



Invasive Plant Management Plan/Environmental Assessment



Invasive plants are being detected and becoming established in the national parks at an increasing rate, causing damage to natural and cultural resources and threatening the integrity of the natural ecosystems the NPS is charged with protecting. Aggressive invasive plants are capable of spreading rapidly, out-competing native plants and drastically altering ecosystem conditions and processes. They can also threaten the integrity of cultural sites and historic structures through overgrowth and visual impacts. Native ecosystems at both REDW and SAMO have been degraded by the impacts of invasive plants, and continue to be at risk.

The National Park Service (NPS) is pleased to announce the availability of the Invasive Plant Management Plan / Environmental Assessment for Redwood National Park (REDW) and Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SAMO).

Early in this process, we asked for public input regarding issues of concern and feedback on the preliminary alternatives we developed. Using the feedback we received during that initial public scoping effort, and input from an interdisciplinary planning team, we considered a range of alternatives and analyzed the potential impacts of those alternatives. All of this information is now presented for your review in the environmental assessment.

The environmental assessment (EA) is available for public review and comment through December 1, 2017. During the public comment period, we will be hosting two open house public meetings. See page 3 for full details on the public meetings and how to submit your comments. The environmental assessment is available at: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RSinvplantEA>.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the Invasive Plant Management Plan!

Sincerely,

David Szymanski
Superintendent
Santa Monica Mountains
National Recreation Area

David Roemer
Acting Superintendent
Redwood National Park

What is the purpose of the plan?

The purposes of taking action are as follows:

- Provide a comprehensive approach for protecting REDW's and SAMO's natural and cultural resources from the impacts of nonnative, invasive plants.
- Provide an approach that is adaptable as new information and new treatment tools become available, as new invasive plant species and infestations appear, and as changes in climate occur over time.
- Identify invasive plant control techniques that are appropriate to use in these two California national parks, considering potential environmental impacts, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Increase public awareness and understanding of the invasive plants problem, and identify opportunities for cooperation among neighboring agencies and landowners.
- Promote revegetation with native species in areas impacted by nonnative, invasive plants.
- Monitor effectiveness of invasive plant control techniques.

What alternatives were analyzed in the EA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to explore a range of alternatives and analyze impacts that any reasonable alternatives could have on the human environment. The alternatives under consideration must also include a “no-action” alternative. Action alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis must meet the purpose of and need for taking action. The environmental assessment analyzes two alternatives, including the No Action Alternative.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, current programs and practices to control invasive plant species would continue at REDW and SAMO, including mechanical/manual and chemical treatments, biological control, prescribed fire (REDW only), revegetation, and monitoring. At REDW, the No Action Alternative represents the management direction that has occurred there as the 1994 Exotic Plant Management Plan was implemented. At SAMO, the park would continue to implement an invasive plant management program on a project-specific basis.

Alternative 1: Preferred Alternative

Alternative 1 proposes to update REDW and SAMO management practices described in the No Action Alternative. In addition, Alternative 1 would strive to enhance or refine some practices such as the following: public outreach; collaboration with stakeholders; invasive plant detection and treatment; recordkeeping and monitoring; revegetation; adaptive management; and best management practices using an integrated invasive plant management approach. Prescribed goat grazing would be a new tool available to the parks. Alternative 1 is also the environmentally preferable alternative.

What are the expected impacts of the alternatives?

Under both the No Action Alternative and Alternative 1, invasive plant management activities such as mechanical/manual treatments, chemical treatments, prescribed fire (REDW only), biological control, revegetation, and monitoring would generally have short-term and localized adverse impacts and both short- and long-term, widespread beneficial impacts on resources such as water resources, vegetation, fish and wildlife (including special status species), recreation, visitor experience, and cultural resources. Under Alternative 1, additional herbicides would be approved for use in REDW and SAMO, which is anticipated to have similar or beneficial impacts due to the likelihood for increased precision and effectiveness. Best management practices would be applied under both alternatives to reduce the likelihood of negative impacts.

The NPS has identified a preferred alternative; however, it has not made a final decision. It is only after consideration of public comment and when an alternative is selected for implementation in a decision document, such as a finding of no significant impact (FONSI), that a final decision is made.



Invasive thistle



Invasive English ivy

How to Comment on the Environmental Assessment

Submit comments online at:

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RSinvplantEA>

Mail comments to:

Santa Monica Mountains

National Recreation Area

ATTN: Invasive Plant Management Plan

401 West Hillcrest Drive

Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Redwood National Park

ATTN: Invasive Plant Management Plan

PO Box 7

Orick, CA 95555

The comment period closes on December 1, 2017

Before including your address, telephone number, electronic mail address, or other personally identifying information in your comments, you should be aware that your entire comment (including your personally identifying information) may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us to withhold your personally identifiable information from public review, we can't guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Hard copies of the EA are available for review in several locations:

REDW: Del Norte, Eureka, Arcata, and McKinleyville public libraries, Kuchel Visitor Center (Orick), and Crescent City Visitor Center (Crescent City)

SAMO: Calabasas, Malibu, Agoura Hills, Westlake Village, Grant R. Brimhall, Woodland Hills, Santa Monica, Topanga, City of Camarillo, and Newbury Park Branch libraries, and King Gillette Visitor's Center (Calabasas)

To be most helpful, the NPS is seeking your input on:

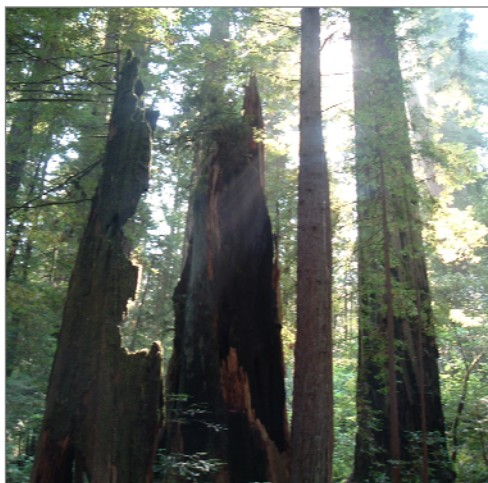
- the purpose and need for action;
- environmental issues / impact topics analyzed;
- alternatives, including mitigation measures which could reduce potentially harmful effects; and
- the information used to describe the affected environment and environmental consequences

Prior to developing and signing a decision document, we will review every comment submitted during the open comment period, and prepare responses to substantive comments. Responses to substantive comments will be made available to the public.

Substantive comments are defined as those that do one or more of the following:

- question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in the EA;
- question, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of the analysis;
- present reasonable alternatives other than those presented in the EA; or
- cause changes or revisions to the restoration actions proposed in the alternatives.

When preparing your written comments, provide as much detail as possible and relate your comments back to the EA. This will ensure that your comments are understood and your concerns are fully addressed in the responses.



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Public meeting schedule

Meetings will be an open-house format, and will present the same information. A short presentation will be delivered approximately 15 minutes after the meeting starts. There will not be a formal hearing. Informational displays will be arranged throughout the room and NPS representatives will be available to answer your questions about the environmental assessment and NEPA process.

November 1, 2017 6:30–8:30 pm	Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Community Room 403 Hillcrest Drive Thousand Oaks, California 91360
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November 8, 2017 6:30–8:30 pm	Redwood National Park Humboldt Area Foundation 363 Indianola Road Bayside, California 95524
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What are the next steps in the process?

Winter 2017	Public comment analysis/response
Spring 2018	Preparation of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
Spring 2018	Completion of all other compliance and consultations
Anticipated spring 2018	Regional Director signs FONSI
	Project implementation can begin after the FONSI is signed by the Regional Director