IDAHO INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

2010

Don't Move Firewood Pilot Project
Report to USDA-APHIS

Project Overview

Firewood has been shown to be a major pathway of invasive insects and plants, as people cut wood in an infested county or state and bring it to a new site. In fact, new infestations of tree-killing insects and diseases are commonly found in campgrounds and parks. In an effort to prevent further spread and to reduce new infestations, the invasive species councils of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington teamed up to inform citizens throughout the Pacific Northwest about the economic and environmental effects of firewood as a vector of invasive species.

To increase understanding and awareness, the three state councils designed and launched an evaluation-based education and outreach campaign in 2010 to:

- inform people in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington of the threat of moving firewood; and
- communicate an understanding of what people can do (i.e., individual actions) to mitigate the threat.

Target audiences included recreationalists, producers, landowners, volunteers, educators, students and policy makers. A major emphasis of the project was to develop education and outreach programs that would lead to behavior change and promote self-efficacy in the movement of firewood.

Methods used to communicate outreach messaging and project strategies included the design and production of multiple outreach products such as Frisbees, playing cards, and posters. Additionally, billboards were purchased with matching artwork and messaging in all three states during the height of the 2010 camping season. The message was further carried out with displays at rest areas along major traffic corridors and advertisements on web sites and various publications intended to reach our target audience. To gauge the success of our outreach efforts and to learn more about the public's knowledge on the topic, pre and post-campaign surveys and interviews were designed and conducted by an Oregon State University Master's student with campers in all 3 states.

Outcomes from this project provided benefits to the Pacific Northwest environments and agriculture and forestry industries that are at risk or threatened from importation of other state's firewood and areas infested with regulatory pests. Additionally, the resulting awareness and behavior change from a more informed public will lead to gaining support for developing strategies to better protect the Pacific Northwest from this threat.

WORKPLAN
PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS: STATUS REPORT

Work Plan Task	Status
Work cooperatively with the Oregon and Washington Invasive Species Councils to develop shared messaging about buying and burning local firewood. All three Councils will share billboard, radio, and advertising design work to brand this issue in the Pacific Northwest.	All three states launched their outdoor board campaign in the summer and fall of 2010, displaying "Buy it where you burn it" billboards throughout identified high-risk areas within their states. Idaho purchased 9 billboards in the summer of 2010 and will purchase additional billboards in the spring of 2011 along major traffic corridors across the state. Messaging and artwork on the boards was consistent throughout the region.
Work cooperatively with the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, US Forest Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, Idaho Power, Bureau of Reclamation, and all entities that manage campgrounds in Idaho post publications at each site informing the public about the risks of moving firewood.	The Council partnered with state and federal agencies, campgrounds, city and county parks managers, and numerous private campgrounds to post posters at their campgrounds, offices, and other public facilities.
Work cooperatively with Oregon State University (OSU) to design pre and post-campaign public surveys to assess awareness of the issue, refine messaging to enhance effectiveness in the future, articulate the barriers to the public buying and burning local firewood, and analyze survey data.	The three Invasive Species Councils coordinated with a Master's student from OSU to choose appropriate campgrounds within 'high-risk' areas to conduct post campaign surveys. A total of 50 campgrounds were visited within all 3 states.

Work Plan Task	Status
Pre-campaign surveys will be conducted beginning June 1, 2010, and prior to the launch of the outreach campaign.	The pre-campaign online surveys were sent out to a random sample of PNW Campers, including 500 residents from each of the three states as well as 500 resident from outside the Pacific Northwest that had camped in the past in Idaho campgrounds. The pre-outreach campaign survey was used to create a baseline of knowledge regarding campers' behaviors and understanding, or awareness about firewood as a vector for invasive species. Results proved to be very useful in planning future project outreach efforts.
Work Plan Task	**Status**
Advertising and outreach will begin July 1, 2010.	All 3 states purchased multiple, billboards to display campaign messaging before the height of the camping season kicked off.
Post-campaign surveys will be conducted beginning August 15, 2010. Data will be maintained by Oregon State University. Results will influence messaging of campaign and understanding of barriers to people not transporting firewood beyond local areas.	Post campaign interviews surveys were conducted in state and federal campgrounds in all 3 states including parks that participated in the outreach campaign within Idaho. These interviews were intended to provide a more detailed understanding of the values, practices, and knowledge of campers regarding invasive species and firewood. By developing a better understanding of PNW campers we hope to assess the effectiveness of the regional summer firewood awareness campaign and suggest recommendations for more effective outreach methods in order to prevent the spread of invasive species.

