



File Code: 1950

Date: November 19, 2010

Dear Interested Citizen,

The Chugach National Forest, Seward Ranger District is proposing an integrated approach to control Reed Canary Grass (RCG) at the Russian River Campground area. An integrated approach includes mechanical and chemical methods to control RCG, a highly invasive plant.

BACKGROUND

Recent inventories have shown that on the Kenai Peninsula, RCG has spread from a few deliberate introduction points to approximately 260 populations. Most of these populations are associated with human disturbances, such as boat launches, roads, bridges, and pastures. RCG has, however, spread from these locations along river corridors. Although most Kenai RCG populations are currently small, if their growth and spread is unchecked, the likelihood that they will adversely affect aquatic systems of the Kenai Peninsula is high. In other parts of its range, RCG dominates the shorelines of lakes, rivers, and wetlands, hindering regeneration of woody and herbaceous native plant communities and reducing habitat suitability for some animal species. When RCG encroaches into active channels, as it has in the Pacific Northwest and Great Plains, it can accelerate siltation of rock and sand bars, reduce the active-channel area, and alter fluvial dynamics. These changes to stream geomorphology likely contribute to reduced suitability for species such as least terns, piping plovers, whooping cranes, and salmonids.

Populations of RCG have been located around the Russian River Campground area. Specific areas include the fee station, concessionaire camp area and associated road, the Russian Lakes Trailhead, and the first mile of the Russian Lakes Trail. Due to the proximity to important fisheries in the Russian River, these populations of RCG are a high priority for eradication.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed treatments would vary depending on size of population and surrounding vegetation. Very small RCG populations (1-5 plants), would be treated by digging them out by their roots with a spade. The RCG root and rhizome network is dense but shallow (< 30 cm). Larger populations (generally less than 100 sq m) may be treatable by mowing and covering with opaque tarps for several growing seasons. To avoid unsightly tarps and risk of tampering, this treatment would only occur in areas with lower levels of human activity. Large populations would also be treated with herbicides such as glyphosate, which is widely used for treating invasive species in natural areas because of its low persistence and low toxicity to humans, fish and wildlife. Glyphosate is a non-selective herbicide that causes the greatest mortality in



perennials when it is translocated with carbon (produced in the leaves) to the roots and rhizomes. Use of herbicide has been found to be a very effective means of controlling RCG.

The proposed activities fall within a category of actions established by the Chief of the Forest Service which normally do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment and therefore, may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment. This category of action is identified in Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30, Section 31.12, (Categories of Actions for Which a Project or Case File and Decision Memo are Not Required), #5d (Repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities; Applying registered pesticides for rodent or vegetation control).

COMMENTS

We are interested in your thoughts and ideas on this proposed project. We would like to know of any issues that you can identify as important to consider during this analysis. If you wish to comment, please mail or e-mail written comments to:

Glacier Ranger District
Attn: Betty Charnon, Reed Canary Grass Control Project
P.O. Box 129
Girdwood, AK 99587
bcharnon@fs.fed.us

Although comments will be accepted at any time, they will be most useful if submitted by **December 30, 2010**. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including your name and address, will be part of the public record and available for public inspection.

For additional information, please contact Betty Charnon at (907) 754-2326. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Stovall FOR

TRAVIS G. MOSELEY
Seward District Ranger