

Mayday trees taking over Alaska's forest



The area of Edinburgh and Selkirk drives where police say a man emerged from the woods Wednesday night with wounds consistent with a bear mauling. Beth Verge / KTUU photo.

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ANCHORAGE (KTUU) A harmful invasive species of tree is taking over Alaska's forest.

It's called the European bird cherry tree, also known as the mayday tree, and the Anchorage Park Foundation says it's rapidly taking over native forests.

In a press release from Anchorage Park Foundation, they say the mayday trees have completely crowded out all other trees and vegetation – plants that moose, salmon, and people rely on for food. In rare situations, the mayday trees can even poison moose.

To combat and help contain the tree from spreading, on Saturday, concerned citizens, the city, state, and federal biologists are coming together for the sixth annual Anchorage Invasive Weed Smackdown.

According to the Anchorage Park Foundation, the frontlines of this invasion are Alaska's cities, ports, and transportation corridors. Several aggressive plant invaders are beginning to move from Anchorage's developed landscapes into natural areas such as Chester and Campbell Creeks, Far North Bicentennial Park, Chugach State Park, Kenai Peninsula, and beyond.

The 6th Annual Anchorage Invasive Weed Smackdown will be held this Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Taku Lake Park near picnic shelter.