

MCWMA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

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among the

Partners of the Mendocino Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is to promote and formalize the cooperative relationship necessary for the effective planning, coordination, and implementation of weed management programs among the signatories (partners).

II. DEFINITIONS

- (a) An "ecosystem" is comprised of all the biological and physical elements in a physically defined area, including all processes and interactions among those elements.
- (b) A "native plant species" is constituted by a population of potentially interbreeding plants that have evolved within a given ecosystem over many generations in popular terms. For ecosystems in California, this generally includes all plants present prior to European contact.
- (c) "Non-native plant species" means, with respect to a particular ecosystem, any species, including its seeds, spores, or other plant material capable of propagating that species, that is not a native species of that ecosystem.
- (d) "Introduction" means the deliberate or unintentional escape, release, dissemination, or placement of a species into an ecosystem in which that species has not evolved. Such introductions are generally, either directly or indirectly, a result of human activities.
- (e) An "invasive plant species" is a non-native plant whose introduction has the potential to cause deleterious economic or environmental impacts.
- (f) For the purpose of this agreement, a "weed" is equivalent to an invasive plant species.

III. BACKGROUND

A number of non-native plant species have been introduced along the Sonoma and Mendocino County coast. Some of these non-native species have altered plant community composition and vegetation structure, and disrupted ecosystem processes and functions. Many of these invasive plants continue to spread throughout this region, outcompeting native plants. Invasive plants also represent a burden to the human economy, impairing agriculture, forestry, transportation, and aesthetics. These invasive species collectively constitute a serious liability for the future of both the coastal ecology and the regional economy.

The Guidelines for the Coordinated Management of Noxious Weeds¹ is an appropriate model for collaborative efforts that can reduce and prevent the negative impacts of invasive species in the Mendocino Coast region. The Guidelines provide information on the administrative structure of weed management areas and examples of cooperative

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activities that can be employed to develop programs and projects.

The geographic area adopted for this weed management area consists of all lands and waters between and exclusive of the Russian and Eel River watersheds, west to the Pacific Ocean, as shown on the attached map. This geographic region will be referred to as the Mendocino Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area (MCWMA).

The intent of this MOA is to enhance the potential for success of a Cooperative Weed Management Program on all public and private lands managed by its signatories. This agreement's focus is to educate the public about the collective, cooperative effort needed to manage invasive plants.

IV. THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES MUTUALLY AGREE:

1. To develop and write, by July 1, 2006, a Strategic Weed Management Plan with short-term and long-term goals designed to prevent and control weed infestations in the region designated as the Mendocino Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area;
2. To identify and pursue opportunities for cooperative actions, as requested by any of the signatories, including but not limited to those for technical assistance, sharing information on techniques and success regarding weed eradication, sharing of equipment, development of funding proposals, educational outreach, native plant community conservation or restoration on the lands managed by each respective signatory, and conducting cooperative weed management actions on lands adjacent to lands managed by the signatories with the signatories' and landowner's approval;
3. To provide opportunities to non-signatory groups and individuals for involvement in carrying out the Strategic Weed Management Plan on lands within the MCWMA;
4. To review this MOA periodically and make revisions as needed to meet the purpose of this agreement, subject to agreement by all signatories;
5. To welcome new signatories who agree to the principles of invasive plant management and the Strategic Weed Management Plan, and the intent of this agreement.

IV. THE SIGNATORY PARTIES MUTUALLY AGREE AND UNDERSTAND THAT:

1. This agreement is a voluntary commitment to cooperation and is legally and financially non-binding;
2. Amendments to this document shall become effective upon written approval by all parties;
3. This memorandum will become effective for each signatory once signed by that

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signatory, and shall continue in effect for each signatory unless terminated by written notice to the Coordinator of the MCWMA*, P.O. Box 415, Redwood Valley, CA 95470;

4. This MOA does not restrict any of the signatories from participating in related activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals;

5. Additional signatories may be added to the MOA by appending an additional signature page to the MOA.

¹*Guidelines for Coordinated Management of Noxious Weeds: Development of Weed Management Areas.* (Date unknown). Retrieved 15 Oct, 2004, from <http://www.weedcenter.org/management/guidelines/tableofcontents.html>

*The “Coordinator of the MCWMA” was initially selected by mutual agreement of potential signatories. The MCWMA bylaws, which are expected to be developed by January 1, 2007, will describe the process for future selections of the Coordinator of the MCCWMA.