



OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For release: January 24, 2008

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PRESS RELEASE

INVASIVE SPECIES REPORT CARD CHALLENGES OREGON TO THINK AND ACT STRATEGICALLY

SALEM, Oregon—There is nothing like a new system to get people to think differently. Such is the case with Oregon's annual report card on invasive species.

The report card from the Oregon Invasive Species Council is intended to assess how Oregon is doing in the battle against unwanted invasive species. The report card was expanded in 2007 to include the familiar grade that is based on the state's success at keeping the 100 worst invaders from creating a home in Oregon, and an additional four grades that assess success in implementing the statutory mandates of the council—a reporting system for invasive species, outreach and education initiatives, the statewide action plan, and administering the council's trust account.

In addition, the new report card offers recommendations on how grades can be improved in each category.

Oregon again scored very high in holding the 100 worst invaders at bay in 2007, bringing home a solid A in that category. None of the organisms on the 100 worst list became established in Oregon in 2007. To maintain or improve that grade, Oregon must prevent all species on the OISC 100 Worst List from becoming established by 2009, document that target established invaders are decreasing or holding steady, 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 to deal with state-specific issues.

In the category that assesses a reporting system for invasive species, Oregon received a B grade for its 1-866-INVADER hotline, a telephone line available for people to report a potential invasive species in Oregon. To boost that grade in 2008, the council must make improvements to

its website and outreach materials and help in launching and then managing a new online version of the hotline with Oregon Public Broadcasting.

For its education and outreach efforts, Oregon scored a B+, primarily because of a statewide awareness and engagement campaign developed in 2007 that will launch on Earth Day in 2008. The council, Oregon Public Broadcasting, SOLV, The Nature Conservancy, Oregon State University, Portland State University, and federal and state partners are collaborating on a long-term public awareness campaign to curtail invasive species. To improve this grade in 2008, the state must fully implement both the initial and long-term strategies of the campaign.

An average grade of C was given in the statewide action plan category. The council took its first step in implementing an action plan by obtaining the funding to contract with a coordinator part-time. The coordinator will facilitate efforts to lead the council in the development of a statewide strategic plan with measurable outcomes and objectives. To improve the grade in this category, the council must conduct a statewide assessment of invasive species in Oregon and develop a strategic plan.

Oregon didn't fare so well in the trust account category, earning a D for failing to raise funds for a trust account to fund invasive species work that was established by the Legislature in 2002. To improve this grade in 2008, the council must articulate and achieve fundraising goals tied to its strategic plan.

Oregon's overall grade for invasive species efforts in 2007 is a B.

Dan Hilburn, Chair of the Oregon Invasive Species Council in 2007 and Oregon Department of Agriculture Plant Division Administrator, was pleased with the overall grade, but commented there was a great deal of work to do. "Collaboration and coordination are critical to achieving success with invasive species efforts in Oregon," said Hilburn. "We can only be successful if we think and act strategically, maximize efficient use of human and financial resources, and engage the public in the importance of keeping their eyes open to invasive species that can enter our state in so many ways. Many states have lost or are losing the battle against invasive species. Oregon is poised to stay ahead of the pack and maintain the quality of its natural resources for native fish and wildlife and people if we think and act strategically."

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 Association of Nurseries, Oregon Marine Board, Bureau of Indian Affairs, USDA Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, Gilliam County Weed Department, Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery, and Port of Portland. In addition, agency representatives include Portland State University, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State University, and Oregon Department of Agriculture.

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OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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For release: February 8, 2008

Contact: Lisa A. DeBruyckere
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PRESS RELEASE

AWARD RECIPIENTS PROVE ANYONE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OREGON'S INVASIVE SPECIES EFFORTS

SALEM, Oregon—It doesn't matter whether you're a student, state employee, teacher, law enforcement officer, or journalist—armed with knowledge, anyone can stop the spread of invasive species in Oregon.

Each year, the Oregon Invasive Species Council gives awards to people whose individual efforts protect Oregon's natural resources, economy, and quality of life from the devastating effects of invasive species.

“We look past Oregon's borders and see states that have lost or are losing the fight against invasive species,” said Oregon Invasive Species Council Chair Mark Sytsma. “But in Oregon, we still have a chance to be proactive, to protect Oregon's natural ecosystems, our economy, and quality of life.”

