



OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

STATEWIDE OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES SUMMIT TO BE HELD NOVEMBER 18 IN SALEM

SALEM, Oregon—The battle against invasive species never ends. Just ask the 175 state leaders and managers set to gather in Salem on November 18, a mere two weeks after the election season and a week shy of Thanksgiving. There is no rest in the ongoing war that threatens Oregon's economy and environment.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council is hosting a gathering of state and federal agency directors, legislators, and stakeholders contributing to invasive species efforts in Oregon to review the results and implications of the statewide management assessment of invasive species; develop a shared vision of how the state can implement the 12 recommendations from the assessment; develop a shared understanding of and support for legislative concepts for the 2011 legislative session that will help protect Oregon from invasive species; and identify next steps. The summit will be held at the Northwest Viticulture Center.

“We had a very successful 2009 legislative session,” said OISC Chair Sam Chan. “We supported 12 invasive species bills, and 11 of them passed into law. But there's more work to do. In the 2011 legislative session, bills relating to firewood, felt-soled waders, and ballast water will be introduced to further protect Oregon's waterways and forests.”

The summit comes on the heels of a tri-state outreach campaign with Washington and Idaho to inform the public about the dangers of moving firewood. Firewood can harbor invasive insects, such as emerald ash borer and Asian long-horned beetle. In addition, firewood can help move diseases, such as Sudden Oak Death, which threatens Oregon's nursery industry.

“One of the most effective ways we can ensure protection of Oregon's native fish and wildlife habitats is to focus on the vectors—the pathways—that introduce these species to the State of Oregon,” said Chan. “If the public is informed and become more aware of the impacts from

invasive species, if they understand what to look for and where to look and what they can do to help, and if they have a way to easily report their suspected findings, Oregon will save a great deal of money in the fight against invasive species.”

To help Oregonians easily report suspected sightings of invasive species, the Oregon Invasive Species Council is launching iMapInvasives, an online Geographic Information System (GIS) that allows people to record and display invasive species location information, this fall. The reporting system will further Oregon’s ability to map and share invasive species information.

“Oregon needs a robust invasive species mapping and reporting system,” said OISC member and The Nature Conservancy Director of Conservation Science and Planning Steve Buttrick. “The iMapInvasives system will create efficiencies, improve our ability to share data across geopolitical lines, and ultimately save the state money and time. We’re anxious to launch the program for the State of Oregon.”

Summit presentations will focus on the potential use of biofuels, including giant reed, to power the Boardman plant; the statewide management assessment of invasive species; a panel discussion of Oregon legislators; the status of feral swine in Oregon; invasive species education through snail monitoring; a 10-year review of Oregon’s aquatic invasive species plan; mystery snails in Oregon, and orange hawkweed and purple starthistle. In addition, summit attendees will participate in small group discussions to develop priority actions that will form the basis for a statewide invasive species strategic plan for Oregon.

“Hosting the summit allows the Oregon Invasive Species Council to bring Oregon’s key leaders and managers together to create efficient, cost-effective, collaborative solutions to invasive species issues,” said Chan. “We’re especially excited to have bi-partisan representation by legislators at the summit—everyone in Oregon needs to be concerned about invasive species. We cannot win this fight without everyone rolling up their sleeves and working together on this issue.”

If you are interested in attending the summit, please RSVP with OISC Coordinator Lisa DeBruyckere, by emailing her at lisad@createstrat.com.

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The mission of the Oregon Invasive Species Council 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.