



## OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### OREGON RECEIVES A B+ GRADE FOR ITS INVASIVE SPECIES WORK IN 2010

SALEM, Oregon—Oregon is holding its own in the battle against invasive species, as evidenced by the B+ grade it received on its annual report card for 2010.

The report card, an assessment of Oregon's activities in five areas—reporting invasive species, outreach and education, planning, funding, and success at excluding invasive species—was released this week by the Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC). The state was given an overall grade of B+ compared to the A- it received in 2009.

According to the report card, the state made positive gains in 2010 by:

- concluding an 18-month process that will result in the launch of a statewide invasive species database in February of 2011;
- conducting an outreach campaign with Washington and Idaho to inform the public about how moving firewood can spread invasive species;
- hosting a statewide invasive species summit in November of 2010 to create a shared understanding of the threat invasive species poses to Oregon's economy and environment;
- implementing the first year of an Aquatic Invasive Species permit program, which included roaming watercraft inspection stations and decontamination wash stations throughout Oregon;
- raising funds to operate the Council, reprint *GardenSmart Oregon*, conduct the firewood campaign, and launch a statewide invasive species database; and
- addressing control and eradication of a newly discovered invasive tunicate in Winchester and Coos Bays.

“Oregon made some significant forward strides in its fight against invasive species in 2010,” said OISC Chair Rian Hooff. “But the discovery of two new invaders, spotted wing drosophila and a tunicate in two of our coastal bays, is a reminder to us that we must remain vigilant in our work to keep new invasives out of Oregon and do our best to control or eradicate those that are here.”

Oregon did not score as well in holding the 100 worst invaders at bay in 2010 because of the discovery of *Didemnum vexillum*, an invasive tunicate. In 2009, Oregon brought home a solid A in the category,

“success at excluding invasive species in Oregon,” because none of the organisms on the 100 Worst List became established in Oregon. To improve the grade in 2011, Oregon must prevent all species on the OISC 100 Worst List from becoming established, encourage activities that suppress already established invasive species, identify policy gaps and steps needed to close those gaps, ensure early detection/rapid response plans are in place, support federal legislation aimed at invasive species, and develop and promote Oregon legislation in 2011 to deal with state-specific issues.

In the category that assesses a reporting system for invasive species, Oregon received an A- grade for its 1-866-INVADER hotline, a telephone line available for people to report a potential invasive species in Oregon as well as management of [www.oregoninvasiveshotline.org](http://www.oregoninvasiveshotline.org), an online invasive species reporting system. To maintain/boost that grade in 2011, the state could integrate the phone line at the Oregon Department of Agriculture with the website hotline to ensure each report of invasive species is documented. In addition, the state could expand the scope, breadth, and depth of early detection and rapid response (EDRR) networks statewide and secure base funding for county weed programs.

For its education and outreach efforts, Oregon scored an A for conducting a tri-state firewood outreach campaign, hosting the 2010 invasive species summit, implementing the Aquatic Invasive Species Permit Program, increasing efforts to develop EDNR networks, and printing 67,000 copies of *GardenSmart Oregon*. To maintain this grade in 2011, the state can continue the firewood outreach campaign, co-host a regional invasive species summit in Portland, assist Winchester and Coos Bay communities with outreach relative to invasive tunicates, and participate in both National Invasive Species Awareness Week and the Healthy Habitats Coalition events in Washington, DC.

Oregon received a B in the planning category for hosting the statewide summit as a next step toward developing a statewide strategic plan in Oregon. To improve the grade in this category in 2011, the state can develop a statewide invasive species strategic plan for Oregon and support invasive species legislative priorities in the 2011 Oregon legislative session.

Oregon fared well in the funding category, earning a B for the funding that was dedicated for all elements of invasive species management, control, surveillance, and outreach. To improve this grade in 2011, Oregon should seek ways to secure \$5 million for the Invasive Species Control Account.

“Oregon did well in 2010,” said Hooff. “But Oregon’s budget picture looks bleak for the next several years. This will require everyone working in the invasive species arena to work harder and smarter to ensure we don’t lose additional ground.”

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*The Oregon Invasive Species Council was established by the Oregon Legislature in 2002. Its mission is to conduct a coordinated and comprehensive effort to keep invasive species out of Oregon and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the impacts of invasive species already established in Oregon. Current members of the council hail from the Oregon Marine Board, USDA Forest Service, USDA-APHIS, Dow Agrosiences, Northwest Weed Management Partnership, Turf Merchants, Inc., Bureau of Land Management, Willowa Resources, and SOLV. In addition, agency representatives include Portland State University, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Oregon Department of Agriculture, and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.*