



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98101

Reply To

Attn Of: ECO-083

May 6, 2003

Informational Memo

**Subject:** Invasive Species Program Update March/April 2003

**From:** Joan Cabreza  
Regional Invasive Species Coordinator

**To:** R10 ECO Management Team

As the invasive species issue finally begins to move into EPA mainstream consciousness, so much is happening both nationally and regionally it is difficult to keep track of it all. I thought a monthly or bi-monthly activity summary might be helpful, both for myself and others interested in IS developments. This summary is intended to be educational, and help raise awareness, but it will also track significant national/HQ events and provide a heads-up on anything that may affect us regionally. It should also be helpful when we evaluate the detail's value at the end of the year. *Feedback on the utility of this summary is solicited. Feel free to forward this to any other interested people, or let me know if you think someone else would like a copy.*

**Community Outreach/Info Transfer...**

1. SWS/SER Presentation. On March 25, I presented a paper at the Invasive Species session of the Society of Wetland Scientists/Society for Ecological Restoration (SWS/SER) conference in Portland. There was good response, and I received many follow-up requests for handouts and copies of the R10 IS Detail report, and e-mail questions. Dick Clark also manned an ARU information table that included IS handouts and related materials.
2. West Nile Virus (WNV). Sharon Collman has worked hard getting on top of WNV. She provided an informative in-house seminar for EPA and wrote articles for the CUH newsletter, Master Gardener newsletter and similar publications.
3. Risk Assessment Conference. Pat Cirone provided a keynote presentation at the National Risk Assessors Conference meeting held in Atlanta, April 28. I provided her with some IS information and photos which she included. She identified invasive species as a research need, and reports the presentation was very well received.

Printed on Recycled Paper

4. International Conference Abstract. I co-authored an abstract Henry Lee (Newport OR lab) is developing for an EPA presentation at the International Invasive Species Conference in Ontario this June. The presentation will describe EPA's actions related to invasive species regulation, prevention and control.
5. WA ANS Meeting. I provided a summary and update on national and regional IS activity at the biannual meeting of the WA ANS Committee in April.
6. Regional IS Detail Report. The IS detail report has generated a lot of interest, and so far on request, I have sent copies to several Regions, OWOW, and 40-50 other groups and individuals around the country.

### Networking/Connecting..

7. WA Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Committee. The multi-agency state ANS Committee asked me to join their Executive Steering Committee. We have been meeting more or less monthly. I also provided a presentation on national/federal activity at the ANS April semi-annual meeting.
8. Meeting with Cincinnati ORD. Cincinnati ORD has accumulated a core of ecologists and geneticists with interest and experience in invasive species. I met with Mark Bagley, ORD, to discuss IS research needs related to genetics, to identify some possible viable IS RARE projects. The WA ANS committee is interested, and I'll be setting up a group conference call with the committee chair in May to flesh out some of the ideas.
9. NISWG (Non Indigenous Species Workgroup) I have been participating in the monthly NISWG (national EPA workgroup) conference calls, and am currently part of a subgroup developing some draft IS conditions that we hope will eventually be included in all EPA grants and cooperative agreements. (This should help provide compliance with EO 13112.)
10. I met with the Director of EarthCorps, a Seattle non-profit focused on Community-based habitat restoration, and a lead partner in the IvyOUT public information and volunteer program ([www.ivyout.org](http://www.ivyout.org)). This effort aims to get 10,000 (!) volunteers to conduct 40,000 (!) hours of ivy removal in over 50 Puget Sound area parks and greenspaces. (This statement should challenge anyone who thinks ivy is not a problem.) They have asked EPA to join in a federal/state/local MOU. The purpose is still a little unclear, but once we see a draft, we can decide whether or not this is something we want to do.
11. Western Regional Panel (WRP). I have finally been officially confirmed as the EPA WRP representative. The next annual meeting of the 57-member panel is in September. Most WRP activity occurs via WRP committees throughout the year; I expect to become involved in the Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee.
12. Grants. I have been working to promote EPA grant opportunities in the community, providing information on various grant opportunities to a variety of outside groups. This year we have received 5 RGI IS grant proposals and some 5-star IS grant proposals, which is encouraging.

### **Regional Office Activity...**

13. ECO Invasives Removal. The Office of Ecosystems held its annual retreat at Lincoln Park April 30, and 50 people conducted several hours of invasive species removal (holly, gorse and knotweed) and trail resurfacing. This was hard work: some holly trees approached 6" in diameter. Park staff were so pleased that they have requested that EPA "adopt" the trail and help maintain it on a long term basis.
14. Regional E-mail List. During the IS detail, I established an E-mail list of interested people to keep people in-house informed of major items that may be of interest. Amazingly, over 90 people have requested inclusion. I try to limit messages to 2-3/week.
15. Place-Based Retreat. I provided a short IS briefing to the place-based retreat. The place-based staff are doing a lot of invasives work, and I encouraged them to pass on information about their activity so it can be included in future reports.
16. ET Briefing. On March 14 I briefed the ET on the IS detail results and outlined the proposed activities, including formation of informal invasive species team. No adverse comments, so I'll be moving ahead with the proposed activities in the detail report.
17. Regional Strategic Plan. I was asked to develop draft tools and progress measures for inclusion in the Regional strategic plan. This is progress: this is the first year invasive species measures have been recognized and included. (perhaps fallout from the GAO report?)
18. USN detail. Joe DiVittorio, on detail from the Navy to Pesticides, completed a draft MOU between the Navy and DOA Noxious Weed Board. The MOU's purpose is to create a mechanism for speedy surveys and control of releases on DOD lands, and it may be a model that can be used in other DOD branches as well.

