



Talking points handout for Interagency Invasive Species Training

Document Purpose: The purpose of this document is to provide a list of talking points to facilitate discussion of invasive species issues and potential management activities that will reduce the burden of impact to federal agencies. The Midwest Natural Resources Group Great Lakes Terrestrial Invasive Species Committee encourages you to use this handout to help create a culture of invasive species awareness and action within your immediate program, office, or management unit. Every federal employee has a role to play in this effort. If you have any additional comments or suggestions to this document please submit them to the document contact below.

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Why do we care about invasive species?

1. **Invasive species, if left unchecked, will limit many uses (e.g, habitat, recreation, agriculture) on lands now and for future generations.**
2. **Invasive species can harm the natural and cultural heritage of our wetlands, prairies, forests, lakes and rivers.**
3. **The longer we wait the more time and money it will take to control invasive species and remediate damage.**

Responsibility

Invasive species awareness is everyone's responsibility. As a federal employee or contractor we are required by Executive Order 13112 to prevent and control invasive species and to further educate the public on issues thereof. Prevention of new invasions is the most economically and ecologically valued action of invasive species management. Adherence to sound management practices reduces long-term costs associated with increased regulation, eradication and restoration efforts.

Executive order 13112 (excerpt):

(2) subject to the availability of appropriations, and within Administration budgetary limits, use relevant programs and authorities to: (i) prevent the introduction of invasive species; (ii) detect and respond rapidly to and control populations of such species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner; (iii) monitor invasive species populations accurately and reliably; (iv) provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems that have been invaded; (v) conduct research on invasive species and develop technologies to prevent introduction and provide for environmentally sound control of invasive species; and (vi) promote public education on invasive species and the means to address them; and

(3) not authorize, fund, or carry out actions that it believes are likely to cause or promote the introduction or spread of invasive species in the United States or elsewhere unless, pursuant to guidelines that it has prescribed, the agency has determined and made public its determination that the benefits of such actions clearly outweigh the potential harm caused by invasive species; and that all feasible and prudent measures to minimize risk of harm will be taken in conjunction with the actions.

In addition to Executive Order 13112, federal agencies have additional management policies to reduce the impact of invasive species. These policies affect all sectors of agency work beyond the scope of natural resource management. The National Invasive Species Management Plan recognizes nine categories in which we can focus our collective actions; Leadership and Coordination, Prevention, Early Detection and Rapid Response, Control and Management, Restoration, International Cooperation, Research, Information Management, Education and Public Awareness. This plan is available online at <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/council/nmp.shtml>.

Guidelines for

Administration/Contracting:

Become aware of invasive species issues at your location.

Purchase weed-free products and insure equipment and materials brought in do not harbor invasive species.

Include contracting language that requires use of clean equipment, invasive –free products complying with phytosanitary standards and activity that reduces the threat of future invasions.

Enforce contractor specifications.

Maintenance/Facility Management:

Learn to ID species of concern and report location information.
Clean vehicles (ATVs, boats) and equipment properly to remove soil, plant and insect material.
Actively manage target species.
Use invasive-free products.
Adopt best management practices such as tarping gravel piles to reduce spread of invasives and decrease future workload.
Ensure that activity does not spread invasive species (e.g., clean equipment and clothing).

Natural Resources:

Learn to ID species of concern and share knowledge with all staff.
Actively manage target species.
Ensure that activity does not spread invasive species (e.g., clean equipment and clothing).
Incorporate early detection rapid response activity in other activities.
Post information at restoration sites to convey ecosystem health benefits to public.

Cultural Resources:

Learn to ID species of concern and report location information.
Ensure that activity does not spread invasive species (e.g., clean equipment and clothing).
Use native or non-invasive species in plantings. Replace invasive cultural species with like non-invasive cultural species.
Collaborate with invasive species control specialists to develop Best Management Plans for control of exotics which mesh with Cultural Resource stewardship requirements

Interpretation/Visitor Relations:

Increase visitor awareness of the invasive species issues.
Provide signs, guidance and facilities (boot brushes, power washers) for equipment cleaning for recreation users.
Learn to ID species of concern and report location information.
Encourage invasive species reporting and volunteer work by visitors
Ensure that activity does not spread invasive species (e.g., clean equipment and clothing).

Resource Protection/Law Enforcement:

Learn to ID species of concern and report location information
Increase visitor awareness of the invasive species issues
Enforce regulations associated with transport of invasive species.
Ensure that activity does not spread invasive species (e.g., clean equipment and clothing).

Local/Regional Program Managers:

Facilitate collaboration and cooperation among other agencies.
Learn to ID species of concern and report location information during site visits.
Ensure that activity does not spread invasive species (e.g., clean equipment and clothing).
Ensure management plans, projects and programs have components to actively reduce the threat of invasive species.
Facilitate cooperation and partnership development through Cooperative Weed Management Areas or similar entities.
Restrict movement of firewood on to federal lands.