A Practical Evaluation of Michigan DNR Wildland Firefighters’ Perception of Invasive Species Decontamination Importance and Strategies to Increase Participation

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OVERVIEW

• COMMUNICATION:
  – What is most important about invasive species decontamination?

• TACTICS: Share knowledge that can make us more effective.
  – What have we learned through experience?
Exercise 1  (4 minutes)

1. Alone: On Post-It notes write down: “Top two things you think are most important about decontamination”.

2. In groups: Stick them onto the large paper.

3. Grouping exercise: Group similar Post-Its into common themes.
Exercise 2 (4 minutes)

1. In groups: Discuss “What are some useful tactics that we can use?”
   - Share “TIPS and TRICKS”

2. Record answers on large paper.

3. Report out: Identify a group spokesperson to share.
The Need

• Do staff need more decon training?
  – How much?
  – Is it effective?

• “Time is money.”

• How are we learning from our experience?
Sping Tactics Meetings for Fire Officers

• Gaylord, MI – 119 Attendees
• Munising, MI – 87 Attendees
Drive UTV pastway
up tracks/slope to give easy access to under carriage + drain water excess.
Grouped Responses Into Themes

• Common themes that were apparent to the facilitator
  – Confirmed by two other colleagues to reduce individual bias.

• Preventing the Spread
• Cost/Practicality
• Doing it Right/Being Educated
• Ethical Responsibility to the Environment
• Example to the Public
• Meeting Policy Standards
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouped Responses Into Themes</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preventing the Spread</td>
<td>“Don’t move seed”; “Slow/Stop Spread”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost/Practicality</td>
<td>“Easy, simple, effective”; “Keep it practical”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doing it Right/Being Educated</td>
<td>“Know what is most critical species”; “Know where seeds collect on equipment”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethical Responsibility to the Environment</td>
<td>“Protect environment”; “Doing our part”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example to the Public</td>
<td>“Set an example”; “Practice what you preach”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Policy Standards</td>
<td>“Meeting FSC and SFI standards”; “comply with policy”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Themes within Michigan DNR Wildland Firefighter Responses To: "Top two things you think are most important about invasive species decontamination."

Upper and Lower Penninsula

- Preventing the Spread: 52%
- Cost/Practicality: 11%
- Doing it Right/Being Educated: 19%
- Ethical Responsibility to the Environment: 3%
- Example to the Public: 2%
- Meeting Policy Standards: 2%
Comparison of themes within Upper and Lower Peninsula Michigan DNR Wildland Firefighter Responses To: "Top two things you think are most important about invasive species decontamination."
Themes in Michigan DNR Wildland Firefighter Response to "Tips and Tricks" To Improve Invasive Species Decontamination

Upper and Lower Peninsula

- Improved Procedures: 52%
- Proper Equipment: 26%
- Partner Communication/Engagement: 15%
- Additional Training: 6%
Strategies to Increase Performance

• Incorporate decontamination procedures into burn plans and briefings.
  – Include known infestations in the plan
  – Provide site-specific guidance and SOP for where/when to decon (post-incident).

• Add decontamination content to regular trainings to foster retention and culture.

• Ensure that adequate decontamination equipment is available/accessible.

• Leadership must set the example.
Questions?

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