

DATE ISSUED: May 21, 2002

REPORT NO. 02-118

ATTENTION: Natural Resources and Culture Committee,
Agenda of June 12, 2002

SUBJECT: Invasive Exotic Plant Ban Ordinance

SUMMARY

Issue - Shall City Council adopt the Invasive Exotic Plant Ban Ordinance (dated May 2002) banning sale and importation of pampas grass, arundo, tamarisk, and German ivy within the City of San Diego?

Manager's Recommendation - Adopt the Invasive Exotic Plant Ban Ordinance dated May 2002.

Other Recommendations - None.

Fiscal Impact - None with this action.

BACKGROUND

At the February 13, 2002, Natural Resources and Culture Committee (NR&C) meeting in response to a presentation on the invasive nature of pampas grass by Carrie Schneider of the California Native Plant Society, the Committee voted to:

1. Direct the City Attorney and City Manager to draft an ordinance to ban the sale, cultivation, and import of all varieties of pampas grass;
2. Direct the City Attorney and City Manager to draft an ordinance to ban the sale, cultivation, and import of other problem invasive nonnative species;
3. Include notice of the ban in the City of San Diego's Landscape Guidelines;
4. Urge the proper City departments to remove pampas grass from City-owned land;
5. Develop and implement a public awareness program to advise the public about problems with pampas grass;
6. Urge landowners to remove existing pampas grass;
7. Direct staff to develop a specific list of other problem invasive nonnative species; and
8. Direct Governmental Relations Department to work towards State legislation relative to banning the sale, cultivation, and import of pampas grass.

DISCUSSION

City staff from the Attorney's Office, Park and Recreation Department, Real Estate Assets, Development Services, Environmental Services, and Planning have been meeting to respond to NR&C's direction. The following discussion corresponds to the NR&C motion as described earlier in this report.

Motions 1&2 Ordinance - A proposed ordinance prohibiting the sale, distribution, and cultivation of giant reed (*Arundo donax*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), German ivy (*Senecio mikanioides*), and tamarisk (*Tamarix chinensis*) is attached to this Report (see Attachment 1). These plants are highly invasive, non-native species that are sometimes sold by nurseries for landscaping. These species were selected by staff for inclusion in the proposed ordinance because they are highly injurious to native plant species and wildlife.

Motion 3 Landscape Standards and Land Development Code Amendments - If Council adopts this ordinance, Attachment 2 outlines recommended changes to the Landscape Standards and Land Development Code.

Motion 4 City Invasive Plant Eradication Efforts - The City Park and Recreation and Environmental Services departments are directly involved with eradication efforts targeting invasive exotics identified in the ordinance and the other invasive species previously listed in this report. Grant funding, volunteer projects, mitigation efforts, and brush management are all means by which these departments currently undertake exotic plant removal. The costs for eradication are variable and are affected by several factors, such as accessibility, degree of invasiveness, labor intensiveness for removal, disposal, and subsequent monitoring and remedial measures. Generally, removal of invasive exotic plants can range from \$10,000 to \$25,000 per acre depending on accessibility of the site and amount of re-treatment required. This cost range would not include restoration of an area with native plants. In some areas where eradication would leave large open areas of habitat, restoration with appropriate native species is necessary to keep exotics from re-colonizing the area and to avoid surface erosion. These revegetation efforts and required monitoring and maintenance for three to five years would be additional costs.

For example, Environmental Services undertook a 1.5-acre *Arundo donax* eradication in 1996 in Mission Valley. This area had good access but the species is highly invasive and requires intensive initial effort as well as regular monitoring and remedial effort. No restoration with native species was deemed necessary at the location. The cost was about \$15,000 per acre using the cut stump method and monitoring and remedial spraying for five years.

Another example is a grant for removal of German ivy by Park and Recreation Department in Tecolote Canyon Natural Preserve. German ivy is considered extremely invasive and hard to control as just a small piece of vegetation left behind after an eradication effort can begin the re-investigation of the area. Costs are expected to be approximately \$10,000 per acre, including subsequent monitoring and remedial effort.

These City departments will continue their efforts for exotic eradication as staff and volunteer time and funding permits. When Environmental Services does brush management efforts, exotic removal is and will continue to be done at the same time. Increased staffing and funding would enable the efforts to increase.

Motions 5&6 Public Awareness and Outreach - CALEPPC has brochures and/or videos available for distribution on pampas grass, tamarisk, and arundo. We recommend showing the videos on invasive exotics on the City's cable access channel and City's web page. Brochures and videos can be incorporated into ranger programs and be made available at every nature center as well as to community planning groups. Also, included for distribution would be a list of suitable replacement species made available to the nursery industry. As part of an outreach program, information on invasive exotics could be put on the City website.

Motion 7

List Other Invasive Exotic Plants - The four species identified in ordinance are considered by City staff and California Exotic Pest Plant Council (CALEPPC) to be the most invasive and the most difficult and expensive to eradicate.

There are, however, additional highly invasive exotics as identified by City staff and CALEPPC that displace native vegetation in San Diego. Many of these are non-commercial varieties and have been introduced to San Diego from various human activities. These species include:

<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	tree-of-heaven
<i>Atriplex semibaccata</i>	Australian saltbush
<i>Bromus madritensis</i> ssp. <i>rubens</i>	red brome
<i>Cynara cardunclus</i>	artichoke thistle
<i>Ehrharta calycina</i>	veldt grass
<i>Eichornia crassipes</i>	water hyacinth
<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	red gum
<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	blue gum
<i>Ficus carica</i>	edible fig
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	fennel
<i>Genista monspessulana</i> (<i>G.racemosa</i>)	French broom
<i>Lepidum latifolium</i>	perennial peppergrass
<i>Myoporum laetum</i>	myoporum
<i>Pennisetum setaceum</i>	fountain grass

