



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Environmental Assessment for the Exotic Plant Management Plan available for public review and comment

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Steve Martin has announced that an Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect (EA) for the Exotic Plant Management Plan is now available for public review and comment.

The park is proposing to use integrated pest management techniques to control and contain exotic plant species within the park boundaries. Integrated pest management is a decision-making process that coordinates knowledge of pest biology, the environment, and available technology to address pests, such as exotic plants, cost effectively and with the least possible risk to people, resources, and the environment. Exotic plant species displace natural vegetation and affect the long-term health of native plant and animal communities. Currently, 189 species of exotic plants are known to occur in Grand Canyon National Park; 82 of these are of serious concern.

The EA evaluates two alternatives including a no action alternative that would continue current exotic plant management. The preferred alternative (Alternative 2) includes 1) integrated pest management; 2) increased education, prevention, and collaboration; and 3) increased manual, mechanical, cultural, and chemical controls. This document will provide a framework for exotic plant management and serve as a planning document to guide this type of work for the next ten years.

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The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, calls on federal agencies to consider environmental issues as part of their decision making process and to involve interested parties in the process. The NEPA process for the Exotic Plant Management Plan was initiated in March 2005 with a public scoping letter soliciting issues and concerns on the preliminary project proposal. Responses to these scoping efforts were used during preparation of the EA.

The National Park Service encourages public review and comment on the EA. The EA will be open for public review for 30 days. The document is available electronically on the web at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grca>. Comments can be submitted online at the same web address (the preferred method) or mailed to Steve Martin, Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, Attention: Office of Planning and Compliance, P.O. Box 129 (1 Village Loop for express mail), Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023. Comments will be accepted through March 27, 2009.

For questions and additional information about this project, or for copies of the EA, please contact Rachel Stanton, project planning leader, at (928) 774-9612.

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