

SE-EPPC E-NEWS June 2008 Volume 2.3

1. MS – EPPC Hosts SE-EPPC Annual Symposium in Biloxi
2. State Chapter Report: Georgia EPPC
3. National Cooperative Weed Management Area Conference
4. NAEPPC Update – NAA/08 NAEPPC Conference in Nashville
5. Upcoming Events and Opportunities

1. MS – EPPC Hosts SE-EPPC Annual Symposium in Biloxi. Summary of the 10th Annual Symposium of Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council – Steve Brewer, MS-EPPC, president

The 10th annual SE-EPPC symposium was held in Biloxi, Mississippi on May 20th, 21st, and 22nd. The symposium was sponsored by the Mississippi Forestry Commission, and the program was organized by John Madsen of the GeoResources Institute of Mississippi State University. The theme for the symposium was “Managing Invasive Plants in Disturbed Landscapes.” It offered a timely forum for considering how best to manage invasive plants in disturbed landscapes. Topics were wide ranging, however, and included presentations on the mapping, detection, and ecology of invasive species, as well as methods of management and control, involving governmental agencies at all levels and grass-roots community-level efforts. In addition, each state chapter provided an update on current and upcoming activities. Conference participants included presenters, regular attendees, and vendors from throughout the southeast region and beyond, including individuals from as far away as Colorado and Illinois.

The keynote address was provided by Dr. Lester Spell, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce for the State of Mississippi. On behalf of MS-EPPC, Stephen Brewer (President of MS-EPPC) presented Dr. Spell with an award in recognition of his outstanding leadership in the management of invasive exotic plants in Mississippi.

The symposium included two invited plenary speakers: Randy Westbrook, who gave a talk entitled “A Conceptual Framework for a Biological Protection Ethic on the Introduction, Use, and Spread of Exotic Plants and Animals in the United States,” and Jean Freeny, who gave a talk about the “National Biological Information Infrastructure – Building Knowledge through Partnerships.” There was also a roundtable discussion on the use of databases for invasive species detection and management. After the symposium, several participants joined John Byrd and Patty Rogers on field trips to local areas demonstrating methods of cogongrass control as well as a swamp tour on the one of the last “wild” rivers in the lower 48 states, the Pascagoula River.

2. State Chapter Report: Georgia EPPC – Carey Minter and Dave Moorhead, Co-Director Center for Invasive Species & Ecosystem Health, University of Georgia

The Georgia Department of Agriculture has issued a statewide ban on the sale of cogongrass, a non-native and aggressively invasive species of grass. Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) is already listed as a noxious weed by the United States Department of Agriculture and is therefore illegal to transport across state lines. The new action makes the growing, cultivation or sale of the plant a violation within the state of Georgia. The grass is sold under the names Japanese

blood grass and Red Baron grass. There is a reddish tint to the leaves which accounts for its name and sole ornamental quality. Cultivars such as 'Red Baron' are thought to be sterile (producing no viable seed), but long-term behavior of the plant is unknown. Cultivars of the grass have demonstrated aggressive spreading by their roots. They will also sometimes revert to green.

State and federal agencies have been working together for four years to detect all known cogongrass infestations and to eradicate them. Cogongrass can form a dense mat that makes it nearly impossible for other plants to coexist. It disrupts ecosystems, reduces wildlife habitat and decreases tree seedling growth. "Think of kudzu as a grass," said Commissioner of Agriculture Tommy Irvin.

This ban is part of an ongoing effort among the nursery industry, USDA Forest Service, University of Georgia Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health, Georgia Department of Agriculture and Georgia Forestry Commission to prevent further introductions of cogongrass into the environment. The Georgia Department of Agriculture has 24 inspectors that will enforce the ban and help educate nurseries and garden centers about this new regulation. "Georgia garden centers and nurseries are stocked with plenty of other ornamental grasses or other plants that will substitute for these grasses," said Commissioner Irvin. "Everyone agrees this is a wise precautionary measure."

Georgia Cogongrass Cooperative Weed Management Area - On May 8, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by more than 20 cooperators/shareholders creating a state-wide Georgia Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) focused on cogongrass. The ceremony was hosted by the Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center in Baker County Georgia. The MOU establishes a mutually agreeable framework for cooperatively addressing the short and long term negative effects of cogongrass within the State of Georgia. All parties to the MOU agree that it is to their mutual interest and benefit to work cooperatively in education, detection, inventorying, monitoring, controlling, and preventing the spread of cogongrass within the State of Georgia. For more information see www.cogongrass.org.

3. National Cooperative Weed Management Area Conference – Janet Clark, Assistant Director for Policy and Publications, Center for Invasive Plant Management

“People-Powered Projects: The National Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Conference” was held April 15-17, 2008, at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, NV. The conference focused on CWMA funding and logistics, working with volunteers, EDRR, awareness and outreach, approaches to mapping, and state and national initiatives, and concluded with an all-day field trip to restoration sites in the Reno area.

This was the first-ever national CWMA conference featured 33 speakers and attracted 113 attendees from 37 states. Attendees represented local, state, and federal agencies; non-profit organizations; universities and other educational institutions; business interests and others.

SE-EPPC was one of nine co-hosts of the event and Brian Bowen served on the organizing committee. It is worth noting that seven of the nine co-hosts were non-governmental, grassroots organizations from across the United States. This unusually broad partnership of peers included:

- Center for Invasive Plant Management (Montana)
- Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council (Tennessee)
- Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plant Management (Alaska)
- California Invasive Plant Council (California)
- Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (Connecticut)
- Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council (Maryland)
- Midwest Invasive Plant Network (Indiana)
- Nevada Department of Agriculture (Nevada)
- National Park Service

Terri Hogan, resource manager for the National Park Service at Stones River Battlefield, was one of the delegates from the Southeast EPPC to be recognized at this conference for her work in Middle Tennessee in coordinating efforts with partners to manage and control cinnamon vine, Cynthia C. Taylor, Natural Resources Manager at the Elachee Nature Science Center in Atlanta, GA. was the second SE-EPPC delegate recognized at the conference for her work in organizing a CWMA to manage invasive plants at the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve.

