

Section 1 – General Information

Existing Project: “Setting Regional Strategies for Invasive Plant Management Using CalWeedMapper”

Project Lead and Organization: Doug Johnson, California Invasive Plant Council

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Ecoregions: North Coast, Central Coast, Sierra Nevada, Bay-Delta, South Coast

Section 2 – Partners and Management Relevance

Identify the relevant partner(s) and their participation in the project: We will work with the more than 40 organizations, including federal, state, and local agencies, land trusts, restoration councils, RCDs, UC Cooperative Extension, and Native Plant Society chapters we have engaged to-date in setting regional strategy. Partners provide local expertise on invasive plants and their management, they select priorities as part of developing regional strategies, and they help disseminate information.

Describe management need being addressed by the science products: Invasive plants are a serious ecosystem stressor that can reduce an ecosystem’s resilience to environmental change. The online CalWeedMapper decision-support tool and our regional process are designed to help managers most effectively allocate limited resources to address this stressor, with a focus on regional surveillance and eradication strategies. A region may contain a hundred or more invasive plants with varying degrees of impacts and distribution; our work helps land managers select their top landscape-scale priorities and collaborate on addressing them.

Explanation of how work implements the CA LCC Strategic Plan: Our work helps resource managers look further ahead to determine what they can do now to address invasive plant problems in the future. By integrating future climatic suitability into the decision process, our strategic approach brings climate-smart practices to the ground. Our work focuses partners on those invasive plant management opportunities that will be most effective and have the most lasting benefit to ecosystems. By delivering scientific products (maps, models, invasive plant research) in an organized decision-support format, we leverage near-term actions by resource managers with long-term landscape-scale goals in mind.

Section 3 - Work Summary

Status of existing product deliverables and outreach efforts: Using maps and climate models from CalWeedMapper, we are working with six regions to develop strategic plans for invasive plant management. Collaborators in four regions have completed strategic plans that identify high priority species for eradication, surveillance, and containment, and two regions are in progress. With our help one region has secured NFWF funding to implement their top eradication priorities. We are adapting the approach for use with other entities, such as State Parks and National Forests. We are also participating in CDFW’s update of the State Wildlife Action Plan, for which we have provided information on invasive plant management priorities and committed to working on a chapter addressing invasive species.

Description of additional work relative to existing work:

1) Workshop and Discussion Groups at Cal-IPC Symposium – We will hold a full-day workshop and two 90-minute discussion groups as part of Cal-IPC’s 22nd Annual Symposium. (The event attracts 250 top land managers.) The workshop will train managers on ways to incorporate a landscape-level approach using CalWeedMapper into their management planning. One discussion group will cover new prioritization tools and approaches. The other will explore “climate-smart” management strategies and novel ecosystems. Presenters will be drawn from partners at State Parks, CDFW, UCCE and USFWS.

2) Surveillance Outreach Guides – We will generate standard templates and content for regional training materials supporting identification of species determined to be early detection and rapid response targets. Regional partners have requested pocket guides and PowerPoint presentations to help train land management staff to identify these surveillance species.

3) Interagency Landscape-Scale Collaboration Summit – We will coordinate a meeting with representatives of state and federal land management agencies, university extension, and NGOs to explore current opportunities for collaboration on climate-smart, landscape-level invasive plant management based on our regional work. The meeting will generate recommendations which will be shared with a wider audience, with the goal of enhancing cooperative landscape-scale conservation.

4) Mapping Support Materials – We will develop materials to help regional partners and citizen scientists to strengthen mapping information for their established priority species. These materials will show them how to fully document all known populations and to ground-truth unconfirmed observations of invasive plant locations (verifying these potential outlier populations is critical).

5) Display on Calflora – We will share data from CalWeedMapper to be displayed as part of Calflora’s grid view, reaching botanists and citizen scientists.

6) General – We will enhance the regions page on CalWeedMapper, where regional products are posted. We will provide updates on regional prioritization to the natural resource management community through our newsletter. We will maintain the CalWeedMapper tool and database.

Description of value added to existing work: This work delivers CalWeedMapper training, key information on identifying high priority early-detection-and-rapid-response species, and guidance for important mapping. These efforts build on the experience gained through regional work to date and extend it to other regions of the state that have not yet undertaken development of a landscape-level regional strategy. The work also extends the information vertically to agency managers who can consider ways to integrate the approach into their overall program design.

Staff involvement and capabilities: Current staff will continue to work on science delivery. Science Program Manager Elizabeth Brusati and Mapping Program Manager Dana Morawitz will complete program work. Executive Director Doug Johnson will oversee the project.

Timeline for deliverables:

12/31/2013 – Hold workshop, discussion groups and interagency summit.

6/30/2014 – Complete surveillance ID guide, mapping support materials, and Calflora display.