

Summary of Supplement to the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Non-Native Invasive Plant Project Forest-Wide

Proposed Action and Purpose and Need

The Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest proposes amend the *2005 Invasive Plant Control Project* Decision Notice to treat 466 additional sites located across 190 acres. These sites were found due to increased search effort although some could be new infestations. The additional sites are identified on attached site maps and treatment tables and the amounts and kinds of control actions, by species treated are summarized in Table 1 below. All applicable requirements and mitigation measures identified in the original decision would be applied to additional actions.

The purpose and need for action on additional sites remains identical to that found in the original 2005 Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact. In short, our purpose is to protect and restore native ecosystems and rare plant habitat on the forest by controlling or eliminating existing populations of non-native invasive plants. This action is needed because non-native invasive plants (weeds) currently occur on the Forest and are degrading natural communities, and control is needed in order to meet the requirements of Federal law, regulation, and policy; and to meet the goals and objectives of the 2004 Forest plan.

Scope

The scope of this proposal is to determine whether or not to amend the July 1, 2005 Decision Notice to treat additional invasive plant infestation sites since that original decision. Actions found in the original decision and Finding of No Significant Impact for the 2005 CNNF Non-native Invasive Plant Control Project remain in place; the 2005 decision is not subject to appeal. A supplement to the 2005 Environmental Assessment (USDA Forest Service 2005a) is being prepared to analyze the effects of treating the additional 466 weed sites. Since the actions (control methods), protocols, and project mitigations for the additional sites are exactly the same as described in the 2005 project, we have determined that a supplemental environmental assessment is the appropriate document to disclose the minor differences between the original and the amended decision.

Although all invasive plant sites would be treated periodically over the next decade, actual annual treatments are based upon monitoring and site condition needs. A particular site may require annual treatment the first year or two, then less frequent treatment from there on. Delayed germination of some weed seed may require follow-up treatments only one out of two or three years.

The 2005 Decision authorized use of an Integrated Management Strategy to treat 710 weed sites (about 850 acres) over a 10-year period. The additional 466 sites (190 acres) are not anticipated to increase the level of annual treatments beyond the range described in the original Decision (about 200 to 300 sites per year). Even with the additional 466 sites, the total acres to be treated each year is so small that it remains under 0.05% of the total forest acreage. The number of sites and acres treated each year is somewhat dependent on funding, manpower, and Regional direction. In 2006 we treated 167 sites on 340 acres by hand-pulling, herbicide, and bio-control insect release and have a target of treating 700 acres in 2007. This translates to about 300 sites because most infestations are small (see Table 1) and the plants are scattered or clumped.

Integrated Weed Management Strategy summary

The Forest has developed a broad strategy to deal with non-native invasive plants. This project, to control current infestations at specific locations, fits under the heading of *Rapid Response*. Other key elements

include *Prevention, Early Detection, Education, Monitoring, and Restoration*. One of the main objectives is to reduce or prevent adverse effects on non-target organisms. In summary the Forest uses a four-step strategy: 1) whenever possible, treat NNIS sites while they are still relatively small and mechanical methods can be employed; 2) if chemical methods are used, choose an application method that directly targets the invasive plant with little over-spray; 3) if a large area must be sprayed, apply herbicide when adjacent native plants are dormant; and 4) if herbicide must be applied during the growing season, a more selective herbicide should be chosen.

Table 1 Additional NNIP Sites - Proposed Treatment Summary

SPECIES NAME	# Sites	Total Acres	Acres manual/mechanical	Acres using herbicide	Herbicide	Acres bio-control
Bishop's goutweed	2	<1	<1	.03	glyphosate	
Buckthorns	54	36	1	35	glyphosate or triclopyr	
Canada thistle	45	5	<1	4	clopyralid or glyphosate	
Common reed grass	8	7	7	(7)	glyphosate	
Garlic mustard	9	2	<1	2	glyphosate or triclopyr	
Asiatic Honeysuckles	29	6	<1	5	glyphosate or triclopyr	
Japanese barberry	2	<1	<1	<1	glyphosate or triclopyr	
Leafy spurge	9	4	1	(3)	glyphosate or imazapic	3.5
Purple loosestrife	11	<1	<1	<1	glyphosate	
Reed canary grass	90	53	<= 53	5	glyphosate	
Spotted knapweed	114	43	1-3	42	clopyralid or glyphosate	
Swamp thistle	75	14	2	12	clopyralid or glyphosate	
Wild parsnip	18	21	6-10	10-15	glyphosate	

A preliminary analysis indicates that, as stated in the original Decision Notice, the integrated pest-management approach designed into the project for treating these additional sites ensures that results would meet the purpose and need with no unacceptable effect to forest resources (USDA Forest Service 2005b).

References:

USDA Forest Service. 2005a. Environmental Assessment, Chequamegon-Nicolet Invasive Plant Control Project, July 2005. Available at >> http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/natres/eis/so/nnis_ea/index.html

USDA Forest Service. 2005b. Decision notice and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Chequamegon-Nicolet Invasive Plant Control Project, July 2005. Available at >> http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/natres/eis/so/nnis_ea/index.html