



Safeguarding the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife refuge by controlling invasive species while climate change continues to alter the ecosystem

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The Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (GDSNWR) consists of over 112,000 acres of protected lands stretching from Virginia to North Carolina. This forested wetland is home to a variety of different species that rely on the swamp to thrive in the ecosystem. The history of the swamp tells a story on why there are some issues on the refuge today. In 1763 George Washington led a group of individuals to drain the swamp by putting ditches all around the area. This has affected the swamp by draining much of the moisture needed for the wildlife of the GDSNWR. Climate change is also something that will negatively affect the refuge. These have led to many invasive species taking over and killing the native species. The refuge thrives off of the native species and the absence of them would not look good for the refuge in the long run.



Due to many other factors working against the refuge, management doesn't have the time or resources to manage the invasive species population. Although there are not drastic effects from their presence yet, with the new changes coming they can become out of control and kill the native species. Hazards such as each invasive species and climate change will prove to only make the problem more difficult in the future.

- Some recommendations to help alleviate the problem include:
 - The refuge having a partnered program with invasive treatment training
 - Volunteer groups being organized
 - Having partnered programs with local universities to help map and treat invasives

