

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
STATE OF MONTANA

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**Governor Bullock Announces Release of Statewide Management Assessment of Invasive Species**

HELENA, Montana—The Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council (MISAC) released a statewide management assessment of invasive species this week. The assessment, a first for Montana and the second of its kind in the nation, provides a comprehensive look at how invasive species were managed in Montana in 2015. A copy of the assessment can be accessed [here](#).

“Montana’s vast outdoor recreation and wide-open spaces are an important part of what makes Montana great and they play a crucial role in our growing economy,” said Governor Bullock. “The threat of invasive species to our land, water, native species, and economy is real, and I will always fight to protect them.”

Governor Bullock issued an Executive Order in December 2014 to improve and streamline Montana’s efforts to tackle the threat of invasive species in the state. The order established the MISAC to serve as the overarching council to combat invasive species in the state – both aquatic and terrestrial.

“We conducted the assessment as a key first step to identify priorities for prevention, early detection, and control of harmful invasive species in Montana,” said MISAC Chair Bryce Christiaens.

Assessment results provided baseline information about how Montana is managing invasive species. Lack of adequate funding was described as the greatest obstacle to effective implementation of invasive species programs in Montana.

“We achieved many of our goals for the assessment,” said Christiaens. “One of the outcomes of the report was a list of 28 recommendations for Montanans to consider as we develop an action plan for Montana—a plan that will provide for the long-term conservation of Montana’s native fish and wildlife and their habitats through a collaborative statewide approach to conservation. The next step is vetting those recommendations and others with stakeholders at the Governor’s Summit on Invasive Species April 12–13 in Helena.”

Examples of recommendations include improving the funding stream for invasive species prevention, early detection, rapid response, and management activities; implementing a systematic approach to prioritizing and making strategic investments in invasive species; considering an all-taxa approach and framework to make the best use of available and limited resources; and creating incentives for private landowners to benefit from invasive species efforts.

“We have our first snapshot of how Montana is managing invasive species—from a policy, funding, and legal framework standpoint,” Christiaens said. “It’s not perfect, but it’s a good first step. Now it’s time to convene stakeholders and interested entities, roll up our sleeves, describe and prioritize recommendations, and create an action plan that will improve Montana’s ability to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species.”

The Governor’s Summit on Invasive Species takes place April 12 – 13, 2016 in Helena. For more information and to register for the conference, click [here](#). For more information about the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council, click [here](#).

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