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First Regional Workshop held on Managing Terrestrial Plant Invasions in the Temperate South

Identification and control methods of 33 of the most invasive plants was the focus of the first regional workshop, *Terrestrial Plant Invasions of the Temperate South: The Problem, Consequences, and Taking Control*, held June 4-5 in Greenville, South Carolina. Aimed at arming managers, landowners, and consultants with the latest information, “the rest of the story” also was covered by an expert panel, with presentations on monitoring, restoration, and accessing the developing information networks. The 220 participants included managers, technicians, and researchers from natural areas, forestry, right-of-way, and golf courses; consultants from these areas; horticulturists and arboriculturists; and private landowners.

The co-organizers, Drs. James (Jim) Miller (USDA Forest Service) and Larry Nelson (Clemson University) opened the workshop with the latest data on the extent of occupation by the most invasive plant species: kudzu, Japanese honeysuckle, and Chinese privet. Dr. Randy Westbrooks (USGS) gave a stimulating and informative keynote address that revealed “how we got in this mess,” and program developments needed to combat the invasions such as early detection and rapid response. Gordon Brown (USDI, National Invasive Species Council Liaison) described the complex structure the federal government has been organizing over the past 30 years to deal with the invasive species problem and the most recent developments. The roles and responsibilities of the states were summarized by Turner Odell (Environment Law Institute). Dr. Peter White (University of North Carolina) explained developing concepts useful for screening new introductions for invasiveness, and the latest developments on the St. Louis Declaration.

Jim Miller’s new book, “Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests: A Field Guide for Identification and Control,” was used to detail the most threatening 33 invasive plant taxa (see pg. 8). Dave Moorhead (University of Georgia) and Miller gave a comprehensive overview of the tools available for integrated management, while Max Williamson (consultant) explained herbicide technology safety and application systems. Specific herbicide prescriptions and applications were covered for each of the invasive species by Miller, Williamson, and Wilson Faircloth (Auburn University).

An invaluable primer on methods for monitoring and mapping was provided by John Buck (Civil and Environmental Consultants), while Lee Patrick (Invasive Plant Control, Inc.) taught the audience how to plan and enact a control and reclamation program. Keith Douce and Chuck Barger (UGA Bugwood Network) provided an overview of technology tools available. Finally, Miller summarized the region’s current status in addressing invasive plants, needed developments in program areas, and organizations where each individual can become connected to developing solutions, like SE-EPPC.

The workshop was followed by a successful formation meeting for a South Carolina EPPC. Facilitated by Robin Roeker (USFS) and Brian Bowen, SE EPPC President, approximately 24 people attended, organized a steering committee, and unanimously voted to establish the SC-EPPC.

The workshop was jointly organized by the USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station and Southern Region, and Clemson University Forestry Extension. Multiple supporting sponsors included SE-EPPC, Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere, USDA APHIS and NRCS, University of Georgia Bugwood Network, and USDI Geologic Survey and Fish & Wildlife Service.

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