



Purple loosestrife spreads into wetlands where it displaces native species and reduces biological diversity.

Invasive species are a leading source of environmental destruction across New York State. Invasive plants, animals, and pathogens wreak havoc in public parks, farmland, wildlife habitat, forests, lakes, and rivers. These invaders displace native plants and wildlife, clog waterways, damage crops, upset ecosystem stability, and permanently alter our natural landscapes. Along public roads, invasive trees, shrubs, and vines restrict visibility and create dangerous roadside hazards.

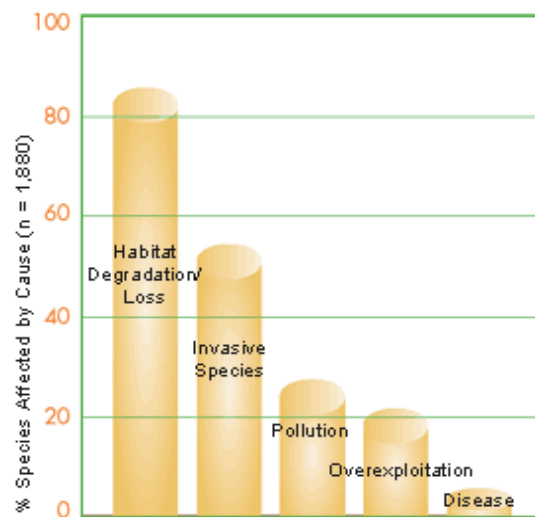
The National Invasive Species Management Plan (2001) defines an invasive species as a

species that is (1) non-native to the ecosystem under consideration and (2) whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

One report estimates the total cost of combating invasive species in the U.S. to be \$137 billion per year. 42% of the species listed on threatened and endangered species lists are at risk mostly because of invasive species.

The harm inflicted by invasive species has captured the attention of public officials. In 2003, Governor George Pataki signed legislation to create the N.Y.S. Invasive Species Task Force. The 17-member task force is examining the factors surrounding the spread of invasive species and their impacts on the State. The task force is jointly chaired by the commissioners of the Department of Environmental Conservation and Department of Agriculture and Markets.

The task force has until November 30, 2005 to report its findings, including administrative and legislative recommendations, to the governor and legislature. These recommendations are expected to provide a cohesive framework and springboard for the development, adoption, and implementation of a broad array of policies and programs designed to address the growing threat posed by invasive species.



Invasive species are the second greatest threat to rare native species around the world.

For more information contact The Nature Conservancy

Willie Janeway
518-273-9408 x236
wjjaneway@tnc.org