RED CEDAR MODEL UNITED NATIONS
SESSION IX

Gutted Greenery: The State of the United States Forests

Chair: Tova Carter

Assistant Specialized Chairs: Lillian Meng, Claire Van Gilder, Michael Ozolins

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Dear Delegates,

My name it Tova Carter and I will be your Chair this Saturday. I am a member of the James Madison College here at Michigan State and am double majoring in Political Theory Constitutional Democracy, and Social Relations and Policy, with several minors focused on science. This is my first time attending RCMUN! I will be assisted by three lovely co-chairs:

My name is Lillian Meng and I'm Gutted Greenery's Assistant Specialized Chair. I'm a sophomore at MSU studying Political Science with a minor in Law, Justice, and Public Policy. This is my first time ever participating in Model UN and I'm very excited to experience my first MUN Conference.

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We are all extraordinary excited to watch you tackle these problems! Let us know if you have questions, concerns, or just want to say hi!

Sincerely,

Tova Carter, and staff

Specialized Chair, Gutted Greenery

Rules of Procedure

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We will be abiding by MSUMUN rules as posted on the conference website. Additionally, the chair will be entertaining Point of Information to correct factual inaccuracies in speeches.

Award Selection Process

Winning an award should not be your primary goal this weekend. We (including the chairs) are all here to learn and develop as community members! As chairs we will be looking for delegates that are kind, approachable, respectful of their peers, and well researched. Remember, the primary goal is to learn and have fun!

As a reminder there will be absolutely no tolerance of bullying, harassment, or targeting of any type for any reason. This will be strictly enforced. If an issue is to arise notify the Dias immediately.

Topic A: Privatization of Federal Land, and Federal Land Us

What are federal lands?

Federal lands are lands in the United States owned by the citizens of the United States. They are held in public trust and managed by the federal government. The federal government owns roughly 640 million acres, about 28% of the 2.27 billion acres of land in the United States, and has tasked four major federal land management agencies with administrating 610.1 million acres of this land.[1]

What Are The Four Federal Land Management Agencies and What Do They Do?

These four agencies are very similar in the ways they manage and preserve US land, but each agency has its own distinct responsibilities. [2]

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[1] [1]Lipton, Eric, and Clifford Krauss, Giving Reins to the States Over Drilling, *New York Times*, August 24, 2012.

[2] Vincent, Carol H, Laura A. Hanson, and Carla N. Argueta. "Federal Land Ownership: Overview and Data." *Congressional Research Service* , March 3, 2017, 1–28. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42346.pdf.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages 248.3 million acres of public land and administers about 700 million acres of federal subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM supports a variety of activities and programs, as does *the Forest Service (FS),* which currently manages 192.9 million acres of designated national forests. *The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)* manages 89.1 million acres and is primarily focused on the conservation of animals and plants. In 2015, *the National Park Service (NPS*) manages 79.8 million acres in 408 diverse units to conserve lands and resources and make them available for public use.

Invasive vs. Non-Invasive Species?

According to the United States Department of Agriculture[3], invasive species have two main characteristics: they are non-native (exotic/alien) to the ecosystem that they occupy, and their existence in that ecosystem causes or is likely to cause harm to the economy, environment, or human health. If left unchecked, invasive species can threaten native species, biodiversity, ecosystem services, water resources, agricultural and forest production, cultural resources, economies, public safety, and infrastructure.

The *Forestry Service (FS)* works very hard to combat this and works to prevent and control the spread of invasive species by funding and coordinating groups that address invasive species issues, federal programs, and by funding agencies within the National Invasive Species Council. The FS also provides assistance to local, state, tribe, and federal partners to help address the issues that invasive species pose to the grasslands, forests, and other ecosystems.

[3] "Invasive Species." Invasive Species | US Forest Service. Accessed October 25, 2019. https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/invasive-species

There are many different ways that the FS works to help prevent and manage current issues with invasive species, but as of 2013, the FS developed a **National Strategic Framework** for Invasive Species Management, to help guide its efforts in addressing the invasive species problem in the US: composed of four key elements for invasive species research and management. Beginning with:

[4]***Prevention***. The most effective strategy to protect federal land is to prevent invasive species introduction and establishment. The FS actively works to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species that adversely affect the health and sustainability of U.S. forests, watersheds, and grasslands. They also work with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and other State and Federal agencies, as necessary, to help inform the public about invasive species threats and their management.

Detection. By detecting new invasive species and monitoring existing priority species, the FS is able to mount a much faster response and leads to a more effective invasive species management approach. Currently, the Forest Service is developing and implementing more efficient survey and monitoring tools to help detect of invasive species and allow for the rapid assessment of their potential impact on forest and grassland health.

