



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Pacific
Northwest
Region

1220 SW Third Avenue (97204)
PO Box 3623
Portland, OR 97208-3623
503-808-2468

To: Senator Denbrow, Chair and Senator Olson, Vice-Chair and Members Bentz, Prozanski, and Roblin

Date: Thursday, February 27, 2019

Topic: USDA Forest Service Testimony to the Senate committee on Environment and Natural Resources regarding Oregon Invasive Species Council

The USDA Forest Service has an excellent relationship and partnership with the Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC).

Invasive species are a significant threat to Oregon's forest, rangeland, and aquatic ecosystems. Numerous invasive plants displace native vegetation, reduce grazing capacity for livestock and wildlife, result in increased reliance on pesticides, damage habitat for wildlife, degrade recreational opportunities, and increase wildfire risk. Invasive insects such as gypsy moth and emerald ash borer threaten the economics and livability of communities, and could severely degrade forest ecosystems. Invasive aquatic organisms impact water supplies and native aquatic species, including plants, amphibians, and threatened salmon stocks. These organisms have the potential to impact all of Oregon's urban, agriculture and forest wildland communities.

Often, the most effective means of preventing invasive species introduction and establishment is through education and outreach, through coordination with adjacent states and various agencies and partners within the state, and through rapid response to eradicate invasive species should they be introduced.

Since the Legislature created the Oregon Invasive Species Council in 2001, OISC has served as a focal point for many partnering agencies across jurisdictions by:

- Providing a coordinated front to address invasive species issues.
- Connecting many invasive species issues across taxa (plants, forest pests, aquatic/terrestrial/marine, etc.)
- Providing a platform for effective communication and efficient collaboration.

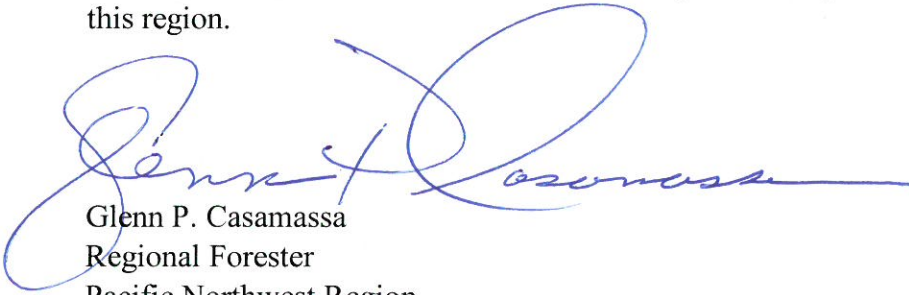
The Forest Service has cooperated with OISC since its inception. The OISC provides an important venue and opportunity for the Forest Service, especially when invasive species threaten across boundary and jurisdiction interests. Through the functions of the OISC, the Forest Service has been able to provide valuable input to Oregon's Strategic and Action Plans for invasive species, which benefits both our agency and the natural resources we steward.

- Due in large part to the interagency meetings of the OISC, the Oregon Department of Forestry implemented a weed-free forage rule for its lands, which mirrors the rule we have for the National Forest system lands. This will benefit hay growers, feed stores, and the public by increasing the demand for weed-free forage, and reducing the spread of invasive plants to natural areas through contaminated hay.



- Another example of mutual benefit provided by the OISC includes cooperative relationships and information that were then utilized to help develop Oregon's response plan for emerald ash borer. Our entomologist provided important input into this plan.
- OISC also developed a tri-state (OR, WA, and ID) "Don't move Firewood" campaign to raise awareness of potential introductions of emerald ash borer and Asian long-horned borer. Both of these tree killing insects can be transported and introduced into forest and treed setting easily through a simple avenue as firewood. The Forest Service uses the Don't Move firewood posters developed by the OISC in our campgrounds.

We respectfully submit that the OISC is an important cooperater for the USDA Forest Service in this region.



Glenn P. Casamassa
Regional Forester
Pacific Northwest Region