Financial support was provided by the Federal Highway Administration, Bureau of Land Management, Western Weed Coordinating Committee, and Center for Invasive Plant Management.

PowerPoint presentations with audio will be posted at www.weedcenter.org by the end of June. Conference attendees strongly supported the idea of holding a follow-up conference in a year or two in the eastern U.S.

4. NAEPPC Update – 2008 Inaugural National Conference; and why you should be there! - Brian Bowen, NAEPPC vice president

The 35th annual Natural Areas Conference kicks off Tuesday afternoon, October 14, 2008 in Nashville and promises to be one of the best invasive species conferences yet. The Natural Areas Association (NAA) and the National Association of EPPC (NAEPPC) are joining together to make this a special event. It will be NAEPPC's inaugural conference and will provide NAEPPC with a national platform. NAEPPC has the full support and participation of the all of the EPPC's throughout the US and has organized more than half of the conference program.

The plenary session opens on Tuesday at the historic War Memorial Auditorium. Wednesday and Friday is a full slate of concurrent sessions with 110 invited speakers and 53 session topics including symposia, workshops, forums, and contributed papers. Thursday features a choice of 25 field trips to natural areas in Tennessee's Central Basin, Highland Rim, and Cumberland Plateau. Thursday night will be an evening of fun and music at the NAA/NAEPPC banquet at the Ryman Auditorium, the official birthplace of "bluegrass."

Adding to the conference offerings are social events, professional meetings, workshops, roundtables, and pre and post conference fieldtrips (three days and two nights each). For registration and all other conference information go to

www.naturalarea.org/08/conference/

5. Upcoming Events and Opportunities

35th Natural Areas Conference - Natural Areas Revival In Music City: Tuning into a changing climate and biological invasion *A joint conference of the Natural Areas Association and the National Association of Exotic Pest Plant Councils*

The Doubletree Hotel - Nashville, Tennessee

The 2008 Natural Areas Conference will be a joint conference of the Natural Areas Association (NAA) and the National Association of Exotic Pest Plant Councils (NAEPPC). The conference will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the NAA and will be an inaugural national conference for NAEPPC. The conference will focus on ecological management themes with an emphasis on invasive exotic species issues. The NAEPPC will bring its invasive species expertise to the conference and the two organizations will provide synergy in organizing what is expected to be an outstanding conference. Join us for an informative and rewarding experience.

Request for Proposals: The BASF ProVM group is requesting grant proposals for its “2009 Invasive Plant Control Matching Grant” program. The program’s goal is to assist organizations with “meeting matching funding requirements for federal, state or foundation grants through helping finance the cost of herbicide application.” Please visit <http://www.aquatics.org/news.htm> for the grant proposal form and program document stating the description and requirements. The deadline for submitting proposals is 5:00pm September 29, 2008 and should be submitted to jennifer.vollmer@basf.com / Fax 307-742-9932

JOB OPENING

Restoration Specialist– INVASIVES STRIKE TEAM

LOCATION: Trail of Tears State Park, Jonesboro, Illinois

TERM: 1 year position

The Restoration Specialist is part of a team who will eradicate invasive, exotic plants. The Restoration Specialist participates in invasive and exotic plant management using integrated pest management strategies. This may include one or more of the following functions:

- Implement and document invasive, exotic plant management control methods including manual, mechanical and chemical techniques.
- Document invasive, exotic plant management and control and produce status maps and reports using the Weed Information Management System (WIMS), a computer database
- Collect accurate and detailed information using the WIMS database, which requires using handheld and desktop computers
- Work as part of a rapid-response Invasive Species Strike Team (ISST) to control invasive exotic plants in State Parks, State Nature Preserves and adjacent private lands that serve as pathways onto these properties.

- Based at the Trail of Tears State Park, the position will work within 11 counties in southern Illinois, including Alexander, Gallatin, Hardin, Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Williamson and Union.
- Assist with prescribed burns
- Use herbicides according to the manufacturer's label and Illinois Department of Natural Resources directions
- Maintain tools and equipment

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- High school diploma and 1-2 years training in science-related field or related experience in land management
- Experience working with or knowledge of natural systems. Ability to recognize plant and animal species as required to complete preserve management activities
- Ability to operate various types of equipment in a safe and efficient manner (e.g.; lawn mower, chainsaw, pole saws, hedge cutters, manual and gas powered sprayers, manual 4-wheel drive and all terrain vehicles, tractor, Global Positioning Systems, hand held computers, two-way radio, etc)
- Ability to follow instructions from colleagues
- Ability to perform physical work, sometime under adverse conditions or in inclement weather
- Ability to obtain Illinois Department of Agriculture Herbicide Application license within 2 weeks of hire
- Ability to successfully complete the USDA Forest Service Wildlife Fire Fighter training courses S-130 and S-190 within 8 weeks of hire
- Valid Illinois driver's license
- PC familiarity, including database knowledge, and ability to use the WIMS system; GPS experience preferred
- Prescribed fire experience preferred

To apply for this position please visit <http://www.nature.org/careers> click 'View Positions' and search for this listing by the position title and location. All resumes must be submitted through The Nature Conservancy's online application process.