



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mesa Verde National Park
PO Box 8
Mesa Verde, Colorado 81330

N-79-08-1-9.1.A.2

January 8, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

The National Park Service is proposing to develop a new management plan for controlling invasive nonnative plants throughout Mesa Verde National Park and Yucca House National Monument in southwestern Colorado. Currently the park and monument have known populations of dozens of nonnative plants, many of which are highly aggressive competitors with native species. Their continued spread puts at risk the ecological and historical integrity of park landscapes.

The purpose of the plan is to enhance the current strategy at the park and monument for preventing and managing invasive plant occurrences in order to protect natural communities, ecological processes, cultural resources, visitor enjoyment, and other park values. The plan will focus on two broad goals: 1) Detecting and preventing the establishment of new invasive plant species or occurrences and 2) Controlling new and existing priority occurrences of invasive plants.

Management alternatives will incorporate an integrated pest management approach and may consist of a variety of methods including mechanical, chemical, biological, manual and cultural control techniques.

An environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide a decision-making framework that analyzes a reasonable range of alternatives to meet project objectives, evaluate potential issues and impacts to park resources and values, and identify mitigation measures to reduce the degree or extent of these impacts.

The National Park Service encourages public participation throughout the NEPA process. The public has two opportunities to formally comment on the project: once during initial project scoping and again following release of the EA. Currently we are in the scoping phase of this project. We invite you to submit your written comments online at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/meve>.

If you are not able to submit comments electronically through this website, then you may submit written comments to me at the above address. Comments must be received by February 14, 2014 in order to be considered during preparation of the EA. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Cliff Spencer
Superintendent