

Larson & McGowin, Inc.



# Cogongrass: No Field of Dreams

Alabama Cogongrass Control Center  
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[www.alabamacogongrass.com](http://www.alabamacogongrass.com)

# Acknowledgments

- Alabama Forestry Commission
- Alabama Invasive Plant Council
- Cogongrass Technical Committee
- American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA)

## Introduction

- Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) is rapidly spreading
- Affects the framework of Alabama
  - Value reduction – crops
  - Increased cost – treatment and prevention
  - Ecosystem *transformer*



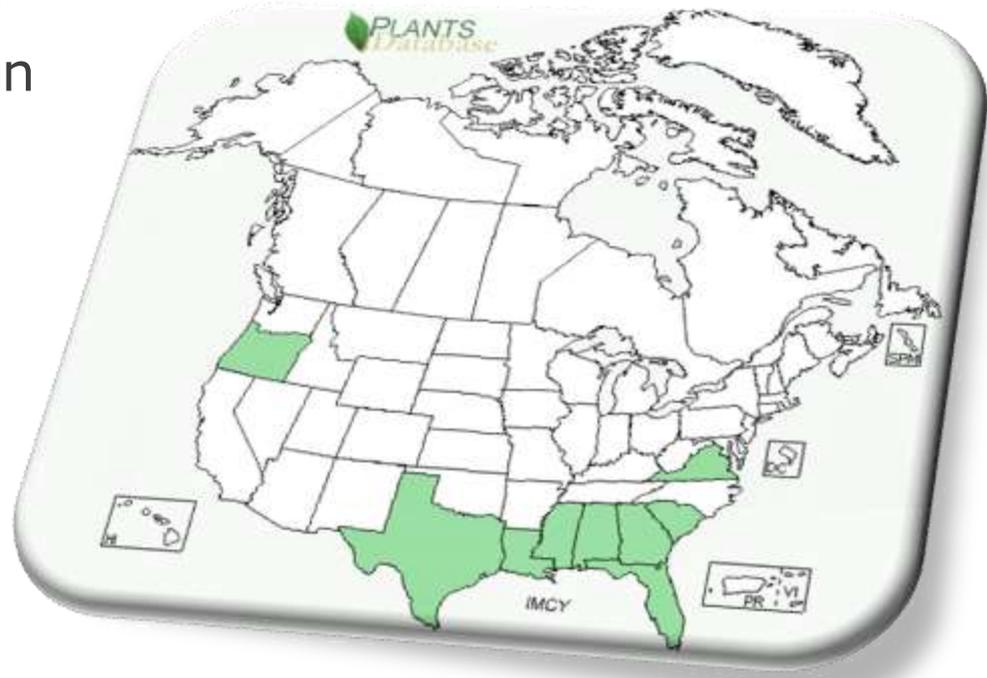
## Introduction

- *Prolific* seed producer
- Rhizomatous plant
- Spreads above- and belowground
- New stems arise quickly
  - Four-inch fragment + 2 years = ten-inch deep rhizome mat!



