STATEMENT & POLICY

F&W Forestry Statement on Invasive Plant Species

Original Draft: February 23, 2021 · Revised: March 30, 2021

POLICY STATEMENT

F&W Forestry understands that invasive plants can pose a substantial threat to the management, health, sustainability, and economic viability of forests, agricultural lands, and water resources.

F&W Forestry understands that invasive plant species pose challenges at both the individual forest level and at the landscape level and, as such, effective solutions may require action by both the individual landowner and by institutional and/or governmental bodies to successfully address the problem.

F&W Forestry understands that invasive plants do not recognize property boundaries, that effective control measures can be prohibitively expensive, and that control strategies are evolving and have not yet been fully developed. In some cases, the complexities of the invasive plant problem can exceed the capabilities of individual landowners.

THUS, F&W COMMITS TO …

1. Follow all laws and regulations regarding control of invasive plant species.
2. Provide our foresters with the tools and training necessary to allow them to recognize invasive species in the regions where they work.
3. When invasive plants are recognized on F&W-managed forestland, F&W will evaluate, on a case-by-case basis, the control options available, taking into account the level of threat, the cost of control, and the likely impact of no control.
4. Communicate management options and any pertinent stewardship, compliance, or environmental issues to our clients, so that they can make appropriate and informed decisions.
5. Implement control measures, upon the approval of our client, and if both operationally and economically feasible.
6. If control measures involve the application of herbicides; F&W will assure that herbicides are applied by appropriately trained and licensed personnel, and only according to all label instructions and precautions.

7. When required by law, regulation or applicable certification program, F&W will record herbicide applications in an appropriate manner.

> *As to the use of mulch and seed for erosion control, F&W recognizes that while mulch and seed are commonly used to stabilize soil disturbed by logging and road building activities, such products often contain a variety of ingredients, some of which may contain the seed of invasive species.*

THUS, F&W COMMITS TO …

1. Obtain from the vendor a listing of the contents of seed and mulch products.
2. If required by regulation or an applicable certification program, utilize products certified by the vendor as containing only native non-invasive plant species. In other situations, products certified by the vendor as containing only seed of native non-invasive plant species will be strongly preferred.
3. If required by regulation or an applicable certification program, only hay, straw, or other matting material certified by the vendor as weed-free shall be used. In other situations, hay, straw, or other matting material certified as weed-free by the vendor will be strongly preferred over hay or other products with respect to which such certification cannot be obtained or which are known to contain invasive or unknown seed.
4. Should products with non-native or invasive species seed be used, the application date, location and species will be recorded in the project file. If required, the site will be monitored for the designated period.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM GUIDANCE

ATF *American Tree Farm* — See ATF Standard 4.2

Landowner shall consider a range of forest management activities to control pests, pathogens and unwanted vegetation.

SFI *Sustainable Forestry Initiative*

See Performance Measures 2.2 and 2.4

Performance Measure 2.2. Program Participants shall minimize chemical use required to achieve management objectives while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the environment, including wildlife and aquatic habitats.

Performance Measure 2.4. Program Participants shall manage so as to protect forests from damaging agents, such as environmentally or economically undesirable wildfire, pests, diseases, and invasive exotic plants and animals, to maintain and improve long-term forest health, productivity, and economic viability.

To conserve biological diversity: Participation in programs and demonstrations of activities as appropriate to limit the introduction, spread and impact of invasive exotic plants and animals that directly threaten or are likely to threaten native plant and animal communities.

FSC *Forest Stewardship Council*

See FSC Standard C6.3, 6.6, 6.9, and 7.1

Indicator 6.3.h The forest owner or manager assesses the risk of, prioritizes, and, as warranted, develops and implements a strategy to prevent or control invasive species

C6.6 Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.

Indicator 6.6.d Whenever chemicals are used, a written prescription is prepared that describes the site-specific hazards and environmental risks, and the precautions that workers will employ to avoid or minimize those hazards and risks, and includes a map of the treatment area.

Indicator 6.9.a The use of exotic species is contingent on the availability of credible scientific data indicating that any such species is non-invasive and its application does not pose a risk to native biodiversity. (This indicator is pertinent to erosion control seed mixes)

Indicator 7.1.f If invasive species are present, the management plan describes invasive species conditions, applicable management objectives, and how they will be controlled.