



OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OREGON NEEDS INFORMATION FROM PACIFIC NORTHWEST FIREWOOD SELLERS TO LAUNCH “FIREWOOD BUDDY” SMARTPHONE APPLICATION

SALEM, Oregon—If you sell firewood in the State of Oregon, the Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) wants your help—and wants to help you.

A new law on the books in Oregon will not only protect Oregon’s forests, but will also give Pacific Northwest firewood sellers an edge on the competition. The law, recently passed by the Oregon Legislature, prohibits the transport of firewood into or within Oregon and the selling of firewood in Oregon, unless the firewood has been harvested in Oregon, Idaho or Washington or the firewood has been treated, according to Oregon Department of Agriculture standards, to kill any hitchhiking live insects and diseases.

One solution to help people not move firewood is to provide them with information on local firewood vendors.

“With the collaboration of experts at Oregon Sea Grant at Oregon State University and students at Portland State and Oregon State universities, we’re creating a smartphone application that any state in the nation can use,” said OISC Chair Rian Hooff. “The application will inform people about the nearest locations of firewood vendors that are selling treated firewood or firewood from the Pacific Northwest. This application will help small firewood retailers promote their business by including contact information, type of wood sold, and cost.”

People that own smartphones (one in two Americans will own a smartphone by December of 2011) will be able to download the Firewood Buddy application. And either prior to leaving home or anywhere en route to a camping location, their smartphone will be able to provide the nearest locations of “local” or treated firewood, including cost, availability, type of wood, etc. In addition, the smartphone application will provide information on campfire recipes, the amount of heat different types of wood provide, instructions on how to build a safe campfire, and a number of other functions.

The OISC is asking anyone that sells treated or “local” firewood (i.e., firewood from the Pacific Northwest) to contact OISC Coordinator Lisa DeBruyckere at lisad@createstrat.com with the following information:

1. Name of vendor
2. State
3. City
4. Address
5. Zip Code
6. Phone
7. Price (either price per cord or price per bundle)
8. Type of Wood
9. Hours of Operation
10. Notes (this includes details about that vendor, such as “delivery only” or “pick-up by appointment”)

“We hope to have the database populated with information from firewood vendors by the end of July,” said Hooff “with a scheduled launch of the smartphone application in August or September.”

The Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) was the genesis for the firewood bill that was shepherded through the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) during the 2011 legislative session.

“Hundreds of thousands of acres of forests in the Midwest and on the East Coast have been devastated by non-native insects such as emerald ash borer and Asian longhorned beetle,” said Hooff. “There remains an opportunity to protect Oregon’s forests and forests throughout the Pacific Northwest if we focus on the pathways of introduction for these nonnative species – in this case, firewood.”

In 2010, the OISC launched a tri-state awareness campaign with Idaho and Washington to inform the public about the dangers of moving firewood, and did so knowing it would take a combination of legislation and outreach and education to keep these invasive wood-boring insects out of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.

Live non-native insects can burrow into firewood. Months later, they emerge as flying insects, wreaking havoc on local trees. Untreated firewood that is transported with live insects burrowed inside can cause new infestations in areas far removed from where the insects originally burrowed. And these insects don’t selectively choose certain types of forests.

“Insects such as emerald ash borer and gypsy moth don’t focus their attention exclusively on remote forest tracts,” said ODA Plant Division Administrator Dan Hilburn. “In fact, numerous cities on the East Coast have lost their urban trees because of these invaders.”

The small gypsy moth invasions in the Eugene, Oregon area over the past decade are a great example of how non-native insects can call urban and suburban areas home.

“Fortunately for Oregon, we detected these new invasions of gypsy moth early, and were able to eradicate them before they wreaked havoc with Eugene’s treescapes and nearby forests,” said Hilburn.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council was established by the Oregon Legislature in 2002. Its mission is to conduct a coordinated and comprehensive effort to keep invasive species out of Oregon and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the impacts of invasive species already established in Oregon. Current members of the council hail from the Oregon Marine Board, USDA Forest Service, USDA-APHIS, Dow Agrosiences, Northwest Weed Management Partnership, Turf Merchants, Inc., Bureau of Land Management, Willowa Resources, and SOLV. In addition, agency representatives include Portland State University, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Oregon Department of Agriculture, and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

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