

National Invasive Species Council Annual Work Plan FY2020

In line with Executive Orders 13112 and 13751, the mandate of the National Invasive Species Council (Council) is to provide the vision and national leadership necessary to coordinate, sustain, and expand federal efforts to safeguard the interests of the United States from the negative impacts of invasive species. The following document outlines the core activities that the Council staff implements in cooperation with Council member agencies over the course of FY2020. These activities are intended to build on the mechanisms and responsibilities outlined in the Council's Terms of Reference with the goal of advancing a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to priority invasive species issues that require inter-agency or intergovernmental collaboration.

Council staff develop the Annual Work Plans (Work Plans) under the guidance of the Council Co-Chairs, or their Principals, in consultation with the other Principals and Senior Advisers, and with input from relevant federal interagency committees. The Work Plan directs the efforts of Council staff and is implemented in collaboration with relevant personnel from Council member agencies and other stakeholders, as appropriate. The Work Plan is approved according to the relevant policies and procedures of the Co-Chair agencies: the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior. Support for Council staff coordination activities is generally provided through the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, although other agencies may contribute human or fiscal resources as available and appropriate.

The Work Plan includes both general coordination responsibilities as well as select, thematic activities based on priorities identified by the Council. Overall, the Work Plans aim to advance efforts to:

- Facilitate institutional leadership and priority setting by Council members;
- Achieve effective interagency coordination and cost-efficiency;
- Raise awareness and motivate action;
- Remove institutional and policy barriers;
- Assess and strengthen capacities; and
- Foster scientific, technical, and programmatic innovation.

Core Coordination Activities

The Council staff play a coordination role to ensure effective and efficient communication and collaboration across Council member agencies on issues related to invasive species. The goal of such higher level engagement should benefit and facilitate the efforts of federal agencies to address invasive species and their impacts. The Council staff also liaise with other relevant federal interagency committees and non-federal partners as appropriate to further support coordination efforts and implementation of priority activities.

The following activities reflect the general coordination responsibilities of Council staff. Specific coordination actions are also tailored to the thematic priority activities and depend on staff capacity and ongoing dialogue with Principals and Senior Advisers:

- Coordinate meetings of the Council, as directed by the Co-Chairs or their Principals, and develop meeting summaries, compile action items, and distribute information regarding the meetings as applicable.
- Coordinate meetings of the Senior Advisers on a regular basis to share information and provide input and guidance on current and future Council activities. Representatives of relevant federal interagency committees are invited to participate as observers.
- Provide regular updates to Senior Advisers and representatives of relevant federal interagency committees on policy developments, Council member activities and outputs, and other relevant information.
- Coordinate with other relevant federal interagency committees addressing invasive species, including through participation in their meetings and collaboration on mutual priority activities where appropriate.
- Coordinate with Council member agencies to facilitate engagement with non-federal stakeholders in relevant meetings.
- Organize and convene webinars and workshops, as needed and in consultation and coordination with Council member agencies, to facilitate conversations on timely invasive species issues.
- Facilitate information sharing and promote collaborative efforts regarding nationally significant, emerging issues applicable to invasive species management.
- Convene and coordinate task teams, as needed and in consultation and coordination with Council member agencies, to address thematic priority activities with specific, discrete deliverables.
- Maintain the Council’s online presence and help organize, provide, and/or coordinate content with other federal invasive species websites.
- Respond to requests for assistance from Council members on relevant activities as resources allow.
- Coordinate the Development of the FY2021 Annual Work Plan.

Thematic Priority Activities

Thematic priorities include a select number of activities where Council staff engages with federal agency experts to advance work in particular areas of importance.¹ In addition to the details provided below, each area of activity is guided by the development of an operational planning table that specifies clear objectives, activities or outputs to be delivered, quality standards, key targets, performance indicators, risk management considerations, staffing and resource requirements, implementation timetables, and a process for monitoring progress.

EARLY DETECTION AND RAPID RESPONSE

1. *Rapid Response – Tools and Lessons Learned*

Objective: Support national level rapid response efforts by documenting tools and lessons learned.

¹ Note: references to specific agencies as activity partners indicate potential applicability to that agency and do not imply or confer any additional budgetary obligation on those agencies to support that activity.

Output: Compilation of tools and lessons learned (e.g., best practices, strategies to reduce obstacles) for federal agencies and their partners in rapid response efforts, including use of the incident command system. This effort will build on previous work on early detection and rapid response, as well as ongoing regional efforts involving federal agencies.