Advertising in each Idaho campground via posters as well as advertising along interstates via billboards will occur during 2010 and 2011.	Idaho purchased 9 billboards which were displayed during the peak of the camping season in 2010. The outdoor displays were erected throughout the state focusing on highway and interstate locations that corresponded with high-risk areas on USDA federal campground maps. Additional outdoor displays will be purchased for the spring of 2011 along major Idaho roadways.
A report will be produced at the conclusion of the project and posted on the Idaho State Department of Agriculture website.	Complete.

CRITERIA USED TO EVALUATE THE PROJECT - Evaluation of anticipated results and successes

Evaluation Criteria	End of Project Evaluation
Level of awareness prior to and after the campaign gauged by surveys conducted before and after campaign.	Need survey results to complete
Ability to use forest stewardship contracts to provide local firewood in select campgrounds.	Need survey results to complete
Success in sharing messaging with neighboring states to better protect the Pacific Northwest from the dangers of firewood as a vector of invasive species.	Regionally shared messaging was a major success of this project. All 3 states worked together to produce billboards throughout the Pacific Northwest, which all displayed the same message "Buy it Where you Burn It" and artwork. This not only resulted in reduced costs to each state, but also provided consistent messaging to the public. The states also coordinated the placement of the billboards so that main traffic corridors used as entry points into each of the states were chosen for billboard placement. In addition to the billboards all 3 states produced, biodegradable Frisbees, posters, and decks of playing cards also showcasing the same consistent "Don't Move Firewood" message and artwork were produced. Again, this ensured that the public would see the same poster warning them about the dangers of moving firewood, despite where they were in the Pacific Northwest. The 3 states shared artwork, messaging, and product vendors. The three states regularly corresponded with one another providing updates on the distribution plan and shared new ideas for outreach

	to the public and private sectors.
The role of outreach and education, as expressed by media interest, to lessen the dangers of firewood as a vector of invasive species.	Idaho worked with the Invasive Species Councils of Oregon and Washington to re-word a video that was originally produced in the Midwest that highlighted the pathways of firewood pests using the Emerald Ash Borer as an example. The video also educated people about the damage that firewood pests can cause and provided tips and suggestions on how to prevent spread. The 3 states also worked together to issue press releases to launch the beginning of the campaign. Idaho's press releases were picked up by newspaper media sources throughout the state.

WORK PLAN SUCCESES

Numerous successes were achieved during the regional Don't Move Firewood Pilot Project. Effective communication methods were delivered and multiple segments of the population and target audiences were reached with campaign messaging. Strong partnerships and networks were established with public and private partners to disseminate campaign messages to the public, landowners, and policy makers. Valuable information was recorded in multiple pre and post-campaign surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. Insights from this analysis will prove to be beneficial in guiding future project outreach strategies.

Communication Strategies - Outreach Materials

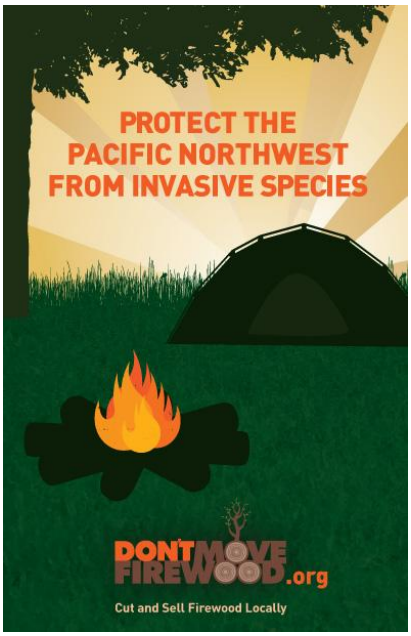
The Idaho Invasive Species Council invested in the design and production of multiple education and outreach materials. Many products were also used and designed by national campaign leaders at the Nature Conservancy's Don'tMoveFirewood.org headquarters. Using the same materials ensured consistency nationally and provided similar messaging to target audiences for increased message absorption and understanding. Other newly designed products were shared regionally among Oregon, and Washington Invasive Councils. All outreach materials produced for Idaho, in addition to campaign messaging, showcased the Council's online reporting form and hotline number for the public to use if invasive species sightings occurred.

