

SAMAB Hosts Workshop on the Prevention and Early Detection of Invasive Plants

by Susan Schexnayder

Land and water managers have learned that managing an invasive plant once it is established in an area is an expensive and time consuming effort, and often success is uncertain. Success with invasive species is most likely if we prevent their introduction or identify them early enough that populations do not become established. With this recognition, SAMAB (Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere Program) hosted a workshop on October 23rd and 24th in Johnson City, TN to help land and water managers in the Southern Appalachian region learn what practices they could incorporate into their existing management strategies to prevent, or at least minimize, the possibility of invasive plant introductions on their managed property. "Success at limiting new introductions to the southern Appalachians will require the collective efforts of all of us who have responsibility for land and water resource management," said Nancy Fraley, a key organizer of the workshop and leader of the National Park Service's Southeast Exotic Plant Management Team. Fraley noted that a wide variety of people—transportation maintenance crews, park managers, and private landowners, just to name a few—have important roles to play in preventing the spread of invasive plants. Participants in the workshop included private land managers, foresters, representatives from several National Forest and National Park units, and other land management staffs.

Among the presenters were Alix Cleveland, Invasives Activities Leader for the US Forest Service Region 8; Rita Beard, Invasive Plants Coordinator for the National Park Service; and Richard Schwab, leader of the interagency Burned Area Emergency Response Program. They each emphasized cooperation, pre-project planning, and the importance of having an invasives specialist, or, minimally, a botanist, involved in project planning and implementation for activities ranging from road construction to stream restoration. Bonnie Harper-Lore, with the Federal Highway Administration, made clear the highway transportation sector's role in invasives, reminding participants that the

Federal Highway Administration manages 12 million acres of roadside green space.

Professor Dave Moorhead of the University of Georgia discussed a range of best management practices for all types of soil disturbing activities, and emphasized the importance of knowing what is growing next to your managed area. To help build this knowledge, Moorhead and Chuck Barger, also of the University of Georgia, have collaborated on the Early Detection and Distributions Mapping System (www.EDDMapS.org) that will serve as a central source of information on invasive plant occurrences and allows new sightings to be reported and verified.

To help extend the focus on the prevention and early detection of invasives in the Southern Appalachian region, SAMAB is collecting and will post on its website examples of site-specific early detection and

rapid response plans, as well as examples of contracts that include specifications that minimize the possibility of invasive plant introductions. To submit examples, contact Susan Schexnayder, SAMAB's program manager, at schexnayder@utk.edu or 865-974-5912. Copies of the workshop presentations will soon be available at the SAMAB website, www.samab.org.

The Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB) Program is a public/private partnership whose vision is to foster a harmonious relationship between people and the Southern Appalachian environment. It promotes the environmental health and stewardship of natural, economic, and cultural resources through cooperation among partners, information gathering and sharing, integrated assessments, and demonstration projects. www.samab.org



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