Control and Management. **"***Directly eradicate (if possible), control, or manage priority invasive species on priority acres to minimize their spread and adverse effects."* Based on integrated pest management principles, such as using risk assessments, identifying thresholds for actions, and identifying expected outcomes, management activities can aim to eradicate an

infestation, to contain its spread, or to mitigate its impacts. The Forest Service will directly intervene, when cost-effective, to manage populations of invasive species that threaten forest and grassland health and sustainability. If eradication is not feasible, the Forest Service will implement integrated pest management and adaptive management techniques to help maintain ecosystem function.

Restoration and Rehabilitation. *Minimize or reverse adverse ecosystem effects caused by invasive species.* The FS works to restore landscapes that have been impacted by invasive species or associated management activities to improve ecosystem integrity and function and to reduce vulnerability to invasive species establishment in the future. Restoring and maintaining the health, functions, and productivity of areas affected by invasive species is consistent with management guidance on restoring national forests and the effective use of native species.[4]

[4] "What Is the Forest Service Doing to Help?" What is the Forest Service Doing to Help? | US Forest Service. Accessed November 13, 2019. https://www.fs.fed.us/science-technology/invasive-species-pests-disease/what-forest-service-doing-help.

These four elements are the guidelines that, rangers, scientists, and federal employees working with the US Department of Agriculture, use to try and keep invasive species in check.

History of Publicly Owned Land in the US

Prior to contact with Europeans (pre-1492), indigenous people lived in what would soon become the United States.[5] Later on, in the lower 48 contiguous states, Indian Nations ceded millions of acres of land to the newly established United States government. Through conquest and treaty settlements, lands were also obtained from Mexico, Canada, Russia, Spain, France and England (who also obtained the land through conquest and settlement from indiginous people). This history of cessation and settlement provided the original basis for federal ownership and legal title to much of the nation's public lands.

Land grants to states, military bounties, and transfers to individuals became commonplace as time went on (the cited article goes into depth about the different laws and acts that affected who owned what land) which led to the emergence of the US Department of

[5] "America's Public Lands: Origin, History, Future." Public Lands Foundation, December 14, 2014.https://publicland.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/150359_Public_Lands_Document_web.

Agriculture in 1862- then later to Bureau of Land Management[6] in 1946 to through the General Land Office (GLO) to manage the majority of the remaining public lands. Nationwide interest in the environment led to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Wilderness Act, the Endangered Species Act and the Wild Free-roaming Horses and Burros Act in the 1960s and 70s, which fell under BLM's jurisdiction. The United States has 61 protected areas known as national parks that are operated by the National Park Service.

Which is an agency of the Department of the Interior. National parks must be established by an act of the United States Congress. The first national park was Yellowstone and the bill which created it was signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant in 1872, followed by Mackinac National Park in 1875 (decommissioned in 1895), and then Rock Creek Park (later merged into National Capital Parks), Sequoia and Yosemite in 1890. The Organic Act of 1916 created the National Park Service "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."[6]

Later in 1906 came the Antiquities Act, which gave presidents the authority to create national monuments to preserve areas of natural or historic interest on public lands[7]. The purpose

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[6] "NPS Organic Act Overview". nature.nps.gov. National Park Service. 17 January 2007. Archived from the original on 6 February 2017. Retrieved 26 February 2017.

[7] "National Park System (U.S. National Park Service)," National Parks Service (U.S. Department of the Interior), accessed November 13, 2019, https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/national-park-system.htm)

of the Act was largely to protect prehistoric Native American ruins and artifacts, but it ended up working as a way for presidents to claim and preserve public (or non-public) land.[8]

Different presidents throughout America's history have had different opinions on federal land and have made many different decisions regarding it. For example, US President Barack Obama used the Antiquities Act to preserve around 550 million acres of US national forest. Bush and Carter also used this act to preserve roughly 300 million other acres of land.

Current US President, Donald J. Trump, has preserved 0 acres of land. Nor declared any monuments. In fact, he has actually reduced public land by opening up National Forests to energy companies, revoked countless protections, rolled back regulations, and eliminated protections for most federal land (more specifically, around 2 million acres of Utah's Bears Ears National Monument). Our current US administration has made it very easy for corporations to access and pollute public land. Environmental activists and indigenous groups are fighting these rollbacks in court.

[8] History.com Editors. "National Park Service." History.com. A&E Television Networks, March 27, 2018. https://www.history.com/topics/us-government/national-park-service.

There is a great interactive graphic of all the rollbacks and regulations cited in the article below[9] along with a lot of very specific information about Public Land sales online[10].

Questions to Consider:

How your character would be affected by these rollbacks and regulations? Would they like them?

Would it undermine their goals or help achieve them?

What are the motives of your character, and would they benefit from land being privately or publicly owned?

