

# **CNPS Policy - WILDLAND INVASIVE PLANTS, INTEGRATED WEED MANAGEMENT (3-08-08)**

## **Policy Statement**

The California Native Plant Society supports the use of Integrated Weed Management (IWM) to control existing weed infestations and protect vulnerable wild lands and corridors from invasive plants. The California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) has provided a definition of IWM:

IWM is a strategic approach for reducing the ecological damage caused by invasive weeds. Programmatically, IWM requires coordination of multiple efforts—including prevention, “early detection/rapid response”, mapping, control efforts, revegetation, and monitoring. For on-the-ground control projects specifically, IWM requires site-specific selection of control methods from the range of methods available—including mechanical, chemical, biological and cultural—based on effectiveness, efficiency, practicality, ecological impact, and safety. (1)

## **Background**

The mission of the California Native Plant Society includes the conservation of native plants in their natural habitats. Great damage to native ecosystems and biological diversity has been caused by the spread of invasive non-native plants (weeds) in California and elsewhere.

## **Goal/Purpose**

CNPS wishes to endorse the IWM approach to weed management on wildlands, and make recommendations that reflect specific CNPS concerns, including recommendations for CNPS and other public participation in weed management efforts.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are offered for weed control planning:

### **1. Project recommendations that reflect CNPS concerns**

- A. Improving the quality of native vegetation should be a major consideration of weed control efforts in wildlands and corridors, such as roadsides, trails, utility rights-of-way, levees, and fuel breaks, where native vegetation is present.
- B. Large-scale IWM projects should be designed and implemented under the supervision of qualified professionals. This work should be part of an explicit management plan that evaluates site-specific priorities and goals.
- C. Smaller volunteer weed-removal projects and activities should be based on IWM principles, and consultation with professionals is encouraged.
- D. Plans should prioritize the management of the most invasive weeds in the most sensitive places, in order to make the most effective use of control resources.
- E. All control methods include some degree of risk. The planners need to evaluate the various options available, and select those which are the most effective and are the least harmful to the ecosystem, to people, to their property, and to cultural resources.

- F. Projects should include a monitoring plan coupled with adaptive management, so that, if necessary, the project can be modified to improve its effectiveness.
- G. Projects should include a map indicating the location and estimated density of the target weeds and the location of sensitive native plants.
- H. In most cases the project should focus on reducing the spread of the target weeds by eliminating outlying populations first and then working toward the center of the weed population.
- I. In general, a project should work toward the elimination or eradication of the target weeds within a specific watershed or similar natural boundary so that the possibility of reintroduction is reduced.
- J. Field sanitation is essential to avoid transporting propagative material out of the infested area.
- K. Prevention is an essential component of IWM. CNPS supports cooperative efforts to discourage the introduction of invasive plants, such as by promoting awareness of the issue among home gardeners, and in the landscaping industry.

## **2. CNPS and public participation in weed control efforts**

- A. CNPS chapters and members – CNPS encourages its chapters and members to take an active role to stop the spread of invasive plants by:
  - a) participating in or organizing public weed removal activities, and with the recommendation that each chapter dedicate at least one program or field trip each year to the problem of invasive plants
  - b) assigning one person in each chapter to the role of invasive plant coordinator
  - c) signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the local Weed Management Area (WMA), and participating in their meetings and activities
  - d) encouraging members to become proficient in identifying invasive plants, and to report new infestations, as appropriate, to Cal-IPC, their local agricultural commissioner, UC Cooperative Extension, and the local landowner or land agency
- B. Projects primarily using volunteers – Coordinators of volunteer-oriented weed management projects should make sure that all volunteers understand the:
  - a) plan of action
  - b) identification of the target weeds, and identification and location of any native plants of concern

- c) methods to be used to reduce soil disturbance and collateral damage to non-target plants
  - d) methods of field sanitation
  - e) safety issues.
- C. Projects primarily using paid staff – When public agencies or businesses are working to control weeds, CNPS members can help reduce damage to native plants and their habitats by:
- a) volunteering to mark the location of sensitive plants
  - b) volunteering to remove the weeds in areas adjacent to sensitive habitats or plants
  - c) observing the progress of the weed control work, so if necessary, CNPS can provide immediate feedback to the agency or business.

### References cited

1. Cal-IPC. Policy on Integrated Weed Management. Accessible at <http://www.cal-ipc.org/policy/index.php>, Spring 2008.

### Supporting references

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