

## **Notice of Invasive Weed Mowing University of California, Berkeley Richmond Field Station Prairie Reserve**

Beginning in mid-June 2006 and continuing throughout the summer and into the fall, the University of California, Berkeley will begin a mowing program aimed at eliminating invasion of Harding Grass (*Phalaris aquatica*, “PHAQ” on the map) in the remnant coastal prairie reserve at the Richmond Field Station (RFS). The mowing is intended to prevent additional seed spread and to reduce the vigor of the weed. Mowing will not harm the native coastal prairie habitat. A qualified wildlife biologist will accompany mowers to insure that sensitive areas are not affected.



### **What is Harding Grass and Why is it a Problem?**

Harding Grass is an introduced, non-native grass from the Mediterranean that was introduced to the United States by way of Australia soon after World War I. Harding grass is now widespread in California. In wildlands it out-competes and displaces native plant species and the animals that use those species for cover or food. The California Invasive Plant Council (Cal IPC) considers Harding grass an Exotic Invasive Plant of Greatest Ecological Concern and recommends eradication through mechanical methods and application of herbicides although a preferred method of control has yet to be developed.

At the RFS, Harding grass is present along the perimeter of the remnant coastal prairie that is being preserved for its unique ecological value. Harding grass has also begun to form small colonies on the interior of the prairie. In order to control this invasion, The Watershed Project, the campus restoration’s non-profit ecology contractors, are working with faculty from Integrative Biology and Environmental Science, Policy & Management Departments and the campus Office of Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) to find effective ways at reversing the spread of the weed. Small patches are being dug up by hand and mowing, which Cal IPC reports can reduce the vigor of the plant, is planned for large areas of Harding Grass.



Map of Harding grass in RFS Prairie Reserve

For more information, please contact RFS Superintendent (665-3402) or EH&S (642-3073). Information and photo from Cal IPC Invasive Plants of California’s Wildlands at <http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/management/ipcw/sciname.php>