



# STATE OF IDAHO

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 27, 2008

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## **EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL PROPOSALS REVIEWED FOR 2008 APPLICATION SEASON**

*The Idaho State Department of Agriculture has final approval responsibility.*

BOISE – After thoroughly reviewing and systematically scoring proposals, the Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) Panel has provided recommendations for the 2008 EWM eradication program administered by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA).

The review panel, consisting of experts from around the United States, scored the applications based on several specific criteria.

"When we scored the applications, we considered the proposed methods of control in the context of the type and location of the water body, the anticipated uses of the water both in the short and long terms, the risk to human health and the environment, and the likelihood of success. If the use of herbicides were proposed, we also examined the label directions for use and, where appropriate, recommended alternative compounds, rates of application or even different methods of control," said Carlton R. Layne, executive director of the Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Foundation, president-elect of the Aquatic Plant Management Society, and chairman of the panel.

A total of 13 applications were submitted and 12 were recommended for approval with a variety of additional recommendations and caveats. Funding for the projects totaled \$2,725,136.70, all of which will come out of the state's general fund. A variety of treatment methods are included in the approved recommendations, including herbicide applications, the placement of bottom barriers, diver dredging and hand pulling.

"Given the mission of the department to achieve the maximum control of EWM possible, the panel examined the proposals with an eye towards the likelihood of predictable results based on good science and the successful operational use of the proposed methods in other programs," Layne said.

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All known lake infestations were treated in 2007 and EWM populations were significantly reduced. While it's still too early to say with certainty that EWM has been eradicated from some water bodies, the program clearly has been successful in many areas. Constant vigilance will be necessary and surveys for EWM and other invasive aquatic species will become part of the fabric of future weed control efforts in Idaho.

Dr. William T. Haller, acting director of the Center for Invasive and Aquatic Plants at the University of Florida and a panel member, said, "I have seen this invasive aquatic plant and others devastate water bodies throughout the United States and I am very impressed with the proactive and action-oriented approach to the planning and implementation of the strategy devised by the State of Idaho in this battle to eradicate EWM."

Eurasian watermilfoil is a very aggressive invasive and noxious aquatic weed which quickly and easily roots itself in the state's lakes and rivers impacting navigation, recreation and native plant communities. Left untreated, the state could expect damage to native fish hatcheries, recreational water sports, and water quality. The weed is predominately located in Idaho's panhandle water bodies, but there are some smaller infestations in the Treasure Valley. Southeastern Idaho is currently thought to be free of EWM, but intense surveys and continued monitoring is expected to take place in 2008.

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