



Florida Invasive Species Guidance

General Manual, Title 190, Part 414 sets forth the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) policy and requirements regarding invasive species. This policy provides direction and guidance for agency actions related to preventing the introduction of invasive species, managing existing invasive species and minimizing economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species may cause.

NRCS – Florida recognizes the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC), Category I list as the official plant list of species that have been determined to be invasive in the state of Florida. Therefore, NRCS conservation planners and those working on our behalf shall not encourage the introduction, transport, establishment, and management of plant species on the FLEPPC Category I list. NRCS will assist clients during the conservation process, delivery of technical assistance, and through implementation of Farm Bill programs to identify Category I listed plant species and to provide guidance, and where applicable financial assistance, to control and/or eradicate these plants where found.

Background

A. On February 3, 1999, former President Clinton signed Executive Order 13112, “Invasive Species,” directing Federal agencies to “prevent the introduction of invasive species and provide for their control and to minimize the economic, ecological and human health impacts that invasive species cause.” The National Invasive Species Council (NISC) and Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC) were formed to define how and to ensure that this Executive Order would be carried out. See <http://www.invasivespecies.gov/laws/execorder.shtml> for further information. As the initial response to this Executive Order, the NISC and ISAC developed a National Invasive Species Management Plan (NISMP), posted at <http://www.invasivespecies.gov/council/nmp.shtml>, to focus upon terrestrial and aquatic invasive plants, animals, and microbial organisms that cause or may cause significant negative impacts and do not provide an equivalent benefit to society. NRCS is using the NISMP and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy for noxious weed management (published January 18, 1990, and available at <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/dr/DR9500-010.htm>) as the basis for developing the NRCS national invasive species policy.

B. Invasive species are reducing the economic productivity and ecological integrity of our nation’s lands and waters. The rate of introduction of such species has risen markedly in recent years with costs to society growing commensurately. Invasive species harm noninvasive native species and their habitats, renewable resources, and diminish productive capacity of agricultural lands including forestlands, rangelands, and pasturelands. They may negatively impact a wide variety of human activities and needs.

The threat to ecosystem health in the United States is particularly acute because there are more relatively intact ecosystems in the continuous U.S. than in most temperate countries.

Authorities

Authorities include the following:

- (1) Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1935, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 590a–590f, 590q.
- (2) Bankhead–Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 1000 and 1010–1011.
- (3) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4321- 4347.
- (4) Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2814.
- (5) Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 2001 – 2009.
- (6) The Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 3801–3862.
- (7) Invasive Species Executive Order 13112, dated February 3, 1999.
- (8) USDA Policy of Noxious Weed Management, Departmental Regulation 9500–010, January 18, 1990.

Definitions

A. Control – Appropriate management actions taken to minimize the spread and size of an invasive species’ population. These actions include eradicating, suppressing, reducing, or managing populations of invasive species, preventing spread of invasive species from areas where they are present, and taking steps such as restoration of native species and habitats to reduce the effects of invasive species and to prevent further invasions.

B. Ecosystem – The complex of a community of organisms and its environment.

C. Introduction – The intentional or unintentional escape, release, dissemination, or placement of a species into an ecosystem as a result of human activity. “Introduced” is not synonymous and should not be confused with the term “invasive.”

D. Invasive species – Those species whose introduction does, or is likely to, cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

E. Native species – With respect to a particular ecosystem, a species that, other than as a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in that ecosystem.

F. Non-native species – Within a particular ecosystem, any species – including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species – that is not native to that ecosystem.

G. Noxious weeds – Those plant species designated as such by the Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of the Interior, or by State law or regulation. Generally, noxious weeds will possess one or more of the characteristics of being aggressive and difficult to manage, parasitic, a carrier or host of deleterious insects or disease, and being non-native, new to, or not common to the United States or parts thereof.

H. Pest – A weed, insect, disease, animal, or other organism (including invasive and noninvasive species) that directly or indirectly causes damage or annoyance by destroying food and fiber products, causing structural damage, or creating a poor environment for other organisms.

I. Restoration – Activities taken following a natural or human-caused landscape disturbance (e.g., the removal of an invasive species population) to begin bringing the landscape back to its natural condition.

J. Species – A group of organisms which have a high degree of physical and genetic similarity, which generally breed only among themselves, which show persistent differences from members of allied groups of organisms, and which produce viable offspring.

NRCS – Florida shall use the latest current version of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) list of Category I plant species as guidance for meeting national and state policies concerning invasive plant species. FLEPPC Category I plant species represent vegetation that cause ecological threats to Florida’s natural resources and ecological communities and pose potential impacts to agriculture and the sustainability of food and fiber in Florida.

Although FLEPPC also has established a Category II list of invasive plant species. These exotic plants have not been identified as altering native plant communities or causing other native impacts to the extent shown by Category I species.

Generally the FLEPPC list of invasive plant species is revised every two years. To access the current FLEPPC Category I plant list go to <http://www.fleppc.org/list/list.htm>.