

FEATURE - SPORTSMEN RECRUITED TO FIGHT INVASIVE SPECIES

INTRO: Hunters and Anglers are being asked to join the fight against invasive species, by partnering with the USDA Forest Service and other agencies. The USDA's Pat O'Leary has more in part 5 of a 5 part series - "Defending Favorite Places."

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THE SILTCOOS LAGOON IN WESTERN OREGON HAS BEEN INVADED BY AN AQUATIC WEED FROM SOUTH AMERICA. PARROT'S FEATHER HAS UPSET THE NATURAL ECOSYSTEM AND TURNED A PRISTINE LAKE INTO A BOG.

Mike Northrop, USDA Forest Service: And we've got a number of lakes along the Oregon Dunes and my big fear is that they are all going to turn into bogs in my lifetime or my kids' lifetime. We've got some interpretive signs we've put up so the public can get the message about just what the cost will be if the weed gets from one lake to another.

THREATENED WITH THE LOSS OF FAVORITE PLACES IN AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS, HUNTING AND ANGLING GROUPS ARE PARTNERING WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FOREST SERVICE AND OTHERS TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CONTROLLING INVASIVE SPECIES.

James Nesmith, Texas Quail Hunter: To this point, hunters have mainly thought of habitat management and invasive species control as being the landowner's problem. But obviously without cooperation between all people who are using that resource, it's never going to be what it should be.

THE EDUCATION EFFORT CENTERS ON BOTH TERRESTRIAL SPECIES AND SO-CALLED AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES, OR ANS:

Brad Henley, Colorado State Parks: They're aquatic hitchhikers. They attach to hard surfaces and of course boats. They can cost millions of dollars in damage to fisheries, recreation, and water systems. We did find Zebra mussels attached to one of our samplers. So, we're inspecting boats coming off of this reservoir in an attempt to stop the spread of Zebra mussels to others waters.

EXPERTS SAY THE KEY IS TO KEEP GEAR CLEAN WHEN MOVING BETWEEN HUNTING AND FISHING ENVIRONMENTS, AND TO LEARN TO IDENTIFY THE INVADERS.

Patrick McRae, Oregon Fly Fisherman: There are a large group of us that are on this river regularly. I mean, they are -- we call them "the regulars." And if anybody is going to see something that's a little out of line, it's going to

be us. And I think we need to be very vigilant about that, and bring in help.

Rollin Tijerina, Elk Hunter: I've gotten to enjoy the outdoors and the environment, the habitats. And I'd like for people who come along in the future to enjoy the same.

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