

**Finding of No Significant Impact  
for  
Use of Integrated Pest Management to Control Leafy Spurge Occurrences  
along the Klamath and Scott Rivers and in the Quartz Valley Watershed**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Yreka Field Office  
Yreka, California**

**Background**

The purpose of the action is to control or eradicate Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) occurrences on private lands along the Klamath and Scott rivers and private and tribal lands along Quartz Valley tributaries to the Scott River and to prevent Leafy spurge from dispersing along these water courses. Due to the persistence of this species, there remains a small window of opportunity to control incipient occurrences before they become unmanageable. The use of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy was considered in order to curtail the environmental degradation caused by Leafy spurge and to allow the passive restoration of native riparian vegetation. Promoting healthy and functioning riparian habitats will improve water quality and habitat for anadromous fish and riparian associated terrestrial wildlife. The need for the proposed action resulted from a significant increase in Leafy spurge occurrences. Surveys conducted by the Siskiyou County Department of Agriculture (SCDA) over the last decade indicate Leafy spurge sporadically infests over sixty miles of the Klamath and Scott rivers and their tributaries and that the number of Leafy spurge sites have increased by over 100 percent along the Klamath River and over 200 percent along the Scott River since 2001. Because Leafy spurge can adapt to a variety of environmental conditions the observed rate of spread is expected to continue. Unconstrained spread of this species is likely to further degrade riparian ecosystems in Siskiyou County and increase the likelihood for infestations in neighboring counties through which the Klamath River flows. The environmental assessment (EA) analyzed two action alternatives along with the no action alternative.

**Decision**

Based on my review of the alternatives presented in the EA, I have decided to select Alternative 3. My decision to select Alternative 3 is based on analyses contained in the EA, and the supporting scientific literature, as well as public and agency comments received through the planning and scoping process.

The reasons for my decision are based upon the potential benefits and risks of the alternatives. Alternative 3 is the preferred alternative as it best attains the purpose and need of controlling, or eradicating, Leafy spurge occurrences and minimizing Leafy spurge dispersal along the Klamath and Scott river corridors with minimal risk to the environment and human health.

**Summary of the Selected Alternative**

The selected alternative will treat 0.7 acres of Leafy spurge with tarps. Sprouts that immerge from under the tarps will be pulled by hand. Newly discovered occurrences that are in their first

year of growth will be treated by hand-pulling and digging of seedlings. The remainder of occurrences will be treated with herbicides unless other IPM methods are determined to be more suitable. For this alternative, glyphosate will be the herbicide used due to its efficacy at controlling the target species, low toxicity to non-target organisms, and chemical properties that limits its movement in, and potential adverse impacts to, the environment.

#### **Other Alternatives Considered**

In addition to the selected alternative, I considered two other alternatives: Alternative 1, No Action, which refers to taking no action to control Leafy spurge, which would allow the continued spread of Leafy spurge at rates equal to or greater than those observed over the last decade; and Alternative 2, Manual Control, which entails manual control treatments only. Due to the efficacy of treatments, the limited applicability of some manual treatments, and the length of time required to obtain control using these methods, it is unlikely Alternative 2 would prevent the continued spread of Leafy spurge originating from private lands. A comparison of these alternatives can be found in the EA starting on page 6.

#### **Public Involvement**

The draft EA was made available to the public in order to provide background information to interested parties who wished to review and provide comments. A public scoping notice for this project was posted on the Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office website on January 20, 2011, and on the front page of the Siskiyou Daily News on January 23, 2011. The scoping notice provided a project summary and information on how to view or obtain the draft EA. Additionally, the notice was mailed to over 30 recipients including local environmental groups, Resource Conservation Districts, Watershed Councils, and State, Federal, and local government agencies. Fifteen comment letters or emails were received in response to the scoping notice.

Consultation was conducted with the Karuk Tribe, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, Hoopa Valley Tribe, and Yurok Tribe through the scoping notice and in a July 19, 2012, letter inviting them to attend a meeting with the Service and the SCDA to discuss any aspects, issues, or concerns they may have with the proposed project. In response to that invitation, a meeting between the Karuk Tribe, the SCDA, and the Service occurred on October 23, 2012. The purpose of this meeting was to clarify and discuss issues and concerns raised by the Karuk Tribe during scoping, particularly those involving aquatic resources, culturally significant areas, and human health and safety.

#### **Finding of No Significant Impact**

For the reasons presented and based upon an evaluation of the information contained in the final environmental assessment and supporting references, it is my determination that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action, either individually or cumulatively, significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, considering the context and intensity of impacts, under the meaning of section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (as amended). Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. The EA supporting this decision is available for review at the Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office (YFWO), 1829 S. Oregon St., Yreka, California, or on the YFWO website at [www.fws.gov/yreka](http://www.fws.gov/yreka).

This determination is based on consideration of the following factors, which are addressed in the EA:

- 1) There will be no measurable impacts to water quality.
- 2) There will be no significant impacts to soil quality, botanical species, fish and other aquatic species, or wildlife and their habitats.
- 3) There will be no significant effects on public health and safety.
- 4) There will be no significant impacts to historical or cultural resources.
- 5) The action will not adversely affect any endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species act of 1973.
- 6) The action will not violate Federal, State, and local laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

**Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations**

My decision is consistent with other relevant laws, regulations, and agency policy. The following discussion summarizes this compliance.

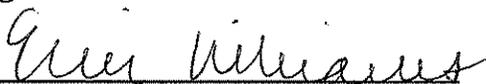
I find the Selected Alternative to be consistent with the Clean Water Act and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region as detectable levels of herbicide are not expected to enter any water bodies.

I find the Selected Alternative to be consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act as resources will be managed consistent with the programmatic agreement between the Service and the California State Historic Preservation Office.

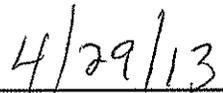
I find the Selected Alternative to be consistent with the Endangered Species Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act as consultations with the Service and National marine Fisheries Service have been completed.

I find the Selected Alternative to be consistent with Executive order 12898, relating to Environmental Justice as minority or low-income populations will not be disproportionately affected by the proposed action.

**Signature and Date**



Erin Williams  
Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office  
Field Supervisor

  
Date