



ADA COUNTY

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Invasive Trees Being Removed from Barber Park

Russian Olive, Siberian Elms and Callery Pear targeted for removal

BOISE – Russian Olives, Siberian Elms and Callery Pear trees sound beautiful and exotic but they can wreak havoc on important ecosystems along the Boise River. Thanks to a generous donation from the Golden Eagle Audubon Society (GEAS) Ada County Parks & Waterways in collaboration with Ada County Weed, Pest, and Mosquito Abatement, the Boise River Enhancement Network (BREN), and GEAS will be removing invasive trees in Barber Park Tuesday through Thursday of this week.

"This work will help improve wildlife habitat for more than 150 bird species in this designated 'Important Bird Area' along the Boise River corridor. Restoring habitats for birds and other wildlife is part of our mission at Golden Eagle Audubon Society and we are proud to partner with Ada County in this collaborative effort."

In particular, Russian olives --- first introduced from Eurasia in the early 1900s --- are targeted for cutting and stump treatment due to their ongoing invasion within Barber Park's black cottonwood forest and riparian areas. These highly invasive trees snuff out desirable vegetation and 'keystone' tree species while providing marginal habitat benefits for migratory birds and other resident animals. Black cottonwoods and willows, on the other hand, are native to the Treasure Valley and considered critical to the riparian ecosystem along the Boise River but cannot regenerate effectively under the dense canopy of Russian Olives. Other invasive tree species such as Siberian elms and Callery pear have also been targeted for removal within Barber Park.

"This is a great way to save taxpayer dollars," said Ada County Commissioner Diana Lachiondo. "I am so thankful for the Golden Eagle Audubon Society's willingness to 'walk the walk' on this issue. Invasive species can do so much damage to areas of this valley we treasure. It is also heartening to see our county departments stepping in to make sure the process is done safely and effectively."

The Golden Eagle Audubon Society has contributed funding to hire a tree service contractor to fell invasive trees that have been flagged for removal by GEAS board member Alan Crockett, and confirmed by Ada County Parks & Waterways. Ada County Weed, Pest, and Mosquito Abatement is providing licensed and certified applicators to immediately treat fresh cut stumps to minimize the potential for regeneration.

Media is welcome and Staff and volunteers from the various organizations will be available for interviews between 10am-12pm on Wednesday, 2/19. Media contact: Scott Koberg, Ada County Parks & Waterways Director (208) 860-9913 or skoberg@adacounty.id.gov.

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