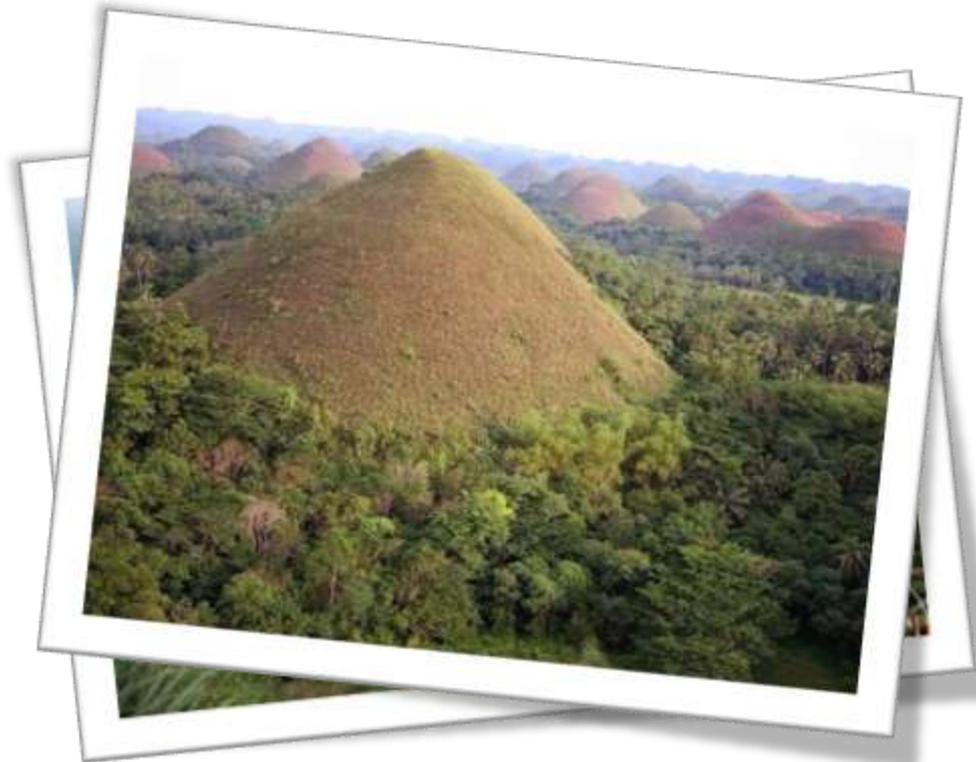
## Across the US

- In 9 states (known)
- Danger is occupation in *every* state!



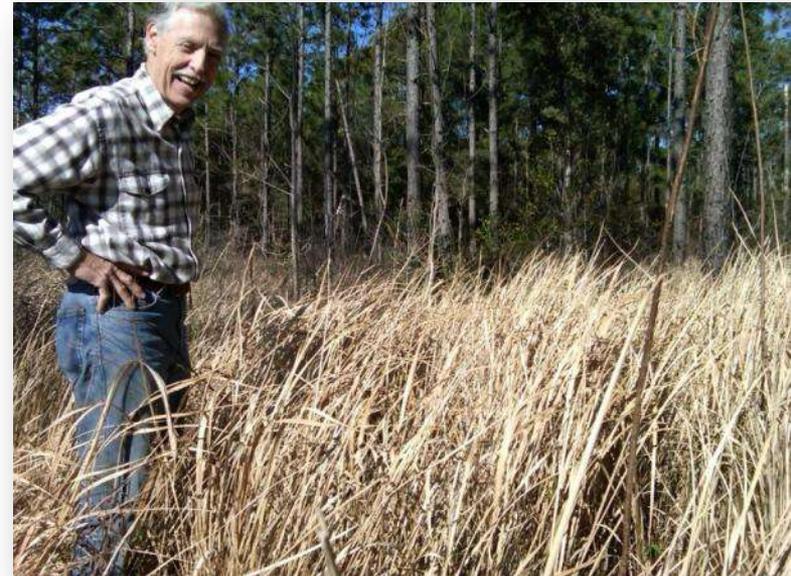
## Across the World

- One of the world's worst weeds
- 1.2 billion acres
- 73 countries
- Tropical forest soils most susceptible



## “The Perfect Weed”

- Prolific reproducer/spreader
- Outcompetes almost everything
- Little to no wildlife value
- Kills fire-tolerant plants
- Grow on almost any site
- *Up to \$500/acre for eradication*



## “The Perfect Weed”

- What it takes to eradicate
  - Herbicides glyphosate and imazapyr
  - Initial treatment June-October of year 1
  - Retreatment year 2
  - Monitoring, and in *some* cases year 3 treatment



## Program Inception

- 2007 – no coordinated effort exists
- 2007 - AFC obtains 3-year grant to begin mapping and education
- 2008 – AFC facilitates establishment of Alabama Cogongrass Task Team
  - Goal to hire a director with 4 sub-teams established in Task Team
  - Limited funding success