The 2007 award winners were recognized at a February 5 awards luncheon, which included guest speaker Dr. Robert Faust, who described the tremendous loss of habitat in Hawaii and the major changes in Hawaii's natural systems because of invasive species such as Coqui frogs, Christmas berry, and rats. The main point of his talk was that people's actions can prevent invasive species.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council awarded the following:

The Eagle Eye Award is presented for reporting the most important sighting of an invasive species. Dan Van Dyke of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife received the award for spotting a house boat from Missouri being towed on I-5 near Medford, Oregon. As a result of his actions, the boat was stopped in Washington, inspected, and found to have zebra mussels attached. Zebra mussels are native to the Caspian Sea, entered the Great Lakes in the mid-1980s

in ship ballast water, and have since spread to more than 20 states and two Canadian provinces. Because the mussels can live out of water for up to four weeks, they easily hitch a ride on boats and trailers. Once introduced, they smother other species by quickly multiplying, clogging water-intakes at power plants and irrigation systems, and outcompeting native fish and wildlife.

Honorable Mention Eagle Eye Awards were given to Dan Stoner of the Oregon Department of Agriculture for finding the source of a gypsy moth infestation in Shady Cover, and Todd Pheiffer of Klamath County Public Works, for finding both Taurian thistle, a new state record, and Plumeless Thistle, a new county record, in Klamath County.

Gypsy moths are native to Europe and Asia, but once introduced to the United States in the late 1890s, their populations erupted in forests, defoliating millions of acres of trees and shrubs in the northeastern United States. Since the late 1970s, small isolated populations of this insect have been detected and eradicated in Oregon. Continued vigilance will keep this invader from defoliating Oregon's forests.

The Sandra Denyes Diedrich Award is given for making the most outstanding contribution to protecting Oregon from invasive species. It was presented to environmental reporter Beth Casper and editor Michelle Maxwell of the Statesman Journal, for development of a comprehensive and effective education series on the environmental and financial effects of invasive species in Oregon (see <http://www.statesmanjournal.com>), and Jeff Douglas and Ed Jahn of Oregon Public Broadcasting (<http://www.opb.org>), for dedicating substantial staff resources to partner, plan, and launch on Earth Day, April 22, 2008, a statewide invasive species awareness and engagement campaign.

Honorable Mention for the Sandra Denyes Diedrich Award was presented to Thea Hayes, a teacher at Binnsmead Middle School, for successfully incorporating student learning and stewardship projects on invasive species as a standard part of student inquiry education.

The 10 Fingers in the Dike Award is presented for going above and beyond the call of duty to keep new invaders out of Oregon. This year's recipient was Deputy Dave Johnson, a marine law enforcement officer with Umatilla County, for being active in boating education and checking zealously for invasive species on boats. Honorable Mention in this award category was given to Stephen Phillips of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, for successful coordination and facilitation of training on rapid response and incident command should Quagga mussels be detected in Oregon and Washington. Similar to zebra mussels, Quagga mussels are native to the Caspian Sea, clog water intake pipes and underwater screens, and build up on boat docks, boats, and beaches. They eat the food source of fish and can change the food web in a lake, discharging phosphorus with their waste. To prevent the spread of this devastating non-native species, boat owners should inspect and remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud, and drain all water from their boat and equipment before leaving a boat launch; throw away unwanted bait in the trash; and spray and rinse the boat and equipment with a high pressure washer and/or hot tap water, especially if the boat has been moored for more than one day.

The Invader Crusader Award is presented for making a difference in protecting Oregon from invasive species, and was given to Gwenn Kubeck, an Oregon State University graduate student,

for developing and leading focus groups with Oregon Invasive Species Council stakeholders on their understanding of invasive species, and for obtaining baseline results for use before the launch of the statewide invasive species awareness campaign on April 22, 2008. Gwenn is supported by the Oregon Sea Grant program at Oregon State University (OSU). Sea Grant is a permanent member of the council. Honorable Mention for this award was given to Trevor Sheffels, a Portland State University, Center for Lakes and Reservoirs graduate student for increasing public knowledge of nutria populations, damage, and issues in Oregon, through research, seminars, and tours. The nutria is a large, herbivorous, semi-aquatic rodent native to temperate South America. Burrowing and feeding activities are destructive to wetlands and levees.

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 Association of Nurseries, Oregon Marine Board, Bureau of Indian Affairs, USDA Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, Gilliam County Weed Department, Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery, and Port of Portland. In addition, agency representatives include Center for Lakes and Reservoirs at Portland State University, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Sea Grant at Oregon State University, and Oregon Department of Agriculture.

