

combination of methods used with planting native vegetation in small areas of disturbance, less than 100 square feet.

Biological Control: Biological weed control activities typically include the release of parasitic and "host specific" insects. Presently, insects are the primary biological control agent in use. Mites, nematodes, and pathogens are used occasionally. Treatments do not eradicate the target species but rather reduce target plant densities and competition with desired plant species for space, water and nutrients. The treated areas would continue to be inventoried and monitored to determine the success of the treatments and when the released bio-control agents have reached equilibrium with the target species.

Responsible Official

The Forest Supervisor, Stan Benes, will be the responsible official for making the decision and providing direction for the analysis. He can be contacted at the address listed above.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The responsible official will decide what type of methods and how they will be used to control invasive plants on the Malheur National Forest.

Scoping Process

The public is asked to provide the responsible official with written comments describing their concerns about this project. At this time, no public meetings are being planned.

Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. When reviewing the proposed action, bear in mind that the Forest has been operating under direction found in the 1988 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and 1988 & 1992 Records of Decision (ROD) for Competing and Unwanted Vegetation and the associated 1989 Mediated Agreement. Treatments under this agreement have previously been by manual control methods. Monitoring has indicated that this approach is not successful. In 2005 the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Region completed and implemented the *Pacific Northwest Region Invasive plant Program FEIS* providing new direction and updating the herbicides that would be permitted for use in the Region. The new herbicides offer many advantages over the more limited set allowed previously, including greater selectivity, less harm to desired vegetation, reduced application rates, and lower toxicity to

animals and people. The proposed treatments will be guided by this FEIS. The most useful comments to developing or refining the proposed action would be site specific concerns and those that can help us develop treatments that would be responsive to our goal to control, contain, or eradicate invasive plants as well as being cost effective. Prevention measures have already been built into the Regional Invasive Plant EIS and will be implemented with all actions occurring on the Forest. The purpose of this proposed action is to begin treatments on known invasive plant sites and provide a mechanism to respond rapidly when new infestations are discovered.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposed so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contents. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45 day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or

chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21)

Dated: March 27, 2006.

Roger W. Williams,
Forest Supervisor.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Southwest Idaho Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) and under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-393), the Boise and Payette National Forests' Southwest Idaho Resource Advisory Committee will conduct a business meeting, which is an open to the public.

DATES: Wednesday, April 19, 2006, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: Idaho Counties Risk Management Program Building, 3100 South Vista Avenue, Boise, Idaho.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Agenda topics will include review and approval of project proposals, and is an open public forum.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Doug Gochnour, Designated Federal Officer, at 208-392-6681 or e-mail dgochnour@fs.fed.us.

Dated: March 23, 2006.

Richard A. Smith,
Forest Supervisor, Boise National Forest.
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