

Southeast EPPC Update

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Some fairly significant changes resulted from the 2002 Spring Board meeting in Nashville. Perhaps most important was the elimination of the SE-EPPC coordinator position and the election of new officers. In terminating the coordinator position, my role shifted from serving as coordinator to becoming the newly elected president. Since SE-EPPC's inception in 1998, the coordinator's role was to develop the organization's structure and respond to administrative needs. We have moved forward on various fronts since then, including gaining recognition by the IRS as a group exempt non-profit organization, developing our website and newsletter, establishing new state chapters in Kentucky, North Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi, and hosting annual symposia in Oak Ridge, Chapel Hill, Athens, and Nashville. We are now in a position to operate on a trial basis without the support of this part time position. As my role changes from coordinator to president, I hope to provide the leadership to make SE-EPPC a better and stronger organization. Here are some of the organization changes:

Newsletter

After some debate and much deliberation, the Board agreed to cease publication of its quarterly newsletter, *Southeast EPPC News*. Instead SE-EPPC will utilize *Wildland Weeds* to submit pertinent information, articles, and updates of interest to its members. It was decided that our resources could not support dual publications and that as an organization, we want to maximize our efforts and avoid duplication. This decision also will eliminate the FL EPPC annual contribution of \$5/member to SE-EPPC for printing and mailing newsletters. The same membership fee from other SE-EPPC state chapters and individuals, however, will be maintained and directed to offset expenses associated with the

printing and mailing of *Wildland Weeds* to non-Florida EPPC members. In this transition, it is hoped that *Wildland Weeds* will evolve to be more of a regional publication.

Electronic updates

I will propose at our next Board meeting that we establish and maintain a membership email database that would enable us to provide electronic SE-EPPC news updates on a regular basis. This would serve as a quasi-electronic newsletter but be limited to a "word" document format. Our membership committee chair, Carrie Miller, has indicated a willingness to try to maintain this database with the assistance of state chapters. If approved by the Board, you should receive a mailing soliciting your email address.

Webpage improvements

As a regional organization we hope to rely more heavily on our website at www.se-eppc.org. Improvements to the webpage should keep members current and provide links and access to information sources. If you haven't visited the webpage, please do so. You will find that each state chapter has its own site on the webpage. The hope and expectation is that each state chapter will soon have someone responsible for their site. We have developed a standard format for state chapter sites. A goal is to make each site as interactive and easy to update as possible. Webpage maintenance has largely been the job of the SE-EPPC coordinator working with Chuck Barger, our webmaster.

State Chapters

This is an important focus that will receive more attention at our summer Board meeting. There is interest in developing new state chapters in Alabama and Virginia. Our next Board meeting is July 19 at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. The meeting will include a morning session focusing on establishing state chapters with key people from Alabama attending. We also will be looking at requirements

for participation in SE-EPPC and how SE-EPPC will be structured to make sure those requirements are being met, both in mission and to meet IRS obligations.

Virginia is also demonstrating interest in developing a state chapter. This is especially interesting because we have Virginia representation on the SE-EPPC Board and a number of individuals from Virginia belong to SE-EPPC. Virginia already participates in the Mid-Atlantic EPPC that is structured as a regional organization without state chapters. In talking with Virginia folks it appears that a state chapter might provide cohesion at the state level where statewide initiatives might be tackled. An idea that seems appealing is to develop a state chapter that would be affiliated under SE-EPPC and have joint representation with Mid-Atlantic-EPPC

Individuals are members

Individuals are members and it doesn't matter if you live in a state with or without a state chapter. When you pay your annual membership dues to either SE-EPPC or to your state chapter, you become a SE-EPPC member. SE-EPPC has a membership base of over 600 members, with 571 members living where there are state chapters. The idea is that new membership growth in states without state chapters will reach a threshold to create enough energy and commitment to begin the process of establishing a state chapter. SE-EPPC should be the engine that fosters that development. Something that we have learned, however, is that there has to be a strong interest and a willingness by a core group of people in the state to make it work. We will ask the SE-EPPC BOD and current members to assist in helping new chapters get established and provide assistance to fledgling state chapters.