Mechanism: Council staff to process information request to Council member agencies, compilation and analysis of submissions, and interagency review.

Agency Partners: DOD, DOI, EPA, USDA

Interagency Committees: ANSTF

2. *Rapid Response – Emergency Funding*

Objective: Increase resource streams for rapid response to new detections of invasive species.

Output: White paper evaluating the benefits and challenges of rapid response funds, including identification of obstacles and opportunities to leverage funding streams.

Mechanism: Council staff to work with ANSTF on the outline, development, and interagency review of the white paper.

Agency Partners: DOI, EPA, USDA, OMB

Interagency Committees: ANSTF

INNOVATION AND EMERGING ISSUES

3. *eDNA Assessment and Coordination*

Objective: Help federal invasive species management efforts more fully and effectively utilize eDNA.

Output: White paper assessing applications, opportunities, and obstacles relevant to invasive species, such as standardization, information management and accessible data clearinghouses, interpretation of eDNA samples, and development of assays. This could include the development of guidance for the adoption of standards that are acceptable across federal agencies.

Mechanism: Council staff to establish and coordinate an interagency task team in coordination with the ANSTF and the Government eDNA Working Group to outline, develop, and provide interagency review for the white paper.

Agency Partners: DOC/NOAA, DOI, EPA, USDA

Interagency Committees: ANSTF

4. *Advanced Biotechnology Applications*

Objective:	Facilitate communication and information sharing across federal agencies on the use of advanced biotechnologies relevant to the management of invasive species.
Output:	Interagency dialogue on federal agency needs and opportunities associated with advanced biotechnologies and their application to invasive species, and documentation of lessons learned (e.g., for risk assessment, social engagement).
Mechanism:	Council staff to coordinate an interagency task team to exchange information on potential advanced biotechnology applications and to provide interagency review for lessons learned.
Agency Partners:	DOD, DOI, EPA, HHS, OSTP, USDA
Interagency Committees:	ANSTF

MANAGEMENT

5. *Invasive Species and Wildland Fire – Assessment*

Objective:	Assess options to advance landscape scale approaches to the management of invasive species and wildland fire.
Output:	White paper on obstacles, needs, and opportunities for addressing invasive species in the context of wildfire management.
Mechanism:	Council staff to establish and coordinate an interagency task team to outline, develop, and provide interagency review for the white paper.
Agency Partners:	DOD, DOI, USDA
Interagency Committees:	FICMNEW, NSTC-SDR, WFLC

ADMINISTRATION

6. *Crosscut Budget Assessments – Inventory and Analysis*

Objective:	Maintain inventory of federal spending on invasive species and identify means to enhance the value of interagency coordination on budgetary issues.
Output:	Crosscut budget tables and analysis of opportunities for interagency coordination on budgetary issues.
Mechanism:	Council staff to work with Senior Advisers and member agency budget contacts to review the crosscut budget process, identify potential improvements, and assess opportunities for improved budgetary coordination. Based on the outcomes of those discussions, Council staff will proceed with a crosscut budget exercise as appropriate.
Agency Partners:	All NISC member agencies, as able

Criteria for Inclusion of Actions

A set of strategic decision-making criteria shall be used in the development of Work Plans to identify priority activities for implementation that:

- Address a pressing invasive species issue or opportunity identified by a Council member agency that could be advanced by interagency cooperation.
- Have a commitment for federal agency engagement and/or leadership from two or more Council member agencies.
- Identify a beneficial role for NISC staff participation as agreed upon by engaged federal agencies.
- Align with administration and Council member agency goals.
- Are feasible given the capacity of Council staff coupled with human or financial resources contributed by engaged agencies.
- Align with one or more objectives from Executive Order 13751
 - Provide institutional leadership and priority setting,
 - Achieve effective inter-agency coordination and cost-efficiency,
 - Raise awareness and motivate action,
 - Remove institutional and policy barriers,
 - Assess and strengthen capacities, and
 - Foster connections to the latest scientific, technical, and programmatic innovation.
- Follow “USMART” principles (Useful, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Based).

Acronyms

ANSTF – Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force

DOC – Department of Commerce

DOD – Department of Defense

DOI – Department of the Interior

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

FICMNEW – Federal Interagency Committee on the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds

HHS – Department of Health and Human Services

NSTC-SDR – National Science and Technology Council, Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

OMB – Office of Management and Budget

OSTP – Office of Science and Technology Policy

USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture

WFLC – Wildland Fire Leadership Council

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