

FEATURE - HUNTERS & ANGLERS JOIN USDA WAR ON WEEDS

INTRO: Hunters and anglers are being asked to help the USDA Forest Service fight the spread of invasive species in wildlife habitats. The USDA's Pat O'Leary has more in part 2 of a 5 part series - "Defending Favorite Places." (1:56)

WILD TURKEYS ARE POPULAR GAME BIRDS IN NEARLY EVERY STATE, BUT THEIR HABITAT IS THREATENED BY INVASIVE SPECIES: NON-NATIVE PLANTS THAT CROWD OUT THE NATURAL VEGETATION.

James Earl Kennamer, National Wild Turkey Federation: : I think invasive species is much more of a real problem than I ever dreamed.

Vance: That's Sericea Lespedeza.

Kennamer: Yep. It was brought in here back in the thirties to try and control erosion on some of these poor soils. And now it's one of our real problems. It's not good for wildlife in particular. It's real high in tannic acid. But it spreads, as you can see, right here.

Vance: You bet.

Kennamer: So the more we can educate our hunters and fishermen and bird watchers and hikers about what they're looking at is very important

ACROSS AMERICA, HUNTING AND ANGLING GROUPS ARE PARTNERING WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FOREST SERVICE AND OTHER AGENCIES TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CONTROLLING INVASIVE SPECIES.

Scott Vance, National Wild Turkey Federation: There's a number of sources that can give you information. The USDA has an excellent website where you can go and look at the different species in your state. More importantly than that, the sportsmen can actually help to control the spread of these invasive species by not spreading seeds from one place to the other. One of the worst ways is on mowing equipment and on equipment, where you're doing land management.

THE CAMPAIGN IS TARGETING INVASIVES ON THE LAND AND IN THE WATER.

Leah Miller, Izaak Walton League of America: Aquatic invasives are one of the worst problems for our waterways and for fisheries. One small fragment of something like an aquatic plant, like Eurasian Milfoil, can grow and clog your waterway and destroy native habitat.

Rick Swanson, Maryland Angler: The last thing I want to do is take an invasive and introduce it into an area that I love. So I try to keep a clean, tidy boat. I keep it on a trailer. I wash it off when I'm done with it. I make sure I'm not carrying anything out when I pull it out.

YOU CAN LEARN MORE AT INVASIVEPSECIIESINFO.GOV.
FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M PAT O'LEARY.