

EMC0239
Duplicate of email

Poppin's Farm
30306 Fox Hollow Road
Eugene, OR, 97405

Brian Amme, Project Manager
BLM Nevada State Office

Dear Mr. Amme,

I am writing to comment adversely on the BLM's proposed use of herbicide sprays in the control of invasive weed species. [Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides Programmatic EIS]. Admittedly, the invasive weeds are a very serious threat to our public lands, but herbicides should not be the primary method of control. Researchers are now finding that herbicides, even the older, "safer" chemicals like atrazine and Roundup, have adverse, or deadly, effects on wildlife, especially invertebrate species and cold blooded vertebrates. In addition, the use of herbicides will harm native species struggling to compete with the invasive plants. Therefore, herbicides should not be the preferred control method for an agency charged with the protection of the public lands and their species. Manual control is effective on many invasives like Scotch broom. The use of burning as in fuel reduction projects, and other heat related techniques for killing plants are effective. Controlled intensive grazing by sheep or goats has proved to be very effective in combating certain weeds, and gives a boost to local economies. If the BLM practices a policy of integrated pest management, using herbicides only as a last resort, the lands it manages will be far healthier for the discretionary use of poisons.

It is very important to consider causes for the spread of invasive species and to try to control them. Loggers and other vehicle users spread weed seeds on their tires. The closure of roads, the restriction of recreational ORV use, and a strong public education program to inform users of BLM land on the ways they can help to reduce the spread of alien invasive species would do a lot to reduce the future spread of unwanted weeds.

We hear often that chemicals are the only choice because they are the most cost-effective. With the increase in the price of fuel and petrochemical products this may not be the case very much longer. Even more importantly, as I see it, the herbicides are not that effective. Timber companies in my neighborhood spray repeatedly, three or four times in establishing a new crop of trees. Their lands here Western Oregon, in spite of the sprays, are a sea of broom, thistle, and blackberry. If herbicides don't even work very well, in spite of repeated applications, against these common invasives, how can they hope to deal with leafy spurge? The BLM needs to establish a firm policy of control which decreases, not increases, the use of herbicides, while relying more and more on conventional and innovative approaches to clearing our public lands of unwanted and harmful species.

Very truly yours,

Reida Kimmel
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