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**Subject:** Bridger-Teton National Forest Releases Record of Decision for Invasive Plant Management  
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## **Bridger-Teton National Forest Releases Record of Decision for Invasive Plant Management**

Jackson, Wyo., June 10, 2020 – Forest Supervisor Tricia O’Connor of the Bridger-Teton National Forest has signed the Record of Decision (ROD) and released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Invasive Plant Management Project, which addresses treating noxious weeds across the 3.4 million acre forest in western Wyoming. “The modified alternative 2 provides the best suite of tools for effective control of invasive plants on the Bridger-Teton,” said O’Connor. The final decision is modified to be responsive to issues raised during the objection process and acknowledges the need to use herbicides to control some weed infestations. The decision is sensitive to the use of herbicides and application is limited to those situations where alternative

methods of control are not effective.

The decision is a modified Alternative 2 where the Forest can treat invasive plant species on up to 20,000 acres annually on the Bridger-Teton using a condition based and integrated invasive plant treatment strategy, and excludes aerial application of herbicides in designated Wilderness and wilderness study areas. Condition-based management is a tool that offers a way to evaluate constantly changing or new weed infestations and new treatment options while still addressing other resource concerns. Acting Pinedale District Ranger, Chad Hayward said "Updating the invasive species management plan is essential to maintaining and even improving the amazing wildlife habitat that we manage on the Bridger-Teton National Forest."

Some weeds produce large numbers of seeds that remain viable in the soil for up to 10-years and even longer for others. Several species have extensive root systems that sprout if the main stem is cut or broken off. "The degree of difficulty to control the growing infestations of weeds necessitates utilization of multiple treatment methods and continuous monitoring to ensure that new infestations don't become established," O'Connor said. This decision contains many safeguards to protect humans as well as wildlife. Exotic plant invasions pose a severe threat to the conservation of natural systems, and present a substantial challenge to land managers given that noxious weeds negatively affect native plants.

"While some weeds have attractive foliage or flowers, they have contaminated the Bridger-Teton ecosystem and are changing it," she said. "The modified Alternative 2 does the best job of balancing the control of weeds while preserving natural habitats and protecting the health of humans and communities. It is the most responsive alternative to the main issues while meeting the purpose and need," stated O'Connor.

The Bridger-Teton National Forest conducted an environmental analysis of treating invasive plant species on the forest over the next 15-years using a combination of manual, mechanical, biological, aerial and ground herbicide applications. The FEIS disclosed potential effects of a breadth of alternatives, including a no action alternative. The Final EIS was released on Sept. 27, 2019 and the analysis as well as the Record of Decision are available online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52791>.

[20200610 Weed ROD NewsRelease.pdf](#)

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