

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Chapter 1: Invasive Species Policy

Originating Office: Office of Policy Analysis

524 DM 1

1.1 **Purpose.** This chapter establishes Department of the Interior (DOI) policy that directs Bureaus/offices to manage the risk of invasive species in their activities, and minimize that risk where applicable and practicable, in cooperation with others as appropriate. This includes helping prevent the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species; promoting early detection and rapid response; and providing for eradication and control to minimize adverse impacts, such as impacts to the environment, human health and safety, cultural resources, recreation, infrastructure, and the economy.

1.2 **Scope.** The policy in this chapter applies to all Bureaus/offices, excluding the Bureau of Indian Education.

1.3 **Authorities.** See Appendix I.

1.4 **Definitions.** See Appendix II.

1.5 **Policy.** It is the policy of DOI to cost-effectively help prevent the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species; detect and rapidly respond to invasive species; eradicate or control populations of invasive species that are established, and implement these actions in collaboration with states, tribes, territories, and others as appropriate. This includes complying with the principles and objectives provided in this chapter, where applicable.

1.6 **Principles.** Consistent with applicable authorities and regulations, Bureaus/offices must comply with the following principles:

A. **Collaborative Conservation.** Coordinate and cooperate across DOI and with other Federal departments and agencies; the National Invasive Species Council and other interagency bodies; tribal, state, local, and territorial governments, Alaska Native Corporations, and the Native Hawaiian Community; entities such as academic institutions, industry sectors and businesses, sportsmen, ranchers and farmers, landowners, local invasive species cooperatives, and other organizations. Leverage staff and funding across these groups to manage invasive species effectively and efficiently.

B. Science-Based Decision-making. Use relevant and reliable science, without bias or regard to the source of that science, to inform and influence understanding of invasive species, their impacts, and how to manage them.

C. Integrated Planning. Recognize that invasive species affect multiple DOI activities and integrate the principles and objectives in this policy in management plans and programmatic documents as appropriate. When planning projects or activities, consider invasive species risks and provide for alternatives or mitigation measures, to the extent practicable, to reduce risks associated with the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species.

D. Integrated Pest Management. Apply integrated pest management (IPM) principles in a manner that balances risks to human health and the environment from invasive species management activities with the related consequences of failure to act expeditiously to control invasive species. The DOI IPM Policy is in 517 DM 1.

E. Strategic Approach. Emphasize the use of prevention, early detection, and rapid response approaches, which are the most cost-effective strategies for invasive species management.

F. Best Management Practices. Use best management practices in all activities to reduce risks associated with invasive species. Activities include but are not limited to natural resources management, construction or development, fire management, permitting, and monitoring.

G. Accountability. Develop specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, and time-fixed performance metrics to evaluate invasive species management activities. Aim for a substantive annual net reduction of invasive species populations or infested acreage on DOI-managed lands and waters. Report annually on performance results and share with Federal and nonfederal partners.

H. Adaptive Management. Use adaptive management, as appropriate, to improve invasive species management and policies. The DOI Adaptive Management Implementation Policy is in 522 DM 1.

I. Landscape-Level Approach. Use a landscape-level, watershed-level, or ecosystem-level approach, whenever possible, to achieve resource management goals at multiple spatial scales. Implement through collaborative and multi-jurisdictional mechanisms.

J. Ecosystem-Based Management. Use a systems approach that emphasizes the importance of maintaining ecological processes to restore or recover ecological communities previously invaded or to maintain the resistance and resilience of relatively intact communities, while balancing economic, cultural, and environmental priorities.

K. Innovative Solutions. Encourage innovative science and technology to manage invasive species.

L. Environmental Change Adaptation. Consider the role of environmental change as it directly or indirectly affects the introduction, establishment, or spread of invasive species. Management of invasive species (*e.g.*, prevention, early detection, rapid response, eradication, and control) can be a critical component of efforts to enhance the resilience of natural areas.

M. Cost-effectiveness. Prioritize the use of cost-effective methods that manage invasive species.

1.7 **Objectives**. Consistent with applicable authorities and regulations, Bureaus/offices will meet the following objectives to the extent practicable and permitted by law:

A. Prevent the introduction of invasive species. Reduce the risks of invasive species introduction, establishment, and spread associated with Bureau/office activities, projects, and people, including Bureau/office employees; entities working for, with, or on the behalf of Bureaus/offices; and, visitors to DOI-managed lands, waters, and facilities. Regulatory actions should support this objective.

