

2016 Envirothon Presentation Scenario

A newly designated (**Provide your own name**) National Park in Evergreen City, TN, recently acquired 150 acres of land adjacent to the Volunteer Zoo. Situated within the plot of land is a 200 hundred year old homestead, which has great historical significance for its connection to the early settlement of the Evergreen City area. Over the years, primarily as a result of out competing and displacing native species, the land has become overrun with invasive plant species, which include Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) and Kudzu (*Pueraria* spp.). As a result of the overbearing invasive population, the homestead buildings are experiencing an accelerated deterioration because they are entirely entrapped by the invasive plant overgrowth and the indigenous plant and tree species are becoming increasingly stressed.

Your team makes up the (???) National Park Vegetation Management Crew.

It is your job to create an action plan for the newly acquired property. You must create a land management plan that explains and demonstrates how to remove the invasive plant species affecting the area. Keep in mind that this is an effort to restore the vitality of the indigenous plant populations and to maintain the integrity of the homestead buildings. The plan must include the suggested methods of treatment, personnel needed and resources involved.

Outline the key elements of your action plan.

In your efforts to create a management plan, a partnership with the Volunteer Zoo would help manage the invasive species currently within the Zoo's boundaries and prevent further spread of harmful invasive species into the historical site at the Park. Through informal discussions with the Zoo employees, you have learned that the Zoo administrators are apprehensive about the Park's management plan. There are fears that the treatments of the invasive species will adversely affect the aesthetics of their enclosures and that the use of chemical herbicides could be detrimental to the Zoo animal's health.

How will you cultivate Zoo management as allies instead of adversaries?

Similarly, local inhabitants of the greater Evergreen City area are concerned about the land management plan. Within the homestead boundary is a small waterway that connects downstream with a popular local lake that is frequently used for swimming and other various recreational activities. The lake is very important for the Evergreen City community because it is home to various local events including a multitude of sporting events, fundraising programs, and festivals, which all rely on the apparently safe and clean reputation of the lake. Many local community members are worried that pesticides will pollute the waterway and, ultimately, make the lake unsafe for people to use, which could greatly affect their cherished community events.

How will you involve the community in constructive ways to educate them on water quality issues, invasive species and safe pesticide use while building partnerships?