

# **BHNFAB Invasive Species Subcommittee**

## **Final Report 7-20-05**

### **SUBCOMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT IN THE BLACK HILLS NATIONAL FOREST**

#### **I. Funding**

- A. Establish a line item within the Forest Service budget for invasive species management and control and recommend an appropriate funding level to the President beginning in Fiscal Year 2007.
- B. This line item should be in addition to program activities through K-V (Knutson-Vandenberg) funding, which is tied to timber harvest.

#### **II. Implementation and coordination within the Forest Service**

- A. Create an invasive species coordinator position to provide a unified approach to invasive species management within the Forest.
  - 1. Provide noxious weed information and inventory infestation maps to timber sale purchasers and to OHV (off-highway vehicle) users.
  - 2. Serve as liaison with other agencies, governments and private entities, including county weed and pest management areas, APHIS (Animal Plant Health Inspection Service), timber sale contractors, grazing permittees.
  - 3. Establish and coordinate treatment priorities and expenditure of funds forest-wide, including across district lines.
  - 4. Coordinate education efforts regarding invasive species.
- B. Implement pre-emptive, pre-treatment of infestations prior to ground-disturbing activities on the Forest.
- C. Monitor the long-term efficacy of management and control efforts.
- D. Implement the most current and effective IPM (Integrated Pest Management) strategies.
- E. Establish noxious weed management priorities in Phase II Forest Plan Direction (Please see Appendix A).

#### **III. Cooperation with other agencies and entities**

- A. Form a multi-entity umbrella group for noxious weed control and management in the Black Hills.
  - 1. Work to establish CWMA's (Coordinated Weed Management Areas) forest wide.
  - 2. Actively pursue partnerships between federal, state, local, and private entities to coordinate invasive species management activities across property boundaries.
- B. Promote region-wide coordinated inter-agency research on invasive species and their management.
  - 1. Seek the establishment of a multi-agency research lab in the Black Hills charged with research and development of new and existing technology targeting weed species of concern in the Great Plains and Intermountain West.
  - 2. Potential partners in this effort include USDA Forest Service – Black Hills National Forest, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Agricultural Research Service, APHIS, Land Grant Universities, and other colleges and universities; a successful example of such a program is “TEAM Leafy Spurge” (TEAM = The Ecological Area-wide Management) [for more information on this program, go to: [www.team.ars.usda.gov](http://www.team.ars.usda.gov) ].

## Background:

Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth has identified invasive species as one of the four threats having the greatest impact on the health of our nation's forests and grasslands. Of 2,000 non-native plants found in the United States, 400 are considered invasive species. The U.S. spends \$13 billion annually to prevent and contain the spread of invasives. For all invasives combined, the price tag is \$138 billion annually in total economic damages and associated control costs.

(Source: Forest Service website <http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/four-threats/>)

The term "invasive species" covers a wide range of species, from plants, insects and animals to pathogens and parasites. Described by some as "biological pollutants", invasive species, in the absence of their natural control agents and predators, can create serious ecological damage.

## Definitions:

**Invasive Species** = alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health [Executive Order 13112].

**Alien Species** = with respect to a particular ecosystem, any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem [Executive Order 13112].

**Native Species** = with respect to a particular ecosystem, a species that, other than as a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in that ecosystem [Executive Order 13112].

**Noxious Weed** = a noxious weed possesses the following characteristics:

- (1) The weed is a perennial;
- (2) The weed is capable of unique and rapid spreading and growth under adverse conditions;
- (3) The weed is not controllable without special preventive chemical, mechanical, biological, and cultural practices;
- (4) The weed is capable of materially reducing the production of crops or livestock;
- (5) The weed is capable of decreasing the value of the land; and
- (6) The weed is not native to the state.

[Noxious Weeds in South Dakota, Extension Special Series 34 – SDSU, College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences]

The following definitions were developed as a result of discussion during the Subcommittee's work on invasive species and reflect the need to consider other species classifications in the overall management equation:

**Desired Non-native Species** = species that is equal to or greater than a native species in production or benefits, or that provides production or benefit(s) not provided by a native species.

**Undesired Native Species** = native species whose presence or introduction causes, or is likely to cause, economic or other environmental harm or harm to human health.

Observations by the Invasive Species Subcommittee:

- ◆ The primary focus for control and management of invasive species in the Black Hills is on “noxious weeds” – as identified on state and local noxious weed lists.
- ◆ Many different terms are used to characterize species that are not native (i.e. non-indigenous, exotic, alien, non-native); however, the term “invasive” means that the species is both not native and also causes or is likely to cause harm.
- ◆ Desired non-native species should not be considered invasive.
- ◆ Equal consideration should be given to controlling and managing undesired native species as well.

## **Appendix A**

### **Comments from Aaron Everett regarding Phase II. Implementation and coordination within the Forest Service, E. Establish noxious weed management priorities in Phase II Forest Plan Direction:**

-DELETE Forestwide Objective 231 (Prevent new infestations and manage to confine and reduce established noxious-weed infestations)

-NEW Forestwide Objective (modified from Guideline 4303): Implement a noxious-weed management program that controls new and established infestations using the following priority order:

- a. Protection of Region 2 Sensitive Species and Species of Local Concern occurrences of snails and plants;
- b. Protection of Research Natural Areas and Botanical Areas;
- c. Eradication of new weed species occurrences;
- d. Preventive measures against the spread of existing infestations due to management activities;
- e. Treatment of new areas of infestation from existing weed species;
- f. Treatment of spreading existing infestations due to factors other than management activities;
- g. Treatment to reduce the size of existing infestations.

-RETAIN Forestwide Standard 4301 (For all proposed projects or activities, determine the risk of noxious-weed introduction or spread, and implement appropriate mitigation measures and treatment.)