(1) Manage risk-using tools, such as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), best management practices, and other methods to reduce the risk of introducing invasive species, particularly prior to implementing actions in the field. Provide training and support in the use of the tools.

(2) Predict potentially invasive species that pose risks to the United States and United States insular areas to inform decision-making and invasive species management.

(3) Manage pathways of introductions of invasive species into and within the United States and United States insular areas using both regulatory and non-regulatory approaches, including but not limited to the following pathways:

(a) Vehicles (motorized and non-motorized, such as cars, trucks, off-road vehicles, watercraft, aircraft, drones, and bicycles). Clean and decontaminate vehicles, appropriate to site conditions, to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species to or from DOI-managed lands and waters.

(b) Materials. To the extent practicable, ensure that all materials used within DOI-managed lands and waters are free of invasive species, including such reproductive and propagative materials as seeds, roots, stems, flowers, leaves, larva, eggs, veligers, spores, and pathogens. Materials include plants, wood, plant products, firewood and other wood products, water, soil, rocks, sand, gravel, mulch, grain, hay, straw, and other related substances.

(c) Employees. Clean and decontaminate clothing and equipment, appropriate to site conditions, to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species. Best practices should include, for example, starting fieldwork in non-emergency situations at the least infested site and finishing at the most infested site, and inspecting and decontaminating equipment and clothing between sites and after fieldwork.

(d) **Grazing Livestock.** Use relevant and reliable science for livestock grazing management practices on DOI-managed lands, including practices to reduce the probability of invasive species introductions; manage invasive species populations, including using prescribed livestock grazing; and maintain and enhance habitat to avoid further encroachment of invasive species. Incorporate those guidelines and measures into permitting documents.

(e) **Transportation and Organisms in Trade.** As applicable, strengthen and support the development of risk-based standards, guidelines, and methods to better understand invasive species and to assess the risk of invasive organisms moved nationally and globally as a result of human activity or action, such as pet, aquaculture, bait, biological supply, research, and ornamental display trades.

(4) Include best management practices for prevention in contracts, grants, permits, and cooperative agreements with entities working for, with, or on the behalf of Bureaus/offices. For example, where determined to be appropriate, use clauses requiring contractors or permittees to clean and decontaminate vehicles and equipment, appropriate to site conditions, prior to entering and when exiting DOI-managed lands, waters, and facilities.

B. Detect and respond rapidly to eradicate or control populations of invasive species in a manner that is cost-effective and reduces human, animal, plant, and environmental health risks.

(1) Survey susceptible areas of DOI-managed lands and waters to detect invasive species and implement timely actions to eradicate them, if feasible, before they establish and spread.

(2) Implement detection and response activities in Bureaus/offices and coordinate with external partners, as appropriate, particularly with regional associations of state, tribal, and territorial governments, to achieve an effective early detection and rapid response approach across DOI-managed lands and waters. This includes coordination in emergency response situations, such as after disasters, including wildland fires and floods, that may require emergency invasive species management actions, such as prevention, eradication, control, or monitoring efforts. Identify Bureau/office contacts at agency and sub-agency levels to serve as contacts for early detection notifications and rapid response activities to help facilitate coordinated action with states, tribes, territories, and other entities, as appropriate.

C. Eradicate or control invasive species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner.

(1) Prioritize the eradication or control of invasive species within DOI-managed lands and waters using site-based and species-based risk assessments. Assessments should consider resource management objectives; invasive species impacts; a comparative economic assessment of invasive species control and management methods to be used; costs and benefits of eradicating or controlling an established species with respect to harm to the environment, human health and safety, cultural resources, recreation, infrastructure, and the economy; probability of successful eradication or control; and resource availability, including fiscal and human capital.

(2) Eradicate or control invasive species within DOI-managed lands and waters when feasible. Use integrated pest management and an adaptive- and ecosystem-based management approach. Where appropriate, every effort should be made to ensure that DOI-managed lands and waters are not responsible for the spread of invasive species, including to adjacent nonfederal properties. Where applicable, work with adjacent land managers or landowners to reduce the spread of invasive species across jurisdictional boundaries.