[9] Kiefer, Philip. "The West's Water Shortage Is Fueled by Human Error." Outside Online, November 11, 2019. https://www.outsideonline.com/2402320/west-water-shortage-usage-tracking.

[10] Gentile, Nicole. "The Trump Administration Is Selling Your Public Lands on the Internet." Center for American Progress. Accessed November 15, 2019. https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2018/01/04/444501/trump-administration-selling-public-lands-internet/.

Topic B: Invasive Species

What is are invasive species?

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, invasive species have two main characteristics: they are non-native (exotic/alien) to the ecosystem that they occupy, and their existence in that ecosystem causes or is likely to cause harm to the economy, environment, or human health. Often invasive species reduce the natural diversity in an ecosystem and causing many species to become threatened or extinct.[11]

History of Invasive Species

Over the past 500 years, more than 50,000 species of plants and animals have been introduced to North America started by European colonist. A small percentage of these have escaped cultivation and established wild populations in the US. It is estimated that costs of invasive species to the American economy are now over $138 billion per year and invasive

[11] "Invasive Species." Invasive Species | US Forest Service. Accessed October 25, 2019. https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/invasive-species

plants alone account for over $50 billion per year. Unlike abiotic pollutants, that can be eliminated from use and will eventually break down in the environment, invasive species are biotic pollutants, which can reproduce and spread, causing ever more problems over time unless they are prevented, or at a minimum controlled.

Management

There are four main tenets of invasive species management: ***prevention, early detection, control and management,*** and ***restoration.***

Invasive species are similar to an infectious disease so the best way of fighting a disease is to stop its spread. ***Prevention*** is the first line of defense and is the most important part of the strategy. The goal is to prevent the introduction and establishment of new invasive species. First, promoting education and outreach is essential. The FS will provide and maintain information on invasive species. This information will be available to the general public. Second, the FS works with the USDA inspection service to prevent invasive species from entering the country.

Early detection is the second line of defense where the goal is to prevent an invasive species from gaining a foothold in the ecosystem. First, the most important part of early detection is scouting and maintaining invasive species inventories. Scouting is where members of the FS go into an ecosystem looking for new invasive species. Also monitoring invasive species vector. A vector is an abiotic or biotic factor which spreads a species or disease. Invasive species are quickly advancing along transportation corridors throughout the country.

Control and management is the "Directly eradicate (if possible), control, or manage priority invasive species on priority acres to minimize their spread and adverse effects." To effective control and manage invasive species requires an understanding of species identification,

biology, ecology, vectors of spread, and IPM. Integrated Pest Management is a method of controlling a pest where combination of physical, biological, cultural, and chemical techniques are used in order of least harmful to most harmful.

*"**Rehabilitation and restoration*** are vital components of an integrated IS management program. Rehabilitation is defined as short-term mitigation to ensure minimum site stability and functionality. This may include site preparation and seeding of desirable non-native vegetation. Restoration is a long-term objective and involves returning sites to natural functions and native species." Restoration is where native species are reintroduce into an ecosystem. Where the goal is to return diversity and functionality back to the ecosystem.

List of Common Invasive Species[12]

The Red Imported Fire Ant (Solenopsis invicta), is native to South America, was first introduced into the US on a cargo ship in Mobile, Alabama, in approximately 1930. After being described as a new species, it was not considered to be a threat to the Southeast since it had originated in a tropical region. However, since than fire ants now infest over 260 million acres of land from Texas and Oklahoma to North Carolina, and cause a tremendous amount of economic and ecological damage.

The Emerald Ash Borer (Agrilus planipennis) is a green jewel beetle native to north-eastern Asia that feeds on ash trees. Outside of Asia it is considered a highly invasive species and is highly destructive to ash trees. The emerald ash borer has killed millions of ash trees

[12] "Species Profiles." Species Profiles | National Invasive Species Information Center | USDA. Accessed November 20, 2019. https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/species-type.

The Japanese Beetle (Popillia japonica) is a species of scarab beetle. Japanese beetles are native to Japan and parts of Asia. It is not very destructive in Japan but in the US it is very invasive. The beetle has 300 host plants in the US.

Garlic Mustard (Alliaria petiolata) is a biennial flowering plant in the mustard family. Garlic mustard is an invasive weed. The problem is this plant produces toxins that harm livestock and kills some Lepidoptera species. Also garlic mustard allyl isothiocyanate and benzoyl isothiocyanate which suppress mycorrhizal fungi.

The Feral Pigs are pigs that live in the wild but are descended from escaped domesticated individuals in both the Old and New Worlds. These pigs are very violent and will attack humans and other animals. Feral pigs reproduce quickly and spread quickly. For even more invasive species please visit: USDA list: https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/species-type

Questions to Consider

- How does the division between public and private land affect invasive species management?
- How do invasive species affect agriculture?