

Developing a Management Plan

Developing a **land management plan** is a good way to start protecting your **property** from **invasive species**. Follow these steps to create your management plan:

1. Get to know the property. Create a property map depicting **natural features** and major **vegetation cover** types (e.g. mature **hardwood forest**, **meadows**, **wetlands**). Include **recreation** trails, buildings and roads. Sketch it by hand or create a more sophisticated, computer-generated map.
2. Outline land management goals. Summarize the **wildlife** management, **forestry** or **trail** building activities that are underway or projected for the future.
3. Identify and map invasive species on the property and the surrounding area. Find out what **plants** are likely to be on the property and look for them along logging roads and trails, at old home sites and in openings in the **forest canopy** (old patch cuts or tree blow-downs), as well as deeper into the woods. Map the species that are found and make note of the size and density of the populations. Include in the plan a brief description of methods used for scouting/surveying to identify current invasive species infestations or invasions and a map or list indicating species/degree of infestation found. Use www.inaturalist.org, project "Mapping for Healthy Forests" to help make a simple map that can be shared with a **land manager** or **contractor**.
4. Include an assessment of invasive species threats. The threat assessment considers the impact of invasive species on land management objectives and options for responding to these threats.
5. Integrate invasive species management into all forestry or wildlife management activities. Adopt forestry best management practices. All land management activities pose some risk of spreading invasive species. Predict what activities (such as **logging** and construction of trails or buildings) will cause future problems. If no land management plan exists, consult with a **forester** or **ecologist** to develop one.
6. Practice Early Detection and Rapid Response (**EDRR**). Walk the property biannually, in the spring and autumn, to look for invasive species. Stay on top of what species are coming into the area and remove new problem plants as soon as they arrive.
7. Identify goals for managing invasive species present on the property (e.g. slow their spread, reduce abundance, **eradicate**). Is this a weed-led or site-led management approach? Check out the 'Comparison of Project Strategies' tool. This will likely vary from one part of the property to the other, depending on species/density and resources that the landowner wants to protect.
8. Consider available resources. Be realistic about available time and money when setting goals. The **USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service** has some funding opportunities that may be appropriate for the property.
9. Modify forest activities to reduce the spread or intensity of invasive species. Include any **BMPs** you plan to use.
10. Continue to adapt the management strategy and project goals. After conducting an initial inventory and considering available resources, alter plans accordingly.
11. Use an integrated management approach = The choice of control method will depend on the availability of local resources (time, money, labor), the size and extent of the infestation, the relative height and density of the infestation and the terrain. Understand the **biology** of each plant and identify the best methods for controlling the species (e.g. **manual**, **mechanical**, **chemical**, cultural or a combination of methods).
12. Develop a reasonable timeline. A reasonable timeline should be based on size of infestation, species, the most effective time/season for treatment and the existence of suitable control methods. Be prepared to monitor the site for three to five years and to do follow-up treatments where plant populations continue to grow.

13. Be realistic. Because of the tenacity of certain species, it may be impossible to completely remove them from a property. They can, however, be managed at a level that allows native plants to thrive.

[Video from riverbankmedia.org on invasive plant management plans](https://riverbankmedia.org)

Check the Resource hub to download short and long versions of a weed management template:

“Weed management plan - short form”

“Weed management plan - long form”



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