(3) Expedite and streamline environmental compliance associated with invasive species management, such as consistently utilizing available categorical exclusions, programmatic environmental assessments, or programmatic environmental impact statements to satisfy National Environmental Policy Act compliance for invasive species early detection, rapid response, control, and eradication activities. Utilize emergency or programmatic section 7 consultations under the Endangered Species Act, where applicable and as appropriate.

D. Monitor invasive species. Monitor existing invasive species populations, as appropriate, and monitor the effectiveness of eradication and control measures within DOI-managed lands and waters. This should include leveraging a wide variety of partnerships. When possible, use standardized monitoring across sites to aid in assessing the effectiveness of eradication and control measures.

E. Implement restoration activities following invasive species eradication or control measures, where necessary and feasible, to prevent or reduce the likelihood of the reoccurrence or spread of aquatic or terrestrial invasive species. When restoring ecosystems, use native species where appropriate and where the habitat can sustain them. In this context, native species are those genotypes that are locally adapted to the specific regions, habitats, and species communities under consideration. Where the habitat is not initially able to sustain native species, it may be appropriate to use non-invasive, non-native species or inert materials as an interim step.

F. Conduct research on invasive species, including developing technologies to prevent introduction, improve early detection capabilities, and provide environmentally sound eradication and control. Foster development, application, and coordination of research on invasive species management. Identify, prioritize, and pursue shared invasive species research needs among Bureaus/offices and with non-DOI cooperators.

G. Promote education about invasive species and the means to address them.

(1) Inform and educate Bureau/office employees, partners, and visitors to DOI-managed lands, waters, and facilities about the risks associated with invasive species, ways they can be a part of the solution to manage invasive species, and pertinent Federal and other applicable laws.

(2) Coordinate with Bureaus/offices and with states, tribes, territories, and other organizations to adopt and promote standard messaging, and link to existing public education efforts as appropriate to optimize the effectiveness of education and outreach programs. Develop

outreach programs and materials that foster a sense of stewardship among employees, visitors, partners, and the public.

H. Facilitate and support invasive species data collection and sharing, management, integration, and dissemination, to enable widespread use of accurate information for management decisions, coordinating within DOI and with other Federal agencies, state, tribal, and territorial governments, and partners, as appropriate.

I. Manage invasive species risks related to disasters to reduce the likelihood that invasive species contribute to disasters and exacerbate their impacts. Invasive species can increase the frequency and severity of disasters (such as wildland fire and flooding). In addition, manage invasive species risks following disasters to reduce the likelihood of invasive species introduction, establishment, spread, and future harm to affected areas. Disasters (such as wildland fires, hurricanes, and flooding) can facilitate the establishment and spread of invasive species.

J. Prevent, eradicate, and control invasive species, as appropriate, where they might impair:

(1) Visitor experiences and outdoor recreation opportunities, including hunting, fishing, and boating.

(2) DOI's infrastructure and assets, including power, water, transportation, and housing, and;

(3) Infrastructure related to Trust assets.

K. Where consistent with applicable laws and regulations, prioritize invasive species management that benefits human health and safety and the economy or reduces the need to list native species under the Endangered Species Act.

1.8 Responsibilities.

A. Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget oversees DOI's compliance with this policy and serves as the Executive Sponsor of the DOI Invasive Species Task Force (Task Force).

B. Program Assistant Secretaries oversee implementation of this policy in their respective Bureaus/offices.

C. Heads of Bureaus/Offices ensure compliance with this policy, as appropriate, and:

(1) Issue and update policy and guidance to address invasive species; and guide management actions, including prevention, early detection and rapid response, control, and related activities as they relate to Bureau/office specific missions and authorities, consistent with this policy.

(2) Ensure planning processes consider invasive species risks, to the extent practicable; and, where necessary, provide for alternatives to reduce risks associated with the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species.

(3) Work with program managers to ensure that persons conducting invasive species management activities, including employees, contractors, financial assistance recipients, cooperators, and volunteers, have the relevant experience and training in IPM, best management practices, and pesticide use safety (DOI's policy on Pesticide Use Safety Training is in 517 DM 1).