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OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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For release: February 18, 2008

Contact: Lisa A. DeBruyckere
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PRESS RELEASE

WILDLIFE PROFESSIONALS RECOGNIZE OREGON FERAL SWINE ACTION PLAN EFFORTS

SALEM, Oregon—Pigs belong behind fences, according to Oregon’s wildlife biologists.

At the annual meeting of the Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) in Gleneden Beach February 13-15, 2008, wildlife professionals from Oregon and neighboring states convened to discuss strategies for managing wildlife populations in the face of increasing human population and development. One of the greatest threats to native fish and wildlife habitats is feral swine.

To address that threat, Dr. Mark Sytsma, Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) Chair and Director for The Center for Lakes and Reservoirs at Portland State University (PSU), and Arick Rouhe, Master of Science candidate at PSU, were given the Outstanding Service Award by TWS for developing a feral swine action plan in 2007 to eradicate this invasive species in Oregon. The award is a “professional recognition award” granted in recognition for outstanding contributions in wildlife management in the past year. Individuals may be recognized for contributions in research, management, conservation, public involvement, education, or law enforcement.

A feral swine pest risk assessment for Oregon, released in 2004, designated feral swine as a “very high-risk species” due to great potential for establishment, environmental and economic impacts, and disease transmission to wildlife, livestock, and humans. Restoration of ecosystems and losses to agriculture and livestock have been estimated to exceed \$800 million in the United States each year. Environmental impacts include facilitation of noxious weed invasions, shifts in dominant plant species, reduction of forest regeneration, and soil erosion. Facilitation of noxious weeds and erosion due to feral swine rooting have been documented in Oregon.

“Feral swine pose a tremendous threat to native Oregon fish and wildlife species and their habitats, and they are capable of transmitting serious diseases to humans and other livestock such as sheep,” said Sytsma. “Other states have lost the fight to control feral swine because they

waited until populations became widespread and established. The key to controlling non-native species is early detection and rapid response. Oregon has time to eradicate feral swine and prevent them from establishing if we act now.”

The feral swine population in Oregon is currently small and dispersed, but in states such as California, failure to act quickly has resulted in large populations of feral swine that are unmanageable and uncontrollable.

Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society President Bruce Campbell commented on the thoroughness of the feral swine action plan and its importance to Oregon’s conservation strategy.

“The plan calls for four years of actions that include recommended legislative changes to facilitate eradication, outreach and education, population assessment, rapid response, and eradication elements,” said Campbell. “It’s a comprehensive and thorough plan that addresses several components of the state’s conservation strategy.”

Eradication of feral swine in Oregon is estimated to require a four-year, \$1.29 million effort. Follow-up control of new releases and escapes will require a maintenance effort estimated at less than \$50,000 per year (excluding contingency funds for emergency response). These costs are small relative to the value of the \$3.6 billion Oregon agriculture and livestock industries and the investment Oregon has made in riparian restoration efforts. Sustained control of feral swine in Oregon will require a long-term commitment that will include annual domestic swine marking, education, and monitoring.

The mission of The Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society is to promote wise conservation and management of wildlife resources in Oregon.

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.

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OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For release: May 19, 2008

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PRESS RELEASE

OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES SUMMIT SET FOR JULY

SALEM, Oregon—One way to deal with the threat of invasive species to Oregon is to bring the best of the best together to strategize and develop solutions, according to the Oregon Invasive Species Council.

On Tuesday, July 22, 2008, the council is hosting a gathering of state and federal agency directors, legislators, and stakeholders contributing to invasive species efforts in Oregon to develop a shared understanding of the threat of invasive species to Oregon's natural resources, economy, and quality of life; develop cost-effective, focused, proactive, shared strategies and commitments that adequately fund and implement invasive species control and prevention efforts in Oregon; and develop a shared understanding of and support for legislative concepts for the 2009 legislative session that will provide Oregon with adequate legal protections from invasive species. The summit will be held in Salem, Oregon at the Northwest Viticulture Center.

“The time to act is now,” said Oregon Invasive Species Council Chair Mark Sytsma. “Other states that have lost or are losing the battle to invasive species are looking back and saying, ‘We wish we had done something sooner.’ Oregon needs sustainable long-term funding to monitor and manage invasive species, emergency funding to quickly and efficiently respond to new invasives, and legislation to adequately protect Oregon.”

Governor Kulongoski's office is supportive of the campaign and the summit. “This campaign truly represents the highest level of collaboration amongst government, nonprofit, and private entities in Oregon,” said Governor Ted Kulongoski. “This is an excellent example of what can happen when people work together to leverage resources to make a difference to Oregon's native fish and wildlife resources, economy, and quality of life. The summit represents the next critical step in protecting Oregon.”

