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Comments: Rick Williams, RF, PhD ForesterREDACTED
REDACTEDLisa W. Lewis, Kisatchie Forest SupervisorKisatchie National Forest2500 Shreveport Hwy.Pineville, Louisiana 71360Re: Kisatchie National Forest Vegetation Management ProjectDear Ms. Lewis,I am excited to see that the Kisatchie National Forest plans to begin a vegetative managementproject to fight non-native and problematic native plant species that lessen the ecologicalfunctions of the forest. These plant species are vigorous and spread rapidly by outcompetingdesirable plant communities. The integrated approach would help restore a more ecologicallybalanced vegetative component in the upland treated areas.In the upland forests of pine or mixed pine/hardwood are seeing a tremendous amount of nonnativeand problematic native vegetation that is reducing or eliminating desirable plants. Thereare numerous at-risk, threatened, or endangered species that would greatly benefit fromtreating non-desirable vegetation to favor desirable vegetation and a healthier ecosystem. Thiscondition is true in upland and aquatic areas across the state and Kisatchie National Forest.Just like in upland areas, it is also important to address aquatic vegetation that is impactingwater bodies in Louisiana and in the Kisatchie National Forest including lakes, ponds, andstreams. There are many examples of waterways that are no longer navigable due to aquaticvegetation. Those areas, and their associated wetlands, have lost their ecological functions andare becoming biological deserts. Control of both invasive non-native and native aquatic plantswould benefit waterbodies and their associated wetland areas improving that habitat forwildlife.While various treatment methods will be employed, I am glad to see that the use ofappropriate herbicides are included in the prescriptions. Herbicide use can greatly reduce theless desirable vegetation while allowing desirable vegetation to re-occupy the site.There are numerous at-risk, threatened, or endangered species that would greatly benefit fromtreating non-desirable vegetation to favor desirable vegetation and a healthier ecosystem. Thiscondition is true in upland and aquatic areas across the state and in the Kisatchie NationalForest.I sincerely hope that this Vegetative Management Project is implemented on the selected acresin the Kisatchie National Forest.Respectfully,