

California is being severely impacted by invasions of an increasing number of harmful, exotic, non-native plants, animals, organisms and diseases.

The establishment of these invasive species results in significant damage to California's agricultural lands, natural resources, waterways and our rural and urban environments, and causes economic hardship for all Californians.

There is significant interest in excluding, detecting, eradicating and controlling the spread of harmful invasive species into and within California and there is a need for a mechanism for coordination, cooperation and collaboration to achieve this objective.

The state intends to complete and implement a statewide action plan for meeting the challenges that invasive species present, and desires to engage public and private organizations to assist in the development and implementation of this plan.

The establishment and spread of invasive species can supplant native species, and can lead to unintended consequences on native species and terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

1. Today we announce the formation of the California Invasive Species Council (Council);
2. The Council shall be chaired by the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture and vice-chaired by the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency; and
3. The purpose of the Council is to provide policy level direction and planning for mitigating harmful invasive species infestations throughout the state and for preventing the introduction of others that may be potentially harmful. The Council shall foster coordinated, streamlined approaches that support initiatives for the prevention and control of invasive species, avoiding program duplication by building upon the core competencies of member organizations.

The Council's actions will minimize the harmful effects of invasive non-native species on California's agriculture, lands, natural resources, waterways, rural and urban environments and ensure the economic and environmental well being of the State of California and the nation by:

1. Serving as a forum for identifying and understanding invasive species issues from all perspectives;
2. Developing policies that reflect the need to minimize the economic and environmental harm posed by invasive species;
3. Coordinating the state's resources to maximize opportunities to encourage exclusion, prevention and control of harmful non-native species;
4. Identifying federal programs and other private funding sources that can leverage existing state resources;
5. Organizing and streamlining the interagency process for excluding, detecting, eradicating and controlling invasive species;
6. Considering ways to halt the spread of invasive species as well as finding possible ways to bring current problems under control;
7. Producing a state strategic plan for the exclusion, detection, eradication, mitigation and control of harmful invasive species;

ESTABLISHING THE INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

8. Integrating invasive species exclusion, prevention and control activities with other cooperating states and state associations as well as with neighboring international governments; and
9. Forming an advisory committee.

The California Invasive Species Council will include a representative from the Secretaries of the following state entities:

1. California Department of Food and Agriculture
2. California Natural Resources Agency
3. California Environmental Protection Agency
4. California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
5. California Emergency Management Agency
6. California Health and Human Services Agency

A California Invasive Species Advisory Committee (CISAC) shall be established to provide advice to the Council from local government, special districts, tribal governments and federal agencies, as well as water, conservation, and environmental organizations, academic institutions, science institutions, affected industry sectors and impacted landowners. Representatives from the following entities shall be invited to participate on the Invasive Species Advisory Committee:

1. University of California
2. California State University
3. Local government and local government organizations
4. Federal agencies
5. Tribal governments of California
6. Water, conservation, environmental and invasive species organizations
7. Public health organizations
8. Landowner organizations
9. Agriculture and nursery sector organizations
10. Scientific and academic institutions

The Council may appoint a statewide California Invasive Species Coordinator to lead the CISAC. The CISAC will report to and advise the Council. Additional members to the Advisory Committee may be added by consensus of the Council.

The advisory committee will:

1. Develop a list of the highest priority invasive species that cause or may cause the greatest economic, public health or environmental hardship;
2. Identify participants and develop a process for an invasive species rapid response plan; and
3. Identify federal programs and private funding sources to leverage state resources.