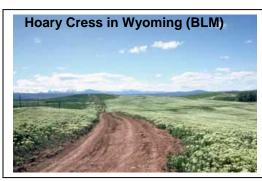
INVASIVE SPECIES IN WYOMING

What is an invasive species?

Invasive alien species are plants, animals, or other organisms that are introduced to a given area outside their original range and cause harm in their new home. Because they have no natural enemies to limit their reproduction, they usually spread rampantly. Invasive alien species are recognized as one of the leading threats to biodiversity and impose enormous costs to agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and other human enterprises, as well as to human health.



- The cost to control invasive species and the damages they inflict upon property and natural resources in the U.S. is estimated at \$137 billion annually.
- Noxious weeds infest approximately 1.3 million acres of lands in Wyoming.
- Grazing losses from leafy spurge infestations in Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas amount to \$129 million and represent the potential loss of 1,433 jobs

Invasive Species in Wyoming: A Quick Look

Wyoming has been invaded by a number of harmful exotic plants and animals. Here is a quick look at some of the worst current and potential invaders:

Name	Туре	Origin	Extent	Damage
Dalmatian	Plant	Central Europe and	Present in all	Reduces forage value of infested
toadflax		Asia, introduced as	but two WY	rangelands, outcompetes native
		ornamental in 1800s	counties	plants
Hoary cress	Plant	Eurasia, probably	Present in all	Outcompetes native plants and
		arrived in soil ballast	but 1 WY	is a serious agricultural weed
		in 1800s	county	
Spotted	Plant	Europe	Known to	Displaces native plants, reduces
knapweed			occur in all but	forage and wildlife value,
			one WY	increases erosion
			county	
Leafy spurge	Plant	Eurasian, brought to	Covers 5	Irritant "latex" in plant causes
		U.S. in late 1800s	million acres	blisters and blindness; cattle will
			in 35 states	not graze in areas with >20%
				cover by spurge.
Canada thistle	Plant	Despite the name this	Found in	Displaces native plants, and is
		thistle is native to	every county	considered unpalatable to
		Europe and Western	in Wyoming –	livestock and detrimental to
		Asia, introduce in	over 20,000	recreation because of its spines.
		1600s	acres in some	
			counties	
White pine	Fungus	Probably Asia,	Has damaged	The rust has reduced inland
blister rust		entered U.S. in 1910	46,000 acres	Northwest white pine stands byt
		on infected pine	of pine forests	90 to 95 percent.
		seedlings from	in Wyoming	
		Europe		

Name	Туре	Origin	Extent	Damage
New Zealand	Mollusk	New Zealand, first	Established in	The tiny snails can reach
mud snail		discovered in Snake	Bighorn	densities of 100,000 snails
		River in 1987	River and	per square meter.
			every	Outcompete native wildlife
			drainage in	and provide poor food
			Yellowstone	source for fish.

What Congress Can Do:

A. Make Prevention Our Top Priority

- Reverse current U.S. policy on the intentional import of live plants and animals, that is, switch from a "dirty" to a "clean" list approach that requires screening for invasiveness before import and which keeps out or limits import of species so as to prevent harm to native species or ecosystems and make the legislative changes to do so.
- Substantially cut the unintentional introduction of aquatic invaders by overseeing federal standard-setting on the discharge of ballast water in the United States, supporting the development of technology to meet these standards; ensuring that agencies monitor and enforce compliance; and reauthorizing the 1996 National Invasive Species Act in the strongest and most comprehensive form.
- When considering, reviewing, or approving trade agreements, rigorously address invasive species, e.g., by allowing for restriction of imports of non-native species that are invasive elsewhere and by identifying pathways by which inadvertent introductions travel so that they may be interrupted.

B. Make Federal Agencies More Effective

- Use oversight authority to ensure that all federal agencies immediately and strongly implement that part of Executive Order 13112 that asks them to identify and reduce actions that introduce or spread invasive species in the United States or elsewhere.
- Appropriate adequate funds so that federal agencies have the resources to address invasive species problems promptly and comprehensively over the long-term.
- Strengthen the structure and leadership of the National Invasive Species Council and prompt more aggressive implementation of its National Management Plan.
- Oversee the work of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to ensure that the agency and its Administrator are committed to protecting biological diversity as well as agriculture.
- Evaluate the serious problems with border inspection for pests, weeds, and pathogens, e.g., in staffing and cross-department coordination, exacerbated by moving these functions into the Department of Homeland Security and amend its authorizing legislation if needed.

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