A mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to preserve the state’s extraordinary biological diversity by protecting, maintaining, and restoring native species and natural communities. Invasive exotic plants pose the single greatest natural resource threat facing California State Parks, because they can spread rapidly and out-compete native species, change the landscape, destroy habitat, and upset natural ecosystem processes.

Management of exotic species is designed to avoid damage to natives and their natural communities and processes, park cultural resources, and human health and safety. It is State Park policy to minimize the need for pest control, and when control is necessary, an adaptive integrated pest management approach is taken to reduce pesticide use, and only least-toxic, target-specific chemicals are used.

Mechanical control methods are generally preferred where effective. Jim Dempsey uses a broad hori to remove a northern California (Debka) common period.

Larger invasive trees are left standing as legacy habitat after treatment where they pose no risk hazard. Trees, shrubs, and other vegetation within an identified stand are sprayed (target xylem) with herbicide mix (20% ‘Garlon-4’ and/or 6% ‘Stalker’ imazapyr in basal oil), August-November, conditions permitting.

Chemical control methods are designed to minimize herbicide use and target chemical for direct action.

..."peel-and-spray" method used on live tree (direct action on xylem)... 

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Control of larger stands of invasive plants can itself create the kind of landscape disturbance that provided opportunity for weed invasion in the first place, so planting and establishment of native plants appropriate to the site are sometimes necessary to prevent reinvasion and to complete restoration of the native habitat.

Volunteers are essential to our habitat restoration projects. In collecting Valley oak (Quercus lobata) acorns, Ed Larsen (left) wields a hand-drivenike, and volunteer April (right) examines a small acorn. Here, Ed Larsen pulls ‘Red Alert’ (A-1) Himalayan blackberry (rust?) from the Lake Oroville Forebay shoreline while it is still easy to control.

Invasive edible fig (Ficus carica) encroaches on Chico River floodplain before removal.

After removing fig trees...

The area is planted with natives and gets flooded by the Sacramento River.

Monterey Bridge State Recreation Area

Buwati Mansion State Historic Park

Lake Oroville State Recreation Area

Sacramento River State Recreation Area

Restoration of a hillside seep infested with Himalayan blackberry and fig

Monitoring is important to catch an invasion early and remove it before it gets out of hand. Here, Ed Larsen pulls ‘Red Alert’ Himalayan blackberry (Dundee purple) from the Lake Oroville Forebay shoreline while it is still easy to control.