

WEEDS & INVASIVE SPECIES

San Juan Islands National Monument RMP

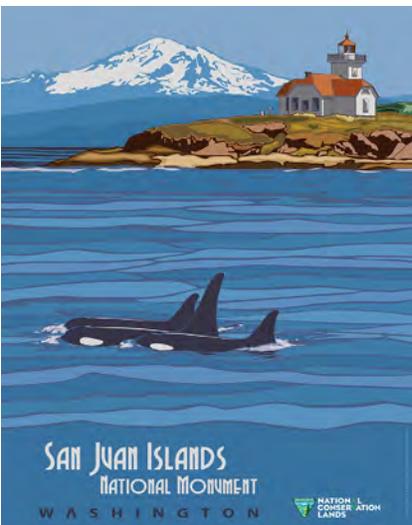


Scotch broom

WEEDS AND INVASIVE SPECIES AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

The San Juan Islands National Monument contains approximately 20 different noxious weeds and invasive species on 27 different sites. These species are found in a variety of different habitats, and range from invasive species not designated for control in the state or county to Class A noxious weeds designated for eradication.

Through the planning process the BLM will determine how and whether to manage noxious weeds and invasive species over the next 15 to 20 years. This will include exploring different management approaches that could respond to the types of planning issues described below. We want your help during scoping to identify additional planning issues, as well as management approaches that you believe we should consider adopting in order to address these issues. (More information on reverse side.)



PRELIMINARY PLANNING ISSUES

- What types of management should be considered to reduce the spread of noxious weeds and invasive species?
- What types of management should be considered to restore areas containing noxious weeds and invasive species?
- What types of management should be considered to prevent the introduction of noxious weeds and invasive species?

WHAT IS THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS NATIONAL MONUMENT RMP?

The Bureau of Land Management is developing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the San Juan Islands National Monument which will guide the management of these spectacular lands in a manner that ensures the protection of their remarkable cultural, historic, and ecological values for the benefit of generations of Americans to come.

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NEWS & UPDATES

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Tansey Ragwort

Weeds and Invasive Species and the San Juan Islands National Monument

Noxious weeds and invasive plants pose a significant threat to the monument's mixed grassland and woodland systems both directly through competition with native plants and indirectly through disruption of ecosystem function that supports native communities. In 2010 and 2013, the BLM identified 15 noxious weed species out of 140 species on the Washington State Noxious Weed Control list which were known to occur within the monument.

Invasive plants are non-native plants that have been introduced into an environment in which they did not evolve and are capable of establishing free-living populations in areas beyond their natural range of dispersal. These plants are characteristically adaptable, aggressive, and lack natural enemies to limit their reproduction and spread. Their vigor, rapid growth, and high reproductive capacity allow them to out-compete native plants for key resources, resulting in their dominance of human-influenced and native ecosystems. Once established, invasive plants can cause significant harm to environmental and economic values.

Noxious weeds, a subset of invasive plants, are designated and regulated by state and federal laws because they are known to be detrimental to agriculture, commerce, natural resources, and public health. The Revised Code of Washington State defines 'noxious weeds' as plants that when established are "highly destructive, competitive, or difficult to control by cultural or chemical practices."

Noxious weeds and invasive plants (collectively referred to here as 'weeds') can create a variety of plant community changes through altering the floristic structure and composition of the community as well as disrupting the key ecosystem processes that enable the community to function. At local scales, weeds can displace native plants due to their conferred competitive and reproductive advantages resulting in the degradation of the community's biotic integrity. The loss of native plant diversity from weed invasions may lead to loss of wildlife habitat, rangeland productivity, and increase the risk of extirpation of special status species.

How does the Proclamation Address this Resource or Use?

Invasive species are a potential threat to the diverse native habitats and species identified in the proclamation, which addresses the need to enhance, preserve, and protect unique and varied natural and scientific resources within the San Juan Island National Monument. For the purposes of protecting and restoring these resources, the BLM shall prepare and maintain a management plan for the monument.

How does this Resource or Use Fit into the Planning Process?

Through the planning effort, the BLM will determine how the identified lands with noxious weeds and invasive species, or the potential to become infested with them, will be managed for the next 15 to 20 years. It will also document any impacts to the San Juan Islands National Monument that would be caused by any range of management approaches it considers in the planning process.