### **Activity Around The Region.....**

#### **Washington**

19. WA ANS Meeting. The WA ANS Committee held a very productive biannual meeting in April. The varied agenda included updates on: federal activities; the newly formed WA ballast water committee; WA rapid response plan; status of the state patrol water craft inspection program; the Oregon ballast water program; WA draft Spartina policy; Lower Columbia River ANS survey; volunteer zebra mussel monitoring program; ballast water exchange verification program; British Columbia netpen aquaculture; Spartina control in Willapa Bay; and status of WA green crab monitoring efforts.
20. Washington Rapid Response Plan. SSB 6553 (2002) requires WDFW to develop an ANS rapid response plan, and plan development is now underway. A draft may be available for review by \_\_\_(June?)\_\_\_. This legislation also requires a plan to inspect watercraft entering the state.
21. A Northwest Invasive Species Forum was held in Seattle March 27. Convened by the Bullitt and McDanel foundations and supported by several other foundations, it attracted over 100 environmental

leaders and foundation representatives from WA, OR and ID, to discuss solutions to invasive problems in the Pacific Northwest, and generated a number of action items for followup. (Unfortunately I did not attend as it conflicted with the SWS/SER conference)

### **Oregon**

22. The Oregon Ballast Water Bill, HB 3620 is now in the state legislature. Follow the fate of this bill at the Oregon legislature web site: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/searchmeas.html>
23. IvyOUT. Portland is holding an IvyOUT project May 5, and expects to have 1000 volunteers at 40 locations throughout the city.

### **Idaho**

24. Idaho Invasive Species Council. HB 212, legislation to create a 42 member Idaho Invasive Species Council, died in committee February 25, as members of the House Resources and Conservation Committee questioned its need, despite support from the Governor and the State Dept. of Agriculture. Some felt the legislation was unnecessary, as the bill codifies a Governor's order already in place, and the Council is already formed. The Council held a meeting April 8. The Governor has asked the Council to complete an invasive species assessment and statewide strategic plan by Dec 31.

### **Alaska**

25. Alaska ANS plan. Alaska is beginning implementation of their state ANS plan (approved last November) with some work on Northern Pike. They hope to hire a state coordinator this month and also have some public service announcements on pike and fish diseases underway.

### **Recent National Activity**

26. OWOW IS Team. OWOW formed its first Invasive Species Team last December, and is developing an IS strategy that should be out for regional review this month. It currently applies only to HQ OWOW, but hopefully will later be expanded for all EPA.
27. NAISA and AISRA. The National Aquatic Invasive Species Act, (reauthorization of the 1996 National Invasive Species Act), and its companion bill AISRA (Aquatic Invasive Species research Act) were introduced into both houses of Congress on March 5. NAISA contains expanded roles for both EPA and the Corps related to ballast water. It has bipartisan support and is hoped to pass. Testimony is being given now.
28. GAO Report. Last fall's GAO report ("*Invasive species: Clearer focus and greater commitment needed to effectively manage the problem*") was critical of national invasive species plan implementation, and this has implications for EPA HQ and Regions. The report finds the plan does not clearly articulate specific long-term goals, and that federal agencies have made little progress (<20%) in implementing action plan items. GAO recommendations include: incorporating IS economic impacts data in developing the Federal government budget; adding performance-oriented goals and objectives to the national management plan; giving high priority to an oversight strategy for measuring progress and results-oriented goals; and examining whether plan implementation is hampered by lack of specific legislation. Agencies generally agreed with GAO's recommendations. EPA's response proposed measures for increasing compliance, while

pointing out that EPA has received no funding appropriation for the action items. One result is that NISWG has begun drafting some EPA GPRA goals.

29. Executive Order Revision. EO 13112 on Invasive Species (1999) is undergoing minor revision to include Homeland Security on the National Invasive Species Council.
30. HB 266. This bill would codify the National Invasive Species Council. Since the Council is the result of an Executive Order, without codification the Council could be disbanded easily at any time. The bill was reintroduced this session, with hearings held on April 29th.
31. North American Invasive Species Strategy. The Council for Economic Cooperation (part of NAFTA) is trying to be more strategic in its approach to IS, and has produced a draft North American Invasive Species Strategy which will attempt to coordinate Mexican, Canadian and US IS control efforts. It was presented to the National Invasive Species Council this month.

### Calendar of Upcoming Events

32. 5/7/03 UW ballast water seminar at the Maritime Odyssey Discovery Center, pier 66. 7:00 pm.
- 5/14/03 Ballast Water Technology Forum. PS regional Council meeting room. Seattle. 9:00-4:15
  - 6/17/03 Brown bag video. PBS had a wonderful special on the Mediterranean sea takeover by *Caulerpa* (marine algal species) last month. I purchased the video and have scheduled a special brown bag presentation in 12 B&C (Regional office). It will be available for placed based offices on demand after that.
33. 6/9-12/03 International Invasive Species Conference, Ontario Canada. (Henry Lee will attend)
34. 7/xx/03 Brown bag planned. Once I get better on powerpoint, I plan to give an informational "Invasive species 101" brown bag to provide general information on current and upcoming activity, similar to the ET presentation, for interested staff. (Regional office).
- 9/9-10/03. Western Regional Panel, annual meeting. San Diego.

### IS Documents Expected for Regional Review Soon

35. OWOW strategic plan (coming May??)
36. USCG EIS - Covers ballast water standards (Coming\_\_(when?)\_\_)
37. USFS EIS - Covers IS management in 21 WA and OR National Forests (Coming June?)
1. National NEPA guidance (stalled at the moment....coming late 2003?)