# Project Inception

- ARRA Grant - 2009
- Larson & McGowin awarded 3-yr, \$6.28 million contract September 2009
- Task Team's structure provides Larson & McGowin with technical resources

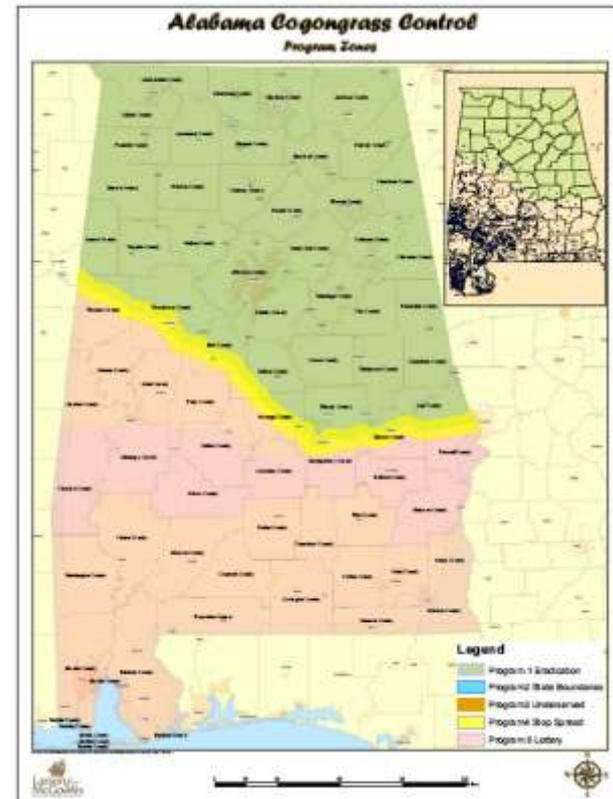
## Program Goals

- Create jobs (OVERALL STIMULUS OBJECTIVE)
- Meet mandate of Alabama Task Force
- Meet guidelines of Technical Committee
  - Eradication
  - Control/Mitigation
  - Enhancing cogongrass database



# Program Overview

- Six Strategies:
  - Detect and Eradicate (20.6%)
  - State Borders (12.4%)
  - Underserved (10.3%)
  - Halt The Spread (6.2%)
  - Habitat Protection (0.2%)
  - Landowner Select (**50.3%**)
- Not a cost-share program
- Max acres in south Alabama



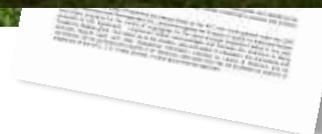
# Program Overview

- This year's objectives
  - Spray June-October in Eradication zone and along the state's borders in the south
  - Increase known locations
  - Enroll landowners
  - Get ready for 2011 in south Alabama!!



## Program Overview

- Landowner contacts program
- Sign access and treatment agreement
- Verification and prescription
- Treatment/Retreatment
- Inspection
- Monitoring
- All records managed in GIS



# Program Overview

- Use only licensed, insured, local workforces
  - Jobs, jobs, jobs



# Program Expectations

- \$6 million for the entire state
  - Won't go far
  - Hard choices made from the outset
  - Greatly infested areas *will not* be eradicated
- Development of a management system and comprehensive program is what will outlive the grant
  - Use of stand-, tract-, and landscape-level decision tools

## What You Can Do

- YOU are a key set of eyes and ears
- Any cogongrass should be reported, *however small or large*
- Things you can do now!
  - Don't drive in, operate in, or treat flowering areas
  - Clean equipment if and when possible
  - Enroll in our program
  - Be aware of new areas

## Where You Come In

- Participation depends on you!
- Let friends and neighbors know
- Tell them about the program and our website
- Invite us to meetings



## How To Contact Us

- Hotline: (334) 240-9348
- Website: [www.alabamacogongrass.com](http://www.alabamacogongrass.com)
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## Questions?

