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**OREGON LAUNCHES “STOP THE INVASION” STATEWIDE
CAMPAIGN AGAINST INVASIVE SPECIES**

SALEM, Oregon—What better day than Earth Day to call attention to one of the greatest threats to Oregon’s way of life? April 22 is the launch of a first-of-its kind statewide campaign called “Stop the Invasion,” which includes a documentary, publications, volunteer opportunities, a coordinated effort to identify, prevent and control invasive species, and research to gauge the awareness and attitudes of Oregonians toward the problem.

“This campaign truly represents the highest level of collaboration amongst government, nonprofit, and private entities in Oregon,” said Governor Ted Kulongoski. “This is an excellent example of what can happen when people work together to leverage resources to make a difference to Oregon’s native fish and wildlife resources, economy, and quality of life.”

The campaign launches on April 22 at 8:00 pm with the premiere of Oregon Public Broadcasting’s “The Silent Invasion,” a one-hour documentary on invasive species created to raise public awareness and encourage people take action in their own communities.

Also on April 22, two Web sites will launch to help the public take action against invasive species. At the Oregon Invasive Species Hotline, www.oregoninvasiveshotline.org, Oregonians can report and upload photos of suspected invasives and interact with invasive species experts. The Silent Invasion companion site, www.opb.org/silentinvasion, will provide extensive links and information on invasive species in Oregon including a video archive of stories about invasives in Oregon. The weekly series Oregon Field Guide will continue to focus on invasives species in a number of stories during the year.

GardenSmart Oregon: a Guide to Non-invasive Plants will be released in April. The booklet identifies 25 of the most threatening invasive plants across Oregon and recommends non-invasive alternative plants for gardeners and landscapers. This free booklet will be available statewide in garden centers and other businesses and from local government agencies. It was developed by the City of Portland, The Nature Conservancy, Oregon Sea Grant, OSU Extension, Oregon Association of Nurseries, and OPB.

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Also in April, over 100,000 OPB members and about 50,000 subscribers to the *Statesman Journal* are receiving a publication on invasive species that provides specific actions people can take to reduce the spread of invasives.

SOLV is participating in the campaign by coordinating volunteer weed pulls with over 10,000 Oregonians in 2008. Their Web site, www.solv.org/programs/invasives.asp, includes a statewide calendar of events for invasive vegetation removal projects.

In addition to contributing to *GardenSmart Oregon*, The Nature Conservancy is developing an early detection—rapid response program in Oregon. The project trains volunteers to regularly monitor priority natural areas and identify and report invasives so they can be stopped before they spread. More information at www.nature.org/oregon.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council is serving as a clearinghouse for information and action to address invasive species statewide. The council is a consortium of federal, state, county, and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities, and industry representatives dedicated to a coordinated and comprehensive effort to keep invasive species out of Oregon and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the impacts of invasives already present. Web site: www.oregon.gov/OISC/.

Oregon State University and Oregon Sea Grant are conducting pre- and post-campaign surveys to determine how much Oregonians know about invasive species and what ordinary citizens can do to help prevent their spread. This follows focus group studies conducted by the university last year to gauge awareness and attitudes among key stakeholders in Oregon including gardeners, boaters, anglers and hunters. Oregon Sea Grant is also releasing a new publication on aquatic invasive species, *On the Lookout for Aquatic Invaders: Identification Guide for the Pacific Northwest*.

The *Statesman Journal* is publishing a series of in-depth articles on invasive species in Oregon and their economic and ecological impacts. The newspaper has also created a comprehensive Web site, www.invasivespeciesoforegon.com, and is producing educational materials for use in classrooms.

Other participants in “Stop the Invasion” include the Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Agriculture and Forestry, Oregon Marine Board, Port of Portland, Bureau of Indian Affairs—Warm Springs, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, USDA Plant Protection and Quarantine, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland State University, many cooperative weed management areas and county weed boards, along with numerous citizens, corporations, private foundations, and organizations. The “Stop the Invasion” campaign is receiving national attention because of the collaboration among government, nonprofit, and private entities and its scope.

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