

# NWOA Position Statement:

## Invasive Species and Forest Health

**Adopted 2014 by the Board of Directors,  
National Woodland Owners Association on the second reading.**

With the worldwide increase in trade in forest products and live animal and plant stock comes also an increase in unwanted and potentially very damaging pests to American woodlands. Best known because of their widespread devastation are the chestnut blight, gypsy moth, and Dutch elm disease. More recent imports are the emerald ash borer, which could all but eliminate ash species from America, and the thousand cankers disease which has the potential of devastating the black walnut industry. In addition aggressive understory species which create dense mats, (including Japanese stilt grass, cogon grass, and garlic mustard to name but a few), that can severely hinder natural generation of native tree species.

Responsibility for monitoring, inventorying and controlling the spread of invasive species is spread among several federal and state agencies. The primary responsibilities to protect and improve the health of forested landscapes, rural, and urban forests is with the Forest Health Protection programs of the State & Private Forestry Branch of the U.S. Forest Service with support of the Forest and Rangeland Research Stations. These include: forest health monitoring, technical assistance, pesticide use management and technology development. The USDA Animal Health & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has a primary role in import and export inspections, biotechnology, emergency response, and quarantines.

All 50 states have a variety of agencies and offices including agriculture research laboratories, plant inspection programs, public health programs and others. Information is often exchanged among all interested organizations at State Invasive Species Working Groups.

At the national level, NWOA is a member of the Council Against Forest Pests, and for many years a participant in the Center for Invasive Species Prevention.

### **NWOA Objectives**

- Increase funding for the control of destructive invasive insects and diseases at the national and state level.
- Maintain current cost share programs for eradication.
- Support and publicize forestry extension programs on how to recognize and control invasive species.