Focusing on our mission

We have undergone some growing pains and are ready to improve our structure and develop sound goals. We have reconfigured the Board structure

and made changes to our bylaws to improve how we conduct business. For continued growth, it is essential that state chapters satisfy their bylaw requirements and meet their IRS non-profit obligations. This will be required to be recognized as a SE-EPPC non-profit organization. In addition, it is important to see SE-EPPC establish tangible goals that can be translated into actions that ultimately help stop the continued introduction of invasive exotic pest plants and facilitates controlling invasive exotic pest plants in natural areas.

Notes from the symposium

So many thanks go out to the TN-EPPC for successfully hosting an excellent symposium (see *Wildland Weeds*, Summer 2002). While the books have not been closed, I can happily report that it was financially a successful event with sponsorship revenues reaching over \$10,000. The total revenue over expenses for the symposium is well in excess of this amount. Next year's conference will be hosted by KY-EPPC and will be held in Lexington. We hope to see many of you there.

North Carolina EPPC Really Exists

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While folks from North Carolina have attended Exotic Pest Plant Council meetings in other states, an official NC-EPPC had just been in the formative stages for the past few years. We gathered information from other EPPCs and have been taking steps such as writing by laws and establishing our

purposes under the leadership of Gene Cross from the NC Department of Agriculture. One of our objectives from the outset was to encourage participation by the diversity of interests impacted by invasive plants. We wanted the many points of view on the subject of invasive exotic plants considered for the benefit of all North Carolinians.

On March 21, 2002 the North Carolina Chapter of the Exotic Pest Plant Council officially came into existence. In general, the purposes of the Council are to:

- Provide a focus for issues and concerns regarding exotic pest plants in North Carolina
- Facilitate communication and the exchange of information regarding all aspects of exotic pest plant control and management
- Provide a forum where all interested parties may participate in meetings and share in the benefits from the information generated by the Council
- Promote public understanding regarding exotic pest plants and their control
- Serve as an advisory council regarding funding, research, management, and control of exotic pest plants
- Facilitate action campaigns to monitor and control exotic pest plants in North Carolina
- Review incipient and potential pest plant management problems and activities and provide relevant information to interested parties

The board consists of:

Arboreta – **Alison Arnold**, The North Carolina Arboretum
 Citizen – **Jeff Birk**
 Conservation – **Kim Douglas**, Triangle Land Conservancy
 Government – **Jame Amoroso**, NC Natural Heritage Program
 Nursery Industry – **Rick Crowder**, Hawksridge Farms
 Landscape Industry – **Tom Suddreth**, UNC – Chapel Hill

Officers are:

President – **Dick Bir**, NC State University
 Vice President – **Johnny Randall**, NC Botanical Garden
 Secretary – **Ann Gill**, Mecklenburg County
 Treasurer – **Steve Manning**, Invasive Plant Control, Inc.

A CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP

DETECTING & ASSESSING INVASIVE EXOTIC PLANTS: APPROACHES FOR THE FLORIDA LANDSCAPE

FEBRUARY 12- 14, 2003

WORKSHOP TOPICS & QUESTIONS:

Technology, Geographic Modeling, Mapping, Assessment, Applications, Spatial Analysis, Agency Integration & Use

What Are The Best Methods?

What Scales Are Most Applicable and When?

Can Different Scales & Methods Be Integrated and Made Interoperable?

Will Mapping Exotics Within The Larger Landscape Context Help?

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
KOVEN'S CONFERENCE CENTER

DETAILS AND MEETING INFORMATION
MAY BE FOUND ON THE WEB AT:

www.sfrestore.org/issuetteams/exotic/iepda/IEPDAindex.htm

or contact rmonchek@sfrestore.org