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Organization:

Title:

Comments: SNF BNF Invasive Species Project EIS

I wish I had gotten to this sooner--but in case it still can help,

I am very interested in the work outlined in your June 29 mailing. As a cabin owner near mile marker 90 on hwy 21, I have been assuming responsibility for the control of spotted knapweed, dalmation toadflax, and Canada thistle on private property called Hanging Valley Ranch, with the aid of Boise County, which provides free access to an excellent broadleaf herbicide, premixed with surfactant. Over the past ten years I have observed and experimented with a number of methods to attempt to eradicate (impossible) and then limit the spread of these plants.

The rapid spread over Forest Service lands, roadsides, and game trails of knapweed is especially appalling. I have experienced most of the situations and techniques described in your Attachment 1. Our 60-some acres are surrounded by National Forest where no weed removal activities of any type are evident, except when I follow our infestations down the road or trail with Boise County's Milestone to try to stop our problems at their source. This year I spent 8 gallons on the Ranch itself, and ran out of time to try to quell the public lands mess feeding into it. As you know, invasive weeds do not observe legal boundaries.

I agree wholeheartedly with your Initial Proposed Action, and if my experiences can be of use, I am happy to offer my observations. I have seen the temporary relief that the imported toadflax beetles provided, only to have the toadflax resurge in huge quantity, once pulling and chemical controls ceased. I have seen the spread of knapweed all the way up hwy 21 along Canyon Creek to mile marker 96 or so. I found our first outbreak of Canada thistle in our meadow this summer, still in the 8-10" high stage, and killed it all. We have cheat grass moving in that we still have not addressed.

I am very interested in learning how to obtain native seed so that when excavation or fire occurs, we can try to get the jump on who moves in.

But most of all, I am deeply concerned that my wildlands neighbors, from diverse backgrounds, are mostly unaware of these problems, cannot identify plants, lack any basic understanding of biology and the ecosystem, and can view my efforts as silly or eccentric. My passion for the environment stems from my high school education in the early 1970s, and my former next-door neighbor, Dave Rittenhouse, set me on the path of weed control at Hanging Valley. As a professional educator, I should be better able to cope with the need to educate my friends and neighbors on these issues. I find myself increasingly impatient and angry with ignorance, and worse yet, deliberate resistance to environmental knowledge. Any educational materials you may create would be of interest to me, as I take on the role of amateur advocate for the preservation of wilderness.

I would ask to be added to your mailing list; the materials I read were sent to Mary Clagett Smith, also a cabin owner at HVR. My Boise address is

Jeanne Belfy

Thanks for listening,

Jeanne

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