



OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

OREGON CONDUCTS “FIRST OF ITS KIND” MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT OF INVASIVE SPECIES

SALEM, Oregon—The Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) released a statewide management assessment of invasive species last week. The assessment, a first for Oregon and the first of its kind in the United States, provides a comprehensive look at how invasive species were managed in Oregon in 2008. A copy of the assessment can be found at www.oregon.gov/OISC.

“Other states have reported on invasive species program elements,” said OISC Chair Sam Chan. “But no other state or federal agency has conducted as comprehensive an analysis of statewide invasive species management.”

The primary goals of the assessment were to provide a big picture framework for the numerous invasive species-related plans that exist in Oregon, identify areas where legislation is needed and where there is overlap, improve understanding of the legal and administrative systems that exist, and review priorities, roles and responsibilities. In addition, the assessment analyzed opportunities for agency collaboration, agreements between agencies, the status of funding for invasive species, the types of invasive species that are managed, and databases used to track and share information about invasives.

Assessment results provided baseline information about how Oregon is managing invasive species. Entities in Oregon reported spending an estimated \$27 million on invasive species activities in 2008. A total of 50% was spent on management and control, 10% on monitoring and surveillance, 6% on outreach and education, 6%, 6% on policy-related matters, 6% on early detection and rapid response, 6% on coordination, 3% on effectiveness monitoring, 3% on research, and 1% of fundraising and other activities. Although lack of adequate funding was described as the greatest obstacle to effective implementation of invasive species programs in Oregon, the Council is exploring in greater detail how funds are expended on invasive programs to determine the potential to achieve greater efficiencies with existing funds. Public awareness was ranked as the second greatest obstacle to effective implementation of invasive species programs.

“We achieved all of the assessment goals and more,” said Chan. “One of the outcomes of the report was a list of 30 recommendations for the Council to consider as we develop an invasive species strategic plan for Oregon—a plan that will serve as the invasive species action plan for one of six key areas in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, a document that provides for the long-term conservation of Oregon’s native fish and wildlife and their habitats through a non-regulatory, statewide approach to conservation. Our Council is currently reviewing and prioritizing the recommendations.”

The recommendations include developing one comprehensive invasive species plan for Oregon that identifies the highest priorities for funding and management activities, including the cost for implementing such a plan. Another recommendation includes establishing base funding for county weed districts statewide, an initiative that failed during the 2009 legislative session because of lack of available funding. Building on the Invasive Species Control Account that was established during the 2009 legislative session to ensure it has a minimum of \$5 million for the state to respond to an invasive species emergency also emerged as a recommendation. Other suggestions included developing measurable performance measures, placing more emphasis on effectiveness monitoring, and enhancing coordination among all natural resource agencies through the development and implementation of horizontal policies to enhance cooperation, collaboration, and accountability.

“We finally have an accurate snapshot of how Oregon is managing invasive species—from a policy, funding, and legal framework standpoint,” Chan said. “Now it’s time to roll up our sleeves, prioritize the recommendations, and create an action plan that will improve Oregon’s ability to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species and realize the invasive species goals in the Oregon Conservation Strategy.”

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