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Managing Pathways - Preventing Invasions

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Managing Pathways - Preventing Invasions

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Many invasive species have moved unintentionally through human assisted pathways causing significant environmental and economic impact. Identifying pathways likely to spread species and preventing introductions is inconsistent from office to office and between agencies. Industry's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) planning has been modified slightly as a management strategy to remove hitchhiking species from any pathway. HACCP planning is a straightforward method to identify problems and minimize the threat of pathway introductions through strategic removal of contaminating hitchhikers at critical control points. Industry has used this tool since the 60's. Recently, it has been recognized for its value in pathway management. HACCP's five linked planning forms systematically evaluate risks and focuses science-based risk removal procedures for maximum affect at key pathway junctions.

This presentation describes HACCP planning and how implementing this preventative concept can block unintended introductions on a large scale basis. The Fish & Wildlife Service has developed a support system to implement this national and international pathway management model. The Service's National Conservation Training Center and others have developed training to teach HACCP principles. Funding needs and management decisions based on HACCP plans ensure priorities are addressed in a consistent manner. Web-based HACCP planning support (www.HACCP-NRM.org) hosts downloadable forms, instructions and a growing national database of completed plans searchable for best management practices (BMPs). Good ideas are spread by copying practices and actions of others. BMPs developed through HACCP planning and shared through a national database create an easy reference source for others to remove or prevent hitchhiking species from pathways. Appropriate planning can prevent the unintended spread of species to protect waters while saving natural resources and money.