



Overview

Invasive species (IS) are any type of living organism that are not native to an ecosystem and cause harm. IS are found in [all 50 states](#), and are characterized by their tendency to outcompete native species due to rapid reproduction rates and their ability to withstand threats that native species cannot. Invasive species can occur on land (terrestrial) or in water (aquatic). Some common examples of IS are: lionfish (aquatic), Russian olive tree (terrestrial), zebra mussels (aquatic), and Burmese pythons (terrestrial). With over [50,000 non-native species](#) and growing in the United States, the threats to the environment and the economy are spreading fast.

State Options

Aquatic and Terrestrial IS

- CA [S.B. 1175](#) would suspend any authorization to import a wild animal species when the risk of wildlife disease transmission to humans is apparent.
- HI [HB 1854](#) establishes best practices for treating and controlling little fire ants.

Aquatic Only

- Policies regarding the regulation of ballast water uptake/discharge have been passed in [Montana](#) and [California](#).
- Research on [market based incentives](#) for controlling invasive lionfish is being conducted in Florida, and could help shape future policies.

KEY POINTS

- Invasive Species have been regarded as [one of the top causes](#) of species endangerment and extinction.
- Wildlife trafficking and otherwise legal trade can also [introduce invasive species](#).
- Invasive species are often tightly linked to zoonotic diseases and threats to human health, as IS can [carry novel diseases](#) that human and other wildlife bodies are not equipped to handle.
- The impacts of IS are costly - [The Nature Conservancy](#) estimates that more than \$120 billion per year goes to managing invasive species in the United States.

Other Resources

- [Fish and Wildlife Services'](#) Invasive Species Laws and Regulations
- ["Top 50 Invasive Species in the West"](#) - This report by the Western Governors Association provides a regional assessment of this environmental challenge.
- The [National Invasive Species Information Center's Laws and Regulations](#) website contains a comprehensive set of resources on invasive species laws and regulations including information on federal, state, and International laws and regulations.