



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Central Yukon Field Office
1150 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

IN REPLY REFER TO:
6711 (AKF030)

Dear Interested Participant:

The BLM will soon start preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the management of invasive weeds along the Dalton Highway and surrounding BLM-managed public lands. This EA will analyze potential environmental impacts of invasive plant management as developed in our Draft Strategic Plan for the Management of Invasive Plants (Weeds), completed last year. We are pleased to announce opportunities for public comment and are planning on holding public scoping meetings during April and May 2010.

The Draft Strategic Plan includes several new proposals involving public education, monitoring, and an Early Detection Rapid Response program. It also addresses current and past efforts to halt the spread of weeds within the Dalton Highway/Utility Corridor Management Area. These efforts included manual and mechanical control of target species including white sweetclover, oxeye daisy, yellow toadflax, bird vetch, and common tansy.

Unfortunately, the current control methods have proven inadequate. It now appears that manual or mechanical means alone will not effectively halt the spread of weeds within the Dalton Highway/Utility Corridor or to adjacent lands. Therefore, the Draft Strategic Plan considers the use of herbicides, as well as other methods of control, within an integrated pest management approach.

I have asked our contractor, Shelly Wade from the consulting firm of Agnew::Beck, to contact leaders and groups in several communities, including Stevens Village, Rampart, Wiseman, Allakaket, Alatna, Bettles, Evansville, Hughes, Huslia, Koyukuk, and Fairbanks to determine interest in scheduling a public meeting during which issues and concerns with invasive weed management can be discussed.

Once the draft EA is completed, the BLM will hold an additional 30-day comment period before we make a decision regarding implementation of the proposed action or alternative.

I know spring is a busy time of year. Any help and time you can spend reviewing the Draft Strategic Plan and providing your comments to us will be sincerely appreciated. The Draft Strategic Plan as well as information regarding our public meeting schedule can be found online at the following URL:

http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/fo/fdo/central_yukon_field/dalton_invasives.html

or by contacting Ruth Gronquist at the above address or by phone at (907) 474-2377.

Respectfully,

/s/ Nichelle W. Jacobson

Nichelle W. (Shelly) Jacobson, Manager
Central Yukon Field Office