

SOUTHEAST EXOTIC PEST PLANT COUNCIL SE-EPPC

August 30, 2002

Pat Duncan Raven
Missouri Botanical Garden
P.O. Box 299
St. Louis, Missouri 63166-0299



Dear Distinguished Organizers:

I am writing on behalf of the Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council (SE-EPPC) to endorse the St. Louis Declaration on Invasive Plant Species (February, 2002). Specifically, this Declaration is important because it includes **Findings and Overarching Principles** that frame the invasive species problem and present the underlying basis for successful efforts to address it, and **Draft Voluntary Codes of Conduct**. As referenced in the Declaration's Statement of Purpose, the Draft Voluntary Codes of Conduct are significant because they will help govern the decisions made by commercial, professional and governmental groups whose actions affect the spread of invasive plant species.

SE-EPPC recognizes the value of these draft voluntary codes of conduct for government agencies, nursery professionals, the gardening public, landscape architects, and botanic gardens and arboreta. SE-EPPC supports the adoption of these Codes because they address significant issues that include: 1) prevention and risk assessment on a regional basis 2) eliminating continued distribution of invasives 3) removal of established invasives 4) development of non-invasive alternatives for various uses 5) raising public awareness and diminishing demand for invasives 6) the need to include the invasive issue in professional training 7) the importance of partnerships, databases, and communication, and 8) importation and exportation rules.

SE-EPPC applauds the efforts of the organizers of "The Workshop on Linking Ecology and Horticulture To Prevent Plant Invasions" held December 2001 at the Missouri Botanical Gardens that brought together shareholders and experts that gave rise to the St. Louis Declaration. This effort, which resulted in the St. Louis Declaration, provides an essential instrument to help bridge the gap between stakeholders. It provides agreement on what the basic parameters of this issue are, and how horticultural interests shall be addressed. By endorsing this Declaration, SE-EPPC supports and encourages that all necessary measures be taken to adopt and implement these voluntary codes of actions that will help prevent plant invasions.

Respectfully yours,

Brian Bowen, President
Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council

copy: John Randall, Peter White, Sarah Reichard

Editor's note:

SE-EPPC includes state chapters in Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina and Tennessee.