



Invasive Plant Adaptive Management Plan Update



Flowers and leaves of bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), a widespread priority invasive species that is being aggressively controlled in Yosemite.

What is the current status of the plan?

With the signing of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in August 2011, Yosemite National Park approved the *2010 Invasive Plant Management Plan Update* (2010 Update). Implementation will begin in September of 2011. The *2010 Update* provides an improved framework for protecting Yosemite's natural and cultural resources from degradation or displacement by non-native invasive species. Alternative 2 was adopted as the Selected Alternative. These documents have been posted on the park's Planning, Environment and Public Comment Website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=23812>

The *2010 Update* was available for public review and comment from December 15, 2011 through January 30, 2011. Comments were reviewed by a NPS planning team. Substantive comments were analyzed and documented, along with NPS responses, in the *Public Comment and Response Report*. The Selected Alternative is based upon the best available science and practical experience related to invasive plant management. It was also influenced by public concerns and comments.

How will invasive plants be managed in Yosemite?

Invasive plant management planning in Yosemite is based upon the principles of Integrated Pest Management, which includes inventory, prioritization, prevention, treatment, monitoring, outreach, and education. The park incorporates each of these principles in its Invasive Plant Program. Treatment methods include manual, mechanical, cultural, herbicides, and very limited biological controls. Under Alternative 2 of the IPMP Update, the number of treatment methods and tools available to protect park natural and cultural resources was expanded:

- Four new herbicides were added (rimsulfuron, triclopyr, chlorsulfuron, and imazapyr). These herbicides are appropriate for use in wildlands and enable treatment of the broadest spectrum of invasives likely to enter the park;
- Limitations in the 2008 IPMP were addressed including:
 - Patch size and density limits for herbicide use which limited ability to treat infestations while they are still small enough to be effectively controlled were removed;
 - Methods and tools appropriate for sensitive areas such as traditional gathering areas, near water, and in designated wilderness were refined in order to better protect park natural and cultural resources from invasive plants.

Why was a new plan needed?

Invasive plant mapping, monitoring and control efforts expanded following the adoption of the 2008 Invasive Plant Management Plan (2008 Plan). Based upon the results of these efforts, and also recommendations from the Burned Area Emergency Response team following the 2009 Big Meadow Fire, resource managers recognized the need to address limitations in the existing plan. For example, the number and extent of Himalayan blackberry patches had steadily increased, in spite of 20 years of intensive physical control efforts. Also, a pre-emergent herbicide was needed in order to allow for more effective control of cheatgrass and other invasive grasses

Why should invasive plants be managed in Yosemite?

Perhaps no single document better states why we must act aggressively to manage invasive plants than the founding legislation of the National Park Service, the 1916 Organic Act. This legislation states that the National Park Service was created to “conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

Yosemite is home to some 1400 native plant species, over 400 of which are endemic to the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Non-native invasive plants fundamentally threaten natural systems and wildlife not only within Yosemite, but also throughout the National Park Service and worldwide. Our mandate from the Organic Act and other laws and policies is clear, and park staff is working very hard to protect Yosemite’s precious scenery, natural and historic resources, and wildlife from the threat of non-native invasive plants.

How can I stay informed?

The Invasive Plant Management Plan information and a link to PEPC can be accessed from the Yosemite National Park website at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/invasive.htm>. Electronic copies of the EA, FONSI, and the Public Comment and Response Report can be accessed through that link.

An amended annual work plan was posted for public review on the park’s invasive plant management website at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/naturescience/invasive-plant-management.htm>. Work plans and associated maps will be posted each year to inform the public about upcoming invasive plant management efforts.

Park staff are available to answer questions regarding the Invasive Plant Management Plan Update and other park planning efforts at the monthly public open house, held on the last Wednesday of each month from 1pm to 4 pm at the Visitor Center Auditorium in Yosemite Valley.

Requests for hardcopies of the FONSI can be submitted by mail to:
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