

Section I

Introduction and Acknowledgments

Weeds in the Western States



Undesirable invasive plants continue to spread into uninfested areas in the western United States. Invasive plants and noxious weeds infest native plant communities in increasing numbers throughout this area.

Public concern about the harmful effects of uncontrolled weeds continues to increase. Unacceptable levels of weeds adversely affect crop and forage production, wilderness, wildlife habitat, visual quality, recreation opportunities, and land value. Land managers face a serious challenge to develop and conduct effective programs for controlling the spread of noxious weeds.

The western states encompass over 890 million acres that include national forests, national parks, federal reservations, national wildlife refuges, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation land, state lands parks, and private lands.

This area includes fourteen contiguous states — Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. World renowned for its renewable resources, this area offers outdoor recreation opportunities, scenery and geologic features, and attracts millions of people annually.

These guidelines provide a unified effort in developing a weed management program, including public awareness; a prevention program; a common inventory, mapping, monitoring, and reporting procedure; and methods of integrated weed management. An overall management plan and specific action plans can be developed for logical units of land within specific **Weed Management Areas** (WMAs).

Any management area with common characteristics can be divided into WMAs. These WMAs become the land unit for the development of a comprehensive Noxious Weed Management Plan. These areas replace jurisdictional boundaries in favor of natural boundaries that facilitate cooperation, coordination, and implementation of effective integrated weed management programs for noxious weeds. Local County Weed Districts are an important driving force in developing weed management programs for these areas.

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Use of the Guidelines

These guidelines are for use by local landowners and land managers when developing weed management programs. They are designed to be used as a working document and can be put into a three ring binder with additional information specific to your area added to the appropriate sections.

Acknowledgments

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