The summit is part of “Stop the Invasion,” an overall statewide awareness and engagement invasive species campaign that is garnering national attention because of the unprecedented level of cooperation and collaboration among state, federal, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, industry leaders, and the media.

Recent outcomes of the campaign include a one-hour documentary on invasive species produced by Oregon Public Broadcasting; a new website called <http://oregoninvasiveshotline.org> for the public to report sightings and download photos of suspected invasive species; *GardenSmart Oregon: a Guide to Non-invasive Plants*, that identifies 25 of the most threatening invasive plants across Oregon and recommends non-invasive alternative plants for gardeners and landscapers; efforts by SOLV to coordinate weed pulls with 10,000 Oregonians; an ongoing monthly series on invasive species in the *Statesman Journal*; and pre- and post-campaign surveys to determine how much Oregonians know about invasive species, and what citizens can do to help prevent their spread.

Other participants in “Stop the Invasion” include The Nature Conservancy, the Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Agriculture, and Forestry, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Oregon Marine Board, Port of Portland, Bureau of Indian Affairs—Warm Springs, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, USDA Plant Protection and Quarantine, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, SOLV, Oregon Public Broadcasting, Portland State University, many cooperative weed management areas and county weed boards, along with numerous citizens, corporations, private foundations, and organizations.

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.

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OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For release: October 21, 2008

Contact: Lisa A. DeBruyckere, OISC Coordinator
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PRESS RELEASE

OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR 2009-2010 COUNCIL SEATS BY DECEMBER 8

SALEM, Oregon—If you've ever wanted to be a part of a "happening" organization, now is your time to throw your hat into the ring for a coveted spot on the Oregon Invasive Species Council.

The Council is seeking nominations for three open seats for positions currently filled by members whose terms expire on December 31, 2008. People with expertise in the following areas are especially needed: marine issues, outreach, seed industry, aquaculture, shipping industry, and nurseries. The statute requires the appointing authorities to endeavor to appoint persons representative of the geographic, cultural, and economic diversity of this state. Terms are for two years with a two-term limit.

There are 13 seats on the Council. Five of them are permanently assigned to the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State University (Sea Grant), Portland State University (Center for Lakes and Reservoirs), and Oregon Department of Forestry. The five permanent members are responsible for appointing eight at-large members from government agencies, universities, industries, organizations or individuals having an interest in invasive species.

The at-large individuals about to vacate their positions represent the Oregon Association of Nurseries, Oregon Marine Board, and Bureau of Indian Affairs—Warm Springs. Other at-large members currently represent the USDA Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, Gilliam County Weed Department, Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery, and Port of Portland.

Council members are not paid, but they are reimbursed for travel expenses when on Council business, including meetings. Nominees should be willing to commit to three 1.5-day meetings per year in various parts of the state, conference calls as necessary, and additional work on behalf of the Council.

Nominations should be sent to OISC Coordinator Lisa DeBruyckere, 6159 Rosemeadow Lane NE, Salem, OR, 97317 or lisad@createstrat.com. Please include the individual's name, title, phone, fax, e-mail, and mailing address as well as a brief description of their qualifications. The deadline for nominations is December 8, 2008. Appointments will be announced shortly thereafter, and the next meeting of the Council will occur February 18-19, 2009.

Formation of the Council by the legislature was a major step in addressing invasive species problems in Oregon. Non-native weeds and undesirable exotic animals threaten vital habitats and jeopardize important commercial species. Nutria, European starling, Dutch elm disease, European green crab, Himalayan blackberry, and German yellowjacket are all examples of invasive species now established in Oregon. Other species, such as zebra and quagga mussels, Chinese mitten crab, gypsy moth, and kudzu, threaten to invade.

The Council began work on January 1, 2002. Its purpose is to facilitate communication, education, and cooperation on invasive species problems. In the past year, the Council participated in a statewide awareness and engagement campaign to stop the spread of invasive species, hosted a statewide summit on invasive species, developed an annual business plan, and identified key legislation and funding needed to protect Oregon from ongoing invasive species threats. The next major initiative for the Council is to conduct a statewide management assessment of invasive species, which will occur in February of 2009. Upon completion of the assessment, the Council will develop a long-term invasive species strategic plan for Oregon.

Any questions about the nomination process should be directed to OISC Coordinator Lisa DeBruyckere at (503) 704-2884.

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