- **Billboards and Rest Area Displays** - Using USDA high-risk pest infestation maps (based on number of out-of-state travelers visiting forested campgrounds vulnerable to outbreaks) identified a list of most desirable billboard display locations. In the fall of 2010, 9 billboards were purchased across the state focusing on high-risk areas. During the spring and early summer of 2011, additional billboards will be purchased.

- **Posters** – The Council printed 1,500 posters in two sizes (8.5x11 and 11x17) to accommodate multiple display size requirements. A weatherized, UV-protected material was used to allow for outdoor kiosks, trailheads, and bulletin board placement. Posters were made available to all campground managers in the state of Idaho.

- **Postcards** – Using national campaign graphics for a one-page informational card to handout to firewood cutters and those working in the firewood industry, the Council printed several thousand double-sided postcard sized educational cards. Messaging on

the cards targeted firewood cutters specifically providing key steps and messages they can use to promote local wood and decrease the risk of invasive pests spreading through infested firewood. Distribution of these cards was carried out by the US Forest Service offices and vendors to customers when issued their permits.



- **Frisbees** – In Partnership with Oregon and Washington, the Council distributed 5,000 Frisbees to distribute primarily to campers and travelers likely to be transporting firewood. We worked closely with the Idaho Department of parks and Recreation to identify high risk parks (again based on locations in close proximity to areas listed as high risk on USDA Pest Infestation Map). All Frisbees were distributed among these parks to their campers through ranger educational programs and from campground hosts. In addition to the Frisbees, park staff received documents describing key messages to relay to the public should they be asked questions about the project.

Playing cards – All three states used identical designs when producing outdoor playing cards for distribution to campers in their state campgrounds. The decks of cards highlighted invasive pests such as the Emerald ash borer, Gypsy Moth, Sudden Oak death, and the Asian longhorned beetle. The cards were used to familiarize the public with the wide array of invasive pests that can be transported in firewood. Images were chosen with the help of state entomologists and can be used to help the public identify the invasive species of concern. The IISC ordered 1,000 decks of cards and focused distribution efforts within priority campgrounds that were identified as high-risk for invasive pest exposure.

- **Video** – Using multiple communication and media outreach strategies. the Council's of all 3 states expressed interest in producing a video to show viewers about the pathways of invasive pest introduction and to highlight one to several of the species the PNW states are most concerned about. In coordination with national campaign leaders at the Nature Conservancy and another state invasive species council, we gained permission to alter an already successful video to be specific to our region. Production is still in progress with plans for distribution to occur within the spring of 2011. The video will be featured on the Council's firewood web page and partner agencies and organization's web sites as well as other media outlets. The video will be the same for all 3 states, again ensuring consistency in messaging.

Coordination with government agencies, the public and stakeholders

The Council strived to work with as many partners that it could, representing a variety of roles and interests regarding firewood pests. The campaign was considered a very valuable project by all involved and everyone was eager to participate in some capacity. With the help of campground managers throughout Idaho, the Council was able to most effectively reach target audiences and to disseminate campaign messaging across the state and region.

Regional Collaboration

Throughout the project, the three state councils continually shared ideas and concepts for a successful and consistent regional campaign. Regular conference calls and correspondence between staff ensured the successful and timely completion of project goals.

Consistent Messaging

All campaign materials were consistent in artwork, design and timely distribution. Because many residents of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington travel throughout these three states during the summer camping season, the similarity in the campaign materials was very important.

BUILD ON LESSSONS LEARNED

This pilot project resulted in many networks and partnerships for the effective dissemination of materials and messages to the public, local and state governments, non-governmental organizations and others. Through feedback from the public, state and public agencies, and from survey and interview results, the Invasive Species Councils of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington can leverage this success by enhancing and expanding messaging, materials and other communication strategies.

Goals for Future Work Include:

- Continue the education and outreach campaign initiated in 2010 to not just inform people in Idaho of the threat of moving firewood, but also communicate an understanding of what people can do (i.e., individual actions) to mitigate the threat. Follow-up and address obstacles to our 2010 pilot projects that provided firewood exchange program at specific campgrounds as well as a "free firewood in campgrounds" program. Work with federal and state partners to develop a system to provide free firewood in campgrounds.

- Expand outreach to the many audiences identified in the National Firewood Task Force Recommendations.

- Publicize best management practices for firewood cutting and transport.
- Build on the cooperation and collaboration of the many entities involved in the 2010 “Buy Local, Burn Local” campaign.