(4) Designate a representative and an alternate to serve on the Task Force to facilitate decision-making from a policy and management perspective.

(5) Take the fullest possible advantage of National Environmental Policy Act categorical exclusions available with respect to invasive species management.

D. Director, Office of Policy Analysis provides management oversight and support staff (DOI Invasive Species Coordinator).

E. DOI Invasive Species Coordinator coordinates implementation of this policy; conducts reviews and updates the policy as needed; facilitates implementation of DOI invasive species action plans; coordinates the Task Force; and serves as DOI's liaison to the National Invasive Species Council.

F. DOI Invasive Species Task Force Representative and Alternate.

(1) Represent their Bureau/office in a decision-making capacity and coordinate with appropriate employees within their respective Bureau/office on the progress and activities of the Task Force.

(2) Participate in meetings convened by the DOI Invasive Species Coordinator and contribute toward the goals and successes of the Task Force through active involvement and commitment to the strategies, actions, and tasks that are generated and agreed to.

(3) Participate in, or designate staff to participate in, DOI-wide invasive species initiatives, as requested and as able.

G. Director, Office of Acquisition and Property Management and Bureau/Office Heads of Contracting Activity ensure that:

(1) Where appropriate, contracts and agreements with entities working for and on behalf of Bureaus/offices, include cost-effective standards to prevent the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species.

(2) Contracting Officers work with Program Managers to ensure that contractors performing work on DOI-managed lands, waters, and facilities are informed of risks associated with invasive species, as well as pertinent Federal and other applicable laws.

1.9 **DOI Invasive Species Task Force.**

A. Purpose. The purpose of the Task Force is to improve communication and coordination within DOI on invasive species issues, and facilitate a strategic, coordinated approach to invasive species management

B. Membership. The DOI Invasive Species Coordinator coordinates the Task Force. The following Bureaus/offices have representatives and alternates on the Task Force: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, National Park Service, Office of Insular Affairs, Office of International Affairs, and Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. Heads of other Bureaus/offices are encouraged, but not required, to designate a representative to the Task Force.

C. Responsibilities. The Task Force responsibilities include:

(1) Developing, updating, and guiding implementation of DOI action plans that take a strategic, coordinated approach to management efforts; and, providing information on multi-year strategies and operations plans, as needed.

(2) Working collaboratively across Bureaus/offices to develop, use, and

institutionalize policies and practices to implement this policy, including efforts to conduct periodic reviews of the execution of invasive species activities to confirm consistency with the policy.

(3) Improving alignment of invasive species programs and providing regular briefings for DOI's senior leadership.

(4) Serving as a forum for disseminating information, communicating priorities, and informing DOI-wide invasive species initiatives and responses on invasive species issues.

(5) Advising the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget, through the Office of Budget, on budget initiatives relating to invasive species.

Appendix I

Authorities

The policy in this chapter is consistent with Federal laws and other authorities, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661, as amended by the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, Pub. L. No. 116-9, section 7001(b) (2019).
- B. Plant Protection Act of 2000, 7 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.* (supersedes all but Sections 1 and 15 of the Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974).
- C. Sections 1 and 15 of the Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, 7 U.S.C. 2801 and 2814.
- D. Noxious Weed Control and Eradication Act of 2004, 7 U.S.C. 7781-7786.
- E. Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), 7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.*
- F. Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act (NANPCA) of 1990, as reauthorized and amended by the National Invasive Species Act (NISA) of 1996, 16 U.S.C. 4701 *et seq.*
- G. Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*
- H. Migratory Bird Treaty Act, 16 U.S.C. 703 *et seq.*
- I. Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, 16 U.S.C. 668-688d.
- J. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4370f.
- K. National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 54 U.S.C. 300101 *et seq.*
- L. Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 *et seq.*
- M. Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1997, 30 U.S.C. 1201 *et seq.*
- N. Lacey Act, 18 U.S.C. 42 and 16 U.S.C. 3371-3378.
- O. Alien Species Prevention Enforcement Act of 1992, 39 U.S.C. 3015 & note.
- P. Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*

- Q. Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978, 43 U.S.C 1901 *et seq.*
- R. Carlson-Foley Act of 1968, 43 U.S.C 1241 *et seq.*
- S. National Park Service Organic Act, 54 U.S.C 100101 *et seq.*
- T. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, 16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997.
- U. American Indian Agricultural Resource Management Act of 1993, as amended, 25 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*
- V. Brown Tree Snake Control and Eradication Act of 2004, 7 U.S.C. 8501-8507.
- X. Executive Order 13112, *Invasive Species*, issued February 3, 1999; as amended by Executive Order 13751, *Safeguarding the Nation from the Impacts of Invasive Species*, issued December 5, 2016.

Appendix II

Definitions

- A. Adaptive Management. A decision process that promotes flexible decision-making that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood. (Adapted from 522 DM 1)
- B. Best Management Practices. Methods or techniques found to be the most effective and practical means of achieving an objective while optimizing resources.
- C. Control. Containing, suppressing, or reducing populations of invasive species.
- D. Cultural Resources. Any prehistoric and historic districts, archaeological sites, buildings, structures, objects, cultural landscapes, sacred sites, and traditional cultural properties that are in, or eligible for, inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places; also, plant and animal species and populations traditionally used by individuals and communities to provide medicine, food, shelter, clothing, and other material culture, as well as landscapes that support these plant and animal species, and the human activities that reinforce cultural identity and religious expression.
- E. DOI-Managed Lands and Waters. Lands and waters that are under the jurisdiction of DOI, excluding tribal lands.
- F. Early Detection. A process of surveying for, reporting, and verifying the presence of a non-native species before the founding population becomes established or spreads so widely that eradication is no longer feasible.
- G. Ecosystem. A community of living organisms in conjunction with the nonliving components of their environment (air, water, and soil), interacting as a system. These biotic and abiotic components are linked together through nutrient cycles and energy flows.
- H. Ecosystem-Based Management. An environmental management approach that recognizes the full array of interactions within an ecosystem, including humans, rather than considering single issues, species, or ecosystem services in isolation.
- I. Eradication. Removal or destruction of an entire population of invasive species.
- J. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP). A management planning tool that provides a structured method to identify risks associated with natural resource pathway activities. It involves understanding pathways and developing plans to reduce non-target species and prevent biological contamination to avoid unintended spread of species.
- K. Integrated Pest Management. An approach to managing pests that uses biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools in a way that minimizes health, environmental, and economic risks. A science-based, decision-making process that incorporates management goals, consensus

building, pest biology, monitoring, environmental factors, and selection of the best available technology to achieve desired outcomes while minimizing effects to non-target species and the environment and preventing unacceptable levels of pest damage.

L. Introduction. As a result of human activity, the intentional or unintentional escape, release, dissemination, or placement of an organism into an ecosystem to which it is not native.

M. Invasive Species. With regard to a particular ecosystem, a non-native organism whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human, animal, or plant health. Invasive species may include plants, animals, pathogens, and other organisms in terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

N. Landscape-Level Approach. A set of principles that guides resource management decisions at multiple spatial scales, typically when diverse stakeholders seek multiple social, environmental, and economic goals.

O. Management. Activities including but not limited to planning (identification and inventory, prioritization, establishing action thresholds), monitoring, prevention, early detection, rapid response, eradication, control, restoration, research, and regulatory approaches used to minimize the threat of invasive species.

P. Native Species. With respect to a particular ecosystem, an organism, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that, other than as a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in that ecosystem.

Q. Non-Native Species (also Alien Species). With respect to a particular ecosystem, an organism, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that occurs outside of its natural range.

R. Non-Regulatory Approach. Activity other than direct regulation of the private sector, such as cooperative efforts (such as government and industry working together to educate the public on environmentally responsible options to surrender unwanted pets), technical assistance (such as providing technical assistance to import industries for low-risk alternative methods and species), or Federal procurement (such as requiring contractors to use best practices to prevent the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species).

S. Prevention. The action of stopping invasive species from being introduced or spreading into a new ecosystem.

T. Rapid Response. A process that is employed to eradicate the founding population of a non-native species from a specific location before it becomes established or spreads so widely that eradication is no longer feasible.