380 acres. Of this total:

- 824 acres were accomplished along more than 200 miles of system roads zone wide.
- 691 acres and 31 river miles were treated in the Main Salmon River corridor on the North Fork Ranger District.
- 808 acres were treated on Forest Service lands by partner organizations zone wide.

At this rate, it will take 16 years to treat all 50,100 weed-infested acres on the North Zone of the SCNF just once. This number was 9 years in 2015 (5,565 acres accomplished) and 7 ½ years in 2014 (around 6,500 acres accomplished).

### 2016 North Zone Invasive Species Crew

- Program manager, Diane Schuldt
- Two-person 1039 Forest Service crew
- One Youth Employment Program employee

With additional work from:

- Lemhi Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) co-partners
- Four-person Montana Conservation Crew (month of July)



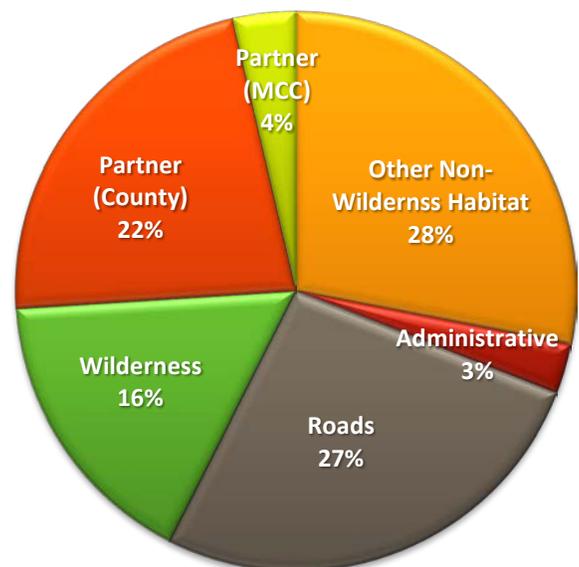
On the way to treat Houndstongue in Silverleads on the North Fork Ranger District.

### FY2016 North Zone Invasive Species Accomplishments

#### Weed Inventory and Control

- The annual Frank Church Wilderness river hitch (main Salmon River) treated 475 acres over 20 river miles in 6 days with a combined 9-person outfitter/Forest Service crew.
- The crew updated inventory and treated weeds in the riparian areas (216 acres) from North Fork to Indianola on the Salmon River.
- One new biological control agent was introduced to the SCNF while another was observed on the North Zone for the first time. Yet another agent was successfully collected for the first time.
- Stock were used to treat 141 acres for weeds in very remote and hard-to-reach areas. Targets included trails, outfitter camps, wildlife habitat, and new weed reports.
- Herbicide output on the only known Orange Hawkweed infestation in Lemhi County declined from 10 gallons in 2014 to 4 gallons in 2015 and just one gallon in 2016.

#### Total Area Treated on the North Zone



## Major project areas included:

- Beaver Creek
- Cramer Basin
- Hot Springs Creek
- Lower Clear Creek
- North Fork to Indianola River Inventory
- Rotational Road Work
- Salmon River Corridor (Wilderness)
- White Horse Basin
- Williams Basin
- Wilson Creek Trail

## Getting Started on FY17

Using funding from a Pulling Together Initiative grant for the Frank Church CWMA, the crew spent two weeks in October treating areas along the Pinto Creek and Stoddard Trails in the wilderness.

- Pinto Creek – Applied 72 gallons of herbicide with backpack sprayers over 2 days on rush skeletonweed and expanded area inventory.
- Stoddard Trail – Treated 5 miles of trail from the trailhead as far back as Color Creek primarily for expanding patches of spotted knapweed.



Treating rush skeletonweed in Pinto Creek in the Frank Church Wilderness.

## 2016 Biological Control Updates



Collecting *Bradyrrhoa* biocontrol agents on the Boise National Forest.

### Rush Skeletonweed Control Agents

- Rush skeletonweed gall mite has been found in an increasing number of locations on SCNF lands though level of impact seems to vary.
- The rush skeletonweed midge was positively identified on the North Zone for the first time. This agent was not released here but likely spread from sites in the Middle Fork.

The crew released a new agent, a root-boring moth (*Bradyrrhoa*), in Lemhi County. Moths were collected on the Boise National Forest and released near Twelvemile Creek.



A first attempt collecting *Agapeta* using black lights on the North Fork Ranger District.

### Spotted Knapweed Control Agents

- The knapweed sulfur moth (*Agapeta*) was successfully collected on the forest for the first time. With few known sources, this is exciting!
- 800 knapweed root weevils (*Cyphocleonus*) were collected on the North Zone and released in the Middle Fork on the South Zone.
- No new root weevil releases this year as established populations are clearly spreading on their own and effect is yet to be seen.

## 2016 Partnership Projects



Guy Armstrong talks to a local fisherman about aquatic invasive species.

### Aquatic Invasives Awareness Outreach

The Lemhi CWMA received RAC funding for a second year to employ local resident Guy Armstrong to talk to Salmon River boaters about the importance of “Clean, Drain, Dry” procedures in preventing the arrival of aquatic invaders like quagga and zebra mussels to the Salmon River system. This year Guy talked to 1,158 people with 354 boats. He reports people continue to be very receptive and happy to see the Forest Service is being proactive on the issue.



Teaching kids about noxious weeds at Shoup Campground for Kid’s Day.

### Weed Awareness and Outreach Activities

- National Invasive Species Awareness Week
- (NISAW) 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Calendar Contest
- Interagency Kid’s Day
- Kid’s Biocontrol Collection Day
- Lemhi CWMA weed awareness fair booth
- Lemhi CWMA fall showcase meeting
- Social media posts with updates on crew activity

### Private Land Owner Efforts

This year the private landowners contributed 1,180 hours of labor to treat a total of 887 acres of private land with herbicide (which is quite beneficial to work on FS lands). Lemhi CWMA spray days this year were held in:

- Carmen Creek
- Tower Creek
- Fourth of July
- Big Flat
- Tendoy
- Leadore
- North Fork
- Salmon

## 2017 Upcoming Projects

- *Outfitter Camps* – The North Zone invasives program is attempting to get to a couple of outfitter camps per year. Because camps are high disturbance areas, they frequently re-infest or play host to new invaders.
- *Continued River Inventory* – The goal for the Salmon River inventory project is to make it from North Fork to Panther Creek. With the work accomplished in 2016, there is still Indianola to Panther Creek to go.
- *Pollinator Habitat Improvement* – In 2014, the president issued a memorandum mandating that agencies address pollinator decline by protecting, improving, and creating vital habitat for bees, butterflies and other pollinators. The North Zone invasive species program will continue to lead this effort in 2017.
- Additional projects on the list include roadside treatments, wilderness work, continued biological control work, wilderness NEPA